

MIAMI BEACH

Presentations & Awards Meeting

City Hall, Commission Chambers, 3rd Floor, 1700 Convention Center Drive

March 12, 2014

Mayor Philip Levine
Vice-Mayor Micky Steinberg
Commissioner Michael Grieco
Commissioner Joy Malakoff
Commissioner Edward L. Tobin Absent
Commissioner Deede Weithorn
Commissioner Jonah Wolfson Absent

City Manager Jimmy L. Morales
City Attorney Jose Smith
City Clerk Rafael E. Granado

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ATTENTION ALL LOBBYISTS

Chapter 2, Article VII, Division 3 of the City Code of Miami Beach, entitled "Lobbyists," requires the registration of all lobbyists with the City Clerk prior to engaging in any lobbying activity with the City Commission, any City Board or Committee, or any personnel as defined in the subject Code sections. Copies of the City Code sections on lobbyists laws are available in the City Clerk's office. Questions regarding the provisions of the Ordinance should be directed to the Office of the City Attorney.

Special note: In order to ensure adequate public consideration, if necessary, the Mayor and City Commission may move any agenda item to the alternate meeting date, which will only be held if needed. In addition, the Mayor and City Commission may, at their discretion, adjourn the Commission Meeting without reaching all agenda items.

Meeting called to order at 5:11 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Gabriela Ramesar, Mary Figueroa, Priya Pershadsingh, Jennifer Leon, Liora Namiech, and Samantha Menendez.

Presentations and Awards

5:11:22 p.m.

PA1 Certificates Of Recognition To Be Presented To Miami Beach Senior High School SOIL Club Essay Contest Winners: Gabriela Ramesar, Mary Figueroa, And Priya Pershadsingh; And The Art Contest Winners: Jennifer Leon, Liora Namiech, And Samantha Menendez.
(Requested by Commissioner Michael Grieco)

ACTION: Certificates and medals of honor were presented.

Commissioner Grieco explained that there was an essay contest that went out to the students regarding the SOIL Group, which is an acronym for Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods. SOIL is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing safe and dignified sanitation, protecting soil resources, empowering communities and transforming wastes into resources in Haiti. The students at Miami Beach Senior High School were inspired by this mission and recognized that although the sanitary conditions in Haiti are foreign, Port Au Prince is not that far from Miami and a shared culture brings the sister cities even closer. The SOIL Group is driven by interest in sustainability and cultural understanding. They have conducted teachings at Nautilus Middle School, presented alongside SOIL at the Rotary Club, volunteered for history of Miami and hosted workshops on grant writing and sustainable product development. This year they organized the 2014 SOIL Art and Essay Contest that asks “what can an individual do to make today's natural resources sustainable for generations to come?” As the SOIL Group seeks to answer this question of themselves, their efforts and mission continue to assist the Haitian people and worldwide sustainability. Commissioner Grieco read the names of the recipients: Gabriela Ramesar, contest winner, Mary Figueroa, second place essay contest winner; Priya, third place essay contest winner, Jennifer Leon, first place art contest winner; Liora Namiech, Samantha Menendez, third place contest winner and Gabriela Ramesar won the essay contest.

5:27:16 p.m.

PA2 Proclamation To Be Presented To Lucas Bocanegra, Shawn Kouri, Matt Berning And Mike Petker For Their Efforts In Rescuing A Tourist From Drowning.
(Requested by Mayor Philip Levine)

ACTION: Proclamation presented.

Mayor Levine introduce four incredible folks from the Ocean Rescue Team, Lucas Bocanegra, Shawn Kouri, Matt Berning and Mike Petker, and what they have done typifies the incredible importance of the entire Ocean Rescue Team and how they are on the frontlines saving people, helping residents, helping tourists, which keeps Miami Beach safe and vibrant.

On Monday December 30, 2013 four teenage tourists went into the ocean at Miami Beach but only three returned. Ocean Rescue lifeguard Lucas Bocanegra had been watching the teens and was able to find the missing one under the surf; Lucas Bocanegra swam into the water and was able to pull him back to shore. The teenager had no pulse, but his heart restarted after being shocked twice with a defibrillator. Lucas Bocanegra was assisted by Shawn Kouri, Matt Berning and Mike Petker who together and through their dedication, extensive training and commitment to saving lives, were able to save this young tourist's life. He recognized lifeguards Lucas Bocanegra, Shawn Kouri, Matt Berning and Mike Petker for their heroic effort and proclaimed March 12, 2014 as “Lucas Bocanegra, Shawn Kouri, Matt Berning and Mike Petker Day.” The City of Miami Beach thanks you.

5:18:51

PA3 Proclamation To Be Presented To Dr. Morris Sunshine For His Community Activism And 90th Birthday.

(Requested by Mayor Philip Levine)

ACTION: Proclamation presented.

Mayor Levine stated that this proclamation is for somebody who is incredibly well known in Miami Beach and unbelievably respected - Dr. Morris Sunshine. Mayor Levine read the proclamation. Dr. Sunshine was a distinguished professor of Sociology at Syracuse University and other institutions of higher learning; he is a classic example of how the GI Bill has turned out productive, effective leaders scholars and teachers in the United States; he is a founding member of the neighborhood association; he has served with distinction on City of Miami Beach boards and committees for many years. He attends every power board meeting every month in City Hall and makes important contributions to whatever is under discussion. He is "Mr. Noise Control" and quality of life for all citizens of Miami Beach, and he rides with the Police Department and keeps an eye on the streets and he has never hesitated to help a neighbor or a neighborhood in need. He has been in a strong committed relationship of over 60 years with his wife Marsha and the best friend anyone would ever want to have. Therefore, Mayor Levine proclaimed March 12, 2014 "Dr. Morris Sunshine Day" in the City of Miami Beach.

Dr. Morris Sunshine stated that it is a great pleasure not to have to announce his name for the record, and reveal to all the people out there that do not particularly care for him where he lives. He jokingly stated that the City Clerk has made a grievous error; as he is not 90 years old, he will be 51. He added that a lot of the people sitting here are like himself, "permanent nuisances," otherwise called "community activists." City Hall is crowded with community activists, and they constitute the institutional memory of this City. They remember, as he does, in 1943 when he was here as a guest of the Air Force, that once upon a time that Miami Beach had no women at all when he was here. He did not see a single woman in the three months he was here. Things have much improved. Secondly he wants to announce that this is not a going away party. He plans to be here. These people, most of whom are community activists, are here because Miami Beach has a precious culture, a very precious political culture. It is a political culture that emphasizes citizen engagement and enables citizens and urges citizens to participate. If they did not have that cultural support, there would be no community activists here. Dr. Sunshine kidded that life would be much simpler for the Mayor if there were no community activists. In honoring him, they are honoring everybody here who regularly makes trips to City Hall through heavy traffic, finds a place to park, pays for their parking space, and comes and prepares a speech as he did tonight. So the Mayor is honoring all community activists, not just Morris Sunshine. Finally he thanked the City staff, especially City Clerk Rafael Granado. His staff is amazing. People go to the Office of the City Clerk with "all kinds of lunatic questions they would not dare go to Legal with", and they are treated with great kindness. Secondly he wants to recognized Jeff Singer, without him and his devotion and maintenance of this equipment, he would not be able to communicate as he does.

5:31:21 p.m.

- PA4 Key To The City To Be Presented To Joseph Hernandez, Former Miami Beach Senior High School Football Player, Now On The Florida State University Football National Championship Team, For His Perseverance And Determination After A Serious Injury.
(Requested by Mayor Philip Levine & Commissioner Jonah Wolfson)

ACTION: Key to the City presented. Mayor Philip Levine presented Joseph the Key to the City of Miami Beach in recognition of his perseverance and determination to play football, being a Hi-Tide Football player, Co-Captain of Team and suffering from a serious Femur Fracture during his Senior Year Football Season. The night of the accident at Jackson Trauma Center he told the Beach High Athletic Trainer, Mia Romero that he was going to play football again. Not only did he play again but he walked on to the nation's Number One Football Team, The Florida State University Seminoles who just won the National Championship this past January 6th, 2014 in Pasadena, California. Joseph will be receiving 3 championship rings this coming April. During the Key ceremony Joseph mentioned Ricardo Lewis, his teammate at Beach High who is an amazing player and played in the opposing team Auburn during the National Championship.

Mayor Levine introduced someone very special, whose name is Joseph Hernandez, and he is the son of Leonor and Tony Hernandez. Joseph was born and raised in Miami Beach, Florida and played football through middle and high school. He transferred to Beach High and played football through grades 11 and 12. He was captain of the team during the two years and was a starter. He had a serious injury during his senior year and fractured his femur after the first game in the season, and was unable to play for the rest of the year. Joseph never missed a game even though he was on a wheelchair or crutches. Joseph was actually a walk on to the FSU football team national champions. Joseph is a national champion! There are not many national champions in town, but they have one right here. Mayor Levine presented Joseph Hernandez with the Key to the City of Miami Beach.

Mayor Levine introduced incoming Miami Beach High Coach Harris. Coach Harris graduated from Penn State in 1999 where he was a three-year starter, running back and team captain under Coach Joe Paterno. During that time, Coach Harris led the team to four bowl appearances and a number one national ranking in 1999. In 1996, as a red shirt freshman Coach Harris rushed for 587-yards and nine touchdowns. Coach Harris was nominated to play in the Hula Bowl as a senior and was drafted by NFL Europe in 2003. While coaching at the college level, Coach Harris secured two internships, one with the Eagles and one with the Miami Dolphins. The coach came to Beach High from Alonzo Mourning High School where Coach Harris was the defensive coordinator for years and his players ranked in the top 10; and the quarterback was a leader in passing for the district. Mayor Levine welcomed Coach Harris to the City.

Mr. Joseph Hernandez stated that it is truly an honor to be here today. Joseph is humbled by this recognition and thanked Miami Beach Senior High School and his coach, former coaches and other coaches that gave him the opportunity to play as a key player in his years at Beach High. Joseph also thanked Commissioner Wolfson and Mayor Levine for the support to the Beach High football team and asked them to support the team in the future. Joseph thanked the Trainer Mia Romero, who was in the hospital with him and helped him recover. Joseph thanked the Athletic Director for his support behind the scenes. Joseph made many special friends. One of his teammates, Ricardo Lewis, who now plays at Auburn, caught the Hail Mary against Georgia to put them in the championship against

Florida State University, but he was not able to be here today but recognized him. Joseph stated that he was seriously injured during his senior year and could not finish the season. Most people thought he would not ever play again, but from his hospital bed he knew he was going to keep doing it. Joseph thought he was going to be a Hurricane, but as time went on, he decided to be a Seminole and it paid off. Lastly, he thanked the Mayor and City Commission for this incredible honor.

Trainer Mia Romero thanked everyone on behalf of Coach Jimenez and herself. Joseph is such a great kid. After the injury, Joseph told them "I'm just going to play again" and they believed him and he has accomplished a great deal.

The following Miami Beach High School employees were present for the recognition:

Principal John Donohue
Athletic Director Edgar Botto
Athletic Trainer Mia Romero
In-coming Football Coach Harris

5:41 p.m.

PA5 Certificates Of Recognition To Be Presented To Paola Pierre Of Florida Immigrant Coalition/Employer And Maria Patricia Bernal/Employee For Their Participation In The UNIDAD Senior Employment Program.

(Requested by Commissioner Jonah Wolfson)

ACTION: Certificates presented.

Mayor Levine recognized a senior employer and senior employee. He introduced Paola Pierre, from the Florida Immigrant Coalition, in recognition of her participation and support of UNIDAD Senior Employment Program for the City of Miami Beach. And also he recognized Maria Patricia Bernal in recognition of her participation and success in UNIDAD Senior Employment Program for the City of Miami Beach. Mayor Levine announced that the Senior Center will open up soon.

Paola Pierre thanked everyone for this certificate and especially Mayor Levine. They have been working with UNIDAD for the past 12 years and it has been a great partnership. She has been working with different nonprofit organizations. It is hard for nonprofits to get overhead money to pay for administration, and without this program it is difficult for them to hire trainees. The trainees come to the office, answer the telephones, and assist them; in turn they receive valuable training. She thanked them for the recognition and added that Patricia is a wonderful administrator.

Maria Patricia Bernal is very proud and happy that she could find UNIDAD and get all their help and training, which helped her obtain a job with this company. She thanked Raymond Adrian for all the support received.

Raymond Adrian thanked the Mayor and Commissioners. He also commended Commissioner Wolfson for bringing this item to the community.

5:45 p.m.

PA6 Certificate Of Recognition To Be Presented To Dave Doebler For His Environmental Efforts.

(Requested By Commissioner Michael Grieco)

ACTION: Certificate and Key to the City presented.

Commissioner Grieco introduced Dave Doebler. He spends his weekends in a kayak picking up everybody else's garbage; tons of garbage that pollute the water and clog the drainage system. Commissioner Grieco commended Dave for the work that he does. Dave is the epitome of what it means to be an activist. Commissioner Grieco recognized Dave for his efforts in keeping the City clean. The certificate is presented to Dave for his efforts in sustainability and environmental movement and as a member of the community he creates awareness of these issues in the City of Miami Beach. Dave is an environmental activist making a difference in the community.

Mayor Levine suggested naming gradings "Doebler gradings" so he may get the deserved recognition for his work.

Mr. Doebler stated that he was excited to just get a certificate of recognition and figured that he did not have to wait and do the good works that Mr. Sunshine has to get a day named after me. He certainly did not expect to receive a Key to the City. He thanked the City Commission for this honor. He explained that he recently became a community activist and an environmental activist about two years ago, when he recognized the real problem in the City, and he is very appreciative of this new City Commission who has really embraced the problems that he brought to light, and are taking a very aggressive action on it. He encouraged everyone to pick a cause they believe in and do something about it. He recently started a website called "VolunteerCleanup.org" which is designed to enable people to find and sign up for, and even host their own community cleanups, because the trash that they allow on streets and the beaches ends up in the water ways. He encourages everybody to get involved with some cause that they care about. He thanked the City Commission for this huge honor and he looks forward to continuing working with the City Commission in order to find some good solutions.

Meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

End of Agenda