



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 009-2006

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: January 10, 2006

SUBJECT: **PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS AD HOC COMMITTEE**

This memo serves to advise you of my intent to convene a Public Relations and Communications Ad Hoc Committee. This Ad hoc committee, which would operate in a manner similar to our long standing Nightlife Advisory Task Force, would be created to provide the Administration with advisory recommendations on how we may effectively market the Miami Beach destination locally and externally. This Task Force would recommend new marketing strategies to expand and/or compliment other existing marketing efforts, with a focus on new, creative initiatives. The committee's goal is the development of a short-term and long-term multi-disciplinary marketing plan for immediate implementation.

As you may recall, in July 2004, I appointed an Ad-Hoc Public Relations and Communications Committee after the City Commission rejected all bids in response to RFP No. 9-03-04. The Committee met seven (7) times and originally discussed hiring an outside firm to handle all public relations for the City of Miami Beach. Upon further review, however, the Committee recommended the expansion of the City's Communications Office to support and execute the City's public relations and overall communications strategy. The committee also endorsed the concept of an advisory committee that would help guide the communications strategy for the City and advise the City Manager.

Funding was included in the 2005/2006 City Budget to expand the City's Communications Office and enhance our marketing efforts. While we have already begun our efforts to improve our local communications, through our MB Magazine and other information products that we are launching shortly, we are looking at unique methods to assist in marketing our destination to enhance visibility and attract additional exposure. As such, \$400,000 was included in the City's Resort Tax Fund Budget for Miami Beach targeted marketing and public relations efforts, to be matched by funds from the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB), the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority (VCA), and our Cultural Arts Council. In addition, the GMCVB contract includes an allocation of submarket initiatives funded at \$950,000 annually, within the contract base.

The new Public Relations and Communications Ad Hoc Committee will be composed of representatives of the hotel, entertainment, and business communities, as well as individuals with a background in marketing and/or communications. I am appointing the following individuals to serve on the above subject Ad Hoc Committee and would appreciate your input:

- Orlando Alvarez, Jr. - City of Miami Beach Resident and Vice-President of Marketing and Development at Mercy Hospital
- Joyce Bronson - Senior Vice President, The Related Group of Florida

- Michael Comras - The Comras Company
- Marlo Courtney – Ocean Drive Association
- Steven Haas – General Manager, Tuscan Steakhouse and Chairperson, VCA
- Elsie Sterling Howard - City of Miami Beach Resident and President of Sterling Public Relations
- Roman Jones - Opium Group
- Gerry Kelly – Shine Nightclub
- Roymi V. Membiela - City of Miami Beach Resident and Asst. Vice President Hispanic Marketing & Communications, Baptist Health South Florida
- Ana Palmer - American Express
- Jerry Powers – Ocean Drive Magazine
- Alan Randolph – Chairperson, Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Alfredo Richard - Senior Vice President, Communications – Claxson
- Mark Tamis – General Manager, Delano Hotel
- David Whitaker - Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Michel Vega - William Morris Agency

It is my expectation that this Committee will provide the necessary assistance and guidance with regard to the City's public relations strategy, to ensure a collaborative representation of City interests. Our Office of Communications and our Tourism and Cultural Development Department will be the liaisons for this effort. If you have any comments or other suggestions, please feel free to contact me.

JMG\HMF\MAS

c: Hilda Fernandez, Assistant City Manager
 Max A. Sklar, Director, Tourism and Cultural Development Department
 Nannette Rodriguez, Public Information Officer

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