



# MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC #066-2006

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: March 14, 2006

SUBJECT: BI-WEEKLY UPDATE— February 11- March 10, 2006

The purpose of this LTC is to provide you with an update describing some one the areas the Administration has recently been focusing on:

**Meeting with Durham, North Carolina Representatives**—On February 13, 2006, members of my Executive Staff and I met with representatives of the City of Durham, North Carolina as we continue to create collaborative relationships with other municipalities. This visit was centered on the City's staff teaching and sharing our CIP strategies with our counterparts from Durham.

**Meeting with Venetian Islands Homeowners Association**—Commissioner Cruz, staff and I met with residents and members of the Venetian Islands Homeowners Association to discuss the status of General Obligation Bond projects in their neighborhood. Particularly, we discussed the proposed improvements that have reached the 90% design completion stage.

**Meeting to review the First Quarter results of the Public Area Cleanliness Index**—In order to address the strategic priority of making the City cleaner and safer, the Performance Improvement Division of the Office of Budget and Performance Improvement has created a Public Area Cleanliness Index for the City.

The index is based on a 5 point rating scale, which was established by benchmarking several projects in similar municipalities such as New York City, San Francisco and Washington D.C.

Each quarter a team of assessors, composed of City employees from every department, go out and check the state of a statistically valid sample of streets, waterways, alleys, beach blocks, parking lots and parks. Each assessor rates the identified area based on the amount of litter, organic matter, animal waste/fecal matter found as well as the condition of trash bins.

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, I met with representatives from the City's Public Works Department, Sanitation Division, Parks and Recreation Department, Code Compliance Division and Performance Improvement Division to discuss the first quarter results of the assessments. This information has become a valuable tool to identify areas for improvement as well as hotspots throughout the island.

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**Meeting with Representatives from Florida Power and Light (FPL)**—Commissioner Bower, staff and I met with Manny Rodriguez and Aletha Player of FPL to discuss the option of pursuing underground utilities in the City. FPL has recently announced a 5 Point Plan to harden the electrical infrastructure. As a result, the issues that previously prevented the neighborhoods from pursuing undergrounding have been resolved.

**Labor Relations** – Staff and I continue contract negotiations with several labor unions, including the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP). The 3<sup>rd</sup> FOP Negotiation Session was held on February 27, 2006 and a subsequent meeting on March 7, 2006. The first re-opener and negotiation meeting with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) took place on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and with the Government Supervisors Association (GSA) on March 7, 2006. The FOP, GSA, and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) contracts expire on September 30, 2006, and the AFSCME contract expires in April 2007. Although the IAFF has not started full negotiations this year, the City and Union have started re-opener discussions specific to the IAFF contract.

**Meetings with County Commissioner Katy Sorenson** — On February 22, 2006, Assistant City Manager, Hilda Fernandez, Kevin Crowder met with County Commissioner Katy Sorenson regarding workforce housing legislation as well as on-going projects and issues in the City of Miami Beach.

**Meeting with Andrew Resnick and Armando Gutierrez regarding Parking Lot Development**— I, along with Assistant City Manager Tim Hemstreet and Saul Frances, Parking Director, met with Andrew Resnick and Armando Gutierrez regarding the possible development of the parking lot next to David's Café on Meridian Avenue between 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Street. They were informed of the many issues that would be faced in pursuing this development. Further, I informed them that this site would not be a priority for the City right now.

**Tour of the Wolfsonian Café**— I met with Cathy Leff on February 24, 2006 to tour the new Wolfsonian Café. This new facility is a great addition to the Wolfsonian Museum.

**Neighborhood Leadership Academy**—I hosted the Annual City Manager's Current Events Session with the Neighborhood Leadership Academy Alumni Association. I had the opportunity to speak to the graduating class as well as hold a question and answer session with the group. The NLAAA currently has over 165 members, and the City is currently holding the 8<sup>th</sup> Class, which began on March 6, 2006. The 8<sup>th</sup> Class was kicked-off by the City Manager's Office as the first session. I attended this session along with all the Assistant City Managers and answered questions posed by the group regarding form of government, daily operations of the City, and current events in the City.

**Cirque du Soleil** — As a follow-up to the March 3, 2006 Letter to Commission, I have continued discussions with the Cirque development team to explore the proposed redevelopment of the Jackie Gleason Theater for the Performing Arts for a permanent venue for Cirque du Soleil.

Cirque is further refining and value engineering this new concept, and has assured us that they anticipate an exciting final product that reflects Cirque's signature creative, unique and high quality approach.

**Police Department** — On February 24, 2006 Command Staff attended a Terrorism Table Top Exercise sponsored by the Village of Bal Harbour and Miami-Dade Police Department at the Sheraton Bal Harbor Hotel.

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, Command Staff attended an Awards ceremony at the International Association of Chiefs of Police luncheon. Detective Gustavo Sanchez received the Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police Office of the Year Award.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, the Miami Beach Police Department staff working in conjunction with representatives of the City Managers Office and the Scott Rakow Recreation Center coordinated the Sled Hockey Tournament to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Twelve teams from the City participated, the winner was Neighborhood Services Department followed by two teams from the Miami Beach Police Department. A total of \$3,205 was raised and will be turned over to the American Cancer Society.

**Budget Meetings**—Currently, I am in the process of meeting with each department individually to discuss their workplan for fiscal year 2006/2007 as well as their current service level budgets. This year's budget process is closely guided by the strategic plan and the strategic priorities set forth by the Commission.

**Tourism & Cultural Development**—Following please find several projects being worked on by the different division of the Tourism and Cultural Development Department:

- City of Miami Beach's Annual Cultural Grants Program is currently evaluating applications submitted by 45 grant applicants.
- First Annual Exhibit of the National Arts Program® in Miami Beach: The program provides professional and non-professional artists that are City of Miami Beach employees or a family member of an employee, with a rare opportunity to exhibit their works publicly and to compete for cash and continuing art education scholarships. The concept of The National Arts Program® is to provide an uninhibited opportunity for all people to present their talents, at whatever level, in a public exhibition, free to artists and the public. The program seeks to showcase individual talent and increase the self-confidence of its participants.
- "13 Graves" (television pilot for Fox) is currently filming
- ESPN Deportes is holding a casting call for their new reality show called "Dream Job"
- "Beach Patrol: Miami Beach" for Court TV is currently filming throughout the City
- The second season of the TV show "Miami Ink" is currently filming
- The new reality program "8th and Ocean" is set to premiere soon on MTV
- The Winter Music Conference (WMC) is scheduled to take place from March 23, 2006 - March 28, 2006, with the actual conference is taking place at the Wyndham Hotel. Historically WMC also bring a multitude of other related events throughout the City. This year the number of ancillary events is projected at almost 200, which will be taking place at nightclubs, bars, hotels and other locations. The City held its first Major Events Planning (MEP) meeting with all departments on Friday, March 3, 2006. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 17, 2006. All departments will be enhancing staffing levels for the event, and final details are currently being coordinated.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

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