



MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 180-2007

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor David Dermer and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: July 27, 2007

SUBJECT: **COUNTY REDUCTIONS IN BEACH CLEANING SERVICES**

Attached please find an excerpt from the Miami-Dade County proposed 2007-2008 Fiscal Year Budget. The excerpt is specific to the Park and Recreation Department which includes the beach cleaning services in Miami Beach and the remainder of Miami-Dade County.

Miami-Dade County has historically had the responsibility to clean the County's beaches from the sand dune to the water. The services provided by the County include litter control and servicing beach litter cans, grading the beach to provide a level surface and to turn seaweed so that it decomposes in the sand and occasionally sand sifting.

For at least the last two years, the City has routinely requested that Miami-Dade County enhance the beach cleaning services provided in the City of Miami Beach at what are the most heavily utilized beaches in Miami-Dade County. With increased popularity and beach usage, the cleaning services provided by the County have not changed and have become less effective over time. In the last quarter of 2006-2007, beach cleanliness scores for the County maintained beach area that are maintained by the City as part of the Cleanliness Index Program, have dropped significantly.

In spite of declining performance and repeated City requests, the proposed 2007-2008 Park and Recreation Budget anticipates a reduction of five (5) full time staff members and 2.25 part-time positions from the beach maintenance staff. This means that after 10:00 a.m. no maintenance staff will be available to clean the very heavily used beaches from the jetty to 21st Street.

The adverse impact of the service reduction has been administratively communicated directly to County staff.

As this is a visible service both from the perspective of our residents as well as our tourism industry that is very likely to evoke vocal negative comment, we felt it important to bring this proposed budget item to the attention of the Mayor and City Commission. The assistance and intervention of the Mayor and City Commission will be necessary if this budget item is to be changed.

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Attachment

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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

FY 2007 - 08 Proposed Resource Allocation and Multi-Year Capital Plan

- The FY 2007-08 Proposed Resource Allocation Plan includes a decrease in grounds maintenance by reducing the roving crew which will result in the reduction of cutting cycles; patrons using community and district parks will notice a visible difference in the cleanliness of the parks including picnic shelters, ballfields, open areas, etc; the annual cutting cycles performed throughout our parks were reduced by 25 percent which will result in grass growing up to one inch higher between cuts; the part-time position at Biscayne Gardens Park was eliminated for which the roving crew from Region 3 will have to provide grounds maintenance once a month (\$2,736,000, eliminated 37 full-time positions and 14.63 part-time FTE positions)
- The Department's FY 2007-08 Proposed Resource Allocation Plan includes the closing of toll booth #2 at Crandon Park on the weekdays allowing the patrons only one entrance to the park (Lot #3); the closing of the south end of Haulover Beach on weekdays; Homestead Bayfront Park's atoll pool will reduce its hours of operation by closing Monday through Friday from October through March; in addition, the Larry and Penny Thompson Lake will open for ten weeks beginning on the first day of summer camp and it will no longer be open for the additional eight weekends before and after summer camp (\$146,000, eliminated 5.20 part-time FTE positions)
- In FY 2007-08, the Department eliminated one Administrative Secretary position at the Deering Estate which will impact the workload of the Director and the overall management staff at Deering (\$49,000, eliminated one full-time position); reduced ground maintenance affecting the Estate's ability to maintain an attractive and safe park (\$36,000, eliminated 1.48 part-time FTE positions); and in addition, reduced the level of security by eliminating its part-time guards resulting in the Estate's ability to properly secure the site and perform mandatory routine security/safety checks of the Estate (\$36,000, eliminated 1.48 part-time FTE positions)
- The Department will be reducing its beach maintenance during FY 2007-08 resulting in the elimination of the South Beach area (jetty to 21 street) crew from 10 a.m. through 6 p.m. and as a result, afternoon debris and litter pick-up services will be eliminated which will impact the cleanliness of our beaches (\$280,000, eliminated five full-time positions and 2.25 part-time FTE positions)
- As a result of the property tax relief initiatives, the Tropical Estate pool will only be open for ten weeks during the summer; the learn-to-swim programs for adults and children during non-summer months will no longer be provided; the pool will no longer be available for use by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' swim teams (\$185,000, eliminated one full-time position and 1.17 part-time FTE positions)
- The Department's FY 2007-08 Proposed Resource Allocation Plan includes the elimination of support staff at the Region Offices (\$228,000; eliminated two full-time positions and 3.69 part-time FTE positions); custodial staff and cleaning supplies were reduced impacting the cleanliness of restrooms, recreation centers, field houses, litter pick-up (\$850,000; eliminated nine full-time positions and 16.48 part-time FTE positions); and in addition, the proposed budget reduced the number of take home vehicles assigned to personnel staff (\$262,000)
- The FY 2007-08 Proposed Resource Allocation Plan includes the elimination of the park security unit which provides security patrols at 150 parks, seven days a week from 2 p.m. through 2 a.m.; without the park security unit the Department will have to depend on the response from police officers for park security and special/community events (\$1,336,000; eliminated 21 full-time positions)
- The Department's funding for Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's is being reduced in FY 2007-08 by \$94,500 to \$283,500 from \$378,000 in FY 2006-07; funding is used for education and outreach programs, horticulture and facility operations, and visitor services
- The FY 2007-08 Proposed Resource Allocation Plan includes reductions in funding for Miami Metrozoo in advertising which may impact admissions (\$251,000)
- In FY 2007-08, the Department is reducing Miami Metrozoo's funding for plants, park furnishings and equipment replacement, light equipment fleet; eliminating seasonal grounds maintenance during the summer; closing the warehouse stockroom two days a week; and reducing security coverage during the 2 a.m. through 10 a.m. shift (\$112,000; eliminated 2.30 part-time FTE positions)