

# APPROVED

**BEACH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)  
SPECIAL MEETING  
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE  
8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2008 – 3:00 P.M.**

<b><u>BID COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u></b>	<b><u>ATTENDANCE</u></b>	<b>10/08 – 9/09</b>	
		<b><u>PRESENT</u></b>	<b><u>ABSENT</u></b>
Amaury Piedra, Chair	P	1	1
Carlos Molinet, Vice Chair	P	2	0
Ina Lee	P	2	0
Michael Hatzfield	A	0	2
Andreas Ioannou	P	2	0
Ramola Motwani	P	1	1
Gabriel Rodriguez	A	1	1
Joseph Geluso	P	2	0
George Cozonis (arr. 3:13)	P	2	0
Jim Oliver	P	2	0

## **Staff**

Jeff Modarelli, Economic Development Director  
Donald Morris, Beach CRA Director  
Hilda Testa, Prototype, Inc.

## **I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chair Piedra called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present.

## **II. Discussion of Marketing RFP**

Chair Piedra recalled that he had been unable to attend the October 2008 BID meeting, but was aware that the Board had seen a presentation a proposed event. Discussion of developing an RFP for a marketing plan for such an event had been suggested. As Ms. Lee had been the Board's point person in arranging for the presentation, he asked that she or Mr. Modarelli provide the Board with a starting point for today's discussion of the RFP.

Mr. Modarelli stated that he had brought along the draft minutes from the October 2008 meeting, as well as his own notes from that meeting's conversation. Some

points the Board hoped to discuss at today's special meeting, he said, were a time frame for the event, ideally between Easter and October 1, and a theme that was likely to draw local and out-of-town residents, favorably impacting the hotel, retail, and restaurant industries.

Another item for discussion was the best possible way to leverage Board funds into the event, and a productive way to showcase the New Fort Lauderdale Beach image, Mr. Modarelli concluded. The objective was to have as thorough an RFP as possible.

Chair Piedra raised the issue of a theme, pointing out that this would be best left to the marketing company that will eventually create the event. The companies bidding on the RFP could present the Board with their ideas, and the bid would be awarded based in part on what the Board felt was the best theme.

Mr. Ioannou modified this proposal to a degree, suggesting that they provide the companies with a framework of what the Board wished to see in an event. He did not agree with the adoption of a specific time frame for the event, feeling instead that a successful community event could run throughout the year. A successful marketing firm, he said, would be able to tell the Board the best time frame for a particular event, along with the best advertising and other specific objectives.

Mr. Geluso reminded the Board that there had been a great deal of discussion at the October 2008 meeting regarding a target market for the event. Mr. Ioannou again felt that this too would be best left to professional marketers.

Chair Piedra stated that ideally a marketing firm would conduct appropriate research to find out the best target demographic and what segment of the District's businesses would be benefited most. Since a variety of businesses will be contributing to the funds, the event must be beneficial to hotels, restaurants, and retailers alike.

He added that the RFP should ideally state what the Board is attempting to achieve with the event, and the marketers will come up with specific items that try to meet these criteria.

Ms. Lee asked if the specific geographic area for the event would need to be defined in the RFP. It was determined that the correct area should be mentioned, which will help the marketers understand which businesses are contributing to the event and whom any event should impact.

Mr. Ioannou felt it would be best to specify the “need period” for the merchants in the RFP. He was met with general agreement.

Chair Piedra recommended that the Board come up with the scope of the event: specifically, what they hope to achieve by establishing an event in the area. He asked the Board for input on what they felt was their ultimate goal.

Mr. Ioannou felt the goal was to promote the specific destination. Ms. Lee expanded upon this by suggesting the goals were as follows:

- promotion of the New Fort Lauderdale Beach as a destination;
- positive impact on businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and retail;
- development of strategic partnerships to maximize efficient use of the approximately \$80,000 in Board funds slated for this purpose.

Mr. Ioannou felt it was best to let the marketer know what is available from BID funds, as well as informing them that co-op advertising was a possibility for leveraging those funds.

Vice Chair Molinet proposed that the RFP ask that any marketing firm specify what they could bring to the table – for example, what they could guarantee in terms of using their local relationships to maximize funds.

It was agreed that the time frame the Board felt was best would be after Easter and before the Boat Show.

Mr. Geluso felt the Board should make sure that potential presenters know the event is not to be sponsored by the City of Fort Lauderdale, but a “unified effort” by hoteliers and others in the business community. He felt a central theme of any event should be unity among Beach area businesses, highlighting them as a single entity. He felt the Beach could be presented as a “strip,” similar to the strip in Las Vegas.

Ms. Lee agreed, noting that the RFP should promote the New Fort Lauderdale Beach as a single cohesive destination. She added that the RFP might include the BID’s mission statement and how it was formed.

Mr. Modarelli informed the Board that some background material of this nature is normal when putting together an RFP so bidders will know how the opportunity for the event arose.

Ms. Lee noted that the Board had previously discussed limiting the RFP to local bidders only. Mr. Geluso concurred, as those agencies will be most familiar with South Florida and will have an established presence in the area. It was agreed that the Tri-County area would be the region from which bids would be sought.

Ms. Lee recalled a previous experience on the Selection Committee, when various categories and numerical values were assigned as part of the process. She asked if this was standard procedure, pointing out that while the Board would have one member present on the Selection Committee, the other participants might have no connection to the Beach or the Board. She asked if the Board would be allowed any input into how particular categories or scores are "weighted" during the selection process.

Mr. Modarelli explained that once the RFP is created, different sections are weighted for scoring. One is often the bidding company's background, which includes past experience with similar work and/or studies. Their understanding of what is wanted by the RFP is often heavily weighted, he said. Another section would be their actual plan or capability, which takes their prospective dollar amount into consideration.

He added that this particular RFP is "somewhat unusual," as they could actually let potential bidders know the dollar amount available for the event. In this case, cost might not be as heavily weighted. He stated he would speak to the Procurement Department to make sure all considerations are weighted appropriately.

Mr. Morris pointed out that the RFP will contain basic requirements that must be met before an agency's bid can even be considered: insurance requirements, for example. These are safeguards of the RFP process, he said.

Mr. Ioannou asked how the membership of the Selection Committee will be determined.

Mr. Modarelli said there will be three members: a representative of the Economic Development Department and most likely two others, in order to ensure an odd number of participants. He felt there were other Departments that would be helpful contributors as well, such as the Public Information Office. The Selection Committee members do not necessarily have to be City employees, however.

He reaffirmed that a member of the BID will sit on the Selection Committee.

Ms. Lee suggested including a member of the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Mr. Modarelli agreed to look into this possibility.

Mr. Geluso asked if there was a chance of making information about the prospective event available to the public during the Beach's busier season, so they will be aware there will be something to return for in the slower season. He asked for a description of the RFP's potential time frame.

Mr. Modarelli explained he will meet with Economic Development and Procurement staff on Wednesday, November 12, 2008, to finalize the RFP. It would, however, need to be sent out for 30-45 days in order to garner sufficient responses. When the RFP closes, the Selection Committee will need time to review the responses prior to the selection process, as often more than three or four bids will make the first cut. Once an agency has been selected, the choice goes before the City Commission.

He estimated that it will be at least a three-month process, and then the actual development of the event will require still more time. Realistically, it was determined, the selection process would most likely extend until March 2009.

Mr. Geluso noted that the proposed "Saturday Night Live" event, for which the Board saw a presentation at its October 2009 meeting, was already fairly well developed and worked out at that time; should this be the event that is officially selected, he pointed out, its creators will already have a "running start" at developing the actual event.

Mr. Modarelli added that other bidders will be in a similar position by the time the proposed event comes before the City Commission.

Ms. Lee asked if there will be a finalized RFP for the Board to view at the regular meeting set for Monday, November 17, 2008. Mr. Modarelli did not feel it would be fully prepared at that point, as most RFPs are 60-80 pages in length.

He cautioned that the Board would not be able to "give out" the proposed scope of the event before the RFP goes out.

Ms. Lee expressed concern that the RFP might not properly describe what the Board actually wants for the event. Vice Chair Molinet assured the members that this was the reason for today's meeting, so they could provide Mr. Modarelli with sufficient detail to create an accurate RFP.

Ms. Lee felt a “wow” factor should be an important and necessary consideration, as the Board hopes to create a lasting and ongoing destination-marketing event. Vice Chair Molinet added that the goal should be to create a long-standing relationship with the agency that would eventually be selected, as opposed to a one-time-only partnership.

Mr. Oliver asked if the Board will be able to dictate the length of time the RFP will be out, as he felt 30 days would be sufficient in today’s business climate. Mr. Modarelli said he could set the time frame of the RFP for 30 days if that was the Board’s wish.

He then asked how long the Board felt it was appropriate to allow responding agencies to come up with their marketing plan. He explained that the RFP can request a specific timeline from the agencies.

Chair Piedra cautioned that it will take some time for any agency to meet with businesses and individuals and make decisions appropriate to developing a marketing plan, especially one that will necessitate working with other businesses and associations within the community. He felt 60-90 days was a more realistic time frame and would allow agencies to come up with a more fully realized plan.

Mr. Modarelli said he will have the RFP ask bidding agencies for a timeline.

He then provided a recap of what the Board had discussed thus far:

- Promotion of the Beach area as a destination;
- Background information that explains the BID and what it hopes to achieve;
- Unified approach in promoting the destination – for example, promoting all Beach hotels, not just one;
- Positive impact on hotels, restaurants, and retail businesses;
- Leveraging strategic partnerships to bring in more funds;
- Timeline of 60-90 days for event development;
- Time frame between Easter and the Boat Show;
- Agencies must be licensed within the Tri-County area to respond to the RFP;
- “Wow” factor is an important goal.

He cautioned against becoming too specific in the RFP’s parameters, as the responding agencies may think of an important aspect that the Board did not consider, and they would not want this to be left out.

Ms. Lee felt it was very important to include "New Fort Lauderdale Beach" as part of the promotion, ensuring that the event focused on the area as something new.

Mr. Cozonis reminded the Board that the "Saturday Night Live" presentation had shown the Board a specific signature event that would promote the destination. Mr. Ioannou said this raised an excellent point, as the RFP should state that they are looking for a single event to occur weekly that would promote the Beach area as a destination.

Vice Chair Molinet raised the point that while this was an important clarification, one of the bidding agencies might come up with an event to take place quarterly, or otherwise differently timed.

Mr. Geluso proposed asking for a contiguous event, or a single event that occurs over the entire time period.

Ms. Lee noted that agencies might come in with other creative endeavors that would be just as attractive as "Saturday Night Live."

Chair Piedra asked that they clarify, as a group, whether the RFP should ask for simply marketing the New Fort Lauderdale Beach or for creating a specific event or series of events that would result in a brand-defining concept.

The Board generally agreed that a "brand-defining concept" was perhaps their overall goal.

Mr. Ioannou felt the available \$80,000 would be insufficient for defining the Beach's new brand. He stated that a specific, targeted event would bring in traffic from in- and outside the City, while branding would be a much larger undertaking and would involve much more money.

Chair Piedra reiterated that it was very important that the Board define what they wanted as an event or a concept so an appropriate RFP could be sent out.

Ms. Motwani recalled that the "Saturday Night Live" concept had been a single ongoing event, while the discussion of the RFP so far had been much more similar to destination marketing rather than event planning.

Mr. Oliver suggested that the goal be a promotion to increase business levels during a specific selected time period.

Mr. Morris believed any events would fall under the “umbrella concept” of branding the New Fort Lauderdale Beach. He felt if the RFP allowed for the creation of a large idea, events could be worked into this theme over time.

Mr. Modarelli felt the RFP could ask for the creation of a recurring promotional program as part of the proposal, which would allow for both branding of the Beach area and development of a signature event.

He noted that the brand-defining recurring promotional program had been added to his list of goals to state as part of the RFP.

Chair Piedra requested an estimate of when the RFP would go out. Mr. Modarelli speculated that it would go out in December 2008, to return within 30 days. Possibly some three weeks after that, the Selection Committee would meet to make a choice, and then add the event and bid approval to the City Commission’s agenda, potentially in February or March 2009.

### **3. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]