

APPROVED

**BEACH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2010 – 3:30-4:30 P.M.**

<u>BID MEMBER/CATEGORY</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Amaury Piedra, Chair (Yankee Trader Hotel, A1A Trader, LLC)	A	1	3
Carlos Molinet, Vice Chair (Bahia Mar)	P	2	2
Andreas Ioannou (Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, Beach Council)	A	3	1
Joseph Geluso (The "W" Hotel, Capri Hotel, LLC)	A	2	2
Jim Oliver (The Ritz Carlton Hotel, Castillo Grand, LLC)	P	3	1
Alfred Rosenthal (Beach Place Towers, Marriott Resorts Hosp. Cor.)	P	3	1
Bill Cunningham (Marriott Courtyard, PHF Oceanfront LP)	P	4	0
Peter Lockhart (EVP/Beach Place)	A	3	1
Aiton Yaari (Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board)	P	2	0

Staff

Stephen Scott, Economic Development Director
Don Morris, Beach CRA Director
Earl Prizlee, Engineering Design Manager
Karen Reese, Economic Development Representative
Eileen Furedi, Economic Development Representative
Captain Reginald Gillis, Fort Lauderdale Police Department
Randall Robinson, Planning & Zoning Department
Petula Burks, Public Information Office
Terry Rynard, Parks & Recreation Department
Lindwell Bradley, Code Enforcement Supervisor
Jennifer Picinich, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

1. **Motion** made by Mr. Oliver, seconded by Mr. Rosenthal, for the Committee to recommend that the City Commission strengthen their partnership with Sun

Trolley and figure ways to expand their services, including the cruise ship terminal. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

2. **Motion** made by Mr. Rosenthal, seconded by Mr. Yaari, to congratulate City Staff and all involved in the successful event this past weekend and to encourage the City Commission to consider a quarterly event for enhanced business and excitement on Fort Lauderdale Beach. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Vice Chair Molinet called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2009

Motion made by Mr. Oliver, seconded by Mr. Cunningham, to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2009 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes: January 11, 2010

Motion made by Mr. Oliver, seconded by Mr. Cunningham, to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2010 meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** carried unanimously.

IV. Spring Break Initiative Update

Mr. Morris explained that Staff undertakes a Spring Break Initiative each year to “get the message out” to all beach businesses, including hotels, regarding spring break. They share information regarding requirements, concerns, and advice for guests and customers. Beach CRA is a participant in this effort, along with the Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation, and Police Departments, among others.

The CRA acts as the business outreach component of the initiative, and works with the Public Information Office to put together a pamphlet for all beach businesses. They act as “the first line” for any business owners who have questions or concerns regarding the Spring Break Initiative; if the CRA cannot address a particular question, it is forwarded to the appropriate Department.

Captain Reginald Gillis, representing the Fort Lauderdale Police Department, stated their plan is very similar to the previous year’s plan, with the only significant change being the time frame. The largest influx during spring break occurs in the first weeks of March, and the Police Department will begin increased efforts on March 1, 2010, and continue them through April 2 as well as “the last weeks of April.”

The Police Department will have eight units on the beach, extending from the South Beach lot through the 2400 block of North A1A. ATVs will patrol the beach at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., and will include the Aquatics Center area after midnight. Public service announcements will focus on enforcement of traffic laws at Las Olas and A1A, and motor units will ensure that traffic flows efficiently along the beach.

The Police Department will hold a daily meeting at 11:00 a.m., Captain Gillis advised.

Mr. Yaari noted that the Air and Sea Show is scheduled for the last weekend in April, and felt there should be "extra" efforts, as this means the event will occur during the spring break season. Captain Gillis replied he was not aware of developments regarding the Air and Sea Show, but advised that the Department will address any unexpected groups of students in the area. A schedule will be in place as of March 15, 2010.

Ina Lee, guest, recalled that previous signage on the beach was "very negative," and emphasized the need to make it more friendly and welcoming to visitors. Captain Gillis stated there will not be signage this year: instead they will use fliers, and the Public Information Office is "writing the colleges" to inform them of policies.

Vice Chair Molinet pointed out that "the biggest opportunity for issues" occurred on "skip day" from local high schools, when some fights broke out. He asked if there will be a sufficiently fast reaction to this day to provide enough enforcement on the beach. Captain Gillis stated he has spoken to a Broward County security officer who will inform the Department "two to five days in advance" of skip day, and the beach units will be reinforced. He observed that this day typically occurs on the Friday prior to the schools' spring break.

Ms. Lee suggested the Department might create an alternate plan for skip day. Captain Gillis stated that the Department is working with school security officers and principals to prepare for this day.

Lindwell Bradley, Code Enforcement Supervisor, advised that the Department will work closely with Mr. Morris and Mr. Prizlee to distribute information and address business concerns. Their main focus will ensure that trash and debris is removed from the beach; during the day, the Code Officer assigned to the beach will react to any developments. This Officer will meet with the Police Department during their daily meeting in order to stay abreast of any issues. Code Enforcement will also ensure that sidewalks are kept clear, address noise issues at night, and keep illegal vendors off the beach.

Terry Rynard, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, stated that their plan is also very similar to the previous year's, with 24 hour coverage on trash and cleanup. Three additional dumpsters will be placed near the beach. The contractor hired to supplement City Staff's efforts will work 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. to provide overnight cleanup.

The only activities that have come through the permit process are the MS Walk on March 7 and two volleyball tournaments on March 13-14 and 27-28, 2010. An Association of Volleyball Professionals (AVP) event is scheduled near the end of spring break.

Mr. Morris added that Prism Cleaning will coordinate their efforts with Parks and Recreation to provide complete coverage without duplicating services.

Art Seitz, guest, commented that there had been a lifeguard competition on the beach, but there had been no CRA funds available to “provide some hospitality,” such as refreshments. Mr. Morris responded that the CRA is looking at ways to help promote beach events and that groups may submit requests for funding, which are not awarded by Staff, but ultimately go through the City Commission. Vice Chair Molinet noted that the Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board (BRAB) should discuss this issue.

V. Sun Trolley Presentation

Vice Chair Molinet introduced Patricia Zeiler, managing director of Sun Trolley, who provided a PowerPoint presentation for the Committee. She described the business’ mission as twofold: in addition to their service on the beach, they also provide transportation in underserved communities in the City.

She advised that many individuals who are planning their vacations contact Sun Trolley for information on travel and events during their stay in the City. The company also provided expanded service during the Super Bowl, and she felt the upcoming Centennial would be an opportunity for similar expansion.

Ms. Zeiler added that some areas served by Sun Trolley are not ADA-compliant, which prevents them from including a Trolley stop at those locations. She explained that they can stop at these areas if “waved” over, similarly to a taxi service, even if they are not official stops. Sun Trolley will also be included on the beach signage that is currently in development.

She pointed out that they are also a “green” business, as the Trolleys use bio-diesel fuel. There are Federal funds available for programs of this nature, and she is looking into these possibilities.

Mr. Yaari asked if Sun Trolley is associated with a tourist agency on the beach, which uses similar colors. Ms. Zeiler advised the two are unrelated; Mr. Scott explained that Sun Trolley provides public transportation, while the other service provides a “day tour” of the City.

Ms. Zeiler added that the City Commission has asked Sun Trolley to provide “clear marking” on their vehicles, indicating that pedestrians may wave them over. This would differentiate them from tour vehicles.

She provided the Committee with a list of routes, as well as the passenger rate per hour in 2008 and 2009. Maximum vehicle capacity is 30 passengers. The Trolley service also encourages beachgoers to ride instead of driving their cars.

A current proposal would expand Sun Trolley’s routes with service Monday through Thursday, possibly from 10-6, and extending service to midnight from Friday to Sunday. This expansion would allow for “seamless connection” for visitors to Las Olas. The cost for these increases would be roughly \$437,000, including marketing costs. Thus far, the service has \$150,000 in grant funds toward this expansion. Ms. Zeiler is seeking matching funds from potential sponsors of the proposed project. She asked if the Committee felt the suggested expansion was practical.

Sun Trolley is presently offering a two-for-one ride on their website, which links to the Convention Visitors Bureau (CVB) site for increased viewership. The site receives roughly 4000-5000 hits per month.

Mr. Morris explained many people in the beach area may not be aware of the Trolley’s routes, hours, or other issues. He also felt the Committee could help Ms. Zeiler decide “what makes sense” regarding possible expansion of services, and how to plan its future and seek funding.

Mr. Rosenthal asked what the possible weekly impact of Trolley expansion would be for beach businesses, or if it has been measured. Mr. Scott felt studies could be done to provide this information, and felt it was “safe to say” that the ridership on particular routes could be measured to estimate its value. Mr. Rosenthal observed that the Trolley provides a definite value to his time-share guests.

Mr. Yaari suggested, since the Trolley has particular appeal and value to tourists, that they might adjust their hours from mid-December to mid-May, for example. He was not sure seven-day service would be necessary in the off-season.

Mr. Scott recalled that Staff had been concerned the Trolley was only going to be running at limited times during Super Bowl weekend, and had asked the City Commission if they would allow Staff to finance one additional route. The City Commission had approved this funding, which allowed Sun Trolley to run on Wednesday and Thursday before the game, as well as until midnight on the night of the concert.

He pointed out that funding is a major issue for the service, as it cannot be expanded on its current budget.

Mr. Oliver asked when the last rate increase had occurred, noting that if “mainly tourists” are using the service, they could pay \$1 as easily as 50 cents, particularly when compared to a cab ride. He added that in some seasons, the demographics of its riders may change, as more people may use public transportation in the summer and private transportation in the winter.

Ms. Zeiler explained that the 50-cent rate is dictated by Sun Trolley’s grant, which is funded in part by Broward County Transit as a community bus service. By agreement with Federal transportation authorities, she is only allowed to charge “up to 50 percent of... the going rate” on a regular BCT bus. The buses charge \$1.50, which means she may only charge 75 cents.

She added that the money from the Trolley’s fare boxes fund “less than 10%” of the service’s operational costs, which is similar to the percentage of costs met through BCT fares.

Vice Chair Molinet recommended sending an electronic version of the presentation to City Staff, who may also be able to partner with Sun Trolley. He noted that some of the ideas discussed at today’s meeting could be added to the presentation as well.

Mr. Seitz observed that the addition of advertising in- or outside of the Trolley could provide a source of funding. Ms. Lee proposed that Ms. Zeiler might contact the trolley program in the city of Hollywood, who may be able to share information regarding what has or has not worked for their system.

Mr. Yaari suggested adding a route from the cruise ships to the beach.

VI. Super Bowl Re-Cap

Mr. Scott asked the Board members to report on their experiences.

Mr. Yaari stated it was the best weekend on the beach for retail, restaurant, and bar business in 20 years. He felt the City should find a way to host “at least four major events” on the beach every year.

Ms. Lee noted that there were “no major problems,” even with the lifting of the open container law, and urged the Board to write letters to the Mayor and City Commission acknowledging how well the weekend had gone. She praised Mr. Scott’s work with the NFL, Live Nation, and other participants.

Vice Chair Molinet also congratulated Mr. Scott and the City Staff on their hard work, and agreed that the Board should communicate with the Mayor and City Commission to show their excitement.

Mr. Scott advised that the Super Bowl-related events helped create a foundation for other events on the beach, as they included traffic and security plans to facilitate the events.

Mr. Morris asked if most hotel guests had attended the beach concert. Mr. Rosenthal stated that several guests had attended and made positive comments. He expressed concern regarding the costs of the event, and felt this should be considered in the future due to the current economic environment.

VII. Update on the 2010 Census

Randall Robinson, Planner, explained that the Complete Count Committee had asked him to address the Committee so they could reach out in turn to their employees. Census forms will be mailed out in March and returned in April. He stated that each person is "worth about \$2000" to the City, and emphasized the importance of an accurate census.

He added that City Staff members are available to answer questions from, or meet with, their employees to familiarize them with the census.

Petula Burks, representing the Public Information Office, advised that some employees who live in other Broward County cities may be more difficult to count. She emphasized that it is important that all employees understand their importance to the census, particularly young people or students who will not be counted on their parents' census forms.

She also stressed the importance of the census in determining how many Federal dollars the City will receive for various kinds of funding.

Mr. Molinet asked how many languages are on the census form when it is sent out. Ms. Burks stated there is a full list available on the City's website. Mr. Robinson noted that while the form is in English, it will also be sent out in Spanish in locations with a high Spanish-speaking population.

There are also Questionnaire Assistance Centers being set up by the Census Bureau, with the City's assistance. Workers will be available to help individuals understand the importance of the census as well as actually filling out the survey.

Mr. Oliver suggested that businesses, particularly hotels, could be supplied with fliers in multiple languages to share with their staff. Mr. Robinson pointed out that the hotels could also be provided with census forms in those languages.

Mr. Robinson added that some individuals do not return the forms they receive in the mail, and a census worker may come to their door instead. He explained that the Census Bureau attempts to hire workers from within their own neighborhoods, and there is a great need for workers in the beach, waterfront, and gated areas. Emails were sent to all advisory boards and committees regarding census test preparation for prospective workers.

VIII. Communications to the City Commission

Vice Chair Molinet suggested the Committee could prepare a communication advising the City Commission that they could expect a letter to follow, telling them how pleased they were with the previous weekend's events. He noted that they could send a communication regarding the importance of Sun Trolley as well.

Motion made by Mr. Oliver, seconded by Mr. Rosenthal, for the Committee to recommend that the City Commission strengthen their partnership with Sun Trolley and figure ways to expand their services, including the cruise ship terminal. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Motion made by Mr. Rosenthal, seconded by Mr. Yaari, to congratulate City Staff and all involved in the successful event this past weekend and to encourage the City Commission to consider a quarterly event for enhanced business and excitement on Fort Lauderdale Beach. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

IX. Old / New Business

Mr. Yaari stated the City Commission had discussed beach parking at their recent Conference Agenda meeting, which had been recommended to them by the Committee.

Mr. Scott reported that he had spoken to Mr. Barnett regarding Saturday Nite Alive. Mr. Barnett has met with the Beach Council's marketing committee, which had shared a number of ideas regarding events and scheduling. He would bring some of these proposals to the next scheduled Committee meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

