

APPROVED

**BEACH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2011 – 3:30 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)	P	3	0
Andreas Ioannou, Vice Chair (Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, Beach Council)	A	2	3
Kenyata Allain (The Gallery at Beach Place)	P	2	1
Bill Cunningham (Marriott Courtyard, PHF Oceanfront LP)	A	2	1
Jim Oliver (The Ritz Carlton Hotel, Castillo Grand, LLC)	A	2	1
Scott Brooks (The "W" Hotel, Capri Hotel, LLC)	P	3	0
Alfred Rosenthal (Beach Place Towers, Marriott Resorts Hosp. Cor.)	P	2	1
William Stanton (LXR Luxury Resorts & Hotels)	P	3	0
Aiton Yaari (Beach Redevelopment Advisory Board)	P	3	2

At this time there are 9 appointed members to the Board, which means 5 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Donald Morris, Beach CRA Director
Eileen Furedi, Economic Development Representative
Karen Reese, Economic Development Representative
Phil Thornburg, Director of Parks and Recreation
Amanda Lebofsky, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

The Beach Business Improvement District Advisory Committee (BID) agreed by unanimous consensus that they would like to investigate the hiring of a part-time contract employee in the position of Executive Director.

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Piedra called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Minutes – September 12, 2011 Joint BID/BRAB Meeting

Motion made by Mr. Rosenthal, seconded by Mr. Allain, to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2011 joint BID/BRAB meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes – September 23, 2011 Special BID Meeting

Motion made by Mr. Rosenthal, seconded by Mr. Stanton, to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2011 special meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

IV. Update on the Food and Wine Festival

Chair Piedra reported that Empire Events will continue to meet with Mr. Morris and City Staff to determine final numbers for the proposed event. The BID's recommendation to provide \$60,000 in funding for a food and wine event will be brought before the City Commission in November. Phil Thornburg, Director of Parks and Recreation, estimated that the event agreement would go to the Commission in November or December 2011.

Chair Piedra advised that the plan is for an evening VIP event on Thursday, with a kickoff event on Friday and a large public event on Saturday and Sunday. A portion of A1A would be closed on Saturday and Sunday for the event. Empire representatives will provide a full update at the next scheduled BID meeting.

V. Discussion of Powerwashing and Cleaning Contract

Mr. Morris noted that the Committee has been provided with a breakdown of the cleaning budget. Beach cleaning services are \$225,000, and the powerwashing contract is \$57,000. He has met with the City's Procurement Office to further discuss the options for these services.

Mr. Morris referred the Committee to a portion of the contract that lists specific services and their prices, such as cleaning the beach itself, cleaning public sidewalks and roadways, cleaning shower stalls, and other tasks. He explained that the Committee might eliminate some of these services, with the vendor's agreement. The Committee may also choose to get rid of the contract entirely, which would require the City Commission's approval.

Chair Piedra distributed copies of ad campaigns from business improvement districts in nearby cities, explaining that these are intended to boost interest and business in these areas. He stated that this was where the Committee should be spending its money rather than on beach cleaning services. He asserted that their most important action was to bring more people to the district, and more money should be spent for advertising and marketing the Fort Lauderdale Beach brand.

Mr. Morris suggested that one possible service for elimination could be powerwashing. He advised that Staff's only concern about eliminating this service was that while the BID members ensured that the sidewalks in front of their businesses were kept clean, not every business within the district takes this initiative. Powerwashing assures that there is a high level of service within the district, which means no debris was allowed to accumulate on sidewalks; if this service is eliminated, it would mean businesses are responsible for keeping their own frontage areas clean.

Mr. Yaari asked how the streets in the district were kept clean before the BID began paying for this service. He felt the City should be responsible for cleaning the streets or ensuring that other commercial residents kept their properties clean. Mr. Rosenthal also felt the regular property taxes paid to the City by properties within the district should fund cleaning services.

Chair Piedra said he had researched other business improvement districts, many of which include some kind of cleaning component. He explained that the problem for the BID is that their budget allocates a disproportionate amount on cleaning services rather than on special events, marketing, public relations, and similar expenses. He advised that the Committee must determine the right amount to be spent on cleaning services versus the right amount to spend on efforts to improve business.

Mr. Morris said the City already provides a baseline level of service, which was in place before the BID was created; however, one issue facing the BID at that time was the need for additional beach cleaning. Chair Piedra pointed out that the businesses in the district had not been asked if they felt this additional service was required. He did not believe they would have agreed to spend money on extra cleaning services if they had been asked. Mr. Stanton agreed with this, stating that he had not believed the BID's purpose was to increase cleaning services.

Mr. Yaari suggested that the BID could send a strong communication to the City Commission with regard to cleaning services. Chair Piedra agreed that they could inform the City Commission that the Committee is exploring the possibility of a significant reduction in the cleaning contract.

Mr. Morris said if the Committee could advise him of what they felt was an appropriate amount of the budget to spend on cleaning, he could work with Parks and Recreation to determine the best use of these funds.

Mr. Stanton commented that he would be more comfortable if he understood what cleaning services were provided for the beach before the BID was created, and what services were added on. Mr. Morris said he would bring this information back to the Board, noting that the baseline services are listed in the cleaning RFP.

Mr. Thornburg explained that the cleaning crews provided by Parks and Recreation work from 5 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. so the beach is clean and ready to open each morning. Their services include basic cleaning of the beach with machines and picking up debris along the walks. The cleaning services provided by the BID act as a second shift: they arrive when Parks and Recreation's crews have left and work until 8 p.m. A reduction in services would mean the afternoon and evening cleaning would be scaled back.

Mr. Thornburg added that because Parks and Recreation is now working with a smaller staff than in recent years, they cannot add more services or hours. He agreed that he could sit down with Staff and with the Committee to determine what additional services are needed in the district, and try to come to an agreement on where the BID could help.

Mr. Yaari recalled there had been discussions of paying City cleaning crews to extend their hours rather than hiring an external company. Mr. Thornburg said while this possibility could be discussed, he felt it would ultimately involve more money than the BID currently pays for supplemental cleaning services. He also pointed out that when baseline and supplemental services are separated, it is easier to determine what the BID is getting for its money.

Chair Piedra proposed that a small subcommittee could be formed to meet with Parks and Recreation and determine how to best augment the baseline services. He volunteered to be part of this subcommittee, stating that his intent was to come back to the November Committee meeting with a recommendation so they can begin making the desired changes. Mr. Rosenthal offered to participate in the subcommittee as well.

Mr. Morris explained a single Committee member could work with Parks and Recreation without the necessity of forming a subcommittee, as the creation of a subcommittee must be authorized by the City Commission. Mr. Rosenthal offered to take on this responsibility. He clarified that he would be working to determine the baseline services provided prior to the creation of the BID, as well as what services should be augmented and at what cost.

Mr. Yaari recalled that the City Ordinance allowing sidewalk cafés requires these businesses to create a written cleaning management program and assume responsibility for cleaning the sidewalks of debris. He felt strict enforcement of this Ordinance would lead to better cleaning of heavily trafficked areas by these businesses, as failure to comply could lead to the loss of their sidewalk café licenses.

VI. Discussion of an Executive Director for the BID

Mr. Morris informed the Committee that the hiring of an Executive Director would require changing “how the BID was formed.” He noted that they were seeking a non-City employee in order to have more flexibility, particularly from a purchasing standpoint. This meant the Committee would need to separate themselves from the City in order to avoid the City’s purchasing requirements. New legislation by the City Commission would be required, and the BID would then form an individual entity that would be outside the City’s purview.

Chair Piedra asked if collections would still go through the City. Mr. Morris said this would depend on how the new entity would be structured. Chair Piedra observed that in Coral Gables, for example, the City assesses a fee and handles collections. The Executive Director for that city is not required to comply with City purchasing guidelines.

Mr. Morris suggested there may be multiple ways to structure the new entity, but recalled that the Committee has had issues with City purchasing procedures in the past. He pointed out that the BID would probably need to hire an attorney to help write the necessary legislation. He also noted that the City would no longer manage or audit BID funds if they become an individual entity, and these costs would also need to be taken into consideration.

Chair Piedra commented that one source of frustration has been a “speed to market” issue, as governmental procedures and actions require more time than the Committee would like. He asked if it would be possible for the Committee to hire a part-time Executive Director at present. Mr. Morris said they could, but the contract would remain subject to City requirements for hiring and personnel. He said he would provide more information on these requirements at the next meeting.

Chair Piedra observed that none of the individual Committee members has sufficient time to deal with many of the BID’s issues, although he did not believe this meant the position of Executive Director would be a full-time job. The Executive Director would deal with issues such as special events, advertising and marketing, and cleaning services, among other BID concerns. He explained this individual would act as an advocate for the Committee by handling these

responsibilities and reporting back to them. He was not certain how much money would be required for a part-time position of this nature.

Mr. Stanton observed that the position sounded as if it resembled a surrogate worker. Chair Piedra confirmed this, stating that some of the BIDs with executive directors work with budgets similar to Fort Lauderdale's. He added that this individual would work on the BID's behalf between meetings, as it is difficult for the Committee to move forward as fast as they would like while meeting on a monthly basis.

Mr. Morris suggested that the Committee could send a communication to the City Commission, advising that they would like to investigate hiring a part-time Executive Director for the BID and requesting that they instruct the appropriate City Staff to work with the Committee on this process. If they chose to look into how to separate the BID from the City, a discussion of this could be part of the process as well.

Mr. Stanton said he would not recommend separating the BID from the City, as he felt the two are interrelated. Chair Piedra reiterated that he did not feel the City moved with sufficient speed to meet the Committee's needs; however, a part-time Executive Director could address these needs between regular Committee meetings. Mr. Stanton pointed out that advisory bodies not associated with a city also require a great deal of work between meetings in order to keep business moving forward.

Ina Lee, guest, said the City's Centennial Celebration Committee had received permission from the City Commission to form "fact-finding groups" rather than subcommittees. This allowed its members to meet in small groups outside the regular meetings without violating the Sunshine Law. She proposed that this might offer a solution for the Committee.

Ms. Lee continued that with regard to the city of Hollywood, all the money that funds their advertising and public relations campaign comes from their CRA. She recommended investigating a way to foster more partnership with the CRA to share expenses such as beach cleaning costs.

VII. Communications to the City Commission

Chair Piedra said the Committee would like to send a communication to the City Commission, stating that the BID would like to investigate the hiring of a part-time contract employee in the position of Executive Director. The Committee members agreed with this by consensus.

VIII. Old / New Business

Mr. Morris invited any interested Committee members to attend a visioning workshop that would be held at 5 p.m. He explained that the City's Visioning Committee has held a series of workshops to look into the City's vision for the future. This will be the fourth and final such workshop. Ms. Lee provided a handout on this meeting, and added that anyone who cannot attend may send their comments on the City's vision for the future via email.

Chair Piedra said he felt if the Committee can balance its budget more appropriately, they have tremendous opportunities for the future. He cited Saturday Nite Alive and other special events as examples, and noted that in addition to an Executive Director, perhaps the BID could hire an advertising agency to help them with print, social, and other forms of media advertising.

Mr. Yaari noted that the Beach CRA was designed to make capital improvements and have a special budget for their efforts. He asked if it might be possible to put these funds toward BID projects such as advertising and marketing. Mr. Morris explained that the CRA will be funding a number of projects presented in the Master Plan, which did not leave sufficient funds for other activity; in addition, these funds must be used within the CRA only, which is only a portion of the BID. The city of Hollywood is able to use CRA funds for this purpose because its CRAs are combined and encompass a greater area than Fort Lauderdale's Beach CRA.

Mr. Yaari suggested that in future years, the BRB might be able to help fund advertising instead of funding specific special events. Mr. Morris advised that this would need to be discussed by the BRB, as requests for funds will always be forthcoming.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

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