

LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

November 28 –December 2, 2011

HIALEAH

On Wednesday, as the Hialeah fire union faced its deadline, union leaders signed off on a contract that includes pay cuts, furloughs and other reductions in order to save 70 fire fighter jobs. The contract has to pass a union-wide vote (a 21 day process) or the layoffs will be reinstated.

Members will vote on a two year contract that includes an estimated \$5 million in cuts. If approved, firefighters will pay five percent towards insurance costs, take seven furlough days, face cuts in tuition reimbursements and lose holiday pay for the first year of the contract. In the meantime, union leaders will continue to push for a financial audit of the city. This year's budget shortfall for Hialeah was estimated \$14 million.

NORTH BAY VILLAGE

On November 11, the embattled former mayor Corina Esquiroso resigned; as a result, vice mayor Leon-Kreps became mayor and commissioner Eddie Lim became vice mayor. According to the city charter, once the mayor resigned, officials had the option to either hold a special election for a new mayor or fill the empty seat by election. The special election option was foregone due to the expense involved in holding an election to fill the seat for one year (the term runs out in November 2012). The move left a an open seat on the commission and on Tuesday, in a 3-1 vote North Bay Village commissioners appointed Richard Chervony, president of a local organization that campaigned to recall Esquijarosa, to the commission. Chervony is an 18 year resident and serves on the Planning and Zoning Board. Additionally, on Tuesday, Dennis Kelly was officially named the new city manager. Kelly has been manager of seven other cities including North Palm Beach and North Miami.

MIAMI

The Miami Parking Authority (MPA) and the City of Miami are yet to agree on the details of how the garages at the Marlins Stadium will be run. The delay is causing problems for potential retail and restaurant tenants which can't sign leases until the two sides have linked the agreement, which gives control of the garages to the MPA

to serve as landlord.

On Wednesday, the MPA held a special board meeting and voted to accept the contract proposed by the City, contingent on some changes. The board wants to ascertain that the agency is indemnified from any potential budget shortfall in operating garages and like the city, can terminate the agreement at any time. The changes will delay the signing of the leases by another two weeks, when the commission is scheduled to meet again; as a consequence, the retail stores and restaurants may not be prepared to open by the start of baseball season.

At its last commission meeting, the City of Miami adopted its adopted 2012 State legislative agenda (to view, please see attached).

NORTH MIAMI

The City of North Miami considers the termination two employees (one a police officer and the other a department office manager) for engaging in Santeria against City Manager Lyndon Bonner. Bonner planned to cut the police budget and was met with police protests and union outrage after the budget hearings this fall.

Office Manager Yvonne Rodriguez, who is not a member of a union, was fired last week.

Officer Elizabeth Torres, a 24 year veteran of the police department, said that although she doesn't practice Santeria, she was motivated because she could not participate in union protests due to her work and school schedule. Torres was given a 240 hour suspension and termination is being considered.

Internal investigations found the women violated city rules with "conduct that is offensive toward a fellow employee, conduct unbecoming of a city employee and conduct that brings the department into disrepute or reflects discredit on the individual employee".

PORT OF MIAMI

The Port of Miami Deep Dredge Project came to a halt due to a last minute legal challenge. Monday's deadline to formally oppose a final, state-issued permit for the "Deep Dredge" of the Port of Miami was met when a group of environmental activists, represented by attorney James Porter, filed a petition with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) contending that the project would prove detrimental to Biscayne Bay and kill protected wildlife. Porter's clients allege

in the petition that in addition to threatening marine wildlife, the blasting and drilling would result in silt in the water and damage the Biscayne Aquifer, sea grasses and coral.

Attorneys for the FDEP will review the petition and decide if it meets legal sufficiency. If deemed legally sufficient, the state can set a hearing; if deemed insufficient, the petition will be dismissed and Porter can file an amended version. Porter indicated that the objective is to improve the terms of the permit to better protect the bay and coral reefs. Should Porter pursue a hearing, the process could take up to six months.

MIAMI BEACH

Announcement:

The City of Miami Beach is set to discuss the city's position and potential impacts of casinos in South Florida at its next commission meeting scheduled on Wednesday, December 14th.

Miami-Dade County League of Cities:

What: MDCLC Best Practices Conference

When: December 2, 2011

Where: Intercontinental Doral, 2505 NW 87th Ave., Doral

Four County Regional Compact Announces 3rd Annual Climate Leadership Summit

The Summit will feature speakers and discussions on sustainability and climate change, and the Regional Climate Action Plan will be presented.

The Southeast Florida four-County Regional Climate Change Compact consisting of Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties is pleased to announce the 3rd Annual Regional Climate Leadership Summit to be held December 8-9, 2011 in Key Largo, Florida. To register click the link: <http://www.monroecounty-fl.gov/forms.aspx?FID=80>

The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) will conduct a public hearing for the above-referenced project. The proposed project involves a new ramp connection and roadway improvements between the existing SR 874/Don Shula Expressway at the Homestead Extension of Florida's Turnpike (HEFT) and SW 137th Avenue. The hearing will be held on Thursday, December 8, 2011, at 7 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Express and

Suites in Kendall, 13475 SW 131st Street in Miami, Florida. The hearing will begin as an open house at 7 p.m. with a formal presentation at 7:30 p.m. A copy of the public hearing display ad and a copy of the project/hearing location map are enclosed. Notices are being sent to all property owners located within 500 feet on either side of the proposed alignment and to other public officials, organizations, and individuals interested in the project.