

LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

March 5 - March 9, 2012

MIAMI

On Thursday, the Miami City Commission voted 3-2 for a tri-party agreement between the city, the Miami Sports & Exhibition Authority and the Friends of Marine Stadium group, to allow Friends to move forward with fundraising and a business plan to resurrect the iconic structure. Additionally, the agreement calls for a 13 member oversight panel including the city's planning director and a member of the Dade Heritage Trust.

Friends of Miami Marine Stadium has six months to report to commissioners what work is needed to renovate the 326 foot concrete stadium, and two years to demonstrate significant progress towards raising the \$30 million needed to salvage it. Commissioners Marc Sarnoff, Willy Gort and Francis Suarez voted in favor of the agreement, while Michelle Spence-Jones and Frank Carollo voted against. Spence- Jones indicated that while she was in favor of the renovation, she was not comfortable with the city bypassing the competitive bidding process, and further demanded that a trust be created to hold any raised funds.

By adding the semi-autonomous Sports & Exhibition Authority to the three-party agreement as the landlord, the city was able to bypass the bidding process required by the charter for waterfront properties. The city used a similar approach when it approved building the Miami Children's Museum on Watson Island.

NORTH MAMI

At Tuesday's North Miami council meeting, the city council voted to approve contracts for both the city manager and new city attorney.

New City Attorney Regine Monestime's contract passed 3-2, with Michael Blynn and Scott Galvin casting the dissenting votes (citing concerns with the severance package).

The contract for City Manager Stephen Johnson, the city's former police chief who has held the interim post since November, passed unanimously.

Per the agreement, Monestime will receive an annual salary of \$191,000 and three-year contract. Additionally, the severance package is equal to the remainder of her contract after six months on the job and 90 days written notice if her contract is terminated.

Also at the meeting, the council extended the deadline for negotiations of the Biscayne Landing project, a mixed use development, which is crucial to the city's finances. According to reports, City Manager Stephen Johnson and developer Michael Swerdlow were at odds over environmental issues, specifically, dealing with the presence of ammonia in an aquifer located on the site.

While the council voted unanimously to extend the deadline for the contract until the March 13 meeting, Mayor Andre Pierre instructed Johnson and Swerdlow to meet daily, to ensure that an agreement is reached by the next meeting.

SURFSIDE

Tuesday night the Town of Surfside held a mayoral candidate forum ahead of its March 20 election. The candidates included Mayor Daniel Dietch and former mayor Charles Burkett. Glenna Milberg, a news anchor at WPLG Chanel 10, moderated the forum.

To read more, please click the link: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/03/08/v-fullstory/2683429/surfside-mayor-and-challenger.html>

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MIAMI BEACH

Announcement:

Miami Beach now has all of its major meetings available on U-Verse TV, as well as Atlantic Broadband. Most major meetings are carried live from the City Commission to the planning design review and historic preservation boards.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

Announcement:

On Wednesday, Dr. Stephen D. Nimer, a renowned researcher and physician was named director of the University of Miami's Sylvester Cancer Center. Dr. Nimer stated that his goal is to make Miami a worldwide destination for cancer treatment.

Nimer's appointment comes 18 months after the Sylvester Center's board launched a global search for a new director to replace Dr. W. Jarrad Goodwin, who stepped down after a 14 year tenure, in order to become the chief medical officer for the center.

Nimer was a key member of Memorial Sloan-Kettering in New York (one of the nation's leading cancer centers); he is considered one of the premier leukemia and stem cell transplant researchers and physicians. Additionally, Nimer has authored more than 200 scientific publications in numerous medical journals and

has made important discoveries in the field of pre-cancerous oncogenes, which can mutate and trigger cancer.

LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

March 12 – March 16, 2012

JACKSON HEALTH SYSTEM (JHS)

It was reported that on Thursday, Jackson Health System's (JHS) governing board approved the proposed "right size plan" by cutting 1,117 jobs. The approval is intended to make it difficult for county commissioners to stop the layoffs. The commission is scheduled to consider the staff reductions and must have a two-thirds vote to overturn a decision made by the full Jackson board.

An external auditor KPMG, reported Jackson's official loss for fiscal year 2011 was \$81.4 million (close to projections) and the working capital deficit reached \$112 million. Additionally, Chief Financial Officer Mark Knight reported that Jackson lost \$3.1 million in February, creating a \$27.6 million loss the first five months of 2012, and the cash on hand was reported at a low 15 days.

With the impending layoffs and the recently signed labor contract with the SEIU local that represents healthcare professionals, the new financial projections include financial surpluses starting May, so that the loss for fiscal 2011 (ending September 30), would be \$20.5 million.

Meanwhile, JHS and the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (representing non-professional employees), reported progress in negotiations but remain at an impasse. Jackson's board recommended that the dispute be taken to the County Commission for resolution.

MIAMI BEACH

On Thursday, City Manager Jorge Gonzalez notified commissioners that Ray Martinez, a 32-year veteran police officer was chosen as the new police chief. Martinez was selected out of 79 candidates who applied for the job. Hialeah Police Chief Mark Overton, who came in second, was offered and accepted the post of deputy chief. Both men have been tasked with reforming the department, which has been tainted by widespread police misconduct.

HIALEAH

On Tuesday, in an effort to save taxpayers money, the city council approved a measure to refinance \$1.84 million-worth of leases at a lower interest rate. The city expects to save \$72,000 by refinancing at an interest rate of 1.74 percent (the approval is subject to another council vote to become final). Additionally, councilmembers gave final approval to take out a \$6 million loan to pay off the city's obligation to the retirement system. The loan has a lower interest rate that the city would pay otherwise. This measure is expected to save the city \$200,000.

BISCAYNE PARK

After years of deterioration, Biscayne Park's 79 year-old log cabin will soon be renovated. The Florida Legislature earmarked of \$150,000 for the restoration of the historic site, built in 1933. Village Manager Ana Garcia and Commissioner Roxanna Ross sought and gained bipartisan support of Miami-Dade's delegation.

The log cabin has experienced extensive water damage, roof leaks, mold and rodent infestations. The proposed restoration project is estimated to cost \$500,000. With \$150,000 from the state, the village will seek additional funding through grants and other sources.

Additionally, the village is looking to construct a new building that would house a village hall and police station. Currently, village administration and its police department share the log cabin's 1,600 square feet. The police also work out of a rented trailer adjacent to the cabin. The proposed project, which would cost an estimated \$1.9 million, would include the building of a 2, 715 square foot village hall and police department.

MEDLEY

Medley Town Councilman Gerardo Silva Jr. has been entangled in controversy since council members learned of more than \$3,000 in charges on his town credit card for personal items ranging from shoes to an iPad. To date, Silva has repaid some of the money. In response to the findings, on March 5, the town council agreed to turn in their city issued credit cards and follow the new guidelines for expenditures.

To read more please click the link: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/03/14/v-print/2695558/councilman-bills-taxpayers-for.html>

MIAMI

A staple of Miami's Virginia Key since the 1950's, Jimbo's, will close by the end of the month. In a letter to Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado, Jimbo's owner, James Luznar, thanked the city for its support over the many decades and said that he would like to return the site to the city for public use. A 30 day time period has been requested to allow for the removal of personal property.

To read more please click the link:

http://blogs.miaminewtimes.com/riptide/2012/03/jimbos_sad_letter_to_tomas_reg.php

ANNOUNCEMENTS

What: MDCLC Board of Director's meeting

When: Thursday, April 5, 2012

Where: Hialeah Park, located at 2200 East 4th Avenue, Hialeah, FL

LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

March 19 – March 23, 2012

MIAMI BEACH

On Wednesday, after much controversy, Miami Beach Commissioners voted to allow Miami-Dade Water and Sewer to repair an aging sewer line that could burst under Government Cut. City commissioners had been against the project because of impacts to streets, condo parking lots and a city park.

After hearing from engineering experts, commissioners granted the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department easements and permits to pursue the “safest and most expeditious” option for replacing the pipeline, which interferes with the Port of Miami dredging project, scheduled to commence this summer.

The 54 inch pipeline was built with concrete sections produced by Interpace, a non-operational company whose defective products have failed in a string of ruptures across the country. Over time, steel reinforcing wires inside the concrete pipes have corroded or degraded. Additionally, concerns over the old pipeline crumbling where contractors planned to link up to the new adjacent line has required revisions to a project originally projected to cost \$32 million. New estimates on the cost and timing of the project have not been disclosed.

Additionally, On Wednesday, Miami Beach Assistant Fire Chief Javier Otero was named the city’s new fire chief by a unanimous vote. Otero was nominated by the city manager as the city’s new fire chief this month after a four-month search to replace Chief Eric Yuhr who is retiring at the end of the month.

HOMESTEAD

In July 2011, the Homestead City Council voted to hand over control of its sports stadium to La Ley Sports. The stadium (originally meant for Major League Baseball) had not been utilized, since it was heavily damaged by hurricane Andrew in 1992. La Ley Sports, a school sports broadcasting company (contracted by the Miami-Dade School Board to broadcast school games), has fallen short of meeting its financial responsibilities to the City of Homestead. According to reports, the company has failed to keep up with the required insurance on the stadium and has \$29,000 in past-due utility bills. La Ley Sports, owner John H. Ruiz also has personal liens against his home

and a pending foreclosure, which has cast doubt on whether the company can meet its obligations under the lease to the city.

The city council indicated that it will work diligently with La Ley on resolving the issues.

MIAMI

Federal authorities have informed Miami they will file civil charges against the city for securities violations arising from a \$65 million bond sale in 2009, marking the end of the investigation. City attorney Julie Abru indicated that after meeting with attorneys of the Security and Exchange Commission, the city won time to negotiate a settlement in the pending case. Commission Chairman Francis Suarez said that an executive session will be called next week to discuss the terms.

Meanwhile, the Securities and Exchange Commission commenced a probe into a sale of approximately \$500 million in government bonds used to build the Miami Marlin's ballpark. It is speculated that the SEC wants to know why the majority of elected officials backed the deal, which has been deemed unfavorable for tax payers, without putting it to referendum.

On Thursday, the city commission decided to allow the parking authority to open four lots in Little Havana near the Miami Marlin's ballpark, to give residents who have lost their on-street parking somewhere to park.

Additionally, on Thursday, commissioners unanimously voted to hire former Doral auditing consultant Ted Guba, 59, as the city's new internal auditor. Commissioner Frank Carollo will negotiate the four year contract with Guba who has 30 years experience, and has worked for four major corporations and Florida International University.

DORAL

On Thursday, the Miami Herald Media Company held a ground breaking ceremony at their new site in Doral. The media company will move into a 15 acre site at 3511 NW 91 Ave by May 2013.

SURFSIDE

On Tuesday, Surfside Mayor Daniel Dietch was reelected, winning over former Mayor Charles Burkett. Dietch defeated Burkett by a margin of 403-245 and will consequently serve a second two-year term.

A lack of candidates for the four at-large commission seats, meant that incumbents Marta Olchyk and Michael Karukin and newcomer, Sheldon Jacob Lisbon, were automatically elected. Karukin, who obtained the most votes (336), won the vice mayor spot.

A special election is scheduled for May 1 to fill the open seat.

The winners will be sworn in at 7:00 PM Wednesday at Town Hall, 9293 Harding Ave.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coral Gables

The Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Board will hold a public hearing to discuss its recommendation regarding truck parking in the city, as well as abandoned junk vehicles. The meeting will be held Monday, March 26, at 6 PM in commission chambers at City Hall, 405 Biltmore Way.

University of Miami

On Monday, Congresswoman Federica Wilson announced a grant award for \$435,142 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine for research and development.

Miami-Dade League of Cities

What: MDCLC Board of Director's meeting

When: Thursday, April 5, 2012

Where: Hialeah Park, located at 2200 East 4th Avenue, Hialeah, FL

LOCAL WEEKLY REPORT

March 26 – March 30, 2012

JACKSON HEALTH SYSTEM (JHS)

On Wednesday, Jackson Health System (JHS) and the union AFSCME Local 1363 announced that they tentatively agreed on a three-year contract that includes approximately \$27.3 million in concessions.

According to Vivienne-Shim, the president of AFSCME Local 1363, “this agreement would immediately end all furloughs, save our special wage and create a historical partnership between AFSCME Local 1363 and the Trust for the sustainment of Jackson’s future and our jobs”.

Under the terms of the draft agreement, which would run through September 30, 2014, the union’s employees would keep half of their prior cost-of-living adjustment, but would not receive automatic cost-of-living or merit increases during the three-year period. They would get six fewer personal days per year. Their 40-hour work week, work schedules and rest periods would not be changed, but they would begin paying 3 percent of their salary toward their pension plan for retirement benefits.

The contract is scheduled to go before the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners for a final approval on Tuesday, April 3.

On Tuesday, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce held a Healthcare Committee meeting to discuss strategies to assist Jackson Health System in its current crisis. Opening remarks were given by Christopher Dudley, Health Committee Chair and discussions were led by Donn Szaro, Chief Strategy Officer, Jackson Health System and Former Florida House Representative Juan C. Zapata, Chairman, Miami-Dade County Hospital Governance Taskforce.

MIAMI

On Wednesday, Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado delivered his third State of the City address.

The mayor touted the city’s progress in dealing with the dismal economy. He promoted and investment of more than \$1 billion in mega-projects over the past year, including the \$800 million Brickell City Centre, which is set to commence construction in the next

few months. The project will encompass four city blocks and include hotel and condominium towers, parking, shops and offices.

According to the mayor “This project alone will be generating 1,700 construction jobs in the next four years and, when finished, will employ 3,800 people. The Swire Group project will provide our city with over \$4 million annually in property taxes, plus over a million dollars more in parking surcharges.”

Regalado said such private sector investments and a decreasing crime rate are bright spots for Miami’s future.

Last week, City of Miami Commissioners voted to convert four city-owned lots into parking spaces for Little Havana residents who were left without on-street parking in order to accommodate traffic around the Marlins Park. On Thursday, Commissioner Frank Carollo indicated his disappointment, after the Marlins denied his appeal to assist the city with clearing the lots, provide lighting and annual maintenance.

Please click the link to read more:

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/03/29/2722543/marlins-park-neighbors-city-hit.html>

FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES

The Florida League of Cities has posted its Legislative Session Initial Overview.

Please click the link for a synopsis of key bills that were considered during the 2012 session:

<http://www.floridaleagueofcities.com/Advocacy.aspx?CNID=7648>

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

Congresswoman Wilson Announces \$2,926,600 in Research Funding for the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.) announced seven research grants, totaling \$2,926,600, for the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine. The supported projects and their corresponding awards are listed below:

- Molecular Mechanisms of Notch Signaling in Neoplasia - \$262,065
- Acquisition of a Biacore T200 for Molecular Interaction Studies - \$350,959
- Cell Based Therapy for Non-Ischemic Dilated Cardiomyopathy - \$715,544
- Functional Outcomes in Older Adults with Schizophrenia - \$267,750
- Modulation of Rett-Like Phenotypes in Mouse Models of Rett Syndrome - \$229,500
- Role of Pannexin1 in Ischemic Injury of Retinal Ganglion Cells - \$372,710
- Role of Toll-Like Receptor Signaling in Retinal Ischemia - \$364,036

“I’m pleased to announce these grants for the UM School of Medicine,” said Congresswoman Wilson. “As a member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, I believe supporting research and development in the sciences is vital for our nation’s future. These grants will bolster UM’s efforts to study diseases affecting millions of Americans. I encourage UM and other South Florida institutions to remain competitive in pursuing federal grants.”

The grants were awarded by various institutes at the National Institutes of Health, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MIAIMI BEACH

On Monday, March 26, the City of Miami Beach celebrated 97 years since its incorporation in 1915.

Sunshine Meeting Notices:

The Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 11-44, which states “the County shall hold six public meetings regarding any resolution calling an election on a proposed Home Rule Charter Amendment.” The Board of County Commissioners will be considering resolutions to amend the Charter at an upcoming meeting.

Below please find the scheduled Town Hall meetings:

Sunshine Notice – Miami-Dade County Charter Amendments Town Hall Meeting
Wednesday, April 4, 2012, at 6:00 PM at **Coral Gables Branch Library** 3443 Segovia Street, Coral Gables, Florida

Sunshine Notice – Miami-Dade County Charter Amendments Town Hall Meeting
Thursday, April 5, 2012, at 6:00 PM at **North Central Branch Library** 9590 N.W. 27th Avenue, Miami, Florida

Sunshine Notice – Miami-Dade County Charter Amendments Town Hall Meeting
Thursday, April 5, 2012, at 6:00 PM at **South Dade Regional Library** 10750 S.W. 211th Street, Miami, Florida

Sunshine Notice – Miami-Dade County Charter Amendments Town Hall Meeting
Thursday, April 5, 2012, at 6:00 PM at **Sunny Isles Beach City Hall** 18070 Collins
Avenue, Sunny Isles Beach, Florida

Sunshine Notice – Miami-Dade County Charter Amendments Town Hall Meeting
Tuesday, April 10, 2012 at 6:00 PM at **Miami Lakes Branch Library** 6699 Windmill
Gate Road, Miami Lakes, Florida

Sunshine Notice – Miami-Dade County Charter Amendments Town Hall Meeting
Tuesday, April 10, 2012 at 6:00 PM at **West Kendall Regional Library** 10201
Hammocks Boulevard, Miami, Florida

Miami-Dade League of Cities

What: MDCLC Board of Director's meeting

When: Thursday, April 5, 2012

Where: Hialeah Park, located at 2200 East 4th Avenue, Hialeah, FL