

Memorandum



Date: September 12, 2011

To: Honorable Javier D. Souto and Members
Recreation and Cultural Affairs Committee

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center
Status Report

RCA
Agenda Item No. 6(C)

CONSTRUCTION COMPLETION / CONTRACT CLOSE-OUT

The Tower Group (TTG), the Contractor for the construction of the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center (SMDCAC), is continuing to address punch list and warranty items. Both TTG and the Department of Cultural Affairs remain committed to a comprehensive, fair and amicable settlement to close out the construction contract.

OPERATIONS

SMDCAC continues to engage in "soft opening" events to test the theater and invite the community to experience the Center. Recently, the Greater Miami Youth Symphony (GMYS) held a three-week advanced summer camp for student classical musicians which culminated in a public show on July 1. The GMYS show drew approximately 950 attendees, providing the Center with the opportunity to showcase the Diva orchestra shell, purchased with a grant from the State of Florida, while entertaining a diverse audience group made up of youth summer camps and several retirement communities.

On July 2, Jamaica Awareness presented the comedic play, *Midnight at Puss Creek* featuring Jamaican TV super star Oliver Samuels. This event brought in 750 members of the Caribbean community, largely residing in the South Miami-Dade area, to visit the facility.

From August 1 to August 6, the Center also hosted *Illadelph Miami*, a week-long Hip Hop dance festival under the direction of choreographer Rennie Harris. Harris is an acclaimed Hip Hop artist whose dance company Rennie Harris Puremovement is at the forefront of the art form. The festival included a full schedule of master classes, lecture demonstrations, open jam sessions, panel discussions, and break-out sessions for about 65 members of the public. The Center provided eight scholarships to local area students of limited means.

SMDCAC staff is actively engaged in the challenging work of finalizing contracts, establishing lease agreements and procuring services in order to be ready for the Grand Opening on October 1 and 2 and subsequently, for the 2011-2012 cultural season. Postings seeking full-time employees for the positions of Box Office Manager, Education and Outreach Manager and Facilities Manager have been placed through the Miami-Dade County Human Resources Department.

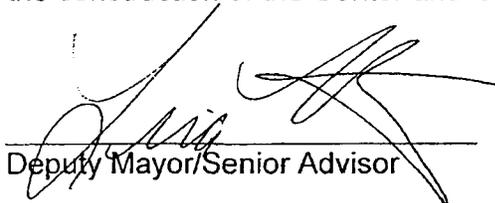
BACKGROUND

The South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center is located on S.W. 211 Street in Cutler Bay and is a multidisciplinary arts center designed to showcase the performing arts. The design team was led by architectural and engineering firm Arquitectonica International, Inc, and also included: theater consultant Fisher Dachs Associates, Inc.; acoustical and sound and communications consultant Artec Consultants, Inc.; and arts management consultant AMS Planning & Research Corp.

The Center's 966-seat state-of-the-art Theater Building includes a fly tower, orchestra pit, front of house spaces (box office, lobby, restrooms, concessions, etc.), back of house support spaces (dressing rooms, storage and work areas, administrative offices, etc.) and a multi-purpose rehearsal space. The separate Activities Building of the Center houses an informal performance space, and smaller multi-purpose spaces for lectures, classes, or community gatherings. The Center's two buildings are joined by an outdoor promenade leading to a gently-sloping lawn for outdoor concerts and festivals along the Black Creek Canal.

Through Miami-Dade County's Art in Public Places Program, the Center has major public art works created by Miami artist Robert Chambers. An innovative light piece illuminates the translucent inner lobby wall with changing light designs created by computer-programmed LED fixtures. In addition, the lobby features two marble sculptures also created by Robert Chambers.

A contract with The Tower Group, Inc. (TTG) for the construction of the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center was approved in July 2005 and the Department of Cultural Affairs issued the Notice to Proceed to the Contractor on December 29, 2005. The final certificate of occupancy was issued on April 15, 2011. The Department was responsible for managing the construction of the Center and is now operating the completed facilities.


Deputy Mayor/Senior Advisor