

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 3(A)(5)

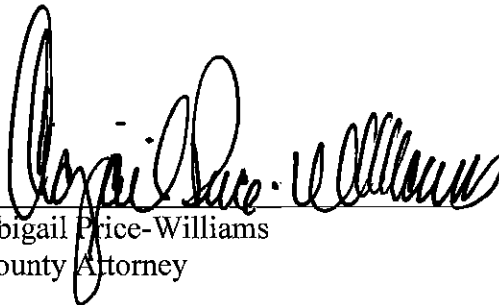
TO: Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: December 17, 2019

FROM: Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution approving the City of
Miami codesignation of that
portion of NW 4th Street from
NW 47th Avenue to NW 52nd
Avenue as "Julio Balsera Way"

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Vice Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa.


Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

APW/lmp



MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

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FROM: Abigail Price-Williams
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 3(A)(5)

Please note any items checked.

- "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- Budget required
- Statement of fiscal impact required
- Statement of social equity required
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- No committee review
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present ____, 2/3 membership ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, or CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c)(2) ____) to approve
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

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Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 3(A)(5)
12-17-18

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY OF MIAMI
CODESIGNATION OF THAT PORTION OF NW 4TH STREET
FROM NW 47TH AVENUE TO NW 52ND AVENUE AS "JULIO
BALSERA WAY"

WHEREAS, Julio Balsera ("Balsera"), a well-known activist and entrepreneur regarded as the father of Miami's school transportation system, was born on April 12, 1939, in Havana, Cuba; and

WHEREAS, Balsera fled his native Cuba in 1960 after his opposition to the Castro regime was discovered, and made his way to Miami in 1963; and

WHEREAS, at the time of Balsera's arrival in Miami, an increasing number of recently arrived Cubans did not qualify for the free public school transportation that was available to the families of long established Miami residents; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, Balsera launched what is generally thought to be the first private school bus company, the J. Balsera School Bus Service, Inc., with a station wagon that was adapted with wooden benches and which served as the start of a fleet that would serve thousands of school children across South Florida for the next 40 years; and

WHEREAS, as part of his civic, community, and political engagement, Balsera would eventually use his school transportation fleet for numerous political campaigns and for the mobilization of voters by civic organizations; and

WHEREAS, by 1977, the school transportation industry had grown and Balsera founded the Association of Independent Bus Owners (“Asociacion de Transportistas Independientes”) to consolidate resources and defend independent transportation companies against an evolving regulatory scheme that threatened their operations; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980s, Balsera played an active role in the campaigns of Congressmen Claude Pepper and Dante Fascell, Mayors Maurice Ferre and Steve Clark, and Commissioner Manolo Reboso; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his appreciation and admiration for the United States of America, Balsera maintained a deep commitment to restoring democracy in Cuba and donated personal and professional resources to advance the cause of Cuban freedom and the overthrow of the Castro dictatorship, including making his fleet available for many Cuban pro-democracy events and the founding of the Cuban American National Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Balsera’s commitment to the Cuban people was equally as passionate, as he used his bus transportation fleet to transport Cuban refugees who arrived in the Keys during the Mariel Boatlift from Key West to Miami on an overnight basis for several months; and

WHEREAS, Balsera was also highly committed to public education and was president of the Parent Teacher Association (“PTA”) for Henry M. Flagler Elementary, where his three children attended school and where he launched his business; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Balsera conducted the first PTA meeting in Miami-Dade County with an English/Spanish translator and later served as countywide Vice-President of the PTA; and

WHEREAS, he also raised the funds to furnish air conditioning to Henry M. Flagler Elementary and to establish the first computer lab at that school; and

WHEREAS, Balsera was a very active member of ASPIRA of Florida, an organization that began by offering programs for at risk youth that were susceptible to dropping out of school and joining gangs, donating his bus fleet to send the ASPIRA kids on field trips; and

WHEREAS, after providing 40 years of school related transportation services, Balsera sold his company and dedicated his retirement to civic involvement; and

WHEREAS, Balsera passed away on October 8, 2019 in Miami, Florida; and

WHEREAS, to honor the memory and legacy of Balsera, on November 21, 2019, the Miami City Commission adopted Resolution No. R-19-0440, which codesignated that portion of NW 4th Street from NW 47th Avenue to NW 52nd Avenue as “Julio Balsera Way”, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference; and

WHEREAS, the City of Miami would like the County to install signage indicating this codesignation on County street signs and traffic signal masts arms; and

WHEREAS, this Board would also like to honor Balsera’s memory and his contributions to the community by approving the City of Miami’s codesignation of that portion of NW 4th Street from NW 47th Avenue to NW 52nd Avenue as “Julio Balsera Way”; and

WHEREAS, NW 4th Street from NW 47th Avenue to NW 52nd Avenue is a city-maintained road located in the City of Miami; and

WHEREAS, this codesignation is located in County Commission District 6,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Approves the City of Miami codesignation of that portion of NW 4th Street from NW 47th Avenue to NW 52nd Avenue as “Julio Balsera Way”.

Section 2. Directs the Clerk of the Board to send certified copies of this Resolution to the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami, the United States Postal Service, the Traffic Signals and Signs Division of the Department of Transportation and Public Works, the Development Services Division of the Regulatory and Economic Resources Department, the City of Miami Police Department and the City of Miami Fire-Rescue Department.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Vice Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa. It was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Audrey M. Edmonson, Chairwoman

Rebeca Sosa, Vice Chairwoman

Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.

Jose "Pepe" Diaz

Eileen Higgins

Joe A. Martinez

Dennis C. Moss

Xavier L. Suarez

Daniella Levine Cava

Sally A. Heyman

Barbara J. Jordan

Jean Monestime

Sen. Javier D. Souto

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The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 17th day of December, 2019. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this Resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

MSM

Michael J. Mastrucci

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City of Miami

Legislation

Resolution: R-19-0440

City Hall
3500 Pan American Drive
Miami, FL 33133
www.miamigov.com

File Number: 6804

Final Action Date: 11/21/2019

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, CO-DESIGNATING NORTHWEST 4TH STREET FROM NORTHWEST 47TH AVENUE TO NORTHWEST 52ND AVENUE, MIAMI, FLORIDA AS "JULIO BALSERA WAY," PURSUANT TO SECTION 54-137 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, AS AMENDED ("CITY CODE"); FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF TWO (2) MARKER DESIGNATIONS TO HONOR JULIO BALSERA PURSUANT TO SECTION 54-136(1) OF THE CITY CODE, SUBJECT TO ALL APPLICABLE PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS; FURTHER DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO TRANSMIT A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE HEREIN DESIGNATED OFFICIALS.

SPONSOR(S): Mayor Francis X. Suarez, Commissioner Joe Carollo, Commissioner Manolo Reyes

WHEREAS, Julio Balsera ("Balsera"), a well-known activist and entrepreneur, known as the father of Miami's school transportation system, was born on April 12, 1939, in Havana, Cuba and passed away on October 8, 2019 in the City of Miami ("City"); and

WHEREAS, Balsera fled his native Cuba in 1960, when he was discovered conspiring against the Castro regime, was under threat of arrest, escaped by hiding in the kitchen cabinets of a cargo ship bound for Caracas, Venezuela, and was able to make his way to the City in 1963; and

WHEREAS, at the time of Balsera's arrival in the City, an increasing number of recently arrived Cubans did not qualify for the free public school transportation that was available to the families of long established City residents; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, Balsera launched what is generally thought to be the first private school bus company, the J. Balsera School Bus Service, Inc. ("Bus"), to fill this need, with a station wagon that was adapted with wooden benches and which served as the start of a fleet that would serve thousands of school children across South Florida for the next forty (40) years; and

WHEREAS, Balsera's early business coincided with a time when the City's Cuban American community was becoming an influential force in local politics; and

WHEREAS, Balsera, through the trust he acquired from this school transportation clients, was able to introduce and recommend for public office, promising political candidates to the families of the children who used the Bus service; and

WHEREAS, as part of his civic, community, and political engagement, Balsera would eventually use his school transportation fleet for numerous political campaigns and for the mobilization of voters by civic organizations; and

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WHEREAS, by 1977, the school transportation industry had grown and developed and Balsera established and founded the Association of Independent Bus Owners (*"Asociacion de Transportistas Independientes"*) to consolidate resources and defend independent transportation companies against an evolving regulatory scheme that threatened their operations; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980s, Balsera played an active role in the campaigns of Congressmen Claude Pepper and Dante Fascell, Mayors Maurice Ferre and Steve Clark, and Commissioner Manolo Rebozo; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his appreciation and admiration for the United States of America, Balsera maintained a deep commitment to restoring democracy in Cuba and donated personal and professional resources to advance the cause of Cuban freedom and the overthrow of the Castro dictatorship, including making his fleet available for many Cuban pro-democracy events and the founding of the Cuban American National Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Balsera's commitment to the Cuban people was equally as passionate and he used his bus transportation fleet to drive Cuban Refugees who arrived in the Keys during the Mariel Boatlift from Key West to the City on an overnight basis for several months; and

WHEREAS, Balsera and his wife Esther were responsible for the transportation services and logistics for many of the City's most important events from the 1970s through the 1990s, which include the Papal visit of Pope John Paul II, the Miss Universe Pageant, and various major parades, such as the King Orange Bowl, Martin Luther King Day, and Three Kings Day; and

WHEREAS, Balsera was highly committed to public education and was president of the Parent Teacher Association ("PTA") for Henry M. Flagler Elementary, the school that his three (3) children attended and from where he launched his business; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, Balsera conducted the first PTA meeting in Miami-Dade County ("County") with an English/Spanish translator and later served as countywide Vice-President of the PTA and raised the funds to furnish air conditioning to Henry M. Flagler Elementary and to establish the first computer lab at that school; and

WHEREAS, Balsera was a very active member of ASPIRA of Florida, an organization that began by offering programs for at risk youth that were susceptible to dropping out of school and joining gangs, donating his bus fleet to send the ASPIRA kids on field trips; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, the Miami Herald recognized Balsera's activism and contributions to the community by publishing a story with a headline noting that "If Flagami were a City, Julio Balsera would be its Mayor"; and

WHEREAS, Balsera was a resident of Flagami from 1975 until October 8, 2019, the sad day that he passed away; and

WHEREAS, after providing forty (40) years of school and related transportation services, Balsera sold his company and dedicated his retirement to civic involvement, specifically holding politicians accountable for broken promises; and

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WHEREAS, as an example of Balsera's civic involvement, Balsera traveled to Tallahassee to confront then Governor Charlie Crist on his campaign pledge that taxes would "drop like a rock"; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Balsera led the Hispanic effort to recall County Mayor Carlos Alvarez for having increased both taxes and staff salaries in the midst of an economic crisis; and

WHEREAS, as part of the County Mayor recall, Balsera and his wife worked with volunteers in Little Havana to collect more than 100,000 signatures that resulted in the recall vote of Mayor Carlos Alvarez; and

WHEREAS, to honor the memory of Balsera, a Cuban American who established the first of its kind private school bus transportation company in the City in 1967, was known as the father of the City's school transportation system, and made many notable contributions to the community, the City Commission wishes to co-designate Northwest 4th Street from Northwest 47th Avenue to Northwest 52nd Avenue, Miami, Florida as "Julio Balsera Way" and to provide a marker in recognition of the memory of Balsera in the public right-of-way located in the median at the intersection of Northwest 4th Street and Northwest 47th Avenue, Miami, Florida; and

WHEREAS, the District 4 Commission Office will cover the costs associated with this co-designation and the installation of the marker;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA:

Section 1. The recitals and findings contained in the Preamble to this Resolution are adopted by reference and incorporated as if fully set forth in this Section.

Section 2. Northwest 4th Street from Northwest 47th Avenue to Northwest 52nd Avenue, Miami, Florida is hereby co-designated as "Julio Balsera Way" pursuant to Section 54-137 of the Code of the City of Miami, Florida, as amended ("City Code"), with costs associated with the installation of related signage to be paid for by the District 4 Commission Office.

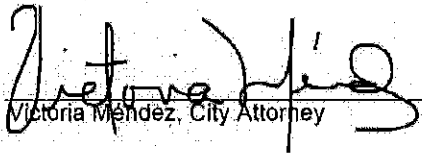
Section 3. The City Manager is authorized¹ to cause the placement of two (2) markers in recognition of the memory of Balsera, one in the Northwest corner of Northwest 4th Street and Northwest 47th Avenue, and the second at the Northeast corner of Northwest 4th Street and Northwest 52nd Avenue, Miami, Florida, pursuant to Section 54-136(1) of the City Code, subject to all applicable permitting requirements, with the costs associated with the installation of same to be paid by the District 4 Commission Office.

Section 4. The City Clerk is directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Rebecca Sosa, Vice Chairwoman of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners; the Departments of Police, Fire-Rescue, and Solid Waste; the United States Postal Service; and, if a State of Florida road, to the Florida Department of Transportation, District Six, for sign installation within the newly designated roadways.

¹ The herein authorization is further subject to compliance with all requirements that may be imposed by the City Attorney, including but not limited to, those prescribed by applicable City Charter and City Code provisions.

Section 5. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption and signature by the Mayor.²

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CORRECTNESS:


Victoria Méndez, City Attorney 11/21/2019

² If the Mayor does not sign this Resolution, it shall become effective at the end of ten (10) calendar days from the date it was passed and adopted. If the Mayor vetoes this Resolution, it shall become effective immediately upon override of the veto by the City Commission.