CLERK'S SUMMARY AND OFFICIAL MINUTES
MAYOR'S BLUE RIBBON TASKFORCE
FOR THE MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
January 17, 2014

The Mayor's Blue Ribbon Taskforce (Taskforce) convened a meeting at 9:34 a.m. on January 17, 2014 at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center, Board of County Commissioners Commission Chambers, 111 NW 1 Street, Miami, FL 33128.

The following Taskforce members were present: Chairman Carlos Gimenez, Marla Alpizar, Se'Adoreia Brown, Newall Daughtrey, Barry E. Johnson, Nancy Lawther, Johnny Martinez, Lea Nickless, John Quick, Diana Ragber, Max Rothman, Raymond Santiago, Katherine Seaver, Javier Alberto Soto, Ron Wasson, Lillian Weinberg, and Deede Weithorn.

The following Taskforce member arrived late: Commissioner Javier Souto.

The following staff members were present: Lisa Martinez, Senior Advisor, Office of the Mayor; Gabriela Lopez, Mayor's Aide, Office of the Mayor; and Deputy Clerk Alan Eisenberg.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Carlos Gimenez led Taskforce members in a Moment of Silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Welcome & Introductions

Mayor Gimenez welcomed Taskforce members and guests. He expressed his appreciation to Taskforce members for their service, time and commitment to ensure that Miami-Dade County's library system was prepared to best serve this diverse community. Mayor Gimenez said that the Taskforce process was responsive to the needs of this County.

Mayor Gimenez explained that best practice information from across the nation as well as surveys from Library employees and County residents was obtained in order to assist Taskforce members to make recommendations. He said that Taskforce members were partners who would help design a future vision for the library system. Mayor Gimenez pointed out that the common goal was to ensure a library system that was worthy of the County's stature as a premiere global community.

Mayor Gimenez' remarks can be found as Exhibit No. 2.

Taskforce members introduced themselves and the organizations they represented.

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3. **Approval of Minutes** (Exhibit No. 3)

Deputy Clerk Alan Eisenberg asked Taskforce members to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2014 Mayor's Blue Ribbon Taskforce meeting.

The Taskforce by motion duly made, seconded and carried approved the January 17, 2014 meeting minutes, as presented (Commissioner Javier Souto was absent).

Ms. Lisa Martinez, Senior Advisor, Office of the Mayor, provided an overview of the presentations that would be made at today's (1/17) meeting.

4. **National Perspective** (Exhibit 5)

Mr. Raymond Santiago, Director, Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS), introduced Ms. Cathy De Rosa, Vice President for the Americas and Global Vice President of Marketing, Online Computer Library Center.

Ms. De Rosa pointed out that she conducted research on the increasing use of online information and its impact on the world of libraries. She noted she would discuss four perspectives on the Future Forward Library; share examples of innovative programs in urban libraries; discuss thoughts over the evolution of information needs; and provide an overview of recommendations from other blue ribbon committees.

Ms. De Rosa presented the four perspectives as follows: 1) Inside (a space for growth); 2) Outside (partnerships for development) 3) Online (tech tools for today); and 4) Lifeline (a front line for safety and wellness). She also provided innovative examples of programs being successfully implemented by other large urban library systems.

Ms. De Rosa noted the institution consisted of community assets with physical locations, mobile units, technology infrastructure, and professionals were necessary to put resources and information together. She noted libraries had the ability to quickly deploy, move or change services and programs to meet community needs. Ms. De Rosa said that the mission to create growth was the only permanent part of the libraries' strategic plans.

Ms. De Rosa explained that the MDPLS had many opportunities to invest in its libraries and to engage the community. She noted three observations for urban libraries to consider in their decision-making process: 1) What can we do together as a community to reach the desired scale? 2) How can we have a partnership, rather than should we have one? and 3) How do we get the word out to the community that libraries were more than just books?

Ms. De Rosa stressed that libraries should pay attention and learn from the advances or mistakes of the commercial sector. She noted there would be 1.75 billion smart phones in use later this year and over 3 billion regular mobile phone devices; and three out of ten

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children in the United Kingdom did not have access to a single book in their homes, with similar results in the United States. Ms. De Rosa said that mobile phone devices could be used to put traditional library services into people's homes. She concluded that unique opportunities existed to build world-class libraries that are open to everyone.

Mr. Max Rothman inquired about methods to fund library developments and whether a role for philanthropy existed.

Ms. De Rosa noted grants and philanthropy had a role in library funding; however, there was an increasing trend toward citizens funding the libraries. She pointed out that voters in 2003 approved over 70 percent of operating funding initiatives placed on local ballots. Ms. De Rosa emphasized the importance of communicating the value of proposed library programs to the community. However, she said, philanthropic support was essential to fund innovation and to sustain libraries, noting the generous contributions from the Knight Foundation, and others, both locally and across the country.

Ms. Lillian Weinberg indicated that philanthropy promoted experimentation and risk-taking. She asked how libraries were dealing with operating hour reductions and new program implementation considering current budget restrictions.

Ms. De Rosa pointed out that libraries were investing in their on-line infrastructures because people increasingly did not want to go to a physical location. She noted technological investments enabled service delivery in other methods such as mobile access, mobile devices, and online access or shared access points. In addition, said Ms. De Rosa, communities were engaging retired professionals to volunteer time in their libraries.

Pursuant to Ms. Se'Adoreia Brown's question about the functions of public-private partnerships, Ms. De Rosa explained that larger private organizations wanted to bring engaged communities together. She said that the trend was to establish joint missions, shared values, and shared outcomes.

Responding to Ms. Deede Weithorn's question about methods used to share costs in public-private partnerships, Ms. De Rosa said that a variety or cost-sharing resources were being used including space, manpower, access to infrastructure, and philanthropic efforts.

5. **Community Survey** (Exhibit 5)

Ms. Lisa Martinez introduced Dr. Robert Ladner, President, Behavioral Science Research Corporation, noting he provided a brief summary of the results of the Community Telephone Survey at the December 18, 2013 MBRTF meeting and would provide additional details on the Survey results.

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Dr. Ladner noted he would present key findings and strategic recommendations based upon the telephone survey conducted in the fall of 2013. He provided a profile of library users, noting 62 percent of households were users, 38 percent of households were non-users, a little more than one-half of users were adults and 25 percent were "child-user households". Dr. Ladner pointed out that having a child in the household was a major contributing factor of library involvement and interest.

Dr. Ladner presented data from Table 1A; noting library users were more highly educated than the average residents and more familiar with the library system. He explained that data from Table 2A depicted that the most important reason to use the library was to borrow books, DVDs or other hard copy materials followed by seeking a quiet place to sit, read, study or play. Table 2B presented information showing that libraries were primarily used to obtain help with reference materials and research in addition to highlighting the desire for expanded library hours, said Dr. Ladner. He pointed out that Table 2C presented information indicating that library users were very satisfied/satisfied and the primary source of customer satisfaction was the level of customer service received from the librarians.

Dr. Ladner summarized the key implications of user data as follows: 1) Very high levels of "traditional" library use, 2) Users do not come to the library for the "free Internet" as much as to use internet-based services, 3) Households where children were library users was a major constituency, and 4) Very high levels of user satisfaction.

Dr. Ladner said that Table 4A showed that the primary use of the library website was to look up a book to check its availability, followed by renewing a book, placing it on hold and obtaining information on branch locations and hours. He pointed out that Table 4B depicted that library users were very satisfied/satisfied with the library website.

Dr. Ladner noted 92 percent of users disagreed with the statement that the library was outmoded, obsolete and no longer necessary as a public service and that 67 percent of non-users still had a positive image of the library. He said there was agreement among both users and non-users that the library provided important services to people without computers or internet access and added to one's quality of life. Dr. Ladner pointed out that Table 6 depicted that two-thirds of the people surveyed were not aware of any reports in local news about funding issues related to library operations.

Dr. Ladner commented on Table 7A, noting the more educated the residents, the more likely they were to support raising property taxes and the less educated the residents, the more likely they were to support reducing branches, hours and services in the event that future library funding was insufficient. He pointed out that Table 7B depicted that people who were more familiar with the libraries were more likely to support raising property taxes and those who were not at all familiar favored reducing branches, hours and services. Table 7C depicted that people who agreed with the statement that public libraries were outmoded, obsolete and no longer necessary as a public service were

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supportive of reducing branches, hours and services, and those who disagreed with that statement supported raising property taxes, said Dr. Ladner.

Dr. Ladner concluded that both users and non-users believed that libraries were useful and needed to be supported. He said people would support increased taxes only if they believed that libraries were technologically advanced and were more than just a place to rent and read books.

Mr. Max Rothman asked whether there was support to raise public funds to achieve the technological advancements required for the library to become an institution of the future.

Dr. Ladner explained that specific data related to technological advancement was not included in the scope of the survey, noting the only question asked was whether there was support to raise taxes in the event that funding was insufficient to maintain existing activities.

Mayor Gimenez inquired whether the survey sample was representative of the overall population of this County.

Dr. Ladner clarified that the sample was representative of the County's registered voter population, noting he was asked to provide data by Commission district and municipality. He said that two-thirds of the population surveyed was in the less than 55 age category for registered voters.

Ms. Katherine Seaver inquired whether cellular phone numbers were used in the survey.

Dr. Ladner clarified that mostly households that had land line telephones were used with the inclusion of a very few cellular phone numbers.

Ms. Seaver said she believed that the results of the survey of people only with home telephones would be different from those with cellular phones.

Mr. Johnny Martinez pointed out that the library millage rate had declined from .486 in the early 2000's to .1725 today and questioned whether it was determined what amount would be needed to maintain library services.

Dr. Ladner explained that a $25 to $35 target figure was used in the survey question regarding a library services property tax increase and that he did not have the exact amount that would be required.

Pursuant to Ms. Se'Adoreia Brown's question as to whether survey participants were asked if they would support methods other than raising the library millage rate to fund the library system, Dr. Ladner noted they did not ask that question.

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Mayor Gimenez welcomed Commissioner Souto who had just joined the meeting.

Mayor Gimenez noted a debate existed over raising taxes versus reducing library service hours, and it appeared that more informed residents would support an increase in taxes to maintain library services. Mayor Gimenez inquired whether the residents were asked whether they would support an increase in taxes for technological advancements.

Dr. Ladner noted the question regarding whether libraries were obsolete and no longer performed a public service supported the perception that libraries should be closed in the event of a funding shortfall. He spoke about the need to convey the message that the library was more than just a place to obtain and read books and that additional funding was needed for technological advancements for it to become a library of the future.

Mayor Gimenez said he was interested to learn that a minority of library users wanted to extend the library service hours, noting people accepted reduced hours as long as they continued to receive good service and the hours were convenient.

Dr. Ladner clarified that library users did not show dissatisfaction with the current operating hours and that it was more important for staff to listen to users and help them with their needs.

Ms. Seaver said she believed that dissatisfaction existed amongst library users, noting she sees people outside the library doors waiting for it to open as well as walking away because it was closed.

Mayor Gimenez pointed out that just because people arrived before the opening time did not mean they were not satisfied. He said that he believed the survey would help Taskforce members make their final recommendations.

Ms. Martinez indicated that County staff would be available to address Taskforce members' key questions in preparation for the upcoming February 5, 2014 meeting.

6. **Employee Survey** (Exhibit 5)

   Ms. Lisa Martinez introduced Mr. Michael Sarasti, Customer Service Advocate, Community Information and Outreach Department, who would provide a summary of the Library Systems Employee Survey results.

   Mr. Sarasti explained that Miami-Dade had 462 library employees; that surveys were sent to 430 employees' email addresses; and that 378 survey responses were received, noting the 88 percent response rate indicated a highly engaged workforce. He pointed out that additional data and verbatim responses would also be provided to support the information presented in this report.

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Mr. Sarasti presented survey data compiled on service importance, noting consistency with Dr. Ladner's findings. He pointed out that 99 percent of library employees believed that borrowing library books, DVDs and other hard-copy materials was very important/somewhat important. Mr. Sarasti also noted high ratings for free internet access and the use of computers and printers.

Mr. Sarasti pointed out that employees believed that computer classes, Reading Ready, Storytime and Project L.E.A.D were among the most effective programs. He said that in terms of program quality, employees believed that the Art of Storytelling should be eliminated and Summer Reading was an excellent program. He pointed out that slightly over 25 percent believed that the collection quality was extremely poor and below average, 38 percent average, with only 35 percent above average/excellent.

Mr. Sarasti noted over 90 percent of staff indicated that they had been sufficiently trained. He said that almost one-half of employees believed that the technology quality was above average/excellent, noting this could be a result of newer work locations having newer technology. Mr. Sarasti presented an overview of employee recommendations for improvement on these two issues.

Mr. Sarasti described employee opinions and comments on the effectiveness of public awareness, and the quality of facilities. He noted over 80 percent of employees believed the customer service quality to be above average/excellent. He then presented employees' comments on marketing and the under-served populations.

In conclusion, Mr. Sarasti said that a similar survey for library service website users was recently posted on-line and the results from that survey would be forthcoming.

Ms. Se'Adoreia Brown inquired whether County employees email addresses were used and whether there was any attempt to obtain surveys from those employees without email addresses.

Mr. Sarasti confirmed that the email addresses were used, noting surveys were as anonymous as possible and those employees spoke freely. He said that he did not have any information as to the 32 employees who were not surveyed.

In response to Ms. Katherine Seaver's question as to whether part-time employees were included in the survey, Mr. Sarasti noted he would find out this information.

7. **Library Services Study** (Exhibit 5)

Ms. Lisa Martinez introduced Mr. Richard L. Waters, Principal Consultant, Godfrey's Associates, noting he conducted a study on the library services provided both by the County and other local municipal governments. She explained that this analysis would be helpful in presenting an objective comparison which would inform the decision to

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integrate other local library systems within the County's Library System.

Mr. Waters indicated that he visited each of the four municipal libraries, some more than once, as well as some of the Miami-Dade Public Libraries during the course of his research. He presented an overview of the Hialeah Public Library, the Miami Shores Public Library, the North Miami Public Library, and the North Miami Beach Public Library, as well as planned investments for these library systems.

Mr. Waters presented a Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 comparison for each library, noting the Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS) had much larger quantitative numbers than the others; however, he pointed out that staff productivity, the contacts per square footage and the contacts per hour were closer when considering the Total Contacts per FTE (the sum of circulation, reference transactions, program attendance, visits and in library personal computer use).

When considering the FY 2013 collection holdings, Mr. Waters pointed out that the traditional two items per capita standard was obsolete with the introduction of electronic information. He presented an overview of the twenty best books for 2012 held by each library, noting while MDPLS had multiple copies of all books, the other libraries had some of the books and some had none. Mr. Waters presented a comparison of FY 2013 and 2014 collection budgets, noting the impact from a budget change was not felt for two years.

Mr. Waters explained that two focus group meetings were held to obtain public input. He noted over one hundred participants attended and they were very well satisfied with the MDPLS's staff, collections, resources and buildings. Mr. Waters said participants expressed the desire to vote on a library tax increase. He pointed out that a focus group was also convened in Hialeah that was attended by eleven participants who were also similarly supportive of their library.

Mr. Waters then provided a national comparison with demographic data for eleven counties. He pointed out that the 52 percent adult literacy rate in Miami-Dade County needed to be considered by the public library system.

Pursuant to Mayor Gimenez' observation that the data was ten years old, Mr. Waters commented that the information was collected by the National Center for Education Statistics and was currently the most up-to-date national information available. He noted the other data used for the analysis was 2012 data obtained from Public Library Association (PLA) Metrics.

Mr. Waters presented additional national comparisons of facilities, circulation, visits and funding. He noted MDPLS was currently at approximately one-half the national average in the area of per capita funding.

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Mr. Waters explained that an overview of the service area population was needed in order to begin planning for the future. He noted Miami-Dade County would grow faster than the State of Florida between 2010 and 2017, resulting in the need for additional library services. Mr. Waters said that according to the Pew Research Center, the average American reads five books per year; furthermore, 95 percent of Americans agreed that materials and resources available at public libraries played an important role in giving everyone a chance to succeed and was important to the quality of life.

Mr. Waters presented 2013 data indicating that 68 referenda were presented to voters for library tax increases with 49 passing and 19 failing, with the average "for" vote being 69.3 percent and the average "against" vote 30.7 percent. He said that pursuant to a Miami-Herald survey, 44 percent were in favor of a tax hike, 36 percent were opposed, and 20 percent were undecided.

Mr. Waters noted all County residents would benefit from a better library service if all libraries used the Polaris Integrated Library System (ILS) technology and that technology funding should never be reduced. He said that the County's bandwidth was presently adequate but would eventually need to be increased.

Mr. Waters pointed out the direct financial, operational, and programming benefits, as well as the financial impact for municipal library systems if they were to acquire shared access to MDPLS services. He noted the County would realize an increase in revenue of approximately $2 million annually through this effort. Mr. Waters highlighted the strengths and weaknesses realized by the municipal governments and the County through this shared program. He then offered the establishment of a countywide cooperative as an alternative for consideration, noting MDPLS could receive funding by assessments and/or dedicated millage to provide specific library services to the municipalities.

Mr. Waters concluded with several additional considerations, including: to encourage self-check; to re-purpose small branch libraries as "reading centers" with internet stations; to complete a total inventory of collection holdings; to become active in the "Edge" initiative; to initiate Radio-frequency identification data (RFID) tagging; to develop, fund, and operate a Research & Development Office; to initiate data collection on impacts; to achieve an annual budget goal of 50-52 percent for personnel, salaries and benefits, and 10-12 percent for collection holdings; to refresh technology hardware on a four-year cycle; and to develop a centralized call center for virtual and telephone inquiries.

8. **Final Comments**

Mayor Gimenez commended Ms. Lisa Martinez for her diligent efforts in leading the Taskforce process.

Ms. Nancy Lawther inquired whether the final recommendations would be considered by

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a vote of Taskforce members.

Ms. Martinez clarified that the MDPLS was developing a Master Plan for 2014 and beyond, noting the information presented in the Task Force meetings was helpful to this process. She said she envisioned that Taskforce members would come to a consensus over their final recommendations; however, she would defer to Mayor Gimenez to determine the outcome.

Mayor Gimenez noted he believed there would be differences of opinion and he would put a Taskforce recommendation to a vote if no consensus was reached.

Commissioner Souto congratulated Ms. Martinez, noting he was extremely impressed with the Taskforce process. He said he was convinced that a lot of hard work was necessary to ensure future advancements to a great library system. Commissioner Souto noted Miami was now getting the attention it deserved as a global destination. He said that libraries were a part of culture and culture helped to make Miami what it was today. Commissioner Souto observed that many successful business entrepreneurs came from this community and were educated in its public school system, including Mr. Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com and Mr. Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook. He noted these and other successful entrepreneurs had a tremendous amount of money and should be approached to contribute to the community's future success.

Mayor Gimenez commented that the issue was greater than just the library and also included parks and cultural institutions. He said that he looked forward to the upcoming meeting on February 5, 2014 and encouraged Taskforce members to think outside the box in order to create something special for this community. Mayor Gimenez pointed out that the goal was to provide opportunities for future generations. He said that Miami was becoming one of the great cities of the world, as evidenced by the positive comments which he heard during his travels. Mayor Gimenez expressed his appreciation to Taskforce members, noting he looked forward to the final recommendations.

9. **Preparation for Next Meeting** (Exhibit 6)

Ms. Lisa Martinez distributed and presented an overview of the Discussion Agenda for Taskforce Recommendations for the February 5, 2014 meeting. She noted Taskforce recommendations would be shared with the general public for community feedback after being considered, developed and integrated within the Library master plan. Ms. Martinez explained that Taskforce members would have the opportunity to discuss the structured guiding questions and recommendations presented earlier in the Taskforce process by the four working groups, as follows: "Service Needs", "Service Model", "Funding" and "Awareness, Advocacy, and Marketing".

Ms. Martinez said that the Administration would be available to address Taskforce members' questions in preparation for the upcoming meeting and would personally meet

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to discuss library services, budget, and the process. She noted that she would be personally available on behalf of Mayor Gimenez to address specific questions and Ms. Gabriela Lopez would communicate with Taskforce members to facilitate this process.

10. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Taskforce meeting was adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Mayor Carlos Gimenez

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