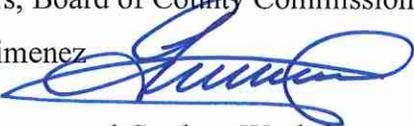


Memorandum



Date: May 29, 2015

To: Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Workshop

In light of the public comments and media attention generated by the May 13, 2015 memorandum regarding the "Proposed Reorganization of Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Trust into a Non-Profit Organization for the Benefit of Miami-Dade County," I am requesting that you schedule a workshop session of the Board of County Commissioners (Board) to provide a thorough discussion of this important cultural policy proposal. This is particularly important given the inaccurate information that has arisen in response to this proposal. As stated in the memorandum, it is and has always been our clear intention to solicit the Board's direction in regard to the best way by which to advance Vizcaya's future service to our community.

Although this workshop session can set the record straight regarding misinformation, it is important to take this opportunity to reiterate several essential facts:

- The direction outlined in the May 13, 2015 memorandum was not a "giveaway" of Vizcaya. Vizcaya would continue to be owned by Miami-Dade County and managed through an active partnership with a non-profit organization. This partnership would be governed by an operating agreement that establishes clearly delineated rights and responsibilities for the County and the non-profit.
- This non-profit partnership model is the one that the Board has approved and that the County continues to use successfully to involve volunteer citizens and community leaders in the County's other major cultural assets such as the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County and HistoryMiami. It also is also a "best practice" used across the nation for the management of cultural institutions.
- Our Department of Cultural Affairs monitors these partnerships and works closely with our theaters and museums to make sure that they are serving the public at the highest possible levels.
- The Board would review and approve the terms of an operating agreement and my administration would ensure that there are adequate safeguards, including the ability to terminate the agreement if necessary.
- Any decisions regarding the future of the "Village" property (i.e., the portion of the Vizcaya estate that houses buildings that were part of the original Vizcaya property and is currently home to the Frost Museum of Science) would be reviewed and approved by the Board.
- There is no crisis regarding Vizcaya. The proposal that Vizcaya has been working on is designed to take a well-run cultural facility to the next plateau with the help of a non-profit

board constituted to raise more money and provide a way to capitalize on the contributions, monetary and otherwise, of individuals, businesses and foundations.

Finally, we have not proposed any action items regarding Vizcaya for the Board to date. A workshop session will give us the opportunity to understand the issues thoroughly, and, together, we can establish a direction for Vizcaya that ensures that it will continue to be a resource for our children and families for generations to come.

- c: Michael Spring, Senior Advisor/Director, Department of Cultural Affairs
- Joel Hoffman, Executive Director, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
- Members, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens Trust
- R.A. Cuevas, Jr., County Attorney
- Christopher Agrippa, Director, Clerk of the Board