

Expert county team hunts ways to respond to sea level threat

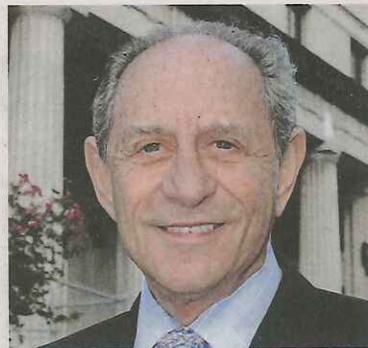
A seven-member team strong in professional experience that will help Miami-Dade government shape responses to the threat of rising sea levels, with County Clerk Harvey Ruvin at the helm, holds its first meeting next week.

Commissioners last week unanimously endorsed the team and named as chairman Mr. Ruvin, who selected members and has long experience in environmental issues.

In a memo Tuesday to task force members, Mr. Ruvin said they would be dealing with "perhaps the most daunting challenge our community, the nation and the world is facing."

The first meeting on Monday is to be introductory, with initial comments from team members and a look at the history of the county's involvement in the issue and general plans for the task force's operations. Mr. Ruvin wrote that expert presentations and written materials distributed "in a thoughtful and non-overwhelming manner" would follow.

The structure of the task force, as predetermined by commission Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, was to include experts in specific categories. One was to be expert in civil engineering, one in community and real estate development, one in climatology, one in emer-



Harvey Ruvin chairs task force.

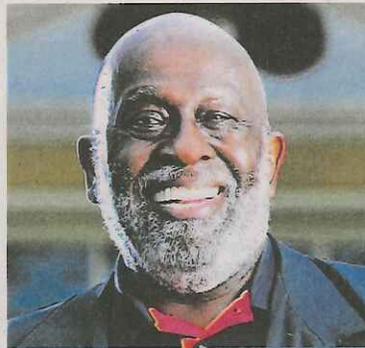
gency management and the other member Mr. Ruvin, a former county commissioner, long-time clerk and climate change activist. The commission later added a seventh slot for an at-large member of the community.

While the extent of sea level rises and the timeframe are both unclear, it is widely accepted that sea level rises will have an extensive and disproportionate impact in South Florida.

In the nearer term, rising sea levels could profoundly alter insurance rates, the tax base, property values, the availability of land the beaches, tourism and transportation.

The task force, Mr. Ruvin told Miami Today earlier, will be charged with developing recommendations to mitigate the effects of rising sea levels. Those steps, he said, might include "a robust plan of capital improvements" involving seawalls, barricades, desalinization plants and other projects.

The county commission and mayor would have final say on any action coming out of the task force recommendations.



T. Willard Fair has community seat.

The commission named as vice chairman of its task force James F. Murley, who for the past two years has been executive director of the South Florida Regional Planning Council.

He is also project director of the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership, a collaborative regional planning team funded by a three-year, \$4.25 million grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

At Florida Atlantic University, where Mr. Murley worked from 1999 to 2011, he served as senior advisor for energy and climate change with the Florida Center for Environmental Studies, College of Science.

He holds a law degree in land use and environmental law from George Washington University.

Chosen for the civil engineer position on the panel is Arsenio Milian, president of Milian, Swain & Associates, a Miami engineering firm. He holds bachelors and masters degrees in engineering from the University of Florida. His resume lists experience in environmental permitting, storm water utility systems, utility man-



Jorge Gonzalez looks at economy.

agement, water systems and wastewater systems.

Holding the seat on the panel for community and real estate knowledge is T. Willard Fair, president and chief executive officer of the Urban League of Greater Miami, who has worked for the Urban League for 50 years.

Mr. Fair holds a degree in sociology from Johnson C. Smith University and a masters in social work from Atlanta School of Social Work. He has long been involved in Miami's civic community.

David Enfield holds the panel's seat for climatology. He was a research oceanographer at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory in Miami from 1987 until he retired from government in 2008. He continues to do climate research at the Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science.

Mr. Enfield holds a Ph.D. from

Oregon State University in physical oceanography.

In the at-large seat on the panel is Sara Elizabeth Fain, who this year became executive director of the Everglades Law Center, which provides legal counsel to environmental and community organizations on issues that include environmental protection, growth management, land use, water management and Everglades restoration.

She holds a law degree from the University of Miami, a master of arts from the UM's Rosenstiel School and a bachelor's in anthropology from Brandeis University.

In the economics position on the panel is Jorge Gonzalez, chief executive officer of City National Bank, who has spent 25 years in banking. He holds a bachelor's degree in finance and international business from Florida International University.

Initially as Ms. Sosa designed it, the task force was to have 220 days to finish its work. But she revised the measure in July to give the task force 364 days. And she explained that the task force's life could be extended from there, 364 days at a time, since no county task force may exist more than 364 days without being given added life.

Other officials locally also have an eye on sea levels. As the annual October flooding of Miami Beach was on its way, a team of Beach officials visited the Netherlands to talk with flood control experts active there and seek solutions that might apply here.

FILMING IN MIAMI

These film permits were issued last week by the Miami-Dade County Mayor's