

MEMORANDUM

Amended  
Agenda Item No. 11(A)(1)

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**TO:** Honorable Vice Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson and Members, Board of County Commissioners      **DATE:** December 18, 2012

**FROM:** R. A. Cuevas, Jr.  
County Attorney      **SUBJECT:** Resolution directing the Mayor to create a web page directly accessible from the County's homepage that will enable citizens to report fraud  
Resolution No. R-1074-12

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The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Lynda Bell and Co-Sponsors Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Vice Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, and Commissioner Juan C. Zapata.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
R. A. Cuevas, Jr.  
County Attorney

RAC/smm



**MEMORANDUM**  
(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Vice Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson and Members, Board of County Commissioners **DATE:** December 18, 2012

**FROM:**   
R. A. Cuevas, Jr.  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Amended  
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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**
- 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 \_\_\_\_, 3/5's \_\_\_\_, unanimous \_\_\_\_ ) to approve**
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor Amended  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_ Agenda Item No. 11(A)(1)  
Override \_\_\_\_\_ 12-18-12

RESOLUTION NO. R-1074-12

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE MAYOR OR MAYOR'S  
DESIGNEE TO CREATE A WEB PAGE DIRECTLY  
ACCESSIBLE FROM THE COUNTY'S HOMEPAGE THAT  
WILL ENABLE CITIZENS TO REPORT FRAUD

**WHEREAS**, fraud has a pernicious effect on our community that deprives local governments of valuable revenue sources, increases the tax burden on law-abiding citizens, and promotes a general lack of trust not only in our government officials but also in our neighbors; and

**WHEREAS**, even a cursory examination of Miami-Dade County's website reveals a vast number of web pages that each deal with different types of fraud including, but not limited to, mortgage fraud, deed fraud, HUD fraud, contractor fraud, homestead exemption fraud, Medicare fraud, consumer fraud, and government fraud; and

**WHEREAS**, these web pages are not linked to one another, they often have different reporting methods, and they are frequently operated by wholly different County departments; and

**WHEREAS**, any concerned citizen seeking to perform a public service and report fraud must presently navigate a digital labyrinth that does not easily direct citizens to the proper site; and

**WHEREAS**, the present framework can lead to confusion, frustration, and, worse yet, can permit fraud to ultimately go unreported; and

**WHEREAS**, due in part to the current recession, rising unemployment, and the decline in the real estate market, there appears to have been an increase in occurrences of fraud throughout Miami-Dade County; and

**WHEREAS**, the County already devotes significant resources to combating fraud; and

**WHEREAS**, the investigation and enforcement of laws concerning fraud can lead to the recovery of tax revenue and other monies due and owing to the County, municipalities and the School Board; and

**WHEREAS**, the Property Appraiser, for example, has done an admirable job of investigating and penalizing tax exemption fraud in general, has increased his investigations in this area, and, in the last three years, has returned to the tax roll over \$1.3 billion in taxable property, and has, in 2011, filed a record \$7.9 million in tax liens so that, as of May 22, 2012, there are over \$14.5 million in tax liens recorded with the Clerk of the Courts; and

**WHEREAS**, funds recovered through the investigation of all forms of fraud can be used to finance a variety of County-wide services; and

**WHEREAS**, losses in revenue due to the economic slow-down and recession have already forced the County to reduce services, lower support to deserving community groups, lay off employees, and cut salaries and benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, if nothing is done, these losses in revenues will cause even further cuts and reductions, creating more hardships, and perhaps even threatening the funding for essential social services to children and the elderly and even for police and fire protection; and

**WHEREAS**, in such difficult economic times, the County should not have to address revenue losses by raising the millage rate or increasing taxes, which places the burden on the hard-working, law-abiding people of South Florida who cannot afford to pay more taxes while still caring for their own families and trying to grow the economy; and

**WHEREAS**, it is therefore more important than ever to ensure that all forms of fraud are fully investigated; and

**WHEREAS**, a comprehensive approach to addressing fraud in Miami-Dade County will require the assistance of concerned citizens as well as dedicated County employees; and

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade citizens cannot become fully involved in this process unless the County makes it easier for them to report fraud; and

**WHEREAS**, there should be a web page, directly accessible from the County's homepage (<http://www.miamidade.gov>), that serves as a one-stop clearinghouse for all fraud reporting; and

**WHEREAS**, this site should enable concerned citizens to either report fraud directly from the newly created site or easily direct citizens to the proper department or agency,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA**, that the Mayor or mayor's designee is directed to create a web page directly accessible from the County's homepage that will enable citizens to report fraud. This web page should include a feature where any citizen who uses the site to report fraud will receive an electronic reply that includes a case/referral number for ease of reference and to facilitate any necessary follow-up where appropriate and applicable. This web page shall also include an option for citizens to report fraud anonymously. The Mayor or mayor's designee is further directed to create an internal working group to streamline the fraud reporting process and implement those recommended changes to the web portal. The internal working group should include, among others, 311, the Miami-Dade Police Department and the Inspector General. An invitation should be extended to the Property Appraiser to participate on the internal working group.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Lynda Bell and the Co-Sponsors are Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Vice Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, and Commissioner Juan C. Zapata. It was offered by Commissioner **Lynda Bell**, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Audrey Edmonson** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

		Audrey M. Edmonson, Vice Chairwoman	<b>aye</b>
Bruno A. Barreiro	<b>aye</b>	Lynda Bell	<b>aye</b>
Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.	<b>aye</b>	Jose "Pepe" Diaz	<b>aye</b>
Sally A. Heyman	<b>aye</b>	Barbara J. Jordan	<b>aye</b>
Jean Monestime	<b>aye</b>	Dennis C. Moss	<b>aye</b>
Rebeca Sosa	<b>aye</b>	Sen. Javier D. Souto	<b>absent</b>
Xavier L. Suarez	<b>aye</b>	Juan C. Zapata	<b>aye</b>

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day December, 2012. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

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

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

**Christopher Agrippa**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk



Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency.

Jess M. McCarty