

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(5)

TO: Honorable Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: April 4, 2023

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution appointing Theodora
Long to the policy committee of
the Miami River Commission

Resolution No. R-319-23

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Eileen Higgins.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/uw



MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: April 4, 2023

FROM: 
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County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 11(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

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(5)
4-4-23

RESOLUTION NO. _____ R-319-23

RESOLUTION APPOINTING THEODORA LONG TO THE
POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE MIAMI RIVER COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the Miami River Commission was created by the Florida Legislature over 20 years ago to improve the 5.5-mile Miami River and its surroundings, including the 69-square-mile water basin that includes portions of the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County; and

WHEREAS, the Miami River Commission is comprised of numerous stakeholders and is established as the official coordinating clearinghouse for all public policy and projects related to the Miami River; and

WHEREAS, the Miami River Commission endeavors to improve the natural environment and the economy of the Miami River and adjacent areas by operating water decontamination vessel services, removing illegally dumped material and invasive plant species from submerged lands, and purchasing and delivering plants, mulch, and dirt for volunteers to use at frequent public Miami River walk beautification events; and

WHEREAS, section 163.06, Florida Statutes, establishes for the Miami River Commission a policy committee with various statutorily enumerated powers and duties, such as creating a strategic plan for improvement of the Miami River and surrounding areas, preparing an integrated financial plan, providing technical assistance and political support to implement the strategic and financial plans, and accepting any specifically defined coordinating authority or function delegated to the committee by any level of government through a memorandum of understanding or other legal instrument; and

WHEREAS, the voting members of the policy committee are designated by statute as “the Governor, the chair of the Miami-Dade County delegation, the chair of the governing board of the South Florida Water Management District, the Miami-Dade County State Attorney, the Mayor of Miami, the Mayor of Miami-Dade County, a commissioner of the City of Miami Commission, a commissioner of the Miami-Dade County Commission, the chair of the Miami River Marine Group, the chair of the Marine Council, the Executive Director of the Downtown Development Authority, and the chair of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce; two neighborhood representatives, selected from the Spring Garden Neighborhood Association, the Grove Park Neighborhood Association, and the Miami River Neighborhood Enhancement Corporation, one neighborhood representative to be appointed by the city commission and one neighborhood representative to be appointed by the county commission, each selected from a list of three names submitted by each such organization; one representative from an environmental or civic association, appointed by the Governor; and three members-at-large, who shall be persons who have a demonstrated history of involvement on the Miami River through business, residence, or volunteer activity, one appointed by the Governor, one appointed by the city commission, and one appointed by the county commission”; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to fill the vacancy of the seat on the policy committee for a neighborhood representative to be appointed by the County Commission; and

WHEREAS, under the statute, the representative shall be selected from a list of three names submitted by the Spring Garden Neighborhood Association, the Grove Park Neighborhood Association, and the Miami River Neighborhood Enhancement Corporation; and

WHEREAS, in the attached letter, the Chairman of the Miami River Commission has submitted a list of three such names; and

WHEREAS, as explained in the attached letter, Theodora “Theo” Long has been submitted as a representative from the Grove Park Neighborhood Association; and

WHEREAS, Theo Long has resided along the Miami River since 1977 and has lived in Grove Park since 1982; and

WHEREAS, for decades, Ms. Long has been dedicated to the improvement of her neighborhood, the Miami River, and Miami-Dade County at large through her involvement in and leadership of various civic organizations and activities relating to neighborhood beautification, historic preservation, and environmental education; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to appoint Theodora Long as the County-appointed neighborhood representative on the policy committee of the Miami River Commission,

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

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein and approved.

Section 2. This Board appoints Theodora Long as the County-appointed neighborhood representative on the policy committee of the Miami River Commission.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Eileen Higgins. It was offered by Commissioner **Anthony Rodriguez** , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Oliver G. Gilbert, III** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

	Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Chairman	aye	
	Anthony Rodríguez, Vice Chairman	aye	
Marleine Bastien	aye	Juan Carlos Bermudez	aye
Kevin Marino Cabrera	aye	Sen. René García	aye
Roberto J. Gonzalez	aye	Keon Hardemon	aye
Danielle Cohen Higgins	aye	Eileen Higgins	aye
Kionne L. McGhee	absent	Raquel A. Regalado	aye
Micky Steinberg	aye		

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 4th day of April, 2023. 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

LUIS G. MONTALDO, CLERK AD INTERIM

By: **Basia Pruna**
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CJW", is written over a horizontal line.

Christopher J. Wahl

Policy Committee:

Governor of State of Florida
Mr. Ron DeSantis
Designee: Ms. Patricia Harris

Chair of Miami-Dade Delegation
Senator Ana Maria Rodriguez
Designee: Senator Ileana Garcia

Chair of Governing Board of South Florida Water Management District
Mr. Chancey Goss
Designee: Mr. Scott Wagner

Miami-Dade State Attorney
Ms. Katherine Fernandez-Rundle
Designee: Mr. David Maer

Mayor of Miami-Dade County
Mayor Daniella Levine Cava
Designee: Mr. Jim Murley

City of Miami Mayor
Mayor Francis Suarez
Designee: Ms. Megan Kelly

City of Miami Commissioner
Commissioner Alex Diaz de la Portilla

Miami-Dade County Commissioner
Commissioner Eileen Higgins
Designee: Ms. Maggie Fernandez

Chair of Miami River Marine Group
Mr. Bruce Brown
Designee: Mr. Richard Dubin

Chair of Marine Council
Mr. Michael Karcher
Designee: Mr. Phil Everingham

Executive Director of Downtown Development Authority
Ms. Alyce Robertson
Designee: Ms. Christina Crespi

Chair of Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Alfred Sanchez
Designee: Ms. Sandy O'Neil

Neighborhood Representative Appointed by City of Miami Commission
Dr. Ernest Martin
Designee: Mr. Tom Kimen

Neighborhood Representative Appointed by Miami-Dade Commission
Ms. Sallye Jude
Designee: Mr. Mike Simpson

Representative from Environmental or Civic Organization Appointed by the Governor
Mr. Horacio Stuart Aguirre

Member at Large Appointed by the Governor
Mr. Luis Garcia
Designee: Mr. John Michael Cornell

Member at Large Appointed by Miami-Dade Commission
Ms. Sara Babun
Designee: Ms. Roselvic Noguera

Member at Large Appointed by City of Miami Commission

Managing Director
Mr. Brett Bibeau

Miami River Commission



c/o Robert King High
1407 NW 7th Street, Suite 2
Miami, Florida 33125
Office: (305) 644-0544

BrettBibeau@MiamiRiverCommission.org
www.miamirivercommission.org

January 17, 2023

Re: Homeowners to Consider for the Board of County Commissioner's Neighborhood Representative Appointment to the Miami River Commission

I'm happy to provide the following 3 bios for the Board of County Commissioner's consideration to appoint to the Miami River Commission's vacant neighborhood representative, to be selected from the Spring Garden Civic Association and the Grove Park Neighborhood Association:

- Theo Long, Grove Park Neighborhood Association
- Eileen Broton, Spring Garden Civic Association
- Emmett Moore, Spring Garden Civic Association

I appreciate your time and consideration of these willing volunteers, whom are outstanding residents and homeowners from the specified Miami River Associations.

Sincerely,

Horacio Stuart Aguirre
Chairman,
Miami River Commission

MDC007

Theodora Long

901 NW 14 CT, Miami, FL 33125

Theodora Long has lived along the Miami River since 1977. She and her husband bought a home in Grove Park in 1982. In 1984, she planted 100 trees in Grove Park. The City of Miami was closing their plant nursery and the City of Miami gave her the 100 trees, (oaks, royal poinciana, coconut palms, mahogany, royal palms, and tabebuia). Theodora hired a homeless gentleman who lived under the 17th Avenue Bridge with his wife, to dig the holes for the 100 trees which needed to be planted in the swale or on the front lawns of Grove Park residents. She paid the gentleman \$20 a hole and supervised the project with her newborn son in the baby carriage. She supplied the shovels, pick and cold water.

At this time, the Miami River was being over seen by Bob Parks in Bob Park's Law Firm Office. Theo would attend regular meetings and plea with Bob Parks to save Grove Park from the demise of rent landlords running rooming houses in Grove Park.

Theo was a stay-at-home-mother who would watch items from everyone's yard items being carried off during the Mariel boat lift. This is when the neighborhood- watch in Grove Park was started, as well as, the Grove Park Homeowner's Association, in 1985. This association is still active today. Grove Park has recently been designated a National Historic Designation due to Theodora speaking at a SR836 Expressway expansion planning meeting where she pleaded with them to spare the historic neighborhood from future demise as it suffered in the 1960's. It was only because the State did the research on Grove Park that the Historic Designation has come to fruition.

In 1992, Theodora Long took on the task of Executive Director of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center after meeting Marjory and helping her on other projects. Her responsibilities include overseeing art and science programs, ensuring the inclusion of people with disabilities, and raising funds to support the facility and programs. She raised \$4 million dollars to build the facility now in Crandon Park. She was inspired to do this by going and visiting and reading to Marjory Stoneman Douglas while she was 100 to 108 years of age. It was Marjory's dream to have a Nature Center by the Sea for all to learn about their natural environment. She is still the Executive Director today. The County recognized Theodora's outstanding accomplishments with the prestigious "In the

Company of Women" award in 2007. She serves on various Boards across the County such the National Park's Stiltville Trust, Friends of Cape Florida State Park, and the newly designated National Historic Grove Park. She is a member of the Junior League of Miami, The Biscayne Bay Advisory Committee. She has served on various boards in Miami over the years. She recently received the Defender of the Everglades Award from Friends of the Everglades this past December.

On December 10, 2022 she won an Emmy Award for Producing a short film about the story of the Life of Bill Baggs, which is now being shown on WLRN. This film was a MSD Biscayne Nature Center project. As President of Friends of Cape Florida she wondered, why does no one know who Bill Baggs was? She solved this issue.

Theodora is an avid sailor and boater as well as an advocate for all marine animals. She would be an asset to the Miami River Commission. Theodora continues to live along the Miami River for the past 40 years. She shops, boat docks, and travels by road the riverfront daily.

Please note attached recent articles written about Theodora Long.

Theodora Long awarded 'Defender of the Everglades' for Nature Center work

By Hilard Grossman

Published January 10, 2012

THEODORE LONG, a woman who spent her life protecting the natural world, was selected the "Defender of the Everglades" by Marjory Stoneman Douglas the day before her death, which she founded at the Nature Center, which she founded at the Nature Center.

Long, who was born in 1914, was a pioneer in the field of environmental education. She was the first to introduce the concept of "environmental education" to the public, and she was the first to introduce the concept of "environmental education" to the public.

Philip Koshlan, president of the National Audubon Society, said Long was a "pioneer in the field of environmental education."

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said pioneer "the person who has made the most significant contribution to the field of environmental education."

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PHOTO OF THE WEEK

By Melquiades (Mel) Garcia

Short film about life of Bill Baggs, wins Emmy Award for Nature Center's Theodora Long

By Hillard Grossman
Special to Islander News

Theodora Long chuckled when asked if the recent double Emmy award for her short film, "The Life of Bill Baggs," made her feel somewhat like Mary Tyler Moore or Betty White, who, between

them, grabbed a dozen of the iconic gold statuettes.

"Not quite," she said, "but I do feel it's a huge accomplishment for me, kind of a stay-home mother who got involved in a lot of things. Winning an Emmy for just starting a story and taking the concept to film... It was my story to tell."

Long, the 32-year executive director of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center at the north end of Crandon Park, turned her first endeavor as an executive producer into double victories for editor and director Patrick and Anne Longstreth, the writers for the 27-minute documentary shown on

Miami's WLRN TV.

Awards were handed out during the recent 46th annual Suncoast Regional Emmy Awards gala at the Hyatt Regency in Orlando. Suncoast is a chapter of the National Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The story of Bill Baggs

See THEODORA LONG on page 15

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THEODORA LONG

(continued from Page 1)

had, for many years, piqued Long's curiosity during her daily commutes to Key Biscayne to work at the park.

"I never met him," said Long, who lives in a historical house on the banks of the Miami River. "Why is his name part of this park? I always wondered. I didn't grow up in Miami, so I didn't know much about the background."

"Who is Bill Baggs? That's what I was wanting (to look further into his life)."

The film, based on the book, "A Nervous Man Shouldn't Be Here in the First Place: The Life of Bill Baggs," follows a nearly 13-year journey by writer Amy Paige Condon, a former Dade County resident now living in Savannah, Ga., who told the story of Baggs, one of the most influential newspaper columnists and editors during the mid-20th Century as he typed six columns a week for two decades, mostly in his Miami News office.

Baggs joined the paper in 1946 and three years later he became its leading news columnist. By 1957, he was the youngest newspaper editor in the nation, and made his mark in that role for 12

years before dying from pneumonia in January of 1969 at age 45.

A huge supporter of the local community and protecting the environment, Baggs helped convince Mrs. Elena Santeiro Garcia, widow of Cuban Sen. Jose Aleman, to come down on her price (from \$6 million to \$3 million) for the plot of land that is now the state park. He then had to persuade political heavyweights in Tallahassee to commit to the funding.

Baggs had written Mrs. Garcia a note in 1967, which read: "Long after you and I have left this old green planet, children and their parents who cannot afford the private clubs will find a healthy and economical pleasure on the lovely beach front which is to become the property of the people. — You can save it if you want to."

The park was named for Baggs in 1974.

Long said she marvels at how much Baggs accomplished in his short life, including his early years in Georgia as a Class Valedictorian, a football standout, and then volunteering for the U.S. Army Air Force, and serving as a bombardier over Europe, where he earned a Distinguished Flying Cross.

The film includes historic footage, dozens of newspaper

clippings from his 3,000 columns, and Condon's scenic tour of Miami — areas that can be connected to Baggs' volume of work, and other areas that never got the chance to be preserved or enhanced due to his untimely death.

"He talked about good urban design, and how does it affect the guy down on Flagler Street?" Condon says in the film.

Baggs had a huge role in editorializing his political viewpoints — even going to Vietnam twice — to persuade leaders to halt the conflict (which resulted in both positive and negative acceptance). He once was partly responsible for getting Martin Luther King out of jail; he was a key to desegregating public schools in Miami; and he became such good friends with the Kennedy family, he even had a phone line in his home straight to the White House, his sons said.

According to reports, the now-defunct Miami News had a front row seat to the Cuban Revolution, Bay of Pigs Invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis, and Baggs provided the scoop on the Soviet Union's buildup of missile launch sites there, thanks to his friendship with President John F.

Kennedy.

The film was important for historical reasons, Long said, to educate those living on Key Biscayne and in Miami, and all of the visitors to the park from around the globe. And, to further honor a local champion of the community.

Long said she "provided the money to make it happen," hiring Condon (who was masterful in the narration) to tell the story, and also the Longstreths to write, edit and direct the film, which was shown at the Miami Film Festival and on PBS.

"I produce a lot of things (such as festivals) over the years, but this is my first film," said Long, who could not attend the awards presentation because it conflicted with the annual Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center Festival, a critical fundraiser.

The film, which took about six months to produce, was nominated for the honor in September.

"It was a lot of work, but we were delighted to receive the Emmy award," Long said.

Now, everyone should be able to answer the question in the film: Who was Bill Baggs?

REAL HOUSEWIVES

(continued from Page 10)

She and her husband, Todd, have owned 36 restaurants across the United Kingdom and the United States.

* **Lisa Rinna**: Probably best known for her roles on "Days of Our Lives" and "Melrose Place," the "Beverly Hills Housewife" has become an instant superstar when it comes to TV sales of her Rinna Beauty cosmetic line, surpassing well over \$10 million since the fall of 2020.

* **Kandi Burruss**: The longest-running "Housewife" will be appearing in her 15th season on the "Real Housewives of Atlanta." She is a Grammy Award-winning singer/songwriter, actress, TV and Broadway producer, and her business ventures range from cosmetics to restaurants.

One of Custer's favorite offshoots of the franchise series has been the comedic act from Amy Phillips, who goes to great lengths to imitate some of the

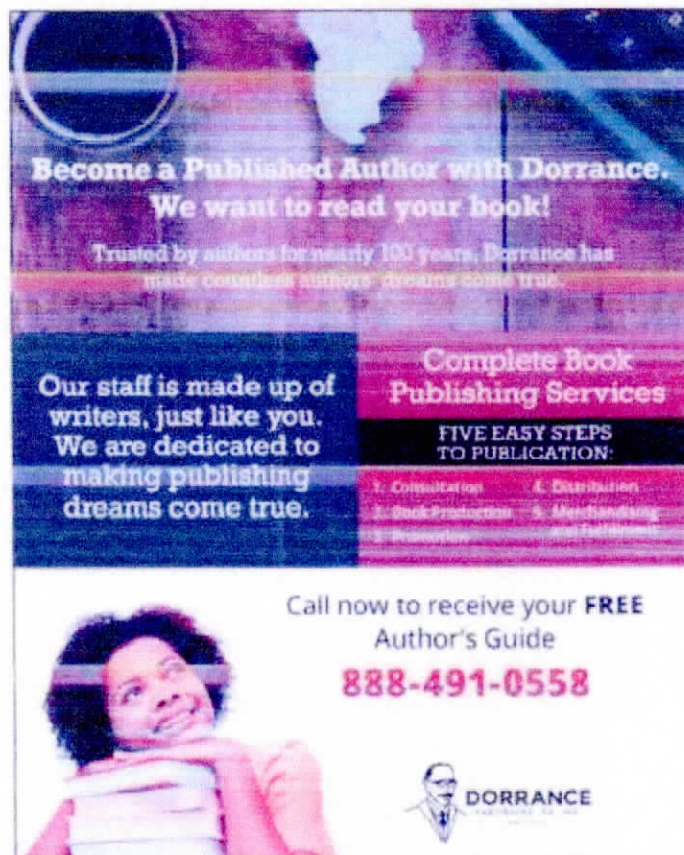
stars who have become fan favorites.

So, what's the drawing card for viewers?

"Watching how someone else lives, people are always curious, especially when it's the opulent, aspirational (side)," Custer said. "Then, there's the added element of intrigue or drama, perhaps morbid sometimes, but no life, no matter how luxurious, is without its ups and downs. And people like to watch contention. That's what drama is about, and that's also what comedy is about."

"We really cannot avoid the desire for escapism. So many (women) are stuck at home, and they can relate (to the show). They want to get away mentally and that's what these shows offer them. It's not a negative side; the escapist side is entertainment."

Interested in becoming a candidate for "The Real Housewives of Key Biscayne"? Email: isabel@abuelaccontent.cl to set up a meeting in person.



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Eileen Broton
951 NW 10th Court
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I am Eileen Broton and am requesting consideration to serve as a resident member of the Miami River Commission. I have lived in the historic Spring Garden neighborhood since 1994. My life is deeply connected to the Miami River and my neighborhood. I have read extensively about the River and experienced much growth along its banks.

I have been an active member of our Spring Garden Civic Association for the past twenty-nine years. I have served as a member and organized tours and activities to promote Spring Garden and the Miami River, and as President, shepherded our portion of the greenway and dredging of the river and the Seybold Canal.

I have experience in working with the City of Miami and its partners. Starting in 2000 I served ten years on the Miami Bond Oversight Board, and was Vice-Chair for the last five of those years. That board was sunsetted. In 2017 until its sunset in 2019 I served on the City of Miami Beautification Committee as the Miami Neighborhoods United representative.

I am reliable and dependable and seriously take my responsibilities to be prepared and actively participate and attend meetings and discussions. I have advanced college degrees and skilled in reading technical reports. I have recently retired from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs after forty-five years of dedicated service and can commit myself to the Miami River Commission. I am passionate about the Miami river and would be honored to serve.

Emmett Moore is a Miami-based artist and designer known for a technically rigorous interdisciplinary approach that challenges notions of functionality and fluctuates seamlessly between design and art examining our relationship with the built environment. Moore's work utilizes processes taken primarily from architecture and industrial design, working with found forms of everyday objects to speak to the universality and timelessness of the utilitarian and quotidian.

His work has been shown institutionally at the RISD Museum, the Frost Art Museum, the Miami Art Museum, the Bass Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami and is in the permanent collection of the Perez Art Museum Miami. He was the first Miami-based designer to exhibit a solo exhibition at Design Miami/. He is represented by Nina Johnson gallery in Miami, FL.

Moore's work has been covered by Art in America, The Guardian, The Miami Herald, Cultured Magazine, Architectural Digest, Artsy and The Art Newspaper among others. Moore was named Miami New Times' Best Visual Artist in 2015 and 2021.

Moore has worked as a designer/design consultant for The Standard Hotel, Rafael de Cárdenas / Architecture at Large, Design Miami/, Arquitectonica and Arquitectonica GEO. Moore is adjunct faculty at the Cushman School and helped develop tech curricula centered around 3d-modeling & 3d-printing.

Moore lives and works in building a single-family home he designed and built in collaboration with Arquitectonica in the Spring Garden Historic District on the Miami River. He is an active board member of the Dade Heritage Trust as well as the Spring Garden Civic Association.