

# Memorandum



**Date:** July 8, 2020

**To:** Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Carlos A. Gimenez  
Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Carlos A. Gimenez", is written over the printed name of the Mayor.

**Subject:** Ordinance Approving, Adopting and Ratifying Special Taxing District Rates for Two  
Certain Active Multipurpose Maintenance Special Taxing Districts



## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners (Board) approve the attached Ordinance pertaining to the proposed FY 2020-21 assessment rates for the active multipurpose maintenance Special Taxing Districts (Districts) listed in Exhibit A, attached hereto. All lots and parcels within the districts are unique due to their geographical boundaries, affected property owners, and level of service. Approval of this Ordinance is required to obtain the necessary funding to continue providing services for all lots and parcels. Of the total 1,001 active Special Taxing Districts, the attached Ordinance relates to the rates for two multipurpose maintenance districts that are increasing, as reflected in Exhibit A. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department (PROS) has determined, and I concur, that the services provided by these Districts will offer special benefits to properties within each district, exceeding the amount of special assessments to be levied.

These proposed new rates are necessary due to increases in lake maintenance contracts (previously approved by the Board), other commodity increases, and to reflect re-noticing costs. Further, these districts have depleted their carryover and their proposed rates represent the districts' true operational and administrative cost. If these rates are not approved, the Division will not be able to maintain the current level of services and will need to reduce lake and landscape maintenance cycles.

Therefore, it is hereby recommended that the proposed rates in Exhibit A be approved and adopted.

## **Scope**

These proposed FY 2020-21 assessment rates are for multipurpose maintenance districts within Commission District 11, represented by County Commissioner Joe A. Martinez, and Commission District 12, represented by County Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz.

## **Fiscal Impact/Funding Source**

The fiscal impact of this Ordinance is limited to those homeowners within the boundaries of these Special Taxing Districts. The total assessment in the Ordinance for these two districts with proposed rate increases is \$173,312.00 (Exhibit A). These active multipurpose maintenance districts are composed of 2,990 folios. These funds will accrue from the special assessments paid by the property owners of folios within the active Special Taxing Districts. As per Section 1.01A(11) of the Miami-Dade County's Charter, expenses accrued for Special Taxing Districts on a yearly basis must be paid in the year they become due. The Charter provides that "[a]ll county funds for such districts shall be provided by service charges, special assessments, or general tax levies within such districts only." Approval of these rates is necessary to ensure that the current level of services is maintained.

### **Social Equity Statement**

If approved, property owners within the affected Special Taxing Districts may have an increase in special assessments appropriately apportioned according to the special benefit they receive from the Special Taxing District services, regardless of their demographics or income levels.

### **Track Record/Monitor**

The implementation and operation of the Special Taxing Districts are monitored by Lorena Guerra-Macias, Chief of the Special Assessment Districts Division (Division) with PROS, and the financials are overseen by Christina Salinas Cotter, Assistant Director, PROS.

### **Background**

Miami-Dade County (County) creates Special Taxing Districts, at the request of residents or developers, to provide public improvements and special services. Chapter 18 of the County Code (Code) provides the legal framework for Special Taxing Districts. Pursuant to petition, notice and public hearing, the Board by various ordinances has established special taxing districts in the County for the following types of services:

1. Street Lighting - created in existing communities at their request and mandated by Code in new subdivisions within unincorporated County to provide lighting continuity along the public right-of-way;
2. Security Guard - provides stationary and/or roving patrols staffed by off-duty police officers or commercial guards;
3. Multipurpose Maintenance - includes, but is not limited to, landscape and lake maintenance; maintenance of swales, walls, and graffiti abatement for walls within or abutting the public right-of-way; and
4. Capital Improvement/Road Maintenance - provides for upgrades or improvements within public right-of-way; examples include water/sewer, drainage, utilities and other roadway improvements.

The County is currently responsible for the management and operation of 1,001 active Special Taxing Districts. Of these, 853 are Street Lighting Districts, 25 are Security Guard Districts, 121 are Multipurpose Maintenance Districts, and 2 are Capital Improvement/Road Maintenance Districts. The special assessments are levied on a unit basis for security guard services, road maintenance and service relocations; square-footage basis for multipurpose maintenance services; and front-footage basis for street lighting services and gas pipeline services.

Pursuant to section 18-14(4) of the Code, the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee caused assessment rolls to be prepared and filed with the Clerk of the Board. Each affected property owner was notified that the special assessments, when approved and confirmed pursuant to section 18-14(6) of the Code, will be placed on the 2020 real property tax bills and that, if these special assessments are not paid when due, the properties on which the special assessments are levied will be respectively subject to the same collection procedures as for ad valorem taxes, including possible loss of title.

Pursuant to Florida Statute 197.3632 and section 18-14(5) of the Code, the County is required to publicly notice the hearing regarding the adoption of the non-ad valorem assessment rolls in Special

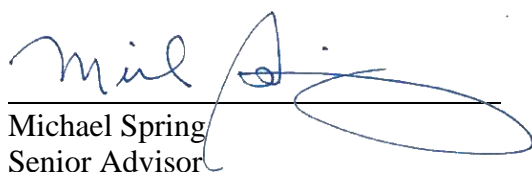
Taxing Districts. Pursuant to Florida Statute 197.3632, the Board is required to adopt non-ad valorem assessment rolls at a public hearing held between January 1st and September 25 for any district for which the rates will increase from the prior year. In order to meet the County's TRIM noticing deadline for non-ad valorem assessments, it is imperative that the item be approved to proceed to public hearing which has been noticed for July 21, 2020.

Pursuant to notices published, posted, and mailed to all property owners within the Special Taxing Districts, the Board will hold a public hearing upon the notification of the assessment rolls, and all interested persons will be afforded the opportunity to present their objections, if any, with respect to their assessments on such assessment rolls. Prior to the hearing, residents of districts with proposed rate increases will receive a required notice in the mail informing them of the public hearing. In addition, as required by law, staff will advertise the public hearing for impacted districts in a newspaper of general circulation. Finally, staff from the Division have reached out to impacted districts with organized associations to arrange for meetings with concerned residents and hosted an informational town hall meeting.

In accordance with section 18-19 of the Code, the Audit and Management Services Department (AMS) has been conducting annual audits on Special Taxing Districts. The most recent audit conducted for FY 2018 resulted in no adverse findings. AMS continues to provide oversight and PROS is working cooperatively with AMS to address any recommendations for improving the program.

The following are highlights of the progress resulting from the implementation of continuous improvements within the Division:

1. Transfers to Municipalities: Currently, the Division is in process of transferring one multipurpose maintenance district to the City of Miami Gardens to take effect October 1, 2020.
2. Communications and Outreach: During FY 2019-20, the Division started conducting town hall meetings to inform and answer resident concerns prior to the passage of new Special Taxing Districts non-ad valorem assessment rates. Additionally, the Division updated the Division website in order to provide more information online.
3. Process Improvements: Since FY 2018-19, several initiatives have been undertaken to improve and streamline operations. For example, the Division employees have been tracking their time through an automated system that more precisely accounts for administrative costs. Recently, the Division has been reviewing the budget and streetlighting district implementation processes to identify areas for streamlining and efficiencies. Finally, the Division has been working with ITD to automate the rate setting process. This will allow for the budgets to be finalized earlier in the year and allow for more time to review. This endeavor is projected to be fully operational for the FY 2021-22 budget process.

  
Michael Spring  
Senior Advisor

**Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-21 Special Taxing Districts Assessment Rates  
 (Assessments based on square footage)  
 EXHIBIT A (Multipurpose Maintenance Districts with Increasing Rates)**

<b>District No.</b>	<b>District Description</b>	<b>FY2019-20 Current Rate</b>	<b>FY 2020-21 Proposed Rate</b>	<b>Number of Folios</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Avg Impact per Household/Folio</b>
M245	Doral Isles	\$ 0.0066	\$ 0.0093	2930	17704444	\$ 164,651	\$ 16
M266	Casa Lago	\$ 0.0092	\$ 0.0169	60	512497	\$ 8,661	\$ 66



**MEMORANDUM**  
(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairwoman Audrey M. Edmonson  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** July 8, 2020

**FROM:** Abigail Price-Williams  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No.

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

Agenda Item No.

Veto \_\_\_\_\_

Override \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE APPROVING, ADOPTING AND RATIFYING NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENT ROLLS, RATES AND ASSESSMENTS FOR TWO CERTAIN MULTIPURPOSE MAINTENANCE SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2020 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2021; AND PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, EXCLUSION FROM THE CODE AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

**WHEREAS**, this Board desires to accomplish the purposes outlined in the accompanying memorandum, a copy of which is in incorporated herein by reference; and

**WHEREAS**, the public hearing will be held during the meeting of this Board on Tuesday, \_\_\_\_\_, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Commission Chambers, Stephen P. Clark Center, 111 NW 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami, Florida,

**BE IT ORDAINED, BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA:**

**Section 1.** This Board intends to use the uniform method of collection of non-ad valorem assessments as authorized in section 197.3632, Florida Statutes, as amended, for collecting the non-ad valorem assessments levied within Miami-Dade County for special taxing districts, including the multipurpose maintenance districts described in the accompanying memorandum. Legal descriptions of such areas to the assessments, units of measurement, and the amount of the assessment are attached to the accompanying memorandum as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference. Except as herein provided, this Board hereby also incorporates by reference: (1) all previously adopted ordinances establishing and/or amending the districts and service areas described in Exhibit A to the accompanying memorandum; and, (2) any resolutions adopting preliminary or amended assessment rolls resolutions for the districts and service areas described in Exhibit A.

**Section 2.** After duly advertised public hearing, this Board has received written objections, if any, and heard testimony from all interested persons and, based on the special benefits to the properties within the districts described in Exhibit A to the accompanying memorandum, hereby determines that the assessments shown on the assessment rolls are in proportion to the special benefits accruing to the respective parcels of real property appearing on said assessment rolls and that the levies of the assessments are needed to fund the cost of providing multipurpose maintenance services within these districts. Said assessment rolls (a copy of which are made a part hereof by reference) are approved, adopted, and confirmed pursuant to section 18-14(6) of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Section 3.** All assessments made upon said assessment rolls shall constitute a special assessment lien upon real property so assessed from the date of the confirmation of such assessments, in accordance with the provisions of section 18-14(8) of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Section 4.** All assessments shall be payable in accordance with section 18-14(7) of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida. As authorized by section 197.363, Florida Statutes, all special assessments levied and imposed under the provisions of the various ordinances previously approved by the Board, shall be collected, subject to the provisions of Chapter 197, Florida Statutes, in the same manner and at the same time as ad valorem taxes. Unless paid when due, such assessments shall be deemed delinquent and payment thereof may be enforced by means of the procedures provided by the provisions of Chapter 197, Florida Statutes, or section 18-14(8) of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Section 5.** Within thirty (30) days from the effective date of this ordinance, the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners is directed to deliver to the Finance Director a copy of the

assessment roll, and to cause a duly certified copy of this ordinance, together with the assessment roll, to be filed and recorded in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

**Section 6.** Unless otherwise prohibited by law, this ordinance shall supersede all enactments of this Board including, but not limited to, ordinances, resolutions, implementing orders, regulations, rules, and provisions in the Code of Miami-Dade County in conflict herewith; provided, however, nothing in this ordinance shall amend or supersede the requirements of Ordinance 07-45, as amended.

**Section 7.** If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or provision of this ordinance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected by such invalidity.

**Section 8.** All provisions of this ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of enactment unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon override by this Board.

**Section 9.** It is the intention of the Board of County Commissioners and it is hereby ordained that the provisions of this ordinance shall be excluded from the Code of Miami-Dade County.

PASSED AND ADOPTED:

Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency:



Prepared by:



Daija P. Lifshitz