



MBNA MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Virtually via Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Board Members – Present (via Zoom): Anamarie Melo (AM), Alicia Casanova (AC), Melinda Pearce (MP), Deborah Lake (DL), Esteban Porcelli (EP), Charlotte Tomic (CT), Michelle Redlich (MR) and Jorge I. Acosta (JA)

Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGXkUg-bTc4fPYS6Rbgd9LIAv4HNkyC_F

- I. **Registration and Zoom Instructions:** More than 60 participants logged into the virtual meeting including MBNA Executive Board and Members, City departments, State and local elected officials, and a few Miami Beach businesses and residents.
- II. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by MBNA President, Anamarie Melo (AM), at 6:01 pm. after verifying Quorum of the Board of Directors. This is the MBNA's first virtual meeting on the Zoom platform.
- III. **Welcome and Introductions:** AM welcomed Commissioner Steven Meiner, Commissioner Michael Gongora and County Commissioner Eileen Higgins. AM acknowledged all MBNA Board of Directors present: Anamarie Melo (AM), Deborah Lake (DL), Melinda Pearce (MP), Alicia Casanova (AC), and Esteban Porcelli (EP) and Charlotte Tomic (CT), Michelle Redlich and Jorge Acosta.
- IV. **Approval of March Minutes:** AC made a Motion to approve the March and April Minutes and JA seconded. All in favor; motion passed.
- V. **Treasurer's Report:** MP stated we now have **52 active members** (38 condos and 14 hotels). Three new members joined since our last meeting; (Vendome, Caribbean and Royal Embassy Condominium.) We have 13 new membership renewals and are waiting for 14. No expenses this month. Balance in Iberia Bank: **\$5,048.53**. (\$4,898.51 Bank Balance from last meeting: \$4,898.51 for three memberships of \$50 each e.g. Vendome, Caribbean, Royal Caribbean.)
- VI. **Census:** AM spoke about the importance of Census 2020. She encouraged members to complete the Census ASAP. This can lead to more to more funding for our City. Commissioner Gongora asked for the MBNA to continue to utilize our email distribution list to help get the Federal Assistance and Aid. Commissioner Higgins has Census postcards with graphics to distribute throughout the condos. For more info about the Census, please reach out to Rachel.cohen@miamidade.gov. The Census should be completed and submitted by October 2020.
- VII. **MBNA Website:** Members are encouraged to stay informed regularly by accessing the MBNA's informative website: www.midbeach.net
- VIII. **Old Business: Updates on current Mid-Beach Projects:**
 1. **New palm lighting and future 41st Street improvements:** Commissioner Steven Meiner stated that this project may possibly not go forward due to funding as a result of the pandemic situation, but he did not want to take "NO" for an answer. He stated he's staying on top of the sample lights and that this project is a high priority for him.
 2. **Elections:** DL stated that our MBNA elections will be extended to November 2020 due to COVID-19. All in favor. Motion passed.

3. **Indian Creek Project: Roadway, Landscape & Seawall:**
 - a. EP spoke about the Indian Creek project. He's been videotaping the construction; (videos are posted on the MBNA website.)
 - b. Commissioner Michael Gongora acknowledged the MBNA group for their continued efforts and stated that during the Land Use meeting today, they agreed to move the large generator to a more appropriate location on the northwest corner of the 28th Street City parking lot. The Flamingo Neighborhood Association all collectively agreed.
 - c. Mina, project coordinator, spoke briefly about the project. Community updates are being sent regularly. The draft letter to Indian Creek owners is in review and should soon be sent to City Engineer for final approval. Hopefully the few remaining property owners will sign letters granting permission to make necessary improvements in front of their properties abutting the roadway and the seawall.
4. **Beach Nourishment Project Update:**
 - a. Betsy Wheaton addressed the four hot spots on 64, 53, 46, and 27 streets.
 - b. The initial thought was to utilize the 46th St parking lot as a staging area but due to the MedRite's COVID 19 testing site, the City realized it was too much to manage by having sand trucks and the testing site simultaneously. Hence, the completion of sand nourishment at 46th will be completed by the end of May 2020.
 - c. MR wanted to confirm that there is enough sand in front of the Fontainebleau for the beach furniture. Betsy will send a map to confirm.
 - d. Gail Vareilles from Club Atlantis inquired who determines who gets more sand. Betsy said the new sand is determined by existing permits and current need for sand. The Army Core of Engineers is in the process of preparing new permits for new areas of erosion. The new sand at 27th street could help mitigate the situation because the sand will flow south of the area also.
5. **Miami Beach Trolley System:**
 - a. Kevin Pulido stated that the MB Trolley is applying for a Grant for the south beach trolley service. There is no application for the midbeach area trolley at this time. Residents are welcome to submit a letter to the Transportation Dept. AM stated she wants to know why MidBeach was left out.
6. **Utility markings:**
 - a. AM addressed the extensive graffiti markups on the sidewalks throughout in Miami Beach. A video was presented showing the markings. Numerous photos have been emailed to City Officials.
 - b. Dr. Jack Levenbrown, from Carriage Club North, mentioned rules for these utility markings need to be revised. He stated that Sen. Jason Pizzo, Sen. Jose Javier Rodriguez and US Rep. Michael Grieco tried to propose a new rule as to the kind of paint they can be allowed to use. They need to specify what is defined as temporary paint and what needs to be permanent. Jack asked for the MBNA to try to meet with the utility companies.
 - c. Commissioner Higgins stated that the implementation of 5G is opening up sections of the sidewalks to install new poles that is why new markings are being made. She agreed that it's excessive. She asked for the MBNA to continue to advocate. Local Senators have been trying to get a definition of "temporary" paint. The utility companies have a powerful hold. Collins Ave. is a State road. Commissioner Higgin's Office will work with Dr. Levenbrown. Anamarie inquired about hiring lobbyist. Commissioner Higgins currently has a county lobbyist.

IX. **New Business:**

1. Jorge Acosta will start the initiative to draft a plan to help our local businesses, including hotels and restaurants, through marketing. He requested assistance from Commissioners Meiner and Gongora to assist with 41st street businesses.
2. Ceci Velasquez, Ocean Drive Representative, mentioned that Ocean Drive is currently promoting the South Beach community. Currently there are only has four 4 Restaurants open out of 41. The Betsy Hotel, Avalon, TGIF and Pink Taco are the only ones open for take-out and delivery. Residents should be encouraged to

use UberEats or Postmates. Considerations are being given to closing Ocean Drive to traffic but there are concerns over sanitation and other issues.

3. AM mentioned that we want to contribute at some level. We need to come up with a strategy to help Ocean Drive. Commissioner Meiner said he is very mindful to businesses, and had a long conversation with Jimmy Morales to waive outdoor seating fees for six months to one year in order to promote outdoor dining with social distancing. He is trying to add it to the City's Agenda.

- X. **Ellen Bowen** – Food Rescue – Ms. Bowen spoke about how Miami Spice offers discounts at restaurants. Since she's a food writer and blogger, she would like to promote this.

XI. **Resolution to Open Pool Decks in Condominiums:**

1. AM talked about the need to re-open Condo pool decks to allow residents to get fresh air and vitamin D. She stated the MBNA would be submitting a Resolution to the City soon.
2. Commissioner Higgins believes properties with large pool decks could re-design their decks and enforce social distancing to make it safe. County Mayor Gimenez is setting the standards through Executive Orders. Municipalities can be more restrictive but not less restrictive.
3. Commissioner Meiner mentioned that Jimmy Morales would exercise his emergency powers and that once they're able to do so, condo pools and gyms would be able to reopen. They will have a meeting on Friday, May 7th to have a discussion on plan to re-open pools and gyms. This would need to be in alignment with the County. He recommended a staggered plan to open up the pools.
4. AC mentioned the desire is to open just the sun/pool decks right now, not the swimming pools.
5. AC proposed the Motion on the Resolution asking for condo pool decks to be allowed to re-open. Melinda seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was passed.

XII. **Testing Sites**

1. Commissioner Meiner provided an update on the MedRite testing site at 46th and Collins. They administered over 5,000 tests. The site is now closed and the state is now moving in a new direction. Testing is also available at the Convention Center. It will also be a walk up or drive through. They're trying to obtain the most reliable testings.
2. The Rockefeller Foundation partnered with 10 cities and has chosen Miami-Dade to help with their contact tracing. If someone is positive for the virus, they will be asked to quarantine and identify who they were in contact with. This helps isolate the hot spots. The City is drafting COVID-19 plan options. They'll be working on enforcing strict protocols to help lower our virus numbers.

XIII. **Beachwalk**

1. Discussion took place regarding possibility of creating a temporary walk on the sand along the east side of the dunes during the lengthy construction period.
2. The project continues during the pandemic and is progressing on schedule. Due to the nature of this project there may be times where you will not see work being performed directly behind an area. This is because the ongoing work is a rolling operation and the contractor is working in a narrow width in a south to north direction.
3. Currently, the boardwalk has all been demolished and the contractor continues to perform irrigation and electrical work underground.

XIV. **New Business**

- MDC Mayor Gimenez issued an Order requiring facial masks and social distancing.
- Commissioner Meiner talked about the opening and closing of South Pointe Park this past week due to inappropriate behavior and large gatherings.
- Several discussions regarding COVID-19 plans and protocols took place. There is a lot of community concern.

- XV. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.