



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

MAYOR'S 41st STREET COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, September 12, 2024 - 5:00 p.m.

First Horizon Bank 400 Arthur Godfrey Rd, Ste 210, Miami Beach, FL 33140

Minutes

Committee Members:

Yechiel Ciment, Chair (P)
Bonnie Crabtree, Vice Chair (P)
Betty Behar (A)
Michael Burnstine (A)
Rana Florida (P) Via Zoom
Eric Hankin (P)
Jerri Hertzberg Bassuk (P)
Robin Jacobs (P)
Michelle Lari (P)
Charlotte Tomic (P)
Jeremy Wachtel (P)

P = Present; A = Absent, E = Excused

Commission/City Staff:

Daniel Sommer, Senior Policy Advisor to the Mayor
Heather Shaw, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department
Diana Fontani Martinez, Redevelopment Specialist/Committee Liaison, Economic Development Department

Public Attendance:

Michael Goldberg
Amy Mehu, Executive Director, 41st Street Business Improvement District, Via Zoom

Chair Yechiel Ciment opened the meeting at 5:08 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1. INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER** – Yechiel asked Michelle Lari to introduce herself as the newest member of the Committee. Michelle stated that she lives on 43rd and Chase Avenue and her four children attend school near 41st Street. She has worked closely with the Miami Dade School Board to improve her children's schools. She is a lawyer but currently not practicing.
- 2. APRIL/JUNE MINUTES** – Bonnie made a motion to approve the April/June minutes and Robin Jacobs seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

3. BIENNIAL REPORT- Eric Hankin made a motion to approve the Biannual Report and Robin Jacobs seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

4. CITY UPDATES

A. TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY UPDATE- Otniel Rodriguez, Assistant Director, gave the update on transportation issues pertaining to 41st Street. Otniel stated that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) project that consists of installing a double right turn lane off Indian Creek Drive onto 41st Street will commence in August 2025 and conclude in August 2026. Another project that Otniel gave an update on was the construction work done on the bridge near Pinetree Drive and 41st Street. The work is complete and was on time. Otniel also stated that the 41 Street Re-Circulation Pilot Program will begin next week. The Committee suggested to Otniel that they should notify the nearby schools of the pilot program. Otniel will be there on site for the first week to see how traffic is flowing. One of the concerns of the Committee was that his pilot program is going to push traffic into the adjacent neighborhoods. Otniel stated that the Transportation department will be monitoring and analyzing the traffic flow into the neighborhoods. Otniel stated that they are working with WAZE, GOOGLE AND APPLE driving apps to notify them of this pilot program.

B. 41ST STREET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) UPDATE- Amy Mehu gave an update on the latest initiatives for the BID. She stated that the Committee had requested openings and closing on 41st Street. Bagel Time and UPS Store are currently under construction. La Provence left due to raising rent costs. Bagel Box opened and seemed to be very successfully according to Yechiel. The Committee asked what the status of the Giller Building. Amy stated that they have cleared Historic Preservation but have not obtained permits. The Committee also asked the status of the Forge and should open in first quarter of 202. Diana Fontani added that in the Board package you have a list of Business Tax Receipts that are opened and closed on 41st Street for the past three months.

BUSINESS INCUBATOR/ACCELERATOR/BUSINESS SURVEY- Diana gave me an update on an initiative that the Economic Development Department is currently undergoing which consists of a 10-minute survey that is geared towards understanding the needs of the business community. Diana stated that the rationale for doing the survey now is that the survey is the overall vision plan for investigating the possibility of establishing a business incubator or accelerator. The Economic Development Team is currently working with a consultant in conducting a four-month feasibility study to determine if and what type of incubator/and or accelerator is needed in Miami Beach. The feasibility study includes several tasks such as

Task 1 - Review and analyze the existing business ecosystem, including Miami Beach's demographics, socioeconomic information, labor force statistics, sales tax revenue and other key economic indicators.

Task 2 - Prepare key economic and real estate trends analysis. Provide forecasts, social and economic factors, and key financial indicators that could attract, retain and grow small businesses.

Task 3 - Conduct a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges analysis of Miami Beach and the Miami Beach business climate.

Task 4 - Identify and verify attributes that make Miami Beach a unique business community, potential for developing customized, locally-based economic strategies and the areas of specialization for which accelerator/incubator programs could provide long-term viability for Miami Beach businesses.

Task 5 - Assess and identify existing Miami Beach entrepreneurial and local/ regional business resources by industry.

Task 6 - Recommend objectives, visions, design, and performance measures that could advance Miami Beach business development policies, programs and planning activities and provide a benchmark to create and implement accelerator and/or incubator programs.

Task 7 - Develop roadmap report, with high-level recommendations for program strategy(ies) and that identifies potential funding and financing models necessary to implement short and long-term programs

One of the tasks involves the completion of the survey. Diana urged the Committee to please send the business survey to as many business community leaders as possible. The Committee was excited to hear about the initiative and once completed it should be received with great press. Diana mentioned the difference between incubators and accelerators and the number of incubators and accelerators globally, national and locally. Lastly, Diana explained that the strategic plan would be a simultaneous two phase program for the incubator and accelerator. Currently we are finalizing an agreement with FIU to offer technical assistance programs to small businesses and to offer a pitch competition for start up and existing businesses. In order to compete in the pitch competition, you have to go through the technical assistance program.

5. CHAIR UPDATE – The Chair had no comments. Eric Hankin mentioned that he had a question about what the status of the marketing of the Business Improvement District is. He mentioned that he had heard that the 41st Street has been referred as the Downtown of Miami Beach. Yechiel also that heard that was taken back by the comment. Eric wants to know how we are making this initiative. Amy stated that they are currently looking for a branding and marketing firm, another issue that was raised that there is preliminary discussion about making the parking garage on Sheridan Avenue a Whole Foods or Fresh Market. The Committee was not thrilled at the fact that why the grocery should be built on an already existing parking garage when there is a vacant parking lot nearby. The Committee decided it was too soon to make a motion against this and to investigate further.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment.

5. MEETING ADJOURNED: 6:04p.m.

6. NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday, October 10, 2024