

**Miami River Commission
Public Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2023**

The Miami River Commission's (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, February 6, 2023, in the Downtown Library Auditorium, 101 W Flagler. Sign in sheets are attached.

Miami River Commission (MRC) Policy Committee Members and/or Designees attending:

Jim Murley, Vice Chairman, designee for Miami-Dade County Mayor Cava
Megan Kelly, designee for City of Miami Mayor Francis Suarez
Eddie Marti Kring, designee for Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins
Mercedes Librada Rodriguez, designee for City of Miami Commissioner Alex Diaz de la Portilla
Patty Harris, designee for Governor
T. Spencer Crowley, III, Member at Large Appointed by City of Miami Commission
Bruce Brown, Miami River Marine Group
Tom Kimen, designee for Neighborhood Representative Appointed by City Commission
John Michael Cornell, designee for Member at Large Appointed by the Governor
Philip Everingham, designee for Marine Council
Neal Schafers, designee for Downtown Development Authority
Mike Simpson, designee for Neighborhood Representative appointed by Miami-Dade County

MRC Staff:

Brett Bibeau, Managing Director

I) Chair's Report

The Miami River Commission unanimously adopted their January public meeting minutes.

MRC Vice Chairman Jim Murley, Chief Resilience Officer Miami-Dade County, provided the following report:

On behalf of the Miami River Commission, I would like to extend our deepest condolences to MRC Chairman Horacio Stuart Aguirre whom is unable to join us today due to the sad passing of his daughter Alessandra Maria.

I would like to welcome Sallye Jude's family, and thank County Commissioner Eileen Higgins, the Board of County Commissioners and Mayor Levine Cava for presenting a special Resolution of Sympathy for her passing.

The free 24th Annual Miami Riverday will be held April 1, 2023, 1-6 PM, Lummus Park, 250 NW North River Drive, featuring free boat rides, live music, environmental education, historic reenactors, children's activities, food and drinks. In addition, at Riverday we will release the 20th Annual Miami River Map and Guide. Sponsorships and advertisements are available with Brett only until this Wednesday, and then we need to send the marketing to the printers.

The Miami River Commission thanks Commissioner Higgins for sponsoring the board of County Commissioner's adopted urging of the Florida Legislature to appropriate a \$150,000 line item to the MRC in the State's FY 23-24 budget. Before you are just the start of many support letters still coming in from Miami River condo associations, retail businesses, restaurants, developers, marinas, law firms, engineers, elected officials, etc. in support of this state funding request.

The MRC thanks the Hands on Miami volunteers whom picked up garbage along the public Riverwalk shoreline in Curtis Park on Sunday January 15.

II) Review of Brickell Bridge Traffic Study

The December 9, 2022 "Pedestrian Bridge Traffic Statement, Brickell Ave Bridge" was distributed and discussed. The signed and sealed professional traffic engineer report was paid for by "Miami Bridge", the future redevelopers of the adjacent Hyatt site. The traffic engineers observed the bridge operations with and without white glove police officers. Without Officers openings are very often extended by pedestrians dangerously walking across the bridge after the vehicular and pedestrian safety gates have closed. The extended wait times directly connects to the number of vehicles waiting for the gates to reopen. When a white glove police officer was in place and observed, they were able to stop the dangerous and illegal pedestrian crossings when the bridge was trying to open, which reduced the time of the bridge openings by around 50%, therefore significantly reducing the traffic buildup. This traffic improvement is able to be implemented quickly and is inexpensive.

III) Update Regarding Miami Circle Park

The following email from the Florida Department of State regarding restoring the historic signage, creating a 3D model, and providing security at Miami Circle Park was distributed and discussed by attendees:

From: Tomlinson, Angela E. <Angela.Tomlinson@DOS.MyFlorida.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2023 7:53 AM
To: Brett Bibeau <brettbibeau@miamirivercommission.org>
Cc: Lotane, Alissa Slade <Alissa.Lotane@dos.myflorida.com>; Liko, Sarah M. <Sarah.Liko@dos.myflorida.com>
Subject: DHR Miami Circle updates, January 2023

Brett, see below updates from DHR Director Lotane. Thank you for all that you and the Miami River Commission do to help us manage the Miami Circle.

On October 11, 2022, State Historic Preservation Officer Alissa Lotane (Director, Division of Historical Resources) visited the Miami Circle to meet with Brett Bibeau of the Miami River Commission. Also present were Dr. Kathryn Miyar, State Archaeologist, and one representative each from Miami Dade County and the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN). The group discussed the condition of the property, including landscaping and interpretive panels that are

now in poor condition due to sun exposure. We also discussed parking, security, and potential options for a replica of the Miami Circle on top of the site.

On November 14, Director Lotane met virtually with Mr. Don Slesnick, former mayor of Coral Gables and current board member of the Division's non-profit Citizen Support Organization, Friends of Florida History, Inc., to discuss the site's management history. Mr. Slesnick put Director Lotane in touch with representatives at History Miami, the former site manager at the time the panels were printed (and currently listed on the panels as a partner). Director Lotane contacted communications staff of History Miami; they were able to search their files and found the original text and print files for the panels. These will need review and some updating of logos at the very least.

Discussion of the site and replacement of the panels is on the agenda of the next Friends of Florida History, Inc., meeting scheduled for January 26, 2:00-4:00pm. Brett and members of the Miami River Commission are welcome to attend virtually (contact Carl.Bryant-Martin@dos.myflorida.com for access to the webinar and agenda). We are proposing that the Friends group assist in raising funds for the new panels. Discussion will center on updating the interpretive signs including materials, copy, and funding; we will also update them on the other topics we discussed in Miami.

Additionally, while Alissa Lotane was in Miami, she learned that there are two, and perhaps even three, sources of laser scanned data for the Miami Circle, including perhaps data from Florida Public Archaeology Network, Archaeologist Bob Carr, and/or University of South Florida. Staff have not had time to track down the data, but this is positive news, as we would need the laser scan data to ever recreate any kind of representation of the Miami Circle on the site. Funding to build the replica would need to be secured in either a Legislative Budget Request or other private source for this to occur. Before a cost can be determined, research is needed into what materials will work best and last longest. Possibilities include epoxy to look like limestone with clear or colored epoxy poured into the solution holes (holes are a trip hazard), or there could be a flat concrete representation with an artist rendering of colors to show where the solution holes and artifacts were located and where a potential structure might have been. The Division has no current plans to complete the replica; this could potentially occur if funding is available in the next 3-5 years.

Security is a topic that we are open to discussing, but we are unable to pay for the full amount of security within our current budget. We would be open to a shared cost for security, at approximately 15-20% of the cost, but cannot commit at this time. We would like to have a follow up call in the next 2-3 months to discuss this and other items above.

Alissa Lotane
Director, Florida Division of Historical Resources &
State Historic Preservation Officer

IV) Preliminary Discussion Regarding Potential Winterfest Holiday Boat Parade on the Miami River

MRC member Mercedes Librada Rodriguez distributed the following outline:

**Annual Miami River Boat Parade
Monday February 6th, 2023**

- 1) Creation of a Sub-Committee
- 2) Date – Suggestion Saturday December 9, 2023
- 3) Time – 5 PM Boat Parade and Fireworks
- 4) Length of Boat Parade and Map
- 5) Activities along the Miami River prior to Holiday Boat Parade
- 6) Parade Viewing Areas
- 7) Boat Parade Grand Marshall
- 8) Media Sponsor – Live Coverage
- 9) Sponsorship Packages
- 10) Event Invitation and Flyer Save the Date
- 11) Boat Entry Application and Fees with Liability Insurance Proof
 - A) Government vessels
 - B) Private Vessels
 - C) Charter Boats
 - D) Commercial Vessels
 - E) Non-for-Profit Vessels
 - F) Showboats Vessels
- 12) Judges Panel/Awards – Boat Sound, Boat Theme, Boat Holiday Lights, etc.
- 13) Bridge Closure
- 14) Volunteers

Spencer Crowley expressed support and offered to assist in obtaining permits and a sponsorship from FIND.

Mike Simpson stated his 15 years of direct experience participating in the FT :Lauderdale Winterfest Boat Parade, noted the magnitude of the logistics of a boat parade, and volunteered to assist.

Phil Everingham recommended seeking the necessary USCG and DERM permits first, to make sure the potential boat parade is permissible.

The MRC agreed to create a Boat Parade Subcommittee, which will host publicly noticed meetings.

V) New Business

The public meeting adjourned.

Miami River Commission Public Meeting

February 6, 2023 - Noon

Miami-Dade County Library, 101 W Flagler ST

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