

Miami River Commission Public Meeting Minutes June 2, 2025

The Miami River Commission's (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, June 2, 2025, in the Downtown Library Auditorium, 101 W Flagler. Sign in sheets are attached.

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

Horacio Stuart Aguirre, Chairman, Appointed by the Governor
James Murley, Vice-Chairman, designee for Miami-Dade County Daniela Levine Cava
Betty Hermida, designee for City of Miami Commissioner Mike Gabela
Megan Kelly, designee for City of Miami Mayor Francis Suarez
Spencer Crowley, Member at Large Appointed by the City of Miami Commission
Theo Long, Neighborhood Representative appointed by Board of County Commissioners
Eileen Broton, Neighborhood Representative Appointed by City of Miami Commission
Richard Murphy, designee for Neighborhood Representative Appointed by City of Miami Commission
Bruce Brown, Miami River Marine Group
Alvaro Coradin, designee for Member at Large Appointed by the County Commission
John Michael Cornell, designee for Member at Large Appointed by the Governor

MRC Staff:

Brett Bibeau, Managing Director

I) Chair's Report and "Voluntary Improvement Plan" (VIP) Update

The Miami River Commission unanimously adopted their May public meeting minutes. MRC Vice Chairman Jim Murley provided the following Miami River Voluntary Improvement Plan (VIP) Update: The Miami River Commission has been actively assisting the efforts of the City, County, State, and private sector to clean up the Miami River District. The MRC pays professional maintenance companies every day to remove litter, invasive plant species, graffiti and provide landscaping, pressure washing, and Scavenger Water Decontamination Vessel services along the Miami River. In addition, the MRC thanks the Hands-on-Miami volunteers whom picked up garbage along the Miami River in Sewell Park on May 18 and in Curtis Park on May 4.

II) Florida Wildlife Commission (FWC) Removal of Derelict "Borocho" Vessel

FWC Major William Holcomb stated 2 weeks ago FWC advertised an invitation to bid to tow the large derelict "Borocho" shipping vessel from its current location on the Miami River, to a location to be cleaned and then towed to Martin County where it will be sunk to become an artificial reef. This week FWC is hosting a mandatory visit to the vessel with all bidders. Major Holcomb stated he estimates by August the vessel will no longer be on the Miami River. The MRC thanked the FWC.

III) Discussion Regarding New Allapattah Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Including Miami River's North Shore from NW 7 Ave to NW 19 Ave

MRC Chairman Aguirre stated the City of Miami currently has the following 3 Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRA), the OMNI Community Redevelopment Agency, the South East Overtown Park West Community Redevelopment Agency, and the Midtown Community Redevelopment Agency. The 5-member City of Miami Commission serves as the entire 5-member Board of Directors of all 3 CRAs. The City Commissioner whom serves as Chair of each respective CRA recommends a CRA Director, and the remaining Board of Directors / City Commissioners confirm the appointment. The CRA Directors control hiring staff for their respective CRA's, which are "independent agencies". Technically City of Miami employees maybe "loaned" to the CRAs.

Kevin Crowder, Business Flare, and Keith Carswell, City of Miami, presented an informational PowerPoint provided information regarding the Allapattah CRA. In April the City of Miami adopted the Finding of Necessity and the Redevelopment Plan. The CRA goals include economic development, job creation, housing, parks, safety / lighting supplemental police and supplemental maintenance. Next the Board of County Commissioners will consider approving the new Allapattah CRA, and the County Commission requests the MRC to provide an advisory recommendation on agenda item impacting the Miami River. In theory the new Allapattah CRA is a potential funding for improvements along the Miami River in the CRA district (North shore from 7 Ave to 19 Ave) such as improvements to Point Park, Wagner Creek public greenspaces, generate job creation and job training with RMK Merril-Stevens, etc. Illegal dumping creates blight therefore the CRA may pay for the removal of illegal dumping. **The MRC unanimously recommended the MRC support creating the new Allapattah CRA, and this item will be on the MRC's June 2 public meeting agenda, noon, 101 W Flagler.**

IV) Presentation Regarding City of Miami's SW Streetscape and Street Tree Master Plans

Luiz Lam, City of Miami, presented the City of Miami's Streetscape Master Plans, which includes new trees in the Miami River District in East Little Havana for example along SW 8 Ave, SW 3 ST, SW 6 ST, and in Allapattah such as Curtis Park on the Miami River. The City of Miami's significant goal is 40% tree canopy. The City of Miami received a \$2 million federal grant and has funding from the Tree Trust Fund.

V) Presentation Regarding Miami Dade County's Urban Forestry Plan

Jen Cheek, Miami-Dade County, presented the "Miami-Dade Urban Forestry Plan 2025". The County's goal is 30% tree canopy. Surveys indicate the following tree canopies:

1996 = 10%
2006 = 12%
2016 = 20%
2020 = 20%

Ms. Cheek stated trees benefit personal health, the natural environment, and reduces temperatures. Therefore, the County is partnering with cities, schools, private sector, and faith-based institutions to increase tree canopy by providing and planting trees at no cost. Ms. Gilbert stated Miami-Dade County received a \$10 million federal grant for County Wide Street Trees. Ms. Gilbert stated Miami-Dade County's \$1.6 million budget for new trees is in jeopardy, and maybe used for street trees in Commissioner Eileen Higgins District along 17 Ave & 22 Ave.

VI) Subcommittee Reports

- a. The MRC Urban Infill & Greenways Subcommittee's May 12, 2025 public meeting minutes were distributed.
- b. The MRC Stormwater Subcommittee's April 16, 2025 public meeting minutes were distributed.

VII) New Business

The public meeting adjourned.

Miami River Commission

Public Meeting

June 2, 2025 - 12:00 PM

101 W Flagler, Miami FL - Main Library Auditorium

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