

# **Miami River Commission Public Meeting Minutes June 1, 2026**

The Miami River Commission's (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, June 1, 2026, 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  
Jim Murley, designee for Miami-Dade County Mayor Cava  
Jon Fernandez, designee for City of Miami Mayor Eileen Higgins  
Martha Garay, designee for City of Miami Commissioner Rolando Escalona  
William Gonzalez, designee for State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle  
Philip Everingham, designee for Miami Marine Council  
Eileen Broton, Neighborhood Representative Appointed by City of Miami Commission  
Richard Murphy, designee for Eileen Broton  
Gary Gunness, Miami River Marine Group  
John Michael Cornell, designee for Member at Large Appointed by the Governor  
Esther Evora, designee for Miami-Dade County Member at Large  
Wanda Mendez, designee for Downtown Development Authority  
Emmett Moore, Neighborhood Representative Appointed by the City of Miami  
Tere Garcia, designee for Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

## **MRC Staff:**

Brett Bibeau, Managing Director

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

MRC Chairman Horacio Stuart Aguirre provided the following report:

The Miami River Commission unanimously adopted the MRC's May public meeting minutes, which were emailed in advance of today's meeting.

Due to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July our July meeting will be held on July 13. The exciting agenda includes detailed discussions regarding Illegal Charters and drawbridge operations.

MRC Vice Chairman Jim Murley provided the following Voluntary Improvement Plan (VIP) Update:

The Miami River Commission has been actively assisting the efforts of the City, County, State, and private sector to keep the Miami River District clean. 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. We remove 3 large 30 cubic yard dumpsters full of garbage every week.

In addition, the MRC thanks the wonderful Hands-on-Miami volunteers for picking up garbage along the shoreline in riverfront Curtis Park on May 24, and in Sewell Park on May 3.

Miami River Fund Inc (MRFI) President Philip Everingham stated the MRFI recently reviewed their FY 25-26 independent clean audit, and adopted the FY 26-27 budget.

## **II) Discussion Regarding the Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM)**

Lorren Parra, Director DERM, and Katie Oswald, Chief of Staff DERM, presented a PowerPoint regarding DERM's responsibilities and the County's Boater Safety Committee, which is about to release their report.

Jim Murley noted DERM used to have a representative attend the MRC's monthly public meeting, and asked DERM to please recommence participating in the MRC's monthly meetings.

Spencer Crowley stated Latitude on the River, located on the Miami River's south shore west of 2 Ave Bridge, has been trying to pull a permit for 20 years to build a small public riverwalk connector between existing public Riverwalk beneath the 2 Ave Bridge and at Latitude on the River. Director Parra said she would look into it. In addition, Mr Crowley stated DERM denied the City of Miami's application to bring a collapsing shoreline in Sewell Park, which is not compliant with code, into compliance by building a seawall with a few slips including slips for Marine Patrol, and DERM denied the application. Therefore, the City is appealing to the EQCB this summer.

Chairman Aguirre invited DERM to participate in the MRC's July 13 public meeting regarding illegal charters. Chairman Aguirre asked if there is a regulation that a vessel docked behind a single-family home must be registered to the same owner of the house, and Director Parra said she would look into it and get back to the MRC with an answer.

Eileen Broton asked if there is a regulation regarding "rafting" boats two abreast, and Director Parra said she would look into it and get back to the MRC with an answer.

William Gonzalez, State Attorney's Office, stated when he tried to prosecute arrests made for pollution, he lost the cases because DERM did not testify that the pollution is damaging the environment, and asked DERM to testify in future pollution arrest cases. Director Parra stated she was unaware, and that she would look into it.

Emmett Moore asked if DERM was working with oysters to improve water quality, and Director Parra replied no, but they are working with sponges to try and reduce pollution. Spencer Crowley stated he would email a presentation made to the Biscayne Bay Board regarding oysters improving water quality.

### **III) Discussion Regarding Draft Legislation to Assist the Miami River Greenway**

Samantha Maldonado, City of Miami Planning Department, presented a PowerPoint regarding 2 draft ordinances which allows sites near the Miami River Greenway to access Floor Area and bonus height, but not additional units / density, through paying cash towards construction of the on-road Miami River Greenway where funding is needed. Ms. Maldonado stated the 2 draft ordinances will be presented to the City of Miami's Planning and Zoning Board in June and the City Commission in July.

MRC Urban Infill & Greenways Subcommittee's May minutes were distributed featuring Subcommittee Chairman Murley's recommended approval of the 2 presented ordinances to assist the Miami River Greenway. Mr Murley thanked the items sponsor Commissioner Rosado, and the City of Miami, for their continued support for finishing construction of the 80% complete 10-mile public Miami River Greenway.

**The MRC adopted a resolution respectfully recommending approval, subject to the following conditions:**

- 1) Increase the cost for a developer to buy additional height**
- 2) Funding collected from developments in the areas of the various Greenways should be used on the specific Greenway located close to the site where the funding is collected. For example, funding collected from developments near the Miami River Greenway should be used on the Miami River Greenway, funding collected from developments near the Ludlam Trail should be used on the Ludlam Trail, etc.**
- 3) The available incentive should not be used in a manner that displaces nor disrupts marine industrial uses.**

### **IV) Discussion Regarding Replacing 836 Fenders**

Oscar Gonzalez, FDOT, distributed and presented, "I-395 / S.R. 836/I-95 Design-Build Project". The \$866 million dollar project commenced in July 2018 and is estimated to be completed in 2029. In the near future they will commence replacing the existing 836 bridge fenders with the improved fenders, but keep the existing fenders length. FDOT will be inviting the Marine Industry to monthly meetings to coordinate these projects and ensure continued navigation in Port Miami River's federal navigable channel.

Spencer Crowley asked for the status of extending the public Miami River Greenway beneath 836. Sergio Besu, EAC consulting, stated on the north shore they will construct a seawall and replace the riverfront sidewalk. MRC Director Bibeau asked for the new sidewalk to be the standard mesa beige color of the Miami River Greenway. Mr Besu stated regarding the south shore beneath 836 they are working with the City of Miami whom will apply for a grant to make the Greenway and stabilize the shoreline, and then GSX would deed the area to the City of Miami.

## **V. Subcommittee Reports**

- a. The Miami River Commission Urban Infill and Greenways Subcommittee's May public meeting minutes were distributed. The next meeting is 6/9, 2 PM, 1407 NW 7 ST.
- b. The Miami River Commission Stormwater Subcommittee's March 4, 2026 public meeting minutes were distributed. The next meeting is 6/3, 10 AM, 1407 NW 7 ST.

## **VI. New Business**

The MRC presented a plaque of appreciation to Spencer Crowley, FIND, which has provided the Miami River millions of dollars for Greenways, dredging, etc.

The public meeting adjourned.

# Miami River Commission

## Public Meeting

June 1, 2026 - 12:00 PM

101 W Flagler, Miami FL - Main Library Auditorium

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Organization

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Email

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## Public Meeting

June 1, 2026 - 12:00 PM

101 W Flagler, Miami FL - Main Library Auditorium

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