

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Village Resolution: Every Minute and Every Tax Dollar Count in the New Year

PALMETTO BAY, Fla., (Dec. 30, 2008) – *The time of year is upon us when individuals and institutions alike take stock in what they've accomplished, and consider what they wish to achieve in the New Year. It is a time of reflection and resolution, and there is a host of prayers, toasts, and quotes that attempt to capture the essence of this annual rite. One quote in particular caught the eye of Village of Palmetto Bay Mayor Eugene P. Flinn, from an article entitled "A Year of Time," written by Steven Cloud.*

"The new year is full of time. As the seconds tick away, will you be tossing time out the window, or will you make every minute count?"

Following is the Mayor's New Years message for the residents of Palmetto Bay:

In the Village of Palmetto Bay, I assure you our plan for the New Year is to certainly make every minute count – by making every tax dollar count! As I noted in my 2008 State of the Village Address, we are now moving from an intense period of capital expenditure to a time of programming development. While there remain infrastructure projects to accomplish, especially in the areas of Public Works and Parks, in 2009 we will focus primarily on improving the quality of life for our residents and providing a fertile base for local business growth.

I wish to review some of the key programs and projects your Mayor, Village Council and Staff are working hard to achieve during this year of transition:

Community Involvement

Because we appreciate the importance of community participation in the local government process, we are hosting a Town Hall meeting on Jan. 14 at the Deering Estate Visitor Center. Concerned residents are invited to meet to review the Boat/Canal ordinance in a workshop-styled forum, wherein all sides of the issue may be represented. There will be several other Town Hall meetings throughout the year.

Also this month, the Village of Palmetto Bay will recognize and celebrate Arbor Day. On Jan. 16, we are conducting a tree-planting ceremony at Palmetto Bay Park, in cooperation with South Florida Water Management District, symbolic of our continued commitment to greening the Village and the ongoing tree-canopy placement program. Details will be available on our web site and in the January edition of *e-Currents*, the Village's e-mail newsletter for residents.

On a related "green" note, in April, we will host our second annual Palmetto Bay Earth Week celebration in partnership with the area schools. Look for another highly successful and fun-filled lady bug release as one of the big-draw activities of this multi-day event.

Parks & Recreation

In the area of Parks & Recreation, we have nearly completed our Parks Master Plan and related capital expenditures. This is a very timely achievement, given the down-turn in the worldwide economy.

Construction of the Library and Community Center at Ludovici Park on Old Cutler Road is nearly complete. Grand opening is scheduled for this spring. We are also anticipating special programming for all residents of all ages to be provided in the new Community Room at the library, through our partnership with the Miami-Dade Public Library system.

The new Coral Reef Park concession/storage facility will be completed by late summer of 2009. This building will serve all users, passive- and organized-sport users, and will allow us to further enhance our programming, particularly our Village youth camps. This modern new facility will bring additional and much-needed bathroom facilities to the park and provide a concession stand for all visitors to our park.

We will also see new construction and improvements to other existing park structures in 2009. For example, Palmetto Bay Park will be significantly upgrading its very popular Skate Pavilion with new surfacing and new fencing. In addition, new scoreboards will adorn two softball fields.

Renovations to the Thallata Park Carriage House, also on Old Cutler Road, will be conducted during 2009. This lovely park with direct access to Biscayne Bay will provide a tasteful venue for social events such as weddings, parties, and other formal gatherings. Expect to also see passive programming such as Yoga and Tai Chi, and specialized camps focusing on aquatics and or the environment.

Community Programming

In 2009, we plan to entice local talent from our public and private schools to come out and perform in the parks. We hope to host talent shows and themed performances – perhaps even special events such as a local “battle of the bands” contest consisting of area residents. The new amphitheater at the bayside Library and Community Center will be an exciting new venue for such programs, in addition to our existing band pavilion at Coral Reef Park.

If you were one of the hundreds who enjoyed our most recent showing of “Alvin & the Chipmunks” at Coral Reef Park over the holidays, then you will be happy to hear we plan to enhance the Movie Night program by purchasing our own movie screening equipment this year. This purchase will allow the Village to hold additional family Movie Nights.

Complementing our new and expanded Parks and Recreation programming, the Village expects appointment of a Tree Board to encourage additional public participation and the establishment of a Village Garden Club. Of course, the new community room at the library will serve as a great venue for such meetings. Other potential clubs/activities may include a Village bicycling club or perhaps even a model rocket guild.

Mitigation Relief

We continue to work through the details of mitigation relief, as we should see a public referendum in 2009 on the elimination of this unfair tax program. It is my intention to call a special Town Hall meeting once mitigation is ended to discuss how we will budget, post mitigation. This is our tax money, so let's talk about opportunities for service improvements, public safety enhancements, continuing to build our Village reserves, and perhaps providing tax relief.

Planning & Zoning

In 2009, we will bolster efforts to attract viable new businesses and commercial ventures by developing and maintaining an infrastructure that makes Palmetto Bay an attractive place to “set up shop.”

Some of the significant changes in the Village's commercial landscape include the addition of a new restaurant, Ale House, at the former Bennigan's site in the Colonial Palms Plaza at 136 Street and S. Dixie Highway. In the Franjo Triangle/Commercial Island area, three new building projects will break ground. One is a Class-A mixed use office building, called Palmetto Bay Point; another building will house the South Florida Educational Federal Credit Union; and a third will be a mixed-use building located adjacent to Palmetto Bay Park, named Palmetto Bay Park Center.

Other Planning & Zoning initiatives in the new year include the valuable work being done by the Art In Public Places Advisory Board to ensure public art is installed in public places and that our cultural, historic, and architectural heritage is being preserved through the efforts of the Historic Preservation Advisory Board.

Public Works

The Department of Public Works is presently engaging studies to address demand for traffic calming throughout the Village in 2009. While consideration is presently being given to the areas east and west of Howard Drive from SW 140th Street to the south, and SW 136th Street to the north, we will advise of the final outcome of those studies at a later date. Additionally Public Works will partner with Miami-Dade County Traffic Signal and Signs Department to evaluate and plan traffic calming at major county-owned intersections and to continue traffic calming efforts through the village.

A pedestrian crossing signal at SW 136th Street and SW 82nd Avenue is being installed to improve crosswalk safety near Howard Drive Elementary School. Such efforts aid in the safety of our kids, bikers, and pedestrians throughout the Village.

A quick glance at other significant Public Works projects:

- At the same time that construction is completed this month on several localized drainage-improvement projects, planning is underway on several others.
- As the Village continues its efforts to be certified as a Tree City USA community, tree planting along Village owned right-of-ways will resume in 2009 with emphasis placed on planting the right tree in the right place.
- Residents will also continue to see routine sidewalk repair, drain cleaning, and roadway resurfacing in 2009.

We will certainly keep you abreast of what's happening along the way, via the recent enhancements to our Village communications program, in particular, *e-Currents*, mentioned above.

Most of all, in 2009, I look forward to continuing to work for and with my fellow residents, fellow council members and staff to make Palmetto Bay an even greater place to live, work, and play. On behalf of the Village Council and Staff, I wish you and your family a safe, prosperous, and happy New Year!

**Eugene P. Flinn, Jr.,
Mayor, Palmetto Bay**

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*Incorporated in 2002, **The Village of Palmetto Bay** is a vibrant community of 25,000 residents nestled between Biscayne Bay and So. Dixie Highway, about 15 miles south of downtown Miami. The Village is governed by a five-member Council and operates under a Council-Manager form of government. Dubbed "The Village of Parks," Palmetto Bay offers an extensive system of attractive parks, unique recreational opportunities, and bay access. It also is home to several excellent public schools, and a robust commercial corridor along Dixie Highway offering a diverse range of restaurants, markets, and lodging. Specifically, the Village extends from the centerline of SW 136 St., south to the centerline of SW 184 St., expanding west to the centerline of South Dixie Highway (including the center island), and east to Biscayne Bay. Visit us at www.palmettobay-fl.gov.*