



Village of Palmetto Bay

Village Manager's Monthly Report
November 2015

- 1) Coral Reef Park Walkway: ITB will be issued by next week for phase one, which includes the tree dams, rubberized walkway on the eastern portion and the walkway asphalt repairs around the baseball fields.
- 2) Fiscal Update: End of the fiscal year brought good news on the budget, last year's budget projected to reduce our surplus by \$1.4 million. Instead, we significantly turned this around and are now adding approximately \$930,000 to the surplus. The most significant savings are primarily attributed to the Palmer Trinity School settlement, which saved \$139,000 in legal fees, savings of \$200,000 from the Policing Unit and the reorganization of the Building & Capital Projects Department, Planning & Zoning Department and the Code Compliance Division, which saved the largest sum at \$231,000.
- 3) General Obligation Bond- Economic Development Fund (EDF) Grant: staff held its first negotiations meeting with the Miami-Dade County last week and the outcome was very positive for the Village. The model being proposed by the county, which is consistent with the Village's prior request, is the same model used for the City of Miami EDF project. To date this is the only one that has been approved by the County's legal department and their staff is in agreement that the Village should be held to the same rules and process.
- 4) Traffic Calming: Our first traffic calming project, consisting of the installation of temporary traffic humps, will begin within the next two weeks. The locations include SW 83 avenue (2) and SW 165 Terrace (2). We are currently coordinating the dates for the next traffic meeting.
- 5) Strategic Plan: the community survey has been launched, and it's on the Village webpage. We now need to finalize the meeting dates for Council to attend the first Council session of about 4 hours, preferably in November to discuss SWOC and achievement areas and another in January for a full day workshop. Under this schedule, we hope to finalize the process by February.
- 6) Halloween Events: I want to personally take a moment and thank staff from the Parks Department and from Public Services for a job well done this weekend. We had a hugely successful movie night at Coral Reef Park on Friday, followed by the Costumes and Cocktails night event at Thalatta on Saturday. Staff showed up at 7 am on Saturday to transform Thalatta Estate into a haunted mansion. Most then stayed to assist during the event and then clean-up the facility and leave it ready for the next event on Sunday. I also wish to publicly thank staff who brought the haunted house to life and served as our



Village of Palmetto Bay

scary actors, and last but not least, to our young volunteers who also worked very hard with the set-up. Job well done but we are just getting started.

7) Upcoming Events:

- a. Twilight Color Run, this Saturday
- b. Pineland Area cleanup @ Coral Reef Park, this Saturday
- c. DARE Arts & Crafts Festival, November 14th
- d. Holiday Lighting Ceremony & Street Fair at Village Hall, December 5th (staff is working to bring an ice skating rink to Palmetto Bay)
- e. Holiday by the Bay at Ludovici Park, December 12th
- f. Jingle Run, more details to come

- 8) National TOD Conference & Lobbying in DC: Last week, some members of the Council and staff went to Washington DC to attend a TOD conference and lobby for funds, projects and initiatives that benefit Palmetto Bay. The conference was extremely rewarding... South Florida really has few good examples of successful TOD projects to learn from, and yet, these types of projects have brought so many benefits to other communities outside of our own. Dadeland South, for example, does not really have sufficient green space and proportions are not congruent with the character of our Village. Dadeland Station does not truly qualify as a TOD, and apart from the safety issues of the past, the project has severe circulation problems and it focuses inwards to the garage rather than engaging the streets grid. In contrast, the Washington DC area, which is home to over 70% of the TOD projects in the nation, has a transit system that recovers \$.75 for every dollar spent on transit as opposed to Miami-Dade County which recovers approx... \$.30 per dollar, has 90% of new construction in and around transit stops, has a proven record showing that transit development actually reduces traffic as more than 60-70% of the residents use the transit system, and more importantly, also has a proven record of transforming blighted areas into vibrant communities, and it tells you why this conference was held in the DC area. As an example City Center in DC saw the developers tax bill rise from \$1 million annually when its property was rundown retail areas and surface parking lots to \$20 million annually after the TOD center was established with one more phase to go.

Additionally we had the Mayor and our Grant Writer Olga Cadaval help us lobby our South Florida Delegation, Carlos Curbello, Mario Diaz-Balart and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen on the importance of a transit bill (known as the DRIVE Act) that was being heard the same day of our meeting. News of the bill came to our attention at the conference. We were able to discuss some changes which our delegation will push allowing the threshold for federal funding to be lowered from the current \$50 million to \$10 million. This change would be significant, as it allows for smaller cities and municipalities to compete



Village of Palmetto Bay

for federal funds. It's a huge opportunity not only for Palmetto Bay, but also other cities that are pursuing transit-oriented developments such as Homestead and Cutler Bay. During the trip, we also met with Senator Marco Rubio's office to lobby for his support at the Senate level on this important piece of legislation. Lastly, we had the opportunity to meet with the Department of Transportation to discuss upcoming grants and as a result, we are currently looking at a grant for electric buses.

- 9) Safer Compass Project: Councilwoman Cunningham will discuss the real time field trip and the Safer Compass Project, which incorporates the Zone Emergency Response Operation. The operation uses a navigational system that allows first responders to locate a critical area in an emergency situation. The system has been field-tested and proven to reduce response time by up to 75%.
- 10) Enterprise Zone: the designation is scheduled to sunset at the end of this year. This designation provides a sound economic incentive for new businesses moving to the area through an assortment of tax credits and job creation incentives. Tax incentives include a sales and use tax credit, tax refund for business machinery and equipment used in an enterprise zone, sales tax refund for building materials used in an Enterprise Zone, and a sales tax exemption for electrical energy used in an enterprise zone. Recognizing the importance of this economic tool for our future downtown and our local business community, Councilwoman Larissa Siegel-Lara and I will be lobbying for the renewal of the Enterprise Zone designation.
- 11) Building Official: Palmetto Bay has hired a new Building Official Mr. Wesley Maly. Mr. Maly has assumed all responsibilities commensurate with the position and is available to our customers for issues or concerns regarding the permitting process.
- 12) Major Greg Truitt: While in DC, Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen read into the federal record a very touching speech thanking our former Village Commander for his services to Miami-Dade County and the Village of Palmetto Bay. On a personal note, as we welcome our new Commander with a letter of congratulations from our Congresswoman, we wish our outgoing Commander well in his future endeavors, his insight and dedication are greatly appreciated, and will be missed.