

**Miami River Commission
Public Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2022**

The Miami River Commission's (MRC) public meeting convened at noon, March 7, 2022.

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

Patty Harris, designee for Governor
Commissioner Eileen Higgins, Board of County Commissioners
Neal Schafers, Designee for Downtown Development Authority
Bruce Brown, Miami River Marine Group
Sallye Jude, Neighborhood Rep. Appointed by Miami-Dade County
John Michael Cornell, Designee for Luis Garcia
Tom Kimen, Neighborhood Representative appointed by City of Miami
Nilo Cuervo, designee for ST Attorney Katherine Fernandez-Rundle
Sandy O'Neil, designee for Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Phil Everingham, designee for Miami Marine Council

MRC Staff:

Brett Bibeau, Managing Director

Others attending interested in the River:

Sign in sheets available upon request.

I) Chair's Report

MRC Managing Director Brett Bibeau stated MRC Chairman Horacio Stuart Aguirre has a cold and is unable to attend.

The Miami River Commission's February public meeting minutes were emailed in advance of today's meeting and unanimously adopted by the MRC.

It is with immense sadness that the officers, directors and staff of the Miami River Commission note the passing of Dr. Ernest L. Martin. His departure leaves an immense void in the commission and in our hearts. His decades of service on the commission and to the Miami River District cannot be summarized in just a few minutes. His tireless advocacy to greatly improve the quality of life along the banks of the river and in the river district are legendary. His dapper elegance, refined sense of diplomacy, knowledge of the subject matter and all-heart dedication made him a living legend. To so many, he was considered the "Godfather" of the Miami River Greenway, otherwise known as the Riverwalk. His years of service as Chairman of the MRC's joint Miami River Greenway and Urban Infill Subcommittee (with colleague James Murley) provided the heart and soul of so many of the recommendations presented to the river commission and adopted by the full board of commissioners. His intellectual integrity was beyond discussion; he could not be comprised. His infectious smile and unwavering optimism pushed the commission through

difficult issues and challenging times. To so many of us, he was something far greater than all mentioned above; he was a true friend. We shall long miss him and trust that from up above, he will be smiling down on us as we continue to make the Miami River and the Miami River District even better than what it is today. “Shine on Ernie, thank you so much for all you did and until we see you again, we toast in your name!”

MRC Chairman Aguirre had a very effective trip to Tallahassee this legislative session, and the renewal of the MRC’s \$150,000, for which the details have been distributed, are currently included in both the Senate and House Budgets. I would like to thank our bill sponsors, Senator Ileana Garcia and Representative Nick Duran. In addition, I thank Commissioner Higgins and the County Commission for including this item in the County’s Legislative requests. Now the MRC is asking Miami River District residents and businesses to write Governor DeSantis in support of the funding.

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. In addition to the maintenance professionals the MRC pays daily to remove litter, invasive plant species, graffiti and provide landscaping and pressure washing services along the Miami River, the MRC thanks the volunteers from Hands on Miami, whom on February 20 picked up garbage along the public Riverwalk in Curtis Park, and on February 6 picked up garbage along the Miami River’s shoreline in Sewell Park.

II) Election of MRC Vice Chair

The MRC unanimously elected Jim Murley as Vice-Chair of the Miami River Commission.

III) Presentation Regarding Permit Application to Reconstruct Existing Piers at Hurricane Cove Marina & Boatyard

John Michael Cornell stated he works for the subject applicant, therefore recused himself due to conflict of interest and left the meeting. Spencer Crowley, FIND, presented the previously distributed plans for the submitted permit application to reconstruct the existing Piers at Hurricane Cove Marina & Boatyard. Although generally the Army Corps of Engineers allows the reconstruction of existing structures built up to, but not inside, of the federal navigable channel, surprisingly the Army Corps originally requested a 20 foot setback followed by a 10 foot setback from the Federal Navigable Channel line, although the subject submerged land is privately owned. Doing so would result in the loss of some slips and set a concerning precedent for the Miami River. There are no known navigational issues or concerns at this location

The MRC expressed support for MRC Chairman Aguirre to write a letter in support of the presented Hurricane Cove Marina and Boatyard Plans / Permit application to reconstruct their old existing piers, none of which are located in the Federal Navigable Channel.

III) Discussion of the Railroad Bridge Replacement

Binod Basnet, Florida Department of Transportation, and Naldo Gonzalez, Gannett Fleming, presented the attached PowerPoint, and stated they would communicate often with local businesses and minimize disruptions.

IV) Miami River Commission Subcommittee Reports

A. Urban Infill and Greenways

Since the City and County's adoption of the *Miami River Greenway Action Plan*, 6.75 miles or 67.5% of the planned 10-mile public Miami River Greenway has been constructed.

Currently 4 sections of the public Riverwalk are under construction at Aston Martin, One Miami, Miami River SAP, and a new restaurant in Little Havana.

The MRC, City and County continues working on numerous private and public sector potential funding opportunities to secure the remaining funding needed to finish construction of the public Riverwalk.

B. Stormwater Subcommittee

The January Stormwater Subcommittee public minutes were distributed. The subcommittee most recently convened last Wednesday, March 2.

The public meeting adjourned.