

DRAFT

BEACH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Monday, December 11, 2023, 3:30 P.M.

Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport

Red Tails Conference Room

6000 NW 21st Avenue

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

MEMBERS	September 2023 – August 2024			
	REGULAR MTGS		SPECIAL MTGS	
	Present	Absent	Present	Absent
The “W” Hotel, Capri Hotel, LLC <u>Anna MacDiarmid</u> Alex Caceres, Alternate	P	4	0	0
Marriott Courtyard, PHF Oceanfront <u>Michael Fleming</u> Steve Zunt, Alternate	P	4	0	0
Ritz Carlton Hotel <u>Vacant</u> Samuel Fuerstman, Alternate	A	2	2	0
Greater FTL Chamber of Commerce <u>Stuart Levy</u>	P	4	0	0
The Westin Ft Lauderdale Beach <u>Laurie Johnson</u> (at 3:45 p.m.) Michael Berry, Alternate	P	1	3	0
B Ocean Fort Lauderdale <u>Rizwan Ansari</u> Alternate Vacant	P	3	1	0
Bahia Mar Doubletree <u>Lisa Namour</u> Michael Munroe, Alternate	P	4	0	0
Sonesta Hotel <u>Jeff Peterson</u> Fernando Calvo, Alternate	A	2	2	0

Staff

Von Howard, Administrative Supervisor, Public Affairs, Board Liaison

Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Manager

Melissa Mata, Senior Management Fellow

Luisa Agathon, Manager for Neighbor Support
Carl Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation
Jamie Opperee, Prototype, Inc.

Guests

Tasha Cunningham, The Brand Advocates (via Zoom)
Ina Lee

I. Call to Order / Roll Call / Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m. by Chair MacDiarmid. It was noted a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- **Regular Meeting – November 13, 2023**

Motion made by Mr. Levy, seconded by Mr. Ansari, to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023, Regular Meeting as presented. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. BBID Marketing Update – Tasha Cunningham, The Brand Advocates

Tasha Cunningham, The Brand Advocates, provided a *PowerPoint* presentation updating on marketing, beginning with a recap of the Riptide Music Festival. She noted concert tickets had been donated the Broward Chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI). She discussed the effort to build a relationship with social media influencers and showed some of the reels and posts shared.

Ina Lee stated she had been at the event all weekend and thought “Fort Lauderdale Beach” needed to be on the main stage so that it shows up when people take and share photos. She asked that this be negotiated with festival hosts in the future. Ms. Cunningham noted that she had been able to secure this for Tortuga, but not for Riptide. She stated it needs to be spelled out when negotiating the initial agreement.

Ms. Cunningham continued her recap of the event. She shared feedback provided to the organizers, including the lack of chairs in the VIP area and the potential for Fort Lauderdale Beach and the BBID to have a table in the cabana area.

Chair MacDiarmid asked if Von Freeman with Audacy would be providing a debrief presentation. Ms. Cunningham stated he was supposed to come back to give a recap of the financials and event details.

Ms. Cunningham noted there had also been feedback on social media related to the no reentry policy, with attendees saying they felt trapped at the concert because they were

unable to do things like go across the street for food and come back in. She advised this was something that should be addressed.

Chair MacDiarmid asked that Mr. Freeman be invited to present at the next meeting.

Laurie Johnson arrived at 3:45 p.m.

Ms. Cunningham continued her presentation, highlighting the Business Participation Program recently unveiled by Visit Lauderdale. She explained this is an opportunity similar to the advertising co-op the BBID had taken part in previously. She advised the prices were affordable, and she would recommend participation.

Mr. Fleming asked if the billboards in the program were shared. Ms. Cunningham explained they would be co-branded with Visit Lauderdale but would not be shared. She noted she did not have a list of what locations remained available.

Chair MacDiarmid inquired as to next steps. Ms. Cunningham stated the marketing contract has a \$25,000 expense budget, and \$3,500 was previously released. She suggested the remainder be released to allow for negotiation with Visit Lauderdale.

Mr. Fleming asked about content. Ms. Cunningham stated she would put together a marketing plan based on what is available and what would be complementary to the Visit Lauderdale materials. Discussion continued as to the appropriate call to action and electronic billboard locations.

Ms. Cunningham shared that the W and the Westin had confirmed to take part in the traveling art exhibit from January 20 through 28, 2024. She asked that anyone else wanting to participate reach out to her.

Motion made by Mr. Levy, seconded by Ms. Namour, to release the remainder of the \$25,000 marketing fund. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

IV. Budget Overview – Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Manager

Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Manager, distributed copies of the current BBID budget. She explained the ending net position after funding commitments was \$369,218.

Chair MacDiarmid stated she had requested a line-by-line breakdown and would send an example of what had been previously provided.

Ms. Sainvil followed up on the request to hold meetings closer to the properties. She stated they had spoken with legal and had been advised the meeting cannot be held at a hotel, but they are working to confirm the Fire Station on the beach as a meeting site.

Mr. Ansari asked for clarification on the balances. Discussion continued.

V. Project Application Request – Luisa Agathon, Manager for Neighbor Support, City of Fort Lauderdale

Luisa Agathon, Manager for Neighbor Support, provided a *PowerPoint* presentation outlining a request for Park Rangers at the Las Olas Oceanside Park System (LOOP). She stated the City had received a number of inquiries related to safety in the LOOP and a number of homeless individuals hanging out. She explained they had put together a small working team to analyze the current service and what could be provided. She noted statistics for Police response and limited data available through tracking and discussed the role of Park Rangers managed by the Police Department.

Ms. Agathon outlined the request for \$15,000 to increase the presence of Park Rangers in the park for a duration of three (3) months. She discussed the potential benefits briefly.

Mr. Levy asked what happens when Park Rangers are challenged by the homeless residents. Ms. Agathon stated they have radios to contact the Police Department.

Chair MacDiarmid asked who is monitoring the LOOP now. Ms. Agathon stated Park Rangers come in, but they have to make their rounds to different parks, as well, and this request would be to have them stationed in the LOOP.

Chair MacDiarmid noted the request was for five (5) days a week from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. She asked what days of the week had been identified, pointing out weekends are busier. Ms. Agathon stated she would pass that feedback along.

Mr. Fleming stated they had met with the Chief of Police six (6) months ago and been told details were added, but he had not physically seen any improvement. Ms. Agathon advised that funding for three (3) new Police Officers had been included in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget to conduct homeless outreach, but they had not yet been selected.

Mr. Levy commented that the visibility of Park Rangers would help as a deterrent.

Ms. Johnson asserted this request was getting into safety and security instead of marketing events. She noted if after three (3) months the additional Park Ranger goes away, they will end up using marketing funds to compensate for services not provided by the City.

Chair MacDiarmid noted this would just be at the park and would not address issues they had all talked about at the hotel exits.

Ms. Johnson asked where the three (3) new Police Officers would be assigned. Ms. Agathon confirmed they would be City-wide.

Mr. Fleming suggested that if the addition of the Park Ranger for three (3) months is successful, they will have data to bring to the City to request continued funding.

Ms. Sainvil advised that public safety helps to market the property around the park area, because it looks safer. She agreed it could serve as a pilot to send information to the Commission.

Mr. Ansari highlighted the previous discussion with the Police Chief regarding safety at the beach. He stated it is not safe to walk at night, and this is not a new issue. He asserted the Board was previously told they were hiring new officers for 2023, but he had not seen a difference. He advised that they call the Police and it takes an hour or longer to get a response, and by that time the person is gone. He argued it is the City responsibility and the Police Department's responsibility to ensure the area is safe.

Mr. Fleming pointed out that when the homeless population leaves the park, they come to the hotel parking lots.

Chair MacDiarmid agreed that the beach cannot be marketed properly if it is not safe. She stated they need the City to step up and understand that it takes away from tourism.

Carl Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation, mentioned that being homeless in the park does not violate the park rules. He discussed the role of the Park Ranger briefly.

Ina Lee stated Las Olas Oceanside Park is the center of the beach right now, with all of the events happening close by. She asserted the more they make the area feel safe and patrolled, it is only going to help the overall experience. She noted that at its founding, the BBID was not just marketing, but they also helped with beach cleanup and infrastructure projects, so there was a precedent.

Chair MacDiarmid asked whether there was a person to fill the role already. Ms. Agathon stated it would be a rotating person.

Chair MacDiarmid asked if the times were set. Ms. Agathon stated they are open to feedback from the Board.

Ms. Ansari suggested revisiting the item at the January meeting to allow for more information to be provided. Discussion ensued regarding putting the Park Ranger in place for the high season.

Mr. Williams noted the park hours are 6 a.m. to midnight, but the City is considering changing the closing time to 9 p.m.

Ms. Namour asserted that from the perspective of her hotel, everything happens after midnight. Discussion continued.

Mr. Fleming asked whether the position should be split between the LOOP and South Beach. Ms. Agathon advised there are actually not many reports of issues at that park. Discussion continued regarding the Park Ranger program.

Motion made by Mr. Levy, seconded by Ms. Johnson, to provide \$15,000 for one (1) person, 40 hours per week, beginning January 1, 2024, for three (3) months, with the hours to be Tuesday through Saturday from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Chair MacDiarmid asked that staff be asked to come back after the three (3) months to present findings and next steps.

VI. Board Member Composition Discussion – Daphnee Sainvil

Ms. Sainvil explained she had shared this idea briefly at the November meeting. She stated the Board is currently made up seven (7) members representing the 10 highest-grossing hoteliers in the BBID. She stated rather than trying to determine which three (3) should rotate, there had been a suggestion that staff request an ordinance change to allow all 10 hotels to have seats at once, along with a member from the Beach Council or Chamber of Commerce to break a tie. Discussion ensued regarding the hotels included in the top 10.

Mr. Fleming noted the difficulty in having quorum. He stated some of the members have previously fallen off because of the attendance requirements.

Chair MacDiarmid stated she prefers a smaller Board because it makes decision making less cumbersome.

Ms. Sainvil advised that she would provide a list of the top 10 grossing hotels in the BBID. She noted there needed to be flexibility in the language to allow for shifting in that list.

Ms. Lee shared that the idea had come up because there are no term limits set for the Board members, and no one was giving up a seat to allow the other hotels to participate.

Mr. Fleming asked if there were others wanting to be on the Board. Ms. Lee stated that there are, noting the Conrad Fort Lauderdale Beach is interested in participating.

Mr. Fleming stated moving the meetings closer to the beach may help. He stated the proposed size was still a relatively small Board.

Chair MacDiarmid asked that the item be placed on the January agenda for further discussion.

VII. Board Member Input

Ms. Sainvil stated the BBID grant application for Fiscal Year 2025 is on the website. She noted applications are open December 1, 2023, through mid-February 2024.

Ms. Sainvil stated there was a late request for a jazz festival in September which would be on the January agenda. Discussion ensued regarding turtle concerns in September.

Ina Lee shared that a stakeholder meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 14 at the Marriott, and discussed the program planned briefly.

VIII. Adjournment

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m. The next Regular Meeting of the BBID will be January 8, 2024, at 3:30 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by C. Parkinson, Prototype, Inc.]

Attachments:

BBID Marketing Update – The Brand Advocates
Park Ranger for LOOP