

DRAFT

**BEACH BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETING**

March 8, 2021, 3:30 P.M.

| MEMBERS | September 2020 – August 2021 | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|---|---|
| | REGULAR MTGS | | SPECIAL MTGS | | | |
| | Present | Absent | Present | Absent | | |
| The “W” Hotel, Capri Hotel, LLC <u>Anna MacDiarmid, Chair</u> Brigitte Bienvenu, Alternate | P | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Marriott Courtyard <u>Michael Fleming, Vice Chair</u> Steve Zunt, Alternate | P | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ritz Carlton Hotel <u>Bosther Kusich</u> Michael Chiusano, Alternate | P | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Greater FTL Chamber of Commerce <u>Aiton Yaari</u> | P | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The Westin Ft Lauderdale Beach <u>Daniel Esteves</u> Laurie Johnson, Alternate | P | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B Ocean Fort Lauderdale <u>Carlos Salazar</u> Ken Elizondo, Alternate | A | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Beach Redevelopment Adv. Board <u>Jason Hughes (at 4:12 p.m.)</u> | P | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bahia Mar Doubletree <u>Lisa Namour</u> Patricia Miracola, Alternate | P | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sonesta Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort <u>Michael Medeiros</u> <u>JP Leblanc, Alternate</u> | P | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Staff

Cija Omengebar, CRA Planner
Clarence Woods, CRA Manager
Tasha Cunningham, BID Manager
Chris Lagerbloom, City Manager
Benjamin Rogers, Transportation and Mobility Director
Sarah Hannah-Spurlock, Manager, Nighttime Economy
Mark Almy, Superintendent of Parks Operation
Mauricio Baquero, Moderator
Crysta Parkinson, Prototype, Inc.

Guests

Ina Lee
Arianne Glassman
Bryan Lilley
Tom McManus
Dev Motwani

I. Call to Order / Roll Call / Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair MacDiarmid. It was noted that a quorum was present.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- **Regular Meeting – February 8, 2021**

Motion made by Mr. Fleming, seconded by Ms. Namour, to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2021 Regular Meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

III. Spring Break Operation 2021 Update

Chair MacDiarmid introduced Sarah Hannah-Spurlock, Nighttime Economy Manager and Sergeant Monica Ferrer, Fort Lauderdale Police Department, and invited them to provide an update on Spring Break.

Ms. Spurlock stated that this was the second full week of Spring Break and said they were available to answer any questions.

Chair MacDiarmid asked if there had been any major issues during the first two (2) weeks of Spring Break on the beach, or in the evenings.

Ms. Spurlock asserted that no issues had reached her level. She noted that Sgt. Ferrer was on the ground every day and could give them a better idea.

Chair MacDiarmid stated it appeared Sgt. Ferrer was not on the call.

Ms. Spurlock stated she believed the City had a good handle on Spring Break and had had the same protocol for several years, which has worked well. She acknowledged there were more crowds than normal, and probably more crowds than people were comfortable with given the pandemic, but that was beyond what the City could control. She noted the Spring Breakers were spending most of their time outdoors, which was a good thing.

Mr. Kusich asked when the biggest peak of Spring Breakers was expected in Fort Lauderdale.

Ms. Spurlock responded that at first, they anticipated it would be this week and next, but there was a theory floating around that since a lot of universities canceled their Spring Break, they may be waiting until the end of April, or until May. She noted there was no real evidence of it, but it was a theory staff would keep their eye on.

Mr. Kusich asserted that everything was going flawless, he was seeing a police presence and they were doing a great job.

Mr. Yaari added that police were doing a great job mitigating and balancing the crowds. He asserted that a lot of people come, and it gives Fort Lauderdale a good image.

IV. Beach Cleanliness

Mark Almy, Superintendent of Parks Operations, reported on cleaning efforts on the beach. He stated that during the previous week, crews started working late to keep debris off the sidewalks and other areas, and 24-hour service was now in full swing. He added that the crowd had been manageable so far, and 70 extra trash receptacles had been added on the sand and sidewalk.

Chair MacDiarmid stated she had noticed great clean up, especially where people walk on the sidewalk and boardwalk.

Mr. Yaari asked if there was an update on the influx of homeless people in the park.

Mr. Almy responded that the only information he had was that it had not been a hindrance for the cleanup crews as it had in the past, but police would have better information.

Mr. Medeiros commented that cleanup crews had done a great job so far and noted that he thought the receptacles were key.

Mr. Almy noted that if the area gets more heavily trafficked, they will be glad to increase staff, and added that if it gets busy cleanup will become an all-night venture. He told the Board to let him know if they see anything.

Chair MacDiarmid thanked staff for being organized and planning ahead to make sure the beaches were clean and safe.

V. Funding Request - \$1,000,000 – Breakers Avenue Streetscape Project

Clarence Woods, CRA Manager, stated that staff supported providing the funding for the Breakers Avenue Streetscape Project, which was presented at the January meeting. He explained that staff believed there was justification to be made for the funding but were still waiting for the legal department to give final approval as to whether the project was an appropriate use of BID funds. He noted that if the Board was in support of the funding, they could hold a vote and make approval subject to legal opinion.

Chair MacDiarmid asked Ms. Omengebar to share the remaining available budget numbers so the Board could keep them in mind during discussion. She reiterated that the request was for \$250,000 per year for four (4) years, totaling \$1 million.

Ms. Omengebar explained \$333,179 remained available for the fiscal year, and \$503,537 was held in reserves.

Ms. Namour commented that she appreciated the project and thought it brought a lot to the area that it would cover. She stated that she would think the Board needed to move forward with support, as it would continue to enhance everything the BID was doing in terms of creating a destination at Fort Lauderdale and Fort Lauderdale Beach.

Mr. Yaari asked the calculation of the return on investment. He asserted the project was very beautiful, but the BID was more than just a couple blocks on Breakers Avenue. He added that he is pro-improvement, but the request was for a lot of money.

Chris Lagerbloom, City Manager, stated there had been intense study done on Breakers Avenue and how to convert it to more of a pedestrian-friendly mall, turning it into basically a festival street. He noted the return on their \$1,000,000 investment was a \$12,000,000 project to turn a back street into a front street.

Mr. Lagerbloom stated there was some question in the City Attorney's office regarding the definition of the boundaries of the BID, and staff was interested in waiting for that opinion prior to acting. He added that the discussion had presented opportunities to review the Ordinance that created the BID and clear up any confusion. He noted the BID had a history of supporting events happening in the area, and staff wanted to make sure that what the Board does matches up with the Ordinance.

Continuing, Mr. Lagerbloom encouraged the Board that if they were inclined to support the project, they go ahead and do so contingent upon the attorney's opinion. He stated that a vote would send the strong message that the BID was looking to invest in the project. He stated he believed it was a good project and the bulk of the remaining funding

had been identified to make it a real project.

Chair MacDiarmid noted the project was not just about the street, but about improving the stormwater systems, lighting, and landscaping, more than just the cafes. She pointed the Board to a 20-page document in the backup for the meeting which outlined exactly where the project was to begin and end, what was planned, and included funding and timelines.

Mr. Yaari asked the spend would be \$250,000 per year for four (4) years from when legal gave the green light.

Mr. Lagerbloom responded that they hoped the opinion from legal would come in the balance of this business week.

Mr. Woods confirmed that Mr. Yaari's understanding was correct.

Motion made by Mr. Yaari, seconded by Ms. Namour, to approve the funding request for \$1,000,000 to the Breakers Avenue Streetscape Project, to be divided into \$250,000 annual payments for four (4) years, pending the opinion of the legal department. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

VI. Post Event Presentation & Funding Request - \$100,000 – Fort Lauderdale Air Show 2021

Bryan Lilley, Manager, Lauderdale Air Show, provided a post-event PowerPoint presentation regarding the November 2020 event. He thanked the City and the BID for their support and the flexibility to move the event to November. He explained it was held responsibly with the Stay Safe and Separate initiative and said he had heard reports of hotel occupancies at around 70 percent on the beach. He asserted that the project was uplifting and inspiring for residents at a time the community really needed it.

Mr. Lilley stated the show had hosted all four (4) Air Force fighter jet demo teams, which has never happened before. He noted the Air Force jumped in with both feet and it was very special. He added that massive media impressions had come because of the historic event. Mr. Lilley shared data from the six (6) week period leading up to the event, including the following information on the event's Facebook page:

- 190,628 sessions
- 123,420 unique visitors
- 2,381 users outside the USA
- 11,623 users from outside Florida
- 109,490 users from inside Florida
- 27,565 from outside the metro area
- 81,925 from Miami metro area

Mr. Lilley shared host hotel page traffic and information on the livestream, which was

available to those not able to attend in person with a game style broadcast including narration. He stated the stream attracted 60,000 viewers with an average viewing time of 24 minutes, including viewers from all 50 states and more than 100 countries.

Chair MacDiarmid asked if the Air Show had received any direct feedback from area businesses about topline revenue generated.

Mr. Lilley responded that the only information they had received was from two (2) hotels regarding occupancy.

Mr. Kusich asked Mr. Lilley if he expected more people and connections at the 2021 event.

Mr. Lilley stated that he did, and asserted organizers were experiencing a groundswell of response. He added that being able to host the event in 2020 and to do so safely would contribute to a robust 2021.

Mr. Fleming asked for details regarding the host hotels on the site, and whether those hotels had paid for the space.

Mr. Lilley responded that in exchange for hosting a performer, the Air Show promotes that guests can stay where the performers stay. He compared it to the Super Bowl, where people want to stay where the teams stay.

Ina Lee stated she was at the event and thought it was brilliantly executed. She asserted that people doubted whether it could be pulled off, but it showed Fort Lauderdale was open for business again and it was a turning point. She added that the event showed that Fort Lauderdale could do it and do it safely.

Mr. Lilley shared details of the 2021 event. He stated during 2020, the team took advantage of the extra time after having to postpone adding value, including rolling out AirDotShow, with a focus on the desirable locations of the air shows.

Mr. Lilley shared updates which had been made to focus on the desirable destinations of their air shows, including:

- New focus on promoting the destination and tourism
- Logo and redesign of materials that focus on the destination first, then the jets
- New website with destination marketing
- Host hotel portal is widely accessible across website
- Destination specific email campaigns featuring host hotels
- Enhanced host hotel portal tracking for every participating hotel
- Destination marketing carried through AirDotShow

Mr. Lilley explained he was asking \$100,000 financial support from the BID for the 2021 event to cover a portion of the City costs to cover police, fire, lifeguards, public works,

and traffic expenses for the free viewing area where most spectators enjoy the event. Mr. Hughes asked if the event would be able to continue without BID funds.

Mr. Lilley responded that loss of those funds could put the event in jeopardy because of the cost of support for the free spectator area and shortage of sponsorship availability in the current economy.

Mr. Medeiros stated he agreed with Ms. Lee that having an event such as this one brought exposure to the City. He stated he was in support.

Chair MacDiarmid agreed that the air show brought a lot of people and the beach was constantly full during the event.

Motion made by Mr. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Medeiros, to approve the funding request for \$100,000 to the 2021 Fort Lauderdale Air Show. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ari Glassman commented that she had been speaking with Mr. Lilley's team regarding expanding the Air Show weekend into the Friday with additional programming. She stated there would be a kite festival the weekend before the event with outreach into schools to talk about flight.

VII. Promotional Campaign Messaging Discussion

• Board Member Feedback

Tasha Cunningham, BID Manager, explained staff was moving full steam ahead with the CVB promotional campaign. She updated the Board on the results of discussions held with individual members while waiting for the contract to be approved. She stated feedback from the Board would be passed along to the CVB to make sure the BID was front and center in the development of the promotional campaign.

Ms. Cunningham stated she had reached out regarding identifying the five (5) business along A1A to be featured in the "Walking Around In" Conde Nast Traveler segment as well as potential messaging. She shared information on the businesses to be filmed for "B-Roll" on the video content.

Ms. Cunningham shared the messaging feedback and ideas she had received from those Board members she had been able to contact and the CVB, including:

- Wide open spaces on FTL beach
- Safety
- Something for everyone
- Book the vacation you deserve in FTL Beach
- When it's time to exhale, come to FTL Beach to find a breath of fresh air
- Play It Safe on FTL Beach

Ms. Cunningham noted that it was likely the area would be in a different phase of the pandemic at the point the promotions came out and asked the Board if they thought the safety messaging would land. Additionally, she asked if they believed the \$10,000 line item in the budget for the partnership with World Red Eye to create two videos, articles, and social media programs made sense to the Board.

Chair MacDiarmid asked whether the messaging should specifically mention COVID-19 or just talk about playing it safe. Discussion ensued regarding the safety messaging and the impact of masks in the video on the ability to reuse the content.

Mr. Hughes encouraged Board members to visit the World Red Eye website before making a decision. He noted that he believed they could spend the money better.

Ms. Johnson encouraged Ms. Cunningham to reach out to her if she had trouble reaching Mr. Esteves for feedback. She agreed that the promotional content did not need to include masks, as it would make the videos look short-term.

Chair MacDiarmid stated it sounded like most of the Board agreed the messaging should not include COVID-19.

Ina Lee commented that she agreed based on timing and added that she liked the idea of promoting major events in the fall season and telling people to make sure they came back because there was something for everyone. She noted the more specifically they showed a holistic promotion of the area, the better. She added that a lot of seniors were traveling again because they have been vaccinated, and as of right now they could not get on a cruise ship.

Chair MacDiarmid stated she agreed the BID was about the BID area and the businesses within it. She noted that whatever events were included, they should just make sure they were finalized.

Ms. Cunningham explained that she would create a survey to send to the Board to finalize the list of businesses for the promotion, rather than take the time to discuss the merits during a meeting.

VII. Communications to the City Commission

None.

IX. Old/New Business – Cija Omengabar, CRA Planner

- **April Meeting Agenda Item Recommendations**

Ms. Omengabar pointed the Board to the master special event calendar she had included in the backup, noting the yellow events had been approved administratively. She stated

that Ms. Glassman would be the best person to answer any questions.

Ms. Glassman noted that the calendar included events every weekend starting in November. She highlighted a few events that had been added to the calendar. Continuing, Ms. Glassman asked to provide feedback on the Conde Nast campaign. She stated the Lauderdale Deals Program ends in early September and added that if the dates were August and September as she understood, they might look at pushing it into October because messaging going out during hurricane season might not be advantageous.

Chair MacDiarmid asked the Board if they had any additional items for old or new business. She proposed additional follow-up presentations from projects the BID had funded at future meetings, such as the Valentine's Day event and the dog lovers' event, to learn more about the return on investment.

Ms. Omengabar stated that the application required a commitment to come back and do a presentation. She noted that data measurement conversations also happened between Ms. Cunningham and the applicant.

Chair MacDiarmid noted another item she would like to see on the agenda if the Breakers Avenue project went through was a monthly update on the project. She added that she would also like to request a BID logo be utilized in relation to the project where possible.

Mr. Medeiros agreed that monthly updates were important.

Mr. Hughes stated he also agreed and thought it was important that residents knew what the BID was doing and how the hoteliers were contributing to the project.

Chair MacDiarmid asserted that Mr. Hughes had hit it right on, noting that sometimes having a hotel next to a condo isn't always appealing, but the community needed to know the funds provided to enhance the area they live in.

Ina Lee added that the BID had also funded the new lighting fixtures going up on Fort Lauderdale Beach through the CRA and that had been a major issue with residents expressing concern over the safety of the beach. She stated she did not think residents knew the BID paid for those. She asserted that there should be regular reports to other boards regarding what the BID was doing for the overall committee.

Ms. Cunningham stated it would also be good to feature the information in the newsletter that goes out, explaining these events were coming to the community courtesy of the BID, this is who we are and what we do.

Chair MacDiarmid noted you really do not hear much about the BID other than at the meetings. She stated she shares on other committees as much as she can, but there isn't much knowledge about the funding going to events and infrastructure.

Ms. Namour asked if the BID had a social media page.

Ms. Cunningham stated that it was not under the manager's purview, but she believed the BID had a contract that managed the newsletter, website, and social media.

Ms. Namour responded that might be a place to put the information.

Ms. Cunningham suggested adding "brought to you by the Beach Improvement District" do the My Fort Lauderdale Beach branding.

Ms. Omengebar reported the artwork for the utility boxes was completed and she would be working with a vendor to get them wrapped. She added that the COVID messaging banners had gone up the previous weekend, and hopefully could be renewed each month until social distancing requirements were more relaxed.

Ms. Omengebar asked if there were additional agenda item ideas. She stated she would connect with other past events regarding providing post-event reports.

Mr. Fleming suggested a recap on Spring Break and lessons learned.

Ms. Omengebar stated she would keep it on the agenda as Ms. Spurlock had said Spring Break might continue through April. She noted she would follow up prior to the meeting.

X. Adjournment

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next Regular Meeting of the BID is scheduled for April 12, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

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

Attachments:

CVB Promotion Project *PowerPoint* presentation
Breakers Avenue Streetscape Project
Fort Lauderdale Air Show *PowerPoint* presentation