

# HOMELAND DEFENSE/ NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT BOND OVERSIGHT BOARD MINUTES

9/23/08 – 6:00 P.M.  
CITY OF MIAMI  
CITY HALL CHAMBERS  
3500 PAN AMERICAN DRIVE  
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33133

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The meeting was called to order at 6:14 p.m., with the following members found to be

Present: Rolando Aedo (Vice Chairman)  
Eileen Broton  
Mariano Cruz  
Robert A. Flanders (Chairman)  
Charisse L. Grant  
Kay Hancock-Apfel  
Ricardo Lambert  
Carmen Matos  
Gary Reshefsky  
Jose Solares  
Hattie Willis

Absent: Hugo P. Arza  
Luis Cabrera  
Jami Reyes

ALSO PRESENT: Denise Wallace, Assistant City Attorney  
Ola O. Aluko, Director, CIP Department  
Stephanie Grindell, Director, Public Works  
Juan Pascual, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation  
Elyrosa Estevez, Project Manager, Public Works  
David Méndez, Assistant Director, CIP Department  
Ricardo Castro, Project Manager, CIP Department  
Mike Tyler, Project Manager, CIP Department  
Keith Ng, Project Manager, CIP Department  
Robert Fenton, Project Manager, CIP Department  
Danette Perez, Board Liaison, CIP  
Marcia Lopez, Administrative Assistant I, CIP  
Teri-Elizabeth Thomas, City Clerk's Office

September 23, 2008

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JULY 22, 2008.**

HD/NIB MOTION 08-27

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JULY 22, 2008.

MOVED: R. Aedo  
SECONDED: M. Cruz  
ABSENT: H. Arza, L. Cabrera, J. Reyes

Note for the Record: Motion passed by unanimous vote of all Board Members present.

**II. NEW BUSINESS:**

- Discussion of Maintenance & Operations
  - ❖ Stephanie Grindell, Director of Public Works

Chairman Flanders: Discussion of maintenance and operations, Stephanie Grindell, director of Public Works.

Stephanie Grindell: Yes. Stephanie Grindell, director of Public Works. You guys asked me to come here, so if you have questions?

Chairman Flanders: Well, I'm simply going to turn it over to the rest of the Board because they all do have questions.

Ms. Grindell: Sure.

Mariano Cruz: I don't have anything, but they doing good work. Your department came and clean all the drains in Allapattah so when all this bad rain came, nothing. But the County didn't clean the major arterials, so 12th Avenue was flooded, but not the City part, so the City did a good job of cleaning all the drains and everything there.

Gary Reshefsky: Ms. Grindell, I don't know if they gave you an overview of why we asked you to come to the Board, but I guess several months ago we started talking about the bond projects that have been funded with the money that we're overseeing. The question that kept coming up was how was the City funding the ongoing maintenance of these various projects. At the last meeting, we had the Parks Department here, and they mentioned that GSA is responsible for doing a lot of that work on the ongoing maintenance. But if you could tell us a little bit about what Public Works does in terms of servicing some of the projects that have been built, whether it be streets, drainage issues. One hot button for people on this Board and many people in the community is the lighting on Coral Way. If you could give us a little overview of that, that would be really helpful, and I think it would probably bring some questions out from Board members as to what's in your purview because we don't want to ask you questions that don't have anything to do with Public Works.

Ms. Grindell: Sure. The projects that CIP builds in the public right-of-way are turned over to Public Works. We pay the electricity bills if there is lighting; the water bill if it has water. We handle the

maintenance in two separate ways. We either use our in-house staff or hire contractors to assist us. As the projects are turned over to Public Works, we include those requests in our budget.

Mr. Reshefsky: Can you tell us a little bit about the Coral Way project?

Ms. Grindell: The Coral Way project, I think at the time that you guys originally had requested that I come, we had some contractual issues with the previous contractor. We terminated his services, and it took quite some time for us to get a new contractor on board. In the interim, you know, the routine staff, the in-house staff, performed those services, but generally, they handle mowing and tree trimming. They're not really landscapers, so there were some concerns as far as how they maintained the shrubbery, etcetera. Basically, they were just helping out until we could get a new contract. The new contractor started right around the time of the US Conference of Mayors. We were actually struggling to finish that corridor before the entourage of buses came through with all the mayors from all over, and we basically finished barely in time. But from that moment on, I don't think that we've had a problem with the landscaping. Now as far as the lighting, I can't tell you off the top of my head -- maybe Ely came. Ely is one of the project managers, and she says that, as far as she knows, all of it's working.

Jose Solares: What? And I apologize to both of you, but I drive through there every weekend. It cost over \$600,000, I think, that lighting project. I have been on this Board now for about a year and a half, close to two years now, and since we came here, we have been complaining about the same thing. Two weeks ago, all the lights were not on. If they fixed them over the last two weeks, you have to forgive me, and I'll take your word for it. Many of us that work in the industry, we take our contractors' word and say, yeah, it's fixed or it's repaired.

Elyrosa Estevez: For the record, Elyrosa Estevez, Public Works. One of our inspectors also does overnight inspections in the City of Miami. Right now Coral Way is under the new contractor, Florida Lawn Services. They submitted a proposal two months ago for the electrical lighting. There was a lot of vandalism on the lighting. We were missing 12 of them. It has taken some time, but I know that we got almost all the parts. The lighting that you that is not working is because there is a special portion of the light that has to be restructured because the lighting fixture is very complicated.

Vice Chair Aedo: You know, this project has caused a lot of angst and frustration over the years. I drive by there every night, so for the record, the stretch between 13th and 14th is not working as of last night. I think we were all excited but somewhat cautious about the expenditures for this lighting project because it was the lighting, it was the landscaping, and this one's been fraught with problems.

Ms. Estevez: Like I said before, we noticed a lot of vandalism to the lights. The lights are made of aluminum, so they're constantly taken out. It's a simple screw on the bottom portion of it.

Vice Chair Aedo: We didn't know that?

Ms. Estevez: I can't say.

Vice Chair Aedo: It's a rhetorical question. Obviously, these were things that you would have thought would have been considered. I think the attempt was noble, but it definitely hasn't executed how I think a lot of people envisioned it.

Ms. Estevez: The contractor that we do have now is very professional, and the bid came out within the limits of our scope of services. I think that he will do a professional job once those lights are in.

Jose Solares: I am not shooting the Public Works Department at no time. I admire you and respect you for the job you are doing over there. The problem is what is the City doing to provide you with the proper support, proper staffing and proper funding. We are spending millions and millions of dollars to build things that we cannot maintain. If that's the case, let's not build it. You know why they took the aluminum off? Because it wasn't energized, so it's no problem at all to take.

Chairman Flanders: I think what you're hearing here, Ms. Grindell, is the concern of the Board regarding the protection, the preservation, and the maintenance of the new projects as they're coming on online. Now I know that your department is supposed to submit a 5-year or 10-year operating plan. What I think this Board wants to hear from you is your insight as to how your budgeting process is working with the new projects, how you are planning going forward. As we all know, you have to maintain the buildings in the parks. What we really want to know is what happens after it's built. Are you getting the financial resources? Is your department being properly staffed? Do you have a 5- and a 10-year plan going forward?

Ms. Grindell: You asked so many questions at one time. I can't speak for Parks or GSA, which maintains buildings in parks. What I can say is that this fiscal year was a little bumpy. Generally, the way that Public Works and CIP handle budgetary issues is prior to the fiscal year when Public Works is getting ready to submit the budget, we ask CIP to tell us all the projects that are going to be coming forward. At the time, a lot of projects are very preliminary. Based on the information that's available at the time of the budget, they provide us with the generic information as far as the scope of the projects. From that, we come up with a cost estimate of how much we believe it's going to cost to maintain it based on the preliminary information that available. And with that information, we include that in our budget.

Mr. Aluko: We do have midyear adjustments. By the time we do reach the midyear adjustments, some of the projects may have been a little more clearer in terms of the completion date and also the operating costs that she will incur. At that time, we will sit down with the Budget director and tender those new numbers to the Budget director and at that time the adjustments will be made.

Hattie Willis: Are you sure that you will be able to do what you need to do with the budget that you have?

Ms. Grindell: I do feel comfortable with the budget that I have, but we have not finalized the number as to how much the maintenance is going to be for all the projects that are to be turned over to Public Works.

Ms. Willis: I always panic during hurricane season. They promised that they would be cutting back the trees and removing dead limbs. I'm not seeing where we're winning with that fight. I would appreciate if you look into that and find out where we are with that.

Ms. Grindell: I can explain that to you now. One of the biggest shocks when I first started with the City was that there wasn't a routine maintenance plan for Public Works. We've been working for a really long time to start a routine maintenance plan. While that doesn't make sense for some items, it does for others. In the area of tree trimming, we actually started our routine plan in January. We

divided the City into 118 grids. Right now we're probably 50 into 118. The full cycle will take around two years.

Charisse Grant: What's the level of coordination or communication between what's being developed for a project out of CIP in terms of what's going to go in there and what the responsibility of Public Works is going to be to maintain it afterwards?

Ms. Grindell: I can say that when I first got here, Public Works wasn't involved at all in the capital plan. We've been working really hard with CIP to start reviewing those plans.

Mr. Reshefsky: Sorry to go back to the lights issue again. How much do the lights cost? Are you guys paying for them out of your budget?

Ms. Grindell: We do pay for the replacement lights out of our budget.

Mr. Reshefsky: How much do they cost?

Ms. Estevez: Each component of the light fixture comes from a different manufacturer. To put one light together costs about \$1,500, and the supplier will not sell directly to the City. The current contractor that we have has proposed a new plastic light fixture.

Mr. Reshefsky: Could I make a suggestion? We spent a lot of money on this project, and I'm just thinking that we're throwing more money at this same project and maybe it might be a good idea to get some input from us so it's not just you all making these decisions. It sounds ridiculous to keep spending money on it.

Kay Hancock-Apfel: I believe if I was going to put a light up and it was stolen once, the second time I would look to get a type of light that would be very difficult to steal. You really need to look at the type of lights, and it was a terrible mistake to use a light that comes from that many sources that can be stolen so readily.

Ms. Willis: If it costs that much money to replace those lights, maybe we can change the lights and find another type of light that would serve the purpose and be more cost-effective.

Ms. Grindell: There are several things to consider. You have to look at the number of light fixtures that we have. We replace on an as-needed basis. Do we want to replace on an as-needed basis with something that looks completely different? That's going to look horrible.

Mr. Aluko: The comments that you all have brought up are very valid comments. Should we stop the bleeding now and consider installing entirely new lights? I think that's something the Public Works Department, the City Manager's office, and obviously the CIP Department needs to get together and look at.

Chairman Flanders: Ola, if you could develop a de facto City standard, it could be incrementally implemented as these things break down. Actually, over time, they would all be replaced and we would, in fact, have a de facto City standard.

Mr. Aluko: We'll definitely take that under advisement with the Public Works Department.

❖ Juan Pascual, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation

Chairman Flanders: The next item is Juan Pascual, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation. Welcome.

Juan Pascual: Thank you very much. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'm assuming you've got some concerns and some issues as far as how our projects are being maintained. First of all, there's a two-fold process as far as our budget goes and our preparation for our budget. We have program concerns and we also have maintenance concerns, so we divide our budget on an operation perspective, those that are dedicated to programs and enhancing the quality of life directly to our citizens and then those that are directed towards maintenance. The maintenance that our department is responsible for is predominantly the grounds maintenance, and then we are in the process of working concurrently with GSA in developing contract services for some of those maintenance issues that normally would be in the realm of GSA, but they may not have the particular expertise in-house to address those. In the budget process, what we have done is we've identified, in working in conjunction with CIP, those projects that are projected to be online within the next fiscal year. Some of that is prorated for the fiscal year, dependent upon when they're scheduled to come online. We've worked diligently with the Budget Department, and they have been gracious enough to understand our needs, and they have given us the funding in order to operate, open, staff, program and to maintain those particular facilities for the current fiscal year.

Hattie Willis: My major problem is GSA. As far as I'm concerned, they're atrocious, and they don't do their job properly. You know I'm constantly calling your office. What I'm saying to you is the response time and their behavior, is that a budget problem, or is that just the way it is overall with the City? It is not appropriate. It just doesn't work.

Mr. Pascual: We have a very good relationship with GSA, and we've identified some of the challenges that both our department and their department have. I think we have a plan in place moving forward to address some of those issues. We're identifying where the needs and deficiencies are as far as the ability to provide the service, and then those are the issues that we're contracting out for contractual services for maintenance.

Ms. Willis: So we're going to have a check and balance system? You're going to have like a quarterly report or something to see overall if they're taking care of all of the parks and doing the things that they need to do efficiently?

Mr. Pascual: We have a needs assessment report. On a monthly basis, our park managers actually have to walk their facility to identify the things that are visually deficient that need correction, and then there's a work order submittal system, and those work orders are then either processed through to GSA or in-house, and those that cannot be completed by GSA are then contracted out.

Charisse Grant: When a project like Jose Marti Park gym comes online, what's the cooperative process to ensure that building maintenance is done on a routine basis so that the Parks Department has a facility that the public can use?

Mr. Pascual: Obviously, I can't speak on behalf of GSA because I'm not with GSA.

Ms. Grant: I'm asking because you guys ultimately need the facility.

Mr. Pascual: We now have a mechanism in place in which we do evaluations. We do have a process. We do have contractors that Procurement has established as preapproved. We do work with GSA in the sense of identifying where maybe some of the deficiencies are and then trying to find a way cooperatively of identifying those, seeking the proper funding, and then putting those contracts in place.

Ms. Grant: My question is really do you have any control or any say over or the ability to make sure that GSA's budget this year and forward includes appropriate maintenance costs so that you don't wind up with something happening to a gym or whatever that really was their responsibility to sort of maintain that now you, the Parks Department, can't use?

Mr. Pascual: I wish I did have the influence to set budgets. What we do is sit down with GSA and identify those areas that we need to work together in order to seek additional funding for those particular needs. And we have done that successfully so far this year, and we're planning on continuing working together with GSA and identifying those as we move forward.

Ms. Willis: I think GSA should be here. I want to find out is it going to get better. I know Stephanie's department has gotten better. I know that Juan's department has gotten better. I can hear Juan saying in the back of his conversation, "I'm not them. I only can tell you what we do with them." Ola is the same way. I know that they need to be here because they're a problem. Believe me, the things that we're addressing, they are a problem, and I really don't know what in-house cleaning went on, but maybe we can ask them the appropriate questions because we're not asking them to the appropriate person. Can we get them?

Chairman Flanders: Hattie, that's easily rectified. We'll put them on the agenda for next month, Ola, and they'll be invited to appear, as Stephanie has, as Juan has.

Ms. Willis: Great.

Chairman Flanders: What we want to do is to feel so comfortable with the process that sometimes we can run what is called political interference in a positive way and lobby our elected officials or the City Manager and say, by the way, did you know the situation exists? Chances are they do, but now you've brought it to their attention, and then they will obviously address it. So Hattie, is that okay? Ola, can we do that?

Mr. Aluko: Mr. Chairman, most definitely. And in all fairness to GSA, they were uninvited because we thought the key items were the Parks and Public Works Departments. They did ask if they should come and we said no because the questions were geared towards Parks and Public Works. So my apologies, but we will invite them for the next meeting.

• Tamiami Storm Sewer Improvements – Construction Services

**NAME OF PROJECT:** [TAMIAMI STORM SEWER IMPROVEMENTS – CONSTRUCTION SERVICES](#)

**TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT:** **\$2,083,918** (\$518,100 Previously Approved; \$526,389 Future Funds)

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:** Tamiami Storm Sewers Phase IV, HD Series 1, 2, and 3

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:** The proposed work consists of drainage improvements consisting of French drains, new storm sewer outfalls, catch basins, cross drains and surface restoration. Road improvements such as roadway milling and resurfacing, damaged sidewalk replacement, curb and/or gutter replacement, re-sod of swales, and ADA compliant ramp construction as needed within project limits. Additional information listed under the Notes Section on the attached Project Analysis Form.

HD/NIB MOTION 08-28

A MOTION TO FUND THE TAMIAMI STORM SEWER IMPROVEMENTS - CONSTRUCTION SERVICES.

MOVED: K. Apfel  
SECONDED: M. Cruz  
ABSENT: H. Arza, L. Cabrera, J. Reyes

Note for the Record: Motion passed by unanimous vote of all Board Members present, with the exception of Gary Reshefsky.

**III. UPDATES:**

1. Commodore Plaza Street Furniture

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project has been completed.

Elyrosa Estevez, Public Works, reported that two metal benches were installed at 3138 Commodore Plaza on brick pavers, and the project is 100 percent completed.

2. Historic Preservation Initiatives – City Hall

Gary Reshefsky stated that study of the columns is being finalized. The columns are currently being encased in concrete, and the project should be completed within six months.

Robert Fenton, CIP Department, stated that the remediation work has not started yet. The engineering work is complete. The contracts have been awarded to the contractor and the shop drawings are currently being reviewed to start the repairs.

3. Bicentennial Park Shoreline Stabilization, Phase III - Construction Services

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project has been a great project for the City and it has been completed.

David Méndez, Assistant Director, CIP, reported that the project has been completed on time and under budget.



#### 4. Fire Station No. 11 – Design and Construction

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project cost went down by 30 percent since it was originally estimated.

David Méndez, Assistant Director, CIP, stated that even though there was a successful bid, the bid is under protest, so depending on how that protest goes, construction may or may not start in November as originally planned.

Ola Aluko, CIP Director, stated that the project will proceed forward until directed to stop.

#### 5. Fairlawn Storm Sewer Improvements Phase III – Design Services

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project design is 90 percent complete.

Ola Aluko, CIP Director, stated that the fees being charged for the design are within average and are actually a little below.

#### 6. College of Policing

Gary Reshefsky stated that construction on the project is 20 percent complete. The project completion date is anticipated for October 2009.

Ola Aluko, CIP Director, stated that the original completion date was scheduled for July 2009. However, the City had not received 100 funds in its escrow, and that's one of the reasons why the contract was not signed with the contractor. The funds are in escrow, so the Department is comfortable that the facility will be built. The commitment that the City received from the School Board has not changed. However, should there be a change of commitment, we have various departments that are jumping at using this facility, so the City will be able to maintain this building on its own.

#### 7. NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Improvements – Design Services

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project is broken up into different segments. The City is paying for the design of the project, and the County is funding most of the project.

#### 8. Additional Funding for Armbrister Park Building Improvements

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project was completed and the building is being occupied. The project utilized additional funding to be completed, but the additional funding came in under budget.

#### 9. Jose Marti Park Gym

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project is completed and the grand opening is scheduled for October 18 at 10:30 a.m.

#### 10. Additional Funding for Black Police Precinct Courthouse Museum Restoration

Gary Reshefsky stated that the project is complete and the contractor is currently obtaining the CO.

Ola Aluko, CIP Director, stated that the ribbon-cutting ceremony date has not yet been determined.

#### **IV. CHAIRPERSON'S OPEN AGENDA:**

Chairman Flanders stated that Larry Spring told him that the City's bond rating was improved, so not only are we not in jeopardy, our bonds aren't and our bond rating, unlike some other cities and counties out there, is solid.

#### **V. ADDITIONAL ITEMS:**

- Discussion of November and December meeting schedule

Chairman Flanders suggested that the meetings for the November and December board meetings be held on November 21 and December 19.