

City of Miami
Homeland Defense/Neighborhood Improvement
Bond Oversight Board

MEMO

To: Joe Arriola, City Manager
From: Robert A. Flanders, Chairman
Date: February 15, 2005
Re: Homeland Defense/Neighborhood Improvement Bond Oversight Board (BOB)
Annual Report for The Year 2004 as Per Sec. 2-890 of The City Code

Pursuant to City Code Section 2-890 (Annual Report of City Boards and Committees), please accept this memorandum as the annual report of the BOB for the year 2004 in the manner and format prescribed in the City Code as follows:

City Code Question No. 1: Whether the board is serving the purpose for which it was created?

BOB Response: Miami's first BOB was created in 2001 by the City Commission to serve in an advisory capacity to the City to oversee and monitor the implementation of the proceeds of the \$255 Million in Bond Funds for Miami's Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). The BOB is fulfilling its purpose diligently with the input and vision from the Mayor's office, the City Commission, and with the extensive assistance and education from the City Manager's office and the CIP Department.

City Code Question No. 2: Whether the board is serving current community needs?

BOB Response: City Administration estimates the City of Miami's current unmet capital needs at roughly \$1.5 Billion. The Bond proceeds and other monies currently available for Miami's CIPs total \$650 Million, approximately 1/3 of the total needed.

Keeping the fairest interests of the entire community in mind and in view of the \$1 Billion shortfall, the BOB stayed on-track with the prudent guidelines we established for all CIPs brought before us: A.) Is the project and its budget on the list specifically identified by the City Administration and set forth in informational pamphlets and media releases prior to the November 2001 election, or in the City Ordinance (as amended) creating the BOB, or one of the Commissioner's prioritized personal district projects or been sent to us by the City Commission as an item approved by their resolution and thereby recommendation?

B.) Have all available matching grants been applied for and the funds secured? C.) Has the CIP and its budget been approved by the CIP Department and secured the approval of the City's Boards having an interest and by the BOB Audit Committee? D.) Will the CIP be purchased, implemented and/or constructed within the timeframe that the BOB has established? E.) What is the actual cost of operation and maintenance and has a line item been established in the City's Budget for the following year to reflect the cost of operation and maintenance of the new item and/or facility?

City Code Question No. 3: A list of the board's major accomplishments.

BOB Response: Over the past two years the BOB has grown greatly in its role as the Commission's and the taxpayer's watchdog overseeing Miami's CIP, and in my own personal opinion our finest achievement to date has been to help re-educate each of the city departments that have come before us that accountability and good results are the name of the game. It is no longer just, "business as usual" and the public's "crisis of confidence" in the city is rapidly dissipating.

The Miami Commission's creation of the Homeland Defense/Neighborhood Improvement Bond Oversight Board was a historical first. BOB members have gladly shouldered their leadership role in the restoration of the public's trust in the City's fiscal ability to raise general obligation bond funds and to insure that the funds are wisely spent on the intended improvements, with no fraud, waste or abuse. Growing the taxpayer's trust in Miami allows us to create additional improvements in the City's infrastructure.

At their considerable personal sacrifice our Audit Sub-Committee members continue to hold several meetings each month, reviewing new projects and the progress of existing projects, reporting their findings at the next BOB meeting so that decisive action can be taken immediately. These meetings speed the CIP process so that an increasing number of projects can be executed quickly. The Audit Sub-Committee and the BOB continues to seek the wise counsel of the Commissioners and the Mayor so that we may operate with their vision and goals in mind.

In no case could the BOB operate with such effective diligence without the complete cooperation and dedication of the many members of the City's Staff that we work with and we gratefully acknowledge their significant contributions and also the special devotion shown to us by the entire CIP Department.

Good communication is the best way to improve the public's awareness of Miami's growing CIP program, and our BOB Communications Sub-Committee is focused on that. All BOB monthly meetings are televised live from Commission Chambers, and are rebroadcast several times each month, and the BOB's user-friendly website within Miami's Official Website is constantly updated so that the citizens may easily learn when, where and how their CIP funds are spent. We continue to meet with and respond to the media's requests for information and we are considering creating a Miami CIP Citizen's Newsletter.

City Code Question No. 4: Whether there is any other board, either public or private, which would better serve the functions of this board?

BOB Response: To our knowledge – no other board – either public or private – has been created and educated to specifically address Miami's Capital Improvement Projects program.

City Code Question No. 5: Whether the ordinance creating the board should be amended to better be able to serve the purpose for which it was created?

BOB Response: The BOB has proven its worth and value to the City and one way in which the Ordinance might better serve the purpose for which it was created would be to amend it to make the BOB responsible for oversight of all of Miami's CIP.

City Code Question No. 6: Whether the board's membership requirements should be modified?

BOB Response: In our opinion, no condition exists that would warrant any change at this time.

City Code Question No. 7: The cost, both direct and indirect, of maintaining the Board?

BOB Response: Since much of the city staff's time is voluntary, the annual cost of maintaining the Board for 2004 remains difficult to estimate. As the portion of staff salaries attributed to the Board include employees from the City Manager's office, the CIP Department, Law, Media Relations and all other city departments required to assist in the function of the Board, the total cost would have to include both personnel and other indirect City expenses.