

2017-29867

RESOLUTION NO.

A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY COMMITTEE AND THE FINANCE AND CITYWIDE PROJECTS COMMITTEE TO TRANSITION TO NON-GAS POWERED LEAF BLOWERS FOR ALL CITY LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS AND DIRECTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO REQUEST ALL CURRENT CITY LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE CONTRACTORS TO VOLUNTARILY COMPLY FOR THE DURATION OF THEIR CONTRACTS AND, FURTHER, DIRECTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO REQUIRE NON-GAS POWERED LEAF BLOWERS IN ALL FUTURE BIDS FOR CITY LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE WORK.

**WHEREAS**, at its February 10, 2016 meeting, the City Commission discussed the elimination and/or phasing out of gas-powered leaf blowers and converting to the use of a less noisy and environmentally friendly alternative. The Mayor and City Commission referred the discussion to the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee for further direction; and

**WHEREAS**, at its June 15, 2016 meeting, the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee discussed the item. A motion was made to have the Sanitation Division reach out to a manufacturer to coordinate a temporary pilot program to test blower models that would produce less noise. At the March 1, 2017 City Commission meeting, a dual referral of this matter was made to the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee and to the Finance and Citywide Projects Committees; and

**WHEREAS**, at its March 8, 2017 meeting, the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee unanimously approved a recommendation that the City transition to the use of non-gas powered leaf blowers; and

**WHEREAS**, at its March 17, 2017 meeting, the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee also recommended moving forward with the transition to non-gas powered leaf blowers, while continuing to use the existing gas-powered blowers through their life cycle; and

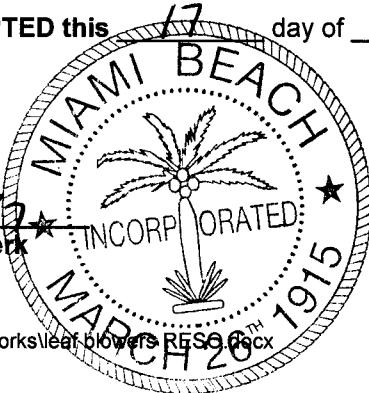
**WHEREAS**, in view of the above-referenced Committee recommendations, the City Administration recommends that all current City landscape maintenance operators and contractors be requested to voluntarily comply by utilizing non-gas powered leaf blowers for their duration of the contracts and that all future bids for City landscape maintenance work require the use of non-gas powered leaf blowers.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA**, that the Mayor and City Commission hereby accept the recommendations of the Sustainability and Resiliency Committee and the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee to transition to non-gas powered leaf blowers for all City landscape maintenance operations, direct the City Administration to request all current City landscape maintenance contractors to voluntarily comply for the duration of their contracts and, further, direct the City Administration to require non-gas powered leaf blowers in all future bids for City landscape maintenance work.

PASSED and ADOPTED this 17 day of May, 2017

ATTEST:

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk



Philip Levine, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO  
FORM & LANGUAGE  
& FOR EXECUTION

T:\AGENDA\2017\4 - April\Public Works\leaf blowers RESO.pcx

City Attorney

Date

R. Levine 5/19/17

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission  
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager  
DATE: May 17, 2017

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY COMMITTEE AND THE FINANCE AND CITYWIDE PROJECTS COMMITTEE TO TRANSITION TO NON-GAS POWERED LEAF BLOWERS FOR CITY OPERATIONS AND CONTRACTORS.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Administration recommends approving the resolution.

### **ANALYSIS**

At the February 10, 2016 meeting, the City Commission discussed the elimination and/or phasing out of gas-powered leaf blowers, to a less noisy and environmentally friendly alternative. The Mayor and City Commission referred the discussion to the Sustainability & Resiliency Committee for further direction.

At its June 15, 2016 meeting, the Sustainability & Resiliency Committee discussed the item. A motion was made to have the Sanitation Division reach out to a manufacturer to coordinate a temporary pilot program to test blower models that would produce less noise. At the March 1, 2017 City Commission agenda, a dual referral to the Sustainability & Resiliency Committee and Finance and Citywide Projects Committees were made.

At its March 8, 2017 meeting, the Sustainability & Resiliency Committee unanimously approved the transition to non-gas powered leaf blowers. At its March 17, 2017 meeting, the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee also recommended moving forward with the transition to non-gas powered leaf blowers, while continuing to use the existing gas-powered blowers through their life cycle.

Leaf blowers, widely used in yard maintenance, are the subject of repeated complaints related to air pollution from combustion products and fugitive dust, as well as noise pollution, particularly from gas-powered motors. Several local, state, and federal agencies across the U.S. have published reports concluding that there are potential health and environmental impacts associated with leaf blowers.

Alternatives to gas-powered leaf blowers include electric leaf blowers, electric mowers, and manually-operated tools such as rakes and brooms. Electrically-operated leaf blowers are the

preferred alternative to gas-powered leaf blowers because they provide plenty of power without producing exhaust emissions or as much noise. While noise emissions from the average gas-powered leaf blower measures about 65-75 decibels (dB) at 50 feet, electric-powered models on average measure about 65 dB at the same distance. Furthermore, electric-powered leaf blowers for both personal and commercial uses generally fall within the same price range as similar gas-powered blowers. The main difference between the two leaf blower types is that the batteries for the electric model last between 30 to 130 minutes of continuous run time and therefore its operation for professional purposes requires a supplemental power source such as a long extension cord, a back-up battery, and a high-speed battery charger.

The City of Santa Barbara in California has banned gas-powered leaf blowers and regulated other types of leaf blowers since 1997. According to several reports, the City has not incurred increased expenditures beyond a one-time cost of \$90,000 to replace their gas-powered leaf blowers with electric-powered blowers and has experienced little to no impact on their municipal operations since the ban went into effect. Conversely, the City of Claremont in California opted to replace leaf blowers with rakes and brooms following the enactment of their leaf blower ban and quantified a 6% increase in staff hours. However, the increase in man hours needed to maintain the same level of service in our tropical environment is expected to be much greater and would have substantial impact on our sanitation, public works and parks operations.

The City of Miami Beach owns and operates over 40 leaf blowers for its Greenspace Management, Sanitation, and Parks & Recreation operations. All leaf blowers currently, except two which were purchased for the pilot program are gas-powered. In addition, City contractors currently use over 15 gas-powered leaf blowers for their operations. The cost of substituting the City's current stock of gas-powered leaf blowers for cordless battery-powered units is estimated at approximately \$1,200 per unit (Attachment A), or \$48,000, which includes the professional (heavy duty) wireless electric leaf blower, backpack battery, and high speed charging unit. It should be noted that this estimate does not consider staff or contractor time required to learn how to operate new equipment or the costs for back-up batteries, additional chargers, etc.

With regard to City landscape maintenance contractors making the transition to battery operated leaf blowers, the City's Greenspace Management Division currently has approximately \$2.5 million in landscape maintenance contracts which expire in March 2018. The direction to utilize battery operated leaf blowers on City owned or controlled properties will entail a revision of the contract language and an increased cost for maintenance services, as the expense for additional non-standard equipment will be passed on from the vendor to the City. Should the City Commission accept the recommendation of the Sustainability & Resiliency to phase out gas-powered leaf blowers, current landscape maintenance vendors will be asked to voluntarily comply with the directive for the remainder of their existing maintenance contracts. Once the contracts expire, during the new bid process the City could solicit bid alternatives for the exclusive use of battery operated leaf blowers on all City properties.

Attachments: A – Joe Blair Garden Supply Cost Estimate

## **CONCLUSION**

The Administration will not purchase additional gas powered leaf blowers.

**Legislative Tracking**

Public Works

**Sponsor**

Commissioner Michael Grieco

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Description**

- Leaf blower estimate

DATE
2/17/16
TIME
12:36
SALESMAN
079/079
STORE
1

**Joe Blair**

320 NE 79th ST.  
MIAMI, FL 33138

**305-757-5554**

[www.joeblairlawnmower.com](http://www.joeblairlawnmower.com)

INVOICE
574163
P/O NUMBER
WORK ORDER
PAGE
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BILL TO ACCOUNT:	2100
CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PUBLIC	
WORKS, GREENSPACE ROW DEP.	
2100 MERDIAN AVE	
MIAMI BEACH, FL 33139	

SHIP TO ACCOUNT:
CITY OF MIAMI BEACH PUBLIC
WORKS, GREENSPACE ROW DEP.
2100 MERDIAN AVE
MIAMI BEACH, FL 33139

Tax Exempt # 230932987154

ALL PROPERTY BELONGS TO JOE BLAIR GARDEN SUPPLY  
UNTIL PAID IN FULL. NO RETURNS ON SPECIAL ORDERS.  
ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS AND STORM SALES.

CUSTOMER PICKUP

Shipped VIA:

ORD	SHIP	B/O	LINE	PART NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	LIST	NET	AMOUNT
OMARLEON MIAMIBEACHFL.GOV								
1	1		STE	BG66L	BG66L HAND HELD BLOWE	269.95	189.56	189.56
				SN-	1.			
	1		STE	BGA100	BGA 100		276.46	276.46
1	1		STI	48654006501	AR900 LITH ION		671.46	671.46
1	1		STI	4850-430-5702	CHARGER	129.95	119.95	119.95

QUOTE ONLY

SUB TOTAL	1257.43
MISC	0.00
LABOR	0.00
Tax: 7.000	0.00
DOWN PAYMENT	
INVOICE TOTAL	1257.43