



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139,  
[www.miamibeachfl.gov](http://www.miamibeachfl.gov)

## COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Neighborhood and Quality of Life Members

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: May 20, 2020

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION REGARDING SARGASSUM SEAWEEED PLAN**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Sargassum seaweed is a natural occurring flora found in the marine environment. It typically floats on the surface of the open ocean and is carried close to the shore by currents where it is deposited along the shoreline with each incoming tide. The amount of seaweed which accumulates on our beaches varies seasonally, with greater proliferation observed from late spring thorough the early months of autumn as depicted by Attachment 1. The preponderance of seaweed during this period has continued to increase over the last few years.

The City's beaches are owned by the State of Florida and fall under several jurisdictions. Miami-Dade County is responsible for the beaches' maintenance whereas the City is responsible for the managing activities that occur on the beach. Beach management is a collaborative effort. As it relates to seaweed, Miami-Dade County Beach Operations and Maintenance is tasked with cleaning and grooming the shoreline as well as turning the accumulated seaweed into the sand to minimize visibility and odor. Turning the seaweed with sand and into the shoreline helps reduce sand erosion and further, preserves the ecology which provides food for shorebird communities and nutrients for healthy dunes.

### **ANALYSIS**

City of Miami Beach staff collaborates with the County on every aspect related their beach maintenance program, including meeting regularly to discuss and evaluate their performance on our beaches. In response to the high prevalence of seaweed, City staff has worked with the County on a plan to reduce the abundance of sargassum on the shorelines. Under RFP-01385, the County Commission recently awarded a contract to Beach Raker LLC, for seaweed removal and mechanical beach cleaning services. Effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, Beach Raker will provide seaweed removal services seven days per week to address hot spot areas, including areas from 26<sup>th</sup> Street to 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Additionally, they will provide beach grooming from the Government cut to the Jetty. During the low season (February to April 30<sup>th</sup>), services will be rendered four times per week (Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). Furthermore, the County will provide the City with monthly reports of the total pounds of seaweed collected in our beaches.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment 1** – Proliferation of Sargassum seaweed on Miami Beach's shorelines, April 2020.

