



City of Miami Beach, 1700 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, Florida 33139, www.miamibeachfl.gov

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee Members

FROM: Jimmy Morales, City Manager

DATE: September 23, 2020

SUBJECT: Discussion Regarding Pedestrian Safety on the Beachwalk (Agenda Item # 8 – C4G from 12/11/19 Commission Meeting Referral and 3/4/20 NQLC Agenda)

ANALYSIS:

Commissioner Steinberg has requested the Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee to continue the discussion reading Pedestrian Safety on the Beachwalk. This was originally brought to the NQLC on March 4, 2020.

➤ **Signage**

- Need assessment of the effectiveness of the current signage. Tourists and transient patrons may not be aware and conscious to the rules/ordinances pertaining to safe use of the beach walk while riding bicycles.
- Only 12 days after the original meeting at the NQLC (3/4/20), the state of emergency was declared as the COVID 19 pandemic affected our normal operations. At that time, we were also in the heart of spring break and required to redirect all our efforts toward handling that event and its challenges. The Parks and Recreation Department assisted with supplementing areas like South Pointe Park to assist with social distancing, facial coverings and closures regarding parks, beaches and other facilities used by visitors.
- Proposed having the media department construct appealing designs to capture the attention of bicyclists to comply with simple rules.
- Area Captains have tasked NROs with assisting in the facilitating of sign deployments once they are available

➤ **Enforcement:**

- Campaign for compliance by educating our residents on the ordinances and rules by using social media, City websites, emails by neighborhood committees
- Due to the imposed State of Emergency the available Police and Park Ranger resources were primarily tasked to deal with pandemic related calls for service, enforcing social distancing mandates and violations of the facial covering mandates.
- Police resources were needed for the social distancing road closure of Ocean Drive and requisite additional personnel to police the adjacent park, to ensure businesses and pedestrians were complying with emergency measures

- As resources become available (personnel and signage) and restrictions are lifted, PD and Park Rangers will work closely with the PIO and City Communications to initiate a public education campaign on this issue.
- A proposed a "Bike Safety Initiative" with the Community Affairs Unit in collaboration with our Park Ranger Team was scheduled for April 2nd. Due to the COVID pandemic, this initiative was postponed. The Community Affairs Unit will re-schedule once emergency measures are lifted.
- All Park Ranger personnel have been instructed to proactively address all issues pertaining to pedestrian safety on the Beachwalk. They have also provided suggestions attached to previous email.
- The PD updated staffing plan will have officers assigned to patrol the Beach and Beachwalk as of September 14, 2020. Among their numerous responsibilities will be the enforcement of ordinances related to operation of motorized vehicles.
- Motorized vehicles are ABSOLUTELY prohibited. The Park Ranger personnel have seen a significant decrease in usage of electric scooters, skateboards, etc.
- Aside from the golf carts that operate for Miami Beach Marina we have not encountered issues with any motorized vehicles with an exception to 1 incident which was dealt with located at 1 Washington Ave boardwalk on 8/24 at approximately 1252hrs, BWC captured (2020-61010).
- Outside of the COVID pandemic and county ordinance enforcement detail, 127 Park and Walks have been conducted by officers from South Pointe to 5th Street on the boardwalk. 79 Park and walk details have been conducted by officers assigned to the ACD Beachwalk Area.
- Park Rangers from March through August have had 59,929 face mask warnings, 4,934 face masks issued, and 320 police assists (18 with arrests), 1084 homeless outreach contacts, and 35,300 spot checks of problem locations

CONCLUSION:

Pedestrian safety on the Beachwalk continues to be an important goal for the police department. The police department is continuously reevaluating public safety priorities as changing conditions warrant. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the deployment of enforcement resources with an unprecedented emphasis being placed on addressing the public health crisis. The task of policing the requirements of the emergency orders requiring the wearing of masks, social distancing, and curfew enforcement has required a significant commitment of police manpower.