

# MIAMI BEACH

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

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # 233-2021

## LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Dan Gelber and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager

DATE: June 2, 2021

SUBJECT: Motion from the Marine and Waterfront Protection Authority Board

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The purpose of this Letter to Commission is to transmit the following motion approved unanimously by the Marine and Waterfront Protection Authority Board at its April 13, 2021 meeting:

The Marine and Waterfront Protection Authority Board requests that Flagler Memorial Island be permanently closed to all motorized vessels and that the island and immediate surrounding waters be designated as a non-motorized boat zone with access to the island limited to official City of Miami Beach vessels required for safety and upkeep of the area.

Flagler Memorial Island is a man-made uninhabited island on Biscayne Bay in the city of Miami Beach. The island is only accessible by boat. A 110-foot-high obelisk that dates back to the 1920s stands in the center of the island as a monument to Miami pioneer Henry M. Flagler. A restoration of this historic site, completed in 2009, was funded by Miami-Dade County's General Obligation Bond. The money was used to repair the monument and clear the island of weeds and underbrush.

Regrettably, over the years, the island has developed a reputation as a party destination for boaters, illegal charters, and jet skiers whose gatherings often result in loud noise, trash and illegal activities on the island.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the island has been closed to all recreational vehicles in an effort to avoid gatherings that could potentially contribute to the spread of the virus. The closing has helped Miami Beach Marine Patrol to control the boat and jet ski traffic in the bay and has reduced the stress on the ecosystem of the island.

In order to continue this positive trend, the Board Members of the Marine and Waterfront Protection Authority recommend that Flagler Memorial Island remain closed to all vessels until the island and its immediate surrounding waters can be designated as a non-motorized boating zone.

  
ATH/EC/HDC/JC