



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

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

LTC # **363-2021**

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Honorable Mayor Dan Gelber and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager 
DATE: September 1, 2021
SUBJECT: Appointment of Assistant City Manager

The purpose of this LTC is to announce the selection of Lester Sola as our newest Assistant City Manager. I am confident he is the right match for our City of Miami Beach team. I have worked with Lester for nearly 30 years and have found him to be an outstanding leader who possesses the drive, dedication, knowledge and integrity required to be successful in this role.

Lester has close to three decades of experience in public service. He is the previous Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department. In that role, he oversaw operations at Miami International Airport (MIA) — one of America's busiest international passenger and cargo airports — as well as four general aviation (GA) airports in the Miami area that generate a combined total of \$33.7 billion in business revenue and support more than 280,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Lester also served as Director of the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department, which is the largest utility in the southeastern United States. There, he was responsible for providing high-quality drinking water and wastewater disposal services to more than 2.3 million residents, businesses and visitors. In that position, he managed more than 2,700 employees with an annual operating budget of \$796 million and led the largest capital improvement program in Miami-Dade County history. During his tenure at the department from 2015 to 2017, the agency completed nearly 1,000 capital projects worth more than \$1.1 billion.

Prior to his appointment to the Water and Sewer Department, Lester was the Miami-Dade Director of the Internal Services Department (ISD). The department is responsible for the County's procurement of goods and services, small business development, architectural and engineering selection services, capital improvement programs, design and construction services, facilities and fleet management, risk management, parking operations, printing and graphics services, surplus asset disposal and capital inventory oversight. He managed an operating budget of \$370 million, capital projects totaling over \$400 million and more than 850 employees.

The City of Miami Beach will benefit from the breadth of Lester's experience, which also includes other appointments as Contract Coordination Officer in the County Executive Manager's Office, Architectural and Engineering Consultant Coordinator for the County Executive Manager's Office,

Assistant to the County Manager, Associate Director for the Aviation Department, Deputy Director for the Department of Business Development and Supervisor of Elections.

Lester has been responsible for the reorganization of several County departments, coordination and refocusing of the capital program at Miami International Airport, the creation of small and minority-based programs for the procurement of goods and services, and the establishment of centralized systems for tracking County capital expansion programs and professional services. He has also been responsible for the provision of management direction to County departments as well as management agreements and agencies such as Aviation, Seaport, Beacon Council, Performing Arts Center and the then American Airlines Arena.

Lester has a master's degree and bachelor's degree in public administration with a minor in organizational psychology from Florida International University.

Please join me in welcoming Lester to the City of Miami Beach. He will begin his tenure with us on September 13. I will coordinate introductory meetings with all of you during that week. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

Attachment

CC: Executive Staff
Management Team

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Experience

February 2018 – Present
Director and CEO, Miami-Dade Aviation Department
Miami-Dade County

- Manage over 1,500 employees
- Manage annual operating budget of \$900 million
- Manage capital program of \$5.5 billion
- Manage a system of 4 General Aviation Airports and Miami International Airport
- Responsible for the number one economic engine for Miami-Dade County. Airport system generates over 300k jobs and an economic impact of \$31 billion in the county.
- Expanded operations, passengers and cargo volumes to new records for airport system
- Directed airport system through the Covid-19 pandemic and recovery
- Business development efforts resulted in new routes and airlines during the most difficult period of the aviation industry.
- Restructured contracts to increase small and local business participation
- Perform press conferences and media interviews (English and Spanish)
- Brief and interact with elected officials (local, state, federal and international governments)

January 2015 – January 2018
Director, Water and Sewer Department
Miami-Dade County

- Manage over 2,700 employees
- Manage annual operating budget of \$796 million
- Manage capital program of \$12 billion
- Recipient of J.D. Power Awards (2016 & 2017) for highest ranking customer satisfaction in Southern region of the US.
- Established the Small Business Initiatives Office to achieve over 70% participation in all projects and contracts by small businesses
- Restructured rules and procedures for water and wastewater infrastructure construction development to facilitate economic growth
- Selected by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act finalist
- Perform press conferences and media interviews (English and Spanish)
- Brief and interact with elected officials (local, state and federal) and the public

August 2011 – May 2015
Director, Internal Services Department
Miami-Dade County

- Manage over 1,000 employees
- Manage annual operating budget of \$330 million
- Manage capital budget of \$400 million

- Oversee policy and procedures for the County's capital program
- Responsible for Purchasing, Capital and Maintenance Program, Human Resources, General Services, Fleet Management, Real Estate Program Development
- Direct comprehensive reviews of the department's organizational structure, process flow and staff competencies to effectively achieve goals
- Perform press conferences and media interviews (English and Spanish)
- Brief and interact with elected officials (local, state and federal) and the public
- Formulate revisions to local, state and federal laws

Special Achievements

- Consolidated four departments into one in order to achieve savings
- Responsible for all countywide procurement, Architectural and Engineering contracts
- Oversee countywide Constructions policies and procedures
- Oversee Small Business Programs
- Developed policies and legislation

January 2003 – August 2011 **Supervisor of Elections/Director** **Miami-Dade County Elections Department**

- Oversaw up to 120 full-time and 1,000 seasonal staff members
- Managed annual budget up to \$27 million and ensured maximum productivity at minimal cost
- Supervised five divisions responsible for Information Technology, Education and Outreach, Voter Services, Operations, and Election Coordination, Campaigns, and Compliance
- Conducted elections with 829 precincts, 20 Early Voting sites and up to 10,000 poll workers per election
- Directed comprehensive reviews of the department's organizational structure, process flow and staff competencies to effectively achieve goals
- Performed press conferences and media interviews during major election cycles and regularly met with candidates, elected officials, and the public
- Formulated and lobbied for revisions to federal and state laws
- Served on several State of Florida Planning Committees

Special Achievements

- Restructured the department's Table of Organization and streamlined policies and procedures
- Executed a complete equipment conversion in an expedited timeframe
- Planned, procured and implemented several new technologies: new systems, asset management tracking and electronic document management system
- Developed training program to include a Certification Program
- Recipient of the County Manager's Award of Excellence 2007
- Recipient of several NACo Achievement Awards

July 2001 – January 2003 **Department of Business Development** **Deputy Director**

- Administered 106-person department

- Managed and directed five Division Directors responsible for Administration, Information Technology, Contract Compliance, Certification, Education and Outreach
- Administered \$6.3 million annual budget
- Served as departmental representative on the County's Review Committee
- Managed administration of the consultant selection appointment process
- Managed the application of measures for Miami-Dade County's small and minority business programs
- Administered the certification processes for disadvantaged, small and minority businesses, including technical certification for architectural/engineering firms
- Administered contract compliance, monitoring, investigative and appeal processes
- Administered the County's debarment and anti-discrimination processes
- Organizational structure review

March 2001 – August 2001
Department of Procurement Management
Assistant Director

- Administered 90-person department
- Developed new consultant selection legislation and procedures
- RFP/Q process administration
- Reviewed Request for Proposal and Request for Qualification selection process
- Reviewed bids and contracts process
- Organizational structure review
- Workflow analysis

February 2001 – May 2001
Aviation Department
Associate Director, Business and Economic Development

- Developed and implemented the Aviation Department's Business and Economic Development Program to bring businesses to Miami International and the General Aviation Airports
- Coordinated, analyzed and disseminated information relating to Aviation Department Capital Program Expansion
- Coordinated Aviation expansion with the County Manager's Office and the Beacon Council
- Developed a consistent approach to opportunities available to the Aviation Department
- Monitored legislative decisions and their impact to the Aviation Department
- Provided executive level support with the transition of the Aviation Director
- County Manager's Office liaison for the Aviation Department

December 1998 – February 2001
Office of the County Manager
Assistant to the County Manager

- Served as liaison between the County Manager's Office and the following county departments: Aviation, Seaport and Performing Arts Center

- Provided direct executive support to Assistant County Manager and the County Manager
- Reviewed all agenda items for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners.
- Served as Executive Assistant to Aviation Director

Special Projects

- American Airlines Arena Construction
- Dade Aviation Consultants contract restructuring
- Performing Arts Center Project
- Miami International Airport Capital Improvement Program
- Negotiation Team – User Agreement for all Airlines at Miami International Airport
- Community Improvement Authority

May 1996 – December 1998

**Department of Business and Economic Development
Division Director**

- Director of the Architectural / Engineering and Certification Division
- Coordinated countywide selection process for consultants
- Established outreach office to increase the number of firms certified
- Developed and implemented new Small Business Enterprise program
- Coordinated minority and small business certification of firms interested in doing business with the County
- Managed a staff of 20 individuals
- Direct support to the department director and the Assistant County Manager
- Developed and implemented procedures to improve the department
- Represent the Department Director in their absence at departmental and public meetings
- Implemented training program for new employees

Special Projects

- BBE/HBE/WBE & DBE program administration
- SBE program Development
- Design-Build Consultant Selection Coordinator
- Architectural / Engineering Consultant
- Architectural and Engineering Trade Organization Representative
- Performing Arts Center Consultant Selection
- Departmental Restructuring
- Policy Development and Implementation

July 1993 – May 1996

**Office of the County Manager
Administrative Assistant 2**

- Established Contract Coordination Office
- Developed and managed the countywide construction process
- Produced reports for the Board of County Commissioners
- Administered the Countywide Design-Build Consultant Coordination
- Developed capital projects policies for county departments and provided implementation procedures.
- Ordinances and Administrative Order Development

- Development and implementation of the County's Debarment Ordinance, Value Engineering and Partnering Program

Special Projects

- Dade Aviation Consultants – Program Reorganization
- Aviation Department – Capital Program Realignment

February 1992 – July 1993
Office of the County Manager
Management Trainee

- One-year rotation program through the following County departments: Aviation, Public Health Trust, Office of Management and Budget and Development and Facilities Management

Special Projects

- Hurricane Andrew Recovery Team
- Personnel Recruitment
- Job Fair Coordinator
- Total Quality Management Coordinator
- Developed Departmental Budgets

June 1985- February 1987
Florida Federal Savings Bank
Mortgage Loan Office Manager

- Staffing
- Development of new Markets
- Marketing Strategies
- Real Estate and Commercial Financial Instruments

Education

Florida International University, Miami, Florida

- M.P.A., Public Administration (Graduated with Honors)
 - B.A., Public Administration, Minor in Psychology
- Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government
- Certificate in Driving Government Performance

Languages

Fluent in English and Spanish