

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE, AT ITS APRIL 17, 2024 MEETING TO REPLACE THE TESLA MODEL X VEHICLE WITH A HIGHER CAPACITY STARCRAFT VAN OPERATING ON A FIXED ROUTE/FIXED SCHEDULE, SIMILAR TO THE FORMER MIAMI-DADE BUS ROUTE 115 ("ROUTE 115"), TO PROVIDE A MORE RELIABLE AND CONSISTENT CONNECTION BETWEEN NORTH BEACH AND MOUNT SINAI MEDICAL CENTER, AND TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE PROPOSED SERVICE TO AN EXISTING BUS STOP LOCATED ON 41 STREET EAST OF ALTON ROAD TO CONNECT TO ROUTE 150 (MIAMI BEACH AIRPORT EXPRESS); AND WAIVING, BY 5/7TH VOTE, THE FORMAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 2-367(E) OF THE CITY CODE, FINDING SUCH WAIVER TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CITY, AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENTS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A FIXED ROUTE/FIXED SCHEDULE TRANSIT SERVICE TO A PORTION OF THE CITY'S AREAS PREVIOUSLY SERVED BY ROUTE 115, WHICH ROUTE WAS ELIMINATED BY MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AS OF NOVEMBER 13, 2023 AS PART OF THE BETTER BUS NETWORK: (1) AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA ("COUNTY"), PROVIDING FUNDING TO THE CITY FOR A FIXED ROUTE/FIXED SCHEDULE TRANSIT SERVICE; AND (2) AN AMENDMENT TO THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH BEEFREE, LLC D/B/A FREEBEE TO INCLUDE A FIXED ROUTE/FIXED SCHEDULE TRANSIT SERVICE AS PART OF THE SCOPE OF THE FREEBEE AGREEMENT; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE CITY, AT A MINIMUM, HAS SECURED A LETTER OF COMMITMENT FROM THE COUNTY TO FUND THE ENHANCED FIXED ROUTE/FIXED SCHEDULE SERVICE.

WHEREAS, at the December 13, 2023 City Commission meeting, at the request of Commissioner Alex Fernandez, the City Commission referred an item (C4 Z) to the Transportation, Parking & Bicycle-Pedestrian Facilities Committee ("TPBPFC") and the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC" or "Committee") to discuss access to Mount Sinai Medical Center for North Beach residents who use public transportation as their main mode of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the Miami-Dade County ("County") Better Bus Network is a restructuring of regional bus service based on a comprehensive countywide study conducted by the Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works ("DTPW") in collaboration with Transit Alliance Miami, a not-for-profit organization; and

WHEREAS, the Better Bus Network study was initiated in June 2019 and approved, as amended, by Resolution No. R-920-21 of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners ("BCC") on October 5, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the BCC Resolution authorized the implementation, by DTPW, of the Better Bus Network; and

WHEREAS, DTPW launched the approved route changes on November 13, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the changes included several new bus routes in Miami Beach including routes 14, 15, 20, and 100 as well as improvements to service frequency; and

WHEREAS, based on DTPW's assessment, frequency and reliability of Miami-Dade County bus service in the City of Miami Beach ("City") is expected to improve as a result of the Better Bus Network; and

WHEREAS, as part of the Better Bus Network, DTPW discontinued Route 115 due to historically low ridership (an average of approximately 134 riders per weekday and 67 riders on weekends); and

WHEREAS, the City Administration ("Administration") initially and consistently expressed concerns with aspects of the Better Bus Network via City Commission Resolution No. 2021-31866, including the elimination of Route 115 without providing an alternative transit option for the affected community, such as an on-demand service, as a mitigation strategy; and

WHEREAS, to help mitigate the impact of DTPW's discontinuation of Route 115 and provide a suitable public transit option to the affected customers in North Beach, the City's Transportation and Mobility Department staff worked with DTPW staff on a plan to augment the City's on-demand transit service operated by Beefree, LLC d/b/a Freebee ("Freebee") to primarily serve the North Beach portion of Route 115 (all existing stops from 63 Street to 88 Street) as well as Mount Sinai Medical Center as an on-demand service; and

WHEREAS, while City staff requested that DTPW allocate funds for the operation of two (2) Tesla X SUV vehicles to meet the anticipated demand of the expanded service area, DTPW approved funding for only one (1) Tesla X SUV vehicle for the expanded service; and

WHEREAS, the single Tesla X SUV vehicle, operated by Freebee, was put in service on November 13, 2023, the same day Route 115 service was eliminated by DTPW; and

WHEREAS, the projected annual operating cost of the Tesla X SUV vehicle is approximately \$168,000 and will be funded (retroactively and prospectively) by DTPW for a two (2) year period through an Intergovernmental Agency Agreement ("IAA") between the City and the County; and

WHEREAS, since the launch of the City's expanded on-demand Freebee service on November 13, 2023, Transportation and Mobility Department staff has been collecting data to evaluate the effectiveness of the new service.; and

WHEREAS, compared to the former Route 115 bus service, which had an average daily ridership of 134 riders on weekdays and 67 riders on weekends, from November 2023 to April 2024, the expanded on-demand Freebee service experienced a lower daily ridership, with an average daily ridership of 72 riders on weekdays and 42 riders on weekends; and

WHEREAS, the data shows that average passenger wait times increased significantly during weekday morning and afternoon peak hours, reaching up to 80 minutes; and

WHEREAS, at the February 14, 2024 PSNQLC meeting, the Committee recommended that the Administration share the data collected by the City with the County and explore other alternatives to the existing on-demand Freebee service in North Beach and return to the April 17, 2024 PSNQLC meeting with an update; and

WHEREAS, based on the data analysis, City staff met with DTPW and proposed enhancements to the existing on-demand Freebee service; and

WHEREAS, the City requested DTPW to replace the existing Tesla Model X vehicle, which accommodates five (5) passengers, with a Starcraft van, a high-capacity vehicle which can accommodate 14 passengers; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the City proposed the implementation of a fixed route/fixed schedule service to provide a more reliable and consistent connection between North Beach and Mount Sinai Medical Center; and

WHEREAS, the new service model would operate with one (1) Starcraft van 13 hours a day, 7 days a week, from 7 am to 8 pm, mirroring the operational hours of the former Route 115 and ensuring continuity in service availability for the community; and

WHEREAS, to support this new service model, the City requested additional funding from DTPW, which DTPW has agreed to provide; and

WHEREAS, the estimated annual operating cost for one (1) Starcraft van is approximately \$245,000; and

WHEREAS, at the April 17, 2024 PSNQLC meeting, the Committee recommended that the existing Tesla Model X vehicle be replaced with a higher capacity Starcraft van operating on a fixed route/fixed schedule (similar to the former Route 115) to provide a more reliable and consistent connection between North Beach and Mount Sinai Medical Center; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the Committee recommended that the Administration explore the feasibility of extending the proposed fixed route/fixed schedule service to an existing bus stop located on 41 Street east of Alton Road to connect to Route 150 (Miami Beach Airport Express); and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Commission hereby accept and adopt the PSNQLC recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Commission hereby waive, by 5/7th vote, the formal competitive bidding requirement in Section 2-367(e) of the City Code, finding such waiver to be in the best interest of the City, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute the following agreements in order to provide a fixed route/fixed schedule transit service to a portion of the City's areas previously served by Route 115, which route was eliminated by Miami-Dade County as of November 13, 2023 as part of the Better Bus Network: (1) an interlocal agreement with Miami-Dade County, Florida ("County"), providing funding to the City for a fixed route/fixed schedule transit service; and (2) an amendment to the professional services agreement with Beefree, LLC d/b/a Freebee to include a fixed route/fixed schedule transit service as part of the scope of the Freebee agreement; provided, however, that the City, at a minimum, has secured a letter of commitment from the County to fund the enhanced fixed route/fixed schedule service.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission accept the recommendation of the Public Safety and Neighborhood and Quality of Life Committee, at its April 17, 2024 meeting, to replace the Tesla Model X vehicle with a higher capacity Starcraft van operating on a fixed route/fixed schedule, similar to the former Miami-

Dade bus route 115 ("Route 115"), to provide a more reliable and consistent connection between North Beach and Mount Sinai Medical Center, and to explore the feasibility of extending the proposed service to an existing bus stop located on 41 Street east of Alton Road to connect to Route 150 (Miami Beach Airport Express); and hereby waive, by 5/7th vote, the formal competitive bidding requirement in Section 2-367(e) of the City Code, finding such waiver to be in the best interest of the City, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute the following agreements in order to provide a fixed route/fixed schedule transit service to a portion of the City's areas previously served by Route 115, which route was eliminated by Miami-Dade County as of November 13, 2023 as part of the Better Bus Network: (1) an interlocal agreement with Miami-Dade County, Florida ("County"), providing funding to the City for a fixed route/fixed schedule transit service; and (2) an amendment to the professional services agreement with Beefree, LLC d/b/a Freebee to include a fixed route/fixed schedule transit service as part of the scope of the Freebee agreement; provided, however, that the City, at a minimum, has secured a letter of commitment from the County to fund the enhanced fixed route/fixed schedule service.

PASSED and **ADOPTED** this 15th day May, 2024.

ATTEST:

Steven Meiner, Mayor

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

(Sponsored Commissioner Alex Fernandez)

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION

City Attorney

Date

5/7/2024

KIR