

# MIAMIBEACH

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

## **HISPANIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

City Liaison: Leonor Hernandez [leonorhernandez@miamibeachfl.gov](mailto:leonorhernandez@miamibeachfl.gov)  
305.673.7610 Ext. 6413

August 22, 2017

Mr. Jimmy Morales  
City Manager  
City of Miami Beach  
1700 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, Florida 33139

Dear Mr. Morales:

Pursuant to Section 2-190.22, of the Code of the City of Miami Beach, the purpose of the Hispanic Affairs Committee is *to serve as a vehicle for responsible persons to utilize and consult with, in attempting to understand and resolve the concerns of the Hispanic community of the city, and to make recommendations to the city commission and city administration regarding such matters.* Further, the Code in part empowers the Committee with the responsibility *to formulate and recommend plans and programs for coordination of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities pertaining to the Hispanic community of the city.*

On July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee (Finance Committee) discussed a funding recommendation from the Hispanic Affairs Committee for activities occurring during Hispanic Heritage Month. At the time, the Finance Committee approved a funding recommendation in the amount of \$1,500.00.

It is during these trying times when cultural division and racism has been emboldened in society that Miami Beach must continue to shine as a welcoming city that proudly embraces and celebrates its diversity. Because of this, the Hispanic Affairs Committee is thankful to the Finance Committee for the funding recommendation sponsored by Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez and Commissioner Micky Steinberg and moved by Commissioner Joy Malakoff. With anticipation that the funding recommendation be ratified by the City Commission at its meeting of September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Hispanic Affairs Committee thanks you in advance for the effort undertaken to recognize and celebrate the rich culture of the Hispanic community that constitutes the majority of the Miami Beach population.

During a separate discussion held at the Finance Committee meeting, it was indicated that funding recommendations for programming coordinated by the City's advisory boards and committees should be presented through the yearly budget process. To date, the Hispanic Affairs Committee has not been contacted regarding our recommendation for budgetary action for the upcoming fiscal year. Therefore, in keeping with the request of the Finance Committee and in advance of the September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 presentation of the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018, the Hispanic Affairs Committee

unanimously adopted a motion on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017 submitting to the City Commission and Administration the following recommendation for funding.

Funding Recommendation – Fiscal Year 2017-2018			
Activity	Programmed Funding	Requested Enhancement	Total Funding
Hispanic Heritage Month	\$17,000.00*	\$6,500.00	\$23,500.00
Jose Marti Celebration		\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Mid-year outreach		\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Total			\$33,500.00

*\*Funding traditionally budgeted through the City of Miami Beach Parks Department.*

The recommended funding for the Hispanic Heritage Month Festivities is inclusive of the funding historically allocated within the Parks Department for expenses related to the Hispanic Heritage Festival. The recommendation from the Hispanic Affairs Committee also takes into consideration funding necessary for other activities being programmed to occur throughout Hispanic Heritage Month including a Domino Contest, Movie in the Park, Awards Presentation Reception, and a concert at the North Beach Bandshell. These events are designed to ensure that Hispanic Heritage Month is truly a month-long celebration of the great contributions to Miami Beach with activities of wide appeal.

Earlier this year, the Hispanic Affairs Committee reinstated the City's Jose Marti Celebration. With the support of funding approved midyear by the City Commission, a successful celebration was held on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Given the success of the Jose Marti Celebration, the Hispanic Affairs Committee strongly encourages the City to continue this important program and also provide funding for an annual outreach activity to take place in the spring or summer months.

This letter is respectfully presented to the City Commission and Administration with the hopes that funding maybe properly allocated for the recommended programing by Hispanic Affair Committee as part of the budget process for Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018. The Hispanic Affairs Committee has great respect for the duties entrusted upon us to represent the Miami Beach Hispanic community constituting 53% of the total population. We trust that the City Commission and Administration will collaborate to ensure that the recommended funding is properly allocated.

While we live in a progressive and welcoming oasis, in recent times we have witnessed a bigoted and prejudiced rhetoric resurface in society. These insensitivities, the violence, and the threats are all too familiar to our hardworking, law-abiding, and taxpaying Hispanic population who have made Miami Beach their home but who just decades ago were marginalized and even discriminated. Today more than ever, we count on your leadership to uphold and enhance the City's efforts to conspicuously celebrate the positive contributions of our Hispanic culture and safeguard its embrace as part of the fabric of this community.

Sincerely,



Alex J. Fernandez, Chairman  
Miami Beach Hispanic Affairs Committee

cc: Honorable Philip Levine, Mayor  
Honorable City Commissioners  
Members, Miami Beach Hispanic Affairs Committee  
Mr. Raul Aguila, City Attorney  
Mr. Ralph Granado, City Clerk  
Mr. John Woodruff, Chief Financial Officer