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**Mayor’s Ad Hoc Small Business Taskforce**

**Monday, December 10, 2018**

**City of Miami Beach**

**1755 Meridian Avenue, Miami Beach**

**MINUTES**

Committee Members in attendance:

* George Heisel
* Jason Loeb
* JP Morgan
* Tim Wilcox
* Sheila Duffy-Lehrman

Committee Members Absent:

* Jean Robert Latortue
* Diego Caiola

City Staff Present:

* Heather Shaw, Acting Director, Tourism, Culture and Economic Development
* Elias Gonzalez, Commission Aide to Commissioner Mark Samuelian
* Melissa Berthier, Assistant Director Marketing and Communications
* Gedel Merzius, Economic Development Specialist, City of Miami Beach

Guest Speakers:

* Dan Davidson, Owner Temple House
* Jerry Libbin, Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce

**Welcome and call to order:** Jason Loeb opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance.

**Approval of the November 19, 2018 Minutes**: Jason Loeb made a motion to move the October minutes, JP Morgan seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Jason Loeb started the meeting by pointing out that the Downtown District Authority placed an ad into the American Airlines Magazine exclusively to highlight what is being done in the City of Miami to drive economic development and tourism.

Heather Shaw, Acting Director, Tourism, Culture and Economic Development stated to do something similar the Task Force could suggest the creation of strategic messaging that would promote collectively and in partnership with the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau. (“GMCVB”)

Jason Loeb asked, how can this Taskforce help the City of Miami Beach develop its own brand, to drive and welcome business.

JP Morgan stated that the initial meeting of the Taskforce, it was discussed is to bring in different department heads within the City of Miami Beach to streamline the processes of business. JP Morgan called for longer, more extensive meetings similar to the Parking and Transportation meetings that are more than 2 hours long. To identify what specific department challenges exist for small businesses, in the City of Miami Beach, the taskforce can review and make recommendations. JP Morgan also suggested that Code Compliance come back for further conversations about small business issues.

Tim Wilcox, stated that Art Basel 2018 was the strongest Art Basel in the last 10 years, due to Art Basel vendors renting empty storefront space. Tim Wilcox suggested that similar activations be encouraged for events such as Art Basel to rejuvenate small business opportunities.

**Production Industry Council (“PIC”) Discussion – Attracting the Film, Print and Special Event Industries:**

Dan Davidson, CEO of the Temple House and Chair of PIC, stated that the City of Miami Beach and the State of Florida are working to enhance t relationships with the film and print studios in hopes to encourage the industry to return to Miami Beach. Currently, production companies are only taking select location shots or recreating Miami/Miami Beach locations in other states such as Georgia.

Sheila Duffy Hoffman cited the importance of re-embracing film and understanding that this is a small business issue within the City of Miami Beach. Sheila Duffy Hoffman stated that the disappearance in film incentives made filming in the City of Miami Beach less attractive.

Dan Davidson stated that the City of Miami Beach has realized there is a need for a culture shift where incentives are created, and the film industry is welcomed back. Dan Davidson stated that there needs to be a direct statement from the Mayor and Commissioners welcoming the film and print industries in Miami Beach. Dan Davidson believes once that directive is made clear then the industries will return.

Jerry Libbin, President of the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce, stated to embrace small businesses there needs to be some sort of flexibility and change in policy. Jerry Libbin suggested creating a campaign asserting that Miami Beach is open for business. Jerry also suggested that there should be some sort of incentives given back to the Miami Beach community along with presenting tangible evidence of what the benefits are to a community, allowing them to understand why specific businesses are important to a community.

Heather Shaw stated that the City of Miami Beach and specific agencies, such as PIC and the GMCVB, are working towards a tangible communications plan. Highlighting social media and other plans into why a business owner should do business in Miami Beach.

Sheila Duffy Hoffman suggested that a motion be set in place to draft a letter of support for the commission to lobby at the state level on behalf of the film and entertainment industry on tax incentives. JP Morgan moved to second that motion.

**MOTION: To request the Miami Beach City Commission lobby the Florida State Legislature to support the re-establishment of a state film industry tax incentive.**

**Discussion on various ways to promote and market Miami Beach as welcoming business community:**

Jerry Libbin spoke of the different Opportunity Zones within the City of Miami Beach. Jerry referenced 41st Street and 71st Street as examples of Opportunity Zones within the City of Miami Beach where different projects has grown interest throughout the community. Jerry spoke of meeting with the newly elected Mayor of North Bay Village Brent Latham and the new Town Manager at Bay Harbor Island JC Jimenez about having Miami Beach Chamber business owners make presentations. Giving a small tutorial to small business on the nuances of running a business.

Heather reminded the committee that in January the City of Miami Beach will be launching Capacity Building Workshops with WeWork giving discount memberships for for-profit and nonprofit businesses addressing the subjects of capacity building, governing through red tape free of charge. Heather also mentioned that there is an item on the December City Commission to fund Prospera, a bi-lingual capacity building organization for businesses in North Beach.

Jerry stated that he believes that the Miami Beach Chamber would be interested in giving a complimentary 3-month membership to anyone who attends the WeWork capacity building workshops.

**Discussion on various ways to promote and market Miami Beach as a welcoming business community:**

Melissa Berthier, Assistant Director Marketing and Communications for the City of Miami Beach,

Discussed the need for material to promote for the Small Business throughout the City of Miami Beach. Melissa suggested a small public service announcement video message showcasing the City of Miami Beach is open for business.

Sheila Duffy Hoffman suggested that there should be a packet for new Business Tax Receipt (“BTR”) recipients explaining the benefits of owning a business in the City of Miami Beach.

Jason posed the question to committee members on whether they should extend the Task Force from the April 2019 sunset. JP Morgan recommended that we wait till the February meeting to decide of whether to extend the Task Force because of the motions that the Small Business Task Force have pending. JP also stated that, giving the Task Force more time to accomplish tangible programs/projects before the end of the April sunset would prove worthier than just simply asking for an extension.

**MB Commission and Committee Agendas:**

Elias Gonzalez, Commission Aide to Commissioner Mark Samuelian, spoke about brainstorming for new ideas. Elias suggested engaging the resident input for those different ideas to gain wins with the City Commission.

Heather Shaw spoke on the items going to the Commission meeting such as WeWork and Prospera.

**Public Forum:** Jason Loeb suggested that we invite members from 41st Street Committee and the Ocean Drive Taskforce Committee, to suggest working together to accomplish things for small businesses. Heather Shaw suggested that some type of Town Hall meeting take place with all the community members throughout the City of Miami Beach.

Elias suggested that when asking for an extension in February the Task Force should suggest a restructured Task Force which would include the participation of different representatives of various business associations throughout the City of Miami Beach.

Heather announced that our next meeting will be in three weeks on Monday, January 10, 2018 at 9am.

**ADJOURN**

Jason made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Diego seconded, and the meeting closed at 10:28 AM.

**Minutes Approved by the Mayor’s Ad Hoc Small Business Task Force**

**on: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Jason Loeb, Chair**