



Small Business Taskforce
August 1, 2018
City of Miami Beach
1755 Meridian Avenue, Miami Beach

MINUTES

Committee Members in Attendance:

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

Committee Members Absent:

- Jean-Robert Latortue

City Staff Present:

- Michelle Huttenhoff, Staff Liaison/Economic Development Manager
- Eva Silverstein, Director Tourism, Culture and Economic Development
- Heather Shaw, Assistant Director, Tourism, Culture and Economic Development
- Elias Gonzalez
- Diana Fontani

Jason Loeb opened the meeting at 9:10 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance. Jason welcomed back the Committee and asked that George Heisel, who was unable to join the first meeting, make an introduction to the group.

JP Morgan made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, Tim Wilcox seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Small Business Taskforce Survey: Michelle explained that during the last Taskforce meeting the members made a motion to create a small business survey that would help gather information and data to inform the Taskforce's future work. The questions presented were those proposed by Taskforce members as well as questions that the Taskforce identified during the first meeting. Michelle explained that this survey would be published by the City of Miami Beach and circulated throughout the City in partnership with the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce.

The Taskforce reviewed the survey and had several outstanding questions and ideas for the flow of the survey. The members felt that the survey needed a section that requested contact information (name, email, and type of business). Some of the members requested that the revenue ranges be modified but the Taskforce determined that it was best to keep them as presented.

Based on the feedback from the conversation, Michelle stated that she would amend the survey and circulate to the Committee for final approval. A copy of the final survey is attached to these minutes.

Update on Commission and Committee Items: Michelle updated the Taskforce on items being discussed at the City Commission and Committee level that pertain to small business and local economic development. Michelle stated that Staff has been working on surveying the current vacancies throughout key commercial corridors. She stated that Staff is working with the Finance Department on different creative and strategic interventions for reducing storefront vacancies and increasing overall vibrancy throughout Miami Beach. Additionally, she updated the Members that the City is working on a partnership with WeWork which would offer a discounted membership rate to Miami Beach businesses for the first three months. In addition, WeWork will host a series of capacity building workshops that will be free and open to the public at their two locations. The purpose of these workshops is to help better strengthen the local business community.

SCORE: Elias Gonzalez made a short presentation to the Taskforce regarding SCORE, a national program that partners retired CEO's and industry experts with local businesses to help support their efforts. SCORE approached Commissioner Samuelian's office and is interested in starting a Miami Beach chapter. The Taskforce requested that a member from SCORE be present at the next meeting to present their ideas.

National Small Business Association Update: Sheila presented an update on NSBA and their regional congress strategy. She informed the Taskforce that the NSBA has selected Miami Beach to host their first regional meeting and that the City of Miami Beach and the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce will host the event in September 2018. The purpose of this half-day summit is to provide small businesses with information and guidance on regional and federal policies and initiatives that may have an impact on them.

Next Steps and Ideas: Diego inquired if the Miami Beach Chamber would be able to offer a discounted membership to small businesses during a particular month. Daniel Diaz, a representative from the Chamber, stated he would discuss with his organization and see what incentives they could create.

JP Morgan requested that Jose Gonzalez present at the next meeting, he requested that Jose provide an update on the SMART plan. *(Per Jose, this initiative needs to be discussed again with the City Commission. Once this has been finalized he will make a presentation to the Taskforce).*

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 am.

Minutes Approved by the Small Business Taskforce

on: _____

Jason Loeb, Chair