



# Islander

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NOVEMBER 2023

## A MESSAGE FROM THE Mayor

“ Sunny Isles Beach stands with Israel. I stand with Israel. ”



Larisa Svechin  
Mayor

Saturday, October 7, 2023, will forever be known as a day of unspeakable abomination, unimageable evil, and an excruciating reminder that hatred and antisemitism persist as the single most dangerous blight on the Jewish people.

Absolute evil and darkness brought unthinkable horror to the people of Israel, the collective Jewish community, and the world. This unprovoked terrorist massacre by Hamas against innocent civilians, including babies, elderly, Holocaust survivors, women, men, and even pets, was an event we never thought we would witness again. Yet, it happened while we slept. Not since the Shoah have so many Jews been terrorized, maimed, raped, tortured, and murdered.

The devastation of this atrocity will affect generations. Our community collectively mourns and weeps. In some way, we all have a connection to Israel, whether through relatives, friends, friends of friends, or just the fact that it is the only democratic country in the Middle East that shares our values and beliefs. For me, it is all these things. I anxiously await news daily

from my family members and our community who are living or visiting Israel. Many in our community have deeper ties to Israel, and yet, we all jointly grieve and pray.

Israel remains strong and determined in the face of this adversity; they will win. However, they do not stand alone. It cannot be stressed enough how important it is for us to stand with Israel, particularly with our sister city, Netanya. Sunny Isles Beach stands with Israel. I stand with Israel.

In the coming weeks, and possibly months, we must maintain and uphold our support of the people of Israel and the Jewish community of Sunny Isles Beach. Our city is a place where civilized, kind, generous, and deeply spiritual people of many nations, languages, religions, and ages live and work. As we enter the holiday season and gather for Thanksgiving dinner, remember that we are all interconnected. Now is the time to hold each other up, take time to do good, and bring light to each day. We must never forget that “in the midst of darkness, light persists.” — Mahatma Gandhi

Contact Mayor Larisa Svechin at [mayor@sibfl.net](mailto:mayor@sibfl.net) or 305.792.1753.

# MESSAGE FROM THE City Manager's Office

November is a time of thanksgiving. There is the traditional thanksgiving holiday and then there is the act of giving thanks. I would like to focus on the act of giving thanks and take this opportunity to ensure that all of those that have spent this past year contributing to our success know that they are appreciated. It is impossible to name everyone, so my message is somewhat generic.

This year was a year of change and adjustment. We completed our charter review and subsequent election. We passed the most detailed budget and reduced the millage rate. We hosted a memorable city anniversary party. We filled every vacant position in the Police Department. We made significant pedestrian safety improvements. We capitalized on our investments. We won multiple awards in various departments. We were successful in grant funding.

There are so many things that our employees do behind the scenes and on the front lines that contribute to the success of this city. And they do it for you. Those in public service are rare and special. They are not looking for fortune and fame but for the satisfaction of a job well done, knowing

that they made a difference. Each department plays a role in the overall success of the city. From inside and out, bottom to top, we could not do this without you.

Our City Commission deserves a special note of appreciation as well. Their dedication to formulating policies, advocating for our residents, and fostering transparency and accountability has been most valuable.

And let us not forget our residents. We thank you for your participation in meetings and events. We thank you for your constructive criticisms and positive feedback. You are why we do what we do, and we appreciate that you care about your community as much as we do.

This month let's all take a moment to say thank you to those that you encounter in your daily lives. Let us spread kindness and appreciation. Let us all be grateful for the beautiful city that we get to live, work, play and thrive in.

To my entire Sunny Isles Beach family, City Commission, and residents, thank you all.



# Changes to Our Meeting Procedures

*Commissioner Jeniffer Viscarra*

You may have noticed that our commission meetings are structured differently now. Commission meetings take place on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m., with the exception of December when there is no meeting. In the past, all items were addressed at Thursday night meetings. Now, we hear all discussion items and special presentations at a 3:00 p.m. workshop on the third Thursday, during which no voting or public discussion takes place. We reconvene at 6:30 p.m. to address city business that requires a vote and for which there is public comment.

In addition, we have introduced an agenda workshop at 10:00 a.m. on the Tuesday before the commission meeting. As a publicly noticed meeting, staff and commissioners are able to openly discuss the upcoming agenda items, which streamlines the commission meeting two days later. As for the Thursday 3:00 p.m., although none of the items require an immediate vote, some may become items that are voted during the 6:30 p.m. meeting.

Let's take the E-Scooters ordinance as an example. E-Scooters have become a major nuisance and safety concern in SIB.

*Contact Commissioner Jeniffer Viscarra at [seat4@sibfl.net](mailto:seat4@sibfl.net) or 305.792.1750.*

As part of the new procedures, commissioners' deadlines for submitting discussion/agenda items was October 6, 2023. Three elected officials timely submitted their ideas, research, and/or perspective for discussion at the 3:00 p.m. workshop.

The city attorney then drafted an ordinance addressing the desired goals for this issue and provided it to the commission by October 13. The commission discussed the proposed ordinance at the 3:00 p.m. workshop on Thursday October 19, where some amendments were made. With the commission's consensus, the E-Scooter ordinance was brought forward as an add-on item and was voted favorably on first reading at the 6:30 p.m. meeting. The second reading vote will be held at the November meeting.

Both the Tuesday and Thursday workshops, along with all commission meetings, are open to the public. I hope to see you there.



# Utilizing Available Resources

*Commissioner Alex Lama*

In March of this year, I wrote about resources offered by Miami-Dade County for condominium owners in need of assistance with their special assessment for the 40-year recertification, as well as resources to help home buyers. I'd like to remind our residents that these resources are still available. Additionally, I know a resident who applied for the Condo Special Assessment Program and received approval for a 0% interest loan for a 40-year term. Here is a brief description of the program:

## **Miami-Dade County Condominium Special Assessment Program:**

This program assists owner-occupied condominium homeowners with limited finances and addresses special assessment requirements associated with repairs due to recertification. Surtax funds will be in the form of a loan at zero interest rate and a household income of up to 140% of the Area Median Income. The monthly payment for moderate-income families will be calculated at a 0% interest rate for 40 years.

*Contact Commissioner Alex Lama at [seat2@sibfl.net](mailto:seat2@sibfl.net) or 305.792.1752.*

For more information, please visit: <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/service.page?Mduid=serI689262443911730> or contact Shawn Topps at 786-469-2209.

Other important programs offered by Miami-Dade County include the Homebuyer Loan Program and the Down Payment Assistance Program. For more information on these programs, you can visit: <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/housing/affordable-homeownership-program.page> or contact Shawn Topps at 786-469-2209.

Applications for some of these programs have been low. I believe it is important that residents are aware of and utilize these programs, especially during this time of economic uncertainty. Feel free to reach out to me if you require more information or assistance.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## NOVEMBER

### Bingo

**November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29**  
**Wednesdays | 3 - 4 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

### Gateway Market

**November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29**  
**Wednesdays | 5:30 - 10 PM | FREE**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

### Lunch n' Learn with Mount Sinai



**Thursday, November 2**  
**11 AM - 1 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
*Pre-registration is required. Lunch is included.*

### Beach Cleanup

**Saturday, November 4**  
**8 - 10 AM**  
 Ellen Wynne Beach Access,  
 192 St. & Collins Ave.

### Doc Chats: Diabetes Awareness Month

**Wednesday, November 8**  
**11 AM - 1 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
*Pre-registration is required.*

### Federal Holiday: Veterans Day

**Friday, November 10**  
 City facilities closed.  
 SIBshuttle will not run.



### Veterans Day Celebration

**Saturday, November 11**  
**5 PM**  
 Heritage Park, 19200 Collins Ave.

### Lunch n' Learn with Florida Historian Cesar Becerra

**Tuesday, November 14**  
**11 AM - 12 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
**Resident ID Cardholders: FREE**  
**Non-Residents: \$10**  
*Pre-registration is required.*

### City Commission Workshop

**Tuesday, November 14**  
**10 AM**  
 Fourth Floor Conference Room, Government Center, 18070 Collins Ave.

### Teen Talk

**Tuesday, November 14**  
**6 - 8 PM | FREE**  
 Pelican Community Park, 18115 N. Bay Rd.

### City Commission Workshop

**Thursday, November 16**  
**3 PM**  
 Commission Chambers, Government Center, 18070 Collins Ave.

### Regular City Commission Meeting

**Thursday, November 16**  
**6:30 PM**  
 Commission Chambers, Government Center, 18070 Collins Ave.

### Senior Fall Festival

**55+**  
**Friday, November 17**  
**12 - 2 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
**Resident ID Cardholders: \$5**  
**Non-Residents: \$10**

### Teen Trip: Miami Hurricanes Game

**Saturday, November 18**  
**TBD**  
 Hard Rock Stadium, 347 Don Shula Dr., Miami Gardens  
 Pick up location: Pelican Community Park  
**Price: \$50**  
*Pre-registration is required.*

### Gateway LIVE! Featuring Electric Avenue

**Saturday, November 18**  
**7:30 - 9 PM**  
 Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
**Resident ID Cardholders: FREE**  
**Non-Residents: \$10**

### Federal Holiday: Thanksgiving

**Thursday, November 23**  
 City facilities closed.  
 SIBshuttle will not run.



### City Holiday: Day after Thanksgiving

**Friday, November 24**  
 City facilities closed. Only SIBshuttle Orange Lines will be in operation.

### Midday Movies: Transformers Rise of the Beasts

**Monday, November 27**  
**11 AM - 1 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
**Resident ID Cardholders: FREE**  
**Non-Residents: \$10**  
*Pre-registration is required. Lunch Included.*

### Full Moon Yoga

**Monday, November 27**  
**6:30 - 7:30 PM**  
 On the Beach by Trump International Beach Resort, 18001 Collins Ave.  
*Pre-registration is encouraged.*

### Cultural Trip: Dolphin Mall

**Tuesday, November 28**  
**9:30 AM - 3 PM**  
 Dolphin Mall, 11401 NW 12 St., Miami  
**Resident ID Cardholders: FREE**  
**Non-Residents: \$5**  
*Pre-registration is required.*

### Senior Roundtable

**Wednesday, November 29**  
**12 - 1 PM**  
 Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.  
*Pre-registration is required.*



# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## CUSTOMER RELATIONS

As we transition into the winter season, the City of Sunny Isles Beach is gearing up for an array of exciting events and activities. Behind the scenes, and often on the front lines are the friendly faces of our Customer Relations team. These individuals are your first point of contact when you visit our city facilities, always ready to assist and ensure you have the best possible experience.

One of the many important tasks that our Customer Relations team handles is the Resident ID program. They work closely with our residents to provide the best pricing options for various programs and activities, such as the highly anticipated Winter Fest.

Our Customer Relations team is also your go-to resource for staying informed about all the programs and services available in Sunny Isles Beach. From the SIBshuttle schedule to park hours and more, they are always in the know and ready to help you make the most of your time in our city.

Have a question about our programs, services or registration? Email Customer Relations at [frontdesk@sibfl.net](mailto:frontdesk@sibfl.net) or call 305.792.1706.

Follow us on Social Media @CityofSIB |    

## INSIDE THE *Isles*

### SIBPD Earns Prestigious Accreditation

The Sunny Isles Beach Police Department (SIBPD) achieved a significant milestone last month by earning "Accreditation Status" from the Florida Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA). The esteemed recognition highlights the department's commitment to ensuring its personnel stay updated and compliant with the latest trends in law enforcement.

The journey to accreditation began in July 2022 when they signed an agreement with CFA to be in compliance within twenty-four months, SIBPD did it in just fourteen months. This past August a team of independent assessors conducted a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of SIBPD. This assessment encompassed a thorough review of the department's policies, procedures, operations, and training protocols. The results of this assessment were nothing short of outstanding, without any non-compliance issues.

The accreditation reinforces the department's ability to prevent and manage criminal activities while enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of law enforcement services provided to the community. The result is a safer and more secure environment for all residents and visitors.

For further information regarding the Florida Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation, please visit <https://flaccreditation.org/>.

## Miami-Dade Transit Bus Routes Changing

Starting on Monday, November 13, major changes are coming to Miami-Dade County's Metrobus routes, as part of their new Better Bus SHIFTS initiative. These changes will impact bus routes in Sunny Isles Beach.

Here are the key modifications from Miami-Dade Transit in our area:

- Route E will be discontinued, with the current service area now being covered by routes 75 and 100.
- Route S will also be discontinued, with the current service area shifting to route 100.
- Route H will be discontinued, with the current service area being taken over by route 75.
- 120 Beach Max will be renumbered as route 100.

As a result, route 75 will provide transportation to Haulover Park, while route 100 will specifically cater to riders along Collins Avenue to and from Aventura Mall. These changes will have direct

impact on residents who previously relied on Miami-Dade Transit services in the inner part of the city, west of Collins Avenue.

But don't worry, we'll still get you where you need to go. The SIBshuttle is a free and convenient ride around Sunny Isles Beach and neighboring cities. You can hop on various stops throughout the city, and at major transit hubs like Intracoastal Mall, Aventura Mall and Hallandale Fire Station. Use the SIBshuttle to connect to the streamlined Metrobus for more efficient trips to destinations all throughout Miami-Dade County.

To stay updated on the SIBshuttle's real-time location, arrival times, and a list of stops, you can download the app from the App Store or Google Play. Alternatively, you can visit [sibshuttle.net](http://sibshuttle.net) or call the SIBshuttle hotline at 305.741.0907.

To see a full map of the new Miami-Dade Transit routes, please visit [miamidade.gov/betterbus](http://miamidade.gov/betterbus).

# GATEWAYLIVE

FEATURING

# ELECTRIC AVENUE

SATURDAY | NOVEMBER 18 | 7:30 – 9 PM

SUNNY ISLES BEACH RESIDENT ID CARDHOLDERS: **FREE**  
NON-RESIDENTS: **\$10**

Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd

[www.sibfl.net/gatewaylive](http://www.sibfl.net/gatewaylive)

# TOY DRIVE

'Tis the season of giving, and we're excited to invite you to take part in our Holiday Toy Drive. Help bring joy to children who might not otherwise receive gifts during the holidays by donating new and unwrapped toys. From games, dolls, books, and more, we're accepting donations at all City facilities, including Pelican Community Park, Gateway Center, and the Government Center. Your generosity will light up a child's holiday season!

Learn more at [sibfl.net/toydrive](http://sibfl.net/toydrive).

