



# SIB *islander*

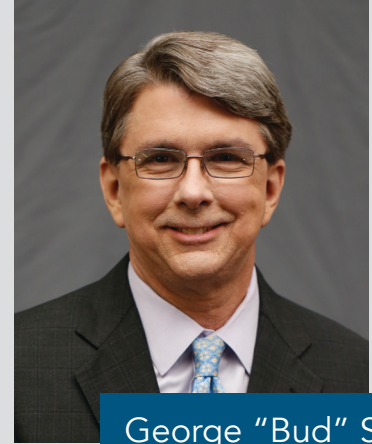
CITY OF SUNNY ISLES BEACH

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SEPTEMBER 2020

## A MESSAGE FROM THE Mayor

“ The 2020 general election is two months away on November 3 and this election is as important as ever. As we navigate through the uncertainty of this time, voting can seem daunting. It is important to make a plan for voting before it is too late to take advantage of the options available. ”



George "Bud" Scholl  
Mayor

The threat of coronavirus may curb your desire to vote in person at one of the polling places in Sunny Isles Beach. Fortunately, if you are registered to vote in Miami-Dade County, you have the option to request a vote-by-mail ballot. Absentee voting is run by the County and is your optimal choice to limit exposure to the coronavirus. You can request a ballot [online](#), by phone or by mail and a paper ballot will be mailed to you to complete in the comfort of your home. The deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot is by 5 pm on the 10th day before the election and they must be received by 7 pm on Election Day. To request a vote-by-mail ballot, visit [miamidade.gov](http://miamidade.gov).

If you choose to vote in person, plan ahead. Early voting is a good way to avoid crowding as it gives you a choice of a handful of days you can vote in various locations around the County. Early voting will run from October 19 – November 1. If voting on Election Day, map out your polling location and arrange the time you will go. Try to vote

at less crowded times and be sure to wear your facial covering, use hand sanitizer often and avoid touching your face. Know that if you do vote in person in Sunny Isles Beach, our polling locations are set up following CDC guidelines and with your safety in mind. Machines will be spaced at least six feet apart, or will only allow voters to use every other machine in precincts where that is not possible; all machines will be disinfected after each voter; and social distancing will be enforced.

And if you are not registered to vote yet, don't delay. The deadline to register to vote is October 5. Visit [registertovoteflorida.gov](http://registertovoteflorida.gov) today to submit an application online for a new registration or to make changes to your existing registration record.

With more time at home, take to the internet or news outlets to research the candidates before filling out your ballot. Be an informed voter. You can find more information about voting in Sunny Isles Beach at [sibfl.net/elections](http://sibfl.net/elections). Whether you opt to vote by mail or in person, your vote counts.

# Message from the City Manager

Christopher J. Russo

Every day we work to fulfill our mission to keep Sunny Isles Beach a world class city that offers the highest quality of life for our residents. The completion of the Gateway Center is just the latest extension of our promise.



When the privatization of the space for a market and restaurant fell through, we realized there was a greater need to utilize the building as a recreation facility for residents. The buildout of the Gateway Center is anticipated to be completed by the end of September 2020.

The Gateway Center optimizes 15,000 square feet of interior space at Gateway Park for the usage and enjoyment of residents. When you enter the facility, you will be greeted at

the serene reception area. Past the lobby, the facility guides you down a social hallway with seating and game tables. This is a space for socialization, engagement and leisure. Those with a valid City-issued SIB Resident ID Card have access to the facility to utilize the social hallway, hang out, and mingle with friends. Further in is a fitness room with oak wood floors and mirrored walls, large and small classrooms, and a full-fledged catering kitchen. One notable feature of the catering kitchen is a camera system designed to follow chefs cooking in the kitchen with the intention to air the video feed in a classroom or play back at a later date. The kitchen is an added opportunity to expand our program and rental offerings.

Elevating the Gateway Center even further is a 3,600 square foot banquet space, which can accommodate 240 seated at round tables. Equipped with top-of-the-line technology, the ballroom will be available to rent for presentations, receptions, weddings, and various special events. Throughout the Center you will be privy to our audio/visual equipment, which connects sound and music throughout the facility in the hallways, rooms, and in the exterior surrounding the banquet space. Unlike any other facility in the City, a Hearing Loop system is built into the floor of the banquet space and fitness room. While invisible to the eye, this high-tech solution delivers sound from the AV system directly to hearing aids and cochlear implants with telecoils, strengthening the sound of the presenter for those who have difficulty hearing. As in every aspect of our work, we strive to provide accessible services for all residents.

The aesthetic of the Gateway Center is emblematic of our oceanfront location with blue, green and coral colors dispersed

throughout. Providing a calm, relaxing and safe space for residents to enjoy was critical during the design phase.



The Center will also have a satellite visitor center, an addition to the original one in the Government Center. Promotional merchandise will be on sale such as shirts, cups, and key chains, as well as light food and beverage items including coffee, sodas and snacks.

Barring any unexpected delays, staff will be able to move in beginning this October. As you might have guessed, COVID-19 restrictions have delayed a grand opening event for the Gateway Center. In the meantime, our team is diligently preparing programming and events for when it is safe to open and we can share this new space with all of our residents. We are also drawing up a facility rental package for the banquet space with the hopes of accepting rental applications for 2021, providing that it is safe to do so.

It is bittersweet to celebrate the completion of our brand-new facility that was championed by former Sunny Isles Beach Commissioner Roslyn Brezin, who passed away in February 2019. It was her staunch determination and vision that served as the impetus for the buildout of the Gateway Center. As we prepare to open the facility, we remember her leadership and advocacy for residents, and seniors in particular, in Sunny Isles Beach.

When it is safe to open, the Gateway Center will be an elite facility for residents to learn new skills by sampling a selection of diverse programs, for teens to meet in a safe setting without their parents, and for seniors to gather for social activities. We are excited for the opportunities the Gateway Center will provide all residents of Sunny Isles Beach.





# Helping Families in Times of Need

Commissioner Jeniffer Viscarra

Many families in high conflict court proceedings simply cannot afford the therapeutic services necessary for critical intervention. For this reason, Miami-Dade County created Family Court Services (FCS), which provides supervised visitation and family, individual, and reunification therapy. As an attorney and Guardian Ad Litem, I have seen how invaluable FCS is for families coping with substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health issues. FCS is the only program of its kind in the country and is especially important for our low-income families who would not otherwise have access to these services.

Aside from County funding, FCS relies upon the financial support of the community via a non-profit organization called KidSide, whose goal is to bridge the financial gap in an underfunded system. Though the good people at FCS work diligently, they are critically underfunded and cannot keep up with the demand for services, which has increased this year since the onset

of COVID-19. The result is often a substantial wait for services, making a difficult and painful process even longer.

Fundraising for FCS has been significantly impacted in 2020. Traditionally, KidSide raised funds for FCS by hosting in-person events such as galas and receptions, which are not possible during a pandemic. With an increase in need of services and a decrease in funds, FCS faces an even greater struggle than usual. Consequently, so will our families. If you are in the position to help, I ask that you make a donation at [kidsidemiami.org](http://kidsidemiami.org) in support of our families in need.

I welcome you to contact me by email at [jviscarra@sibfl.net](mailto:jviscarra@sibfl.net) or by phone at [305.792.1750](tel:305.792.1750).



# It Started from Day One

By Retired Sunny Isles Beach Police Chief Fred Maas

“ *In times of turmoil it can be comforting to hear from another longstanding member of our Sunny Isles Beach family. This month, I am handing my space over to former SIBPD Chief Fred Maas, the original force behind building our department from the ground up, who requested to write a message to Sunny Isles Beach residents.* ”

— Chief Dwight Snyder



First and foremost, I am grateful to Chief Snyder and City Manager Russo for the opportunity to respond to a recent article in the SIBislander, the article written by Vice Mayor Svechin, a wonderfully supportive article, regarding the community support for our police officers during these challenging times. From day one, 1998, I was asked to build a police department that would make a difference in the community we serve in Sunny Isles Beach. That was the single goal by our first Mayor and City Commission. That philosophy has carried on through two successive mayors and numerous commission members.

In order to accomplish that, we initiated a demand of all our police hires: ‘Service Above and Beyond’ with a ‘How Can I Help You’ attitude. As simple as that. It was a

search into the heart and soul of every potential officer to ensure that they would buy into our promise to our community, the entire community as diverse as we are.

The response? Well you have seen it, read about it, and hopefully you have experienced it! And though we have made mistakes, we have learned from them, which has only strengthened our ‘How Can I Help You’ goal.

I salute the founding officers still on the job, the newer officers who have come on board since 1998, the current administration of the Police Department and yes, the City Commission and community both for supporting this two-way street and embracing one another. We have something special in Sunny Isles Beach that others envy and admire! God Bless and Be Safe!

# TIPS FOR AT-HOME LEARNING

The start of a new school year is usually an exciting time for students, but this year is unlike any other. As you prepare your children for virtual learning, here are a few tips to enhance the at-home experience for both students and parents.



## SETTING UP:

- Try to attend virtual school activities and meetings. These meetings can be a way to express any concerns you may have about the school's plans.
- Create a schedule with your child and make a commitment to stick with it. Discuss your family's schedule and identify the best times for learning and instruction.
- Try to find a space free of distractions, noise, and clutter for learning and doing homework.
- Identify opportunities for your child to connect with peers and be social—either virtually or in person, while maintaining physical distance.

## CYBERSECURITY:

- Monitor your children's use of the internet; keep electronic devices in an open, common room of the house.
- Make sure privacy settings are set to the strictest level possible for electronic devices.
- Check your children's profiles and what they post online.
- Review and approve games and apps before they are downloaded.

## PLANNING:

- Find out if there will be regular opportunities each day for staff and student check-ins and peer-to-peer learning.
- Find out if students have regular opportunities for live video instruction by teachers or if they will primarily be watching pre-recorded videos and receive accompanying assignments.
- Ask your school what steps they are taking to help students adjust to being back in school and to the ways that COVID-19 may have disrupted their daily life.
- If your child receives learning support, ask your school how these services will continue during at-home learning.

## MENTAL WELL-BEING:

It is especially important to check in with your child regarding their mental health. Talk to your child about how school is going and their interactions with classmates and teachers. Find out how your child is feeling and then communicate to them that what they may be feeling is normal. Watch for behavior changes which may be signs of stress and anxiety. Be a role model for your child by practicing self-care such as getting plenty of sleep, exercise, eat well, and stay socially connected.

[READ MORE ABOUT HOW PARENTS AND CHILDREN CAN ADJUST TO VIRTUAL AT-HOME LEARNING BY VISITING THE CDC'S WEBSITE.](#)

## COVID-19 RESOURCES



STAY HOME



WEAR FACIAL COVERINGS



NO CONGREGATING IN ANY AREA



SOCIAL DISTANCE

### City Resources

[sibfl.net/coronavirus](https://sibfl.net/coronavirus)

### City Reopening Information

[sibfl.net/reopening](https://sibfl.net/reopening)

### Florida Department of Health (FDOH)

24-hour hotline for questions concerning the Coronavirus: [1.866.779.6121](tel:18667796121)

### Miami-Dade County COVID-19 Information & Updates

[miamidade.gov/global/initiatives/coronavirus/home.page](https://miamidade.gov/global/initiatives/coronavirus/home.page)

Individuals in Miami-Dade County who believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should call the FDOH at [305.470.5660](tel:3054705660).

## VIRTUAL TEEN CLUB

TEENS, craving a break with friends? Here is your chance. Just like other aspects of our lives, our teens only events have gone virtual! The free Virtual Teen Club is offered twice monthly to grades 7 – 12. Visit [sibfl.net/teens](https://sibfl.net/teens) for all upcoming events.

### Trivia Night

Thursday, September 3 | 7-8 PM

### Crafting Showcase

Thursday, September 17 | 7-9 PM

Be sure to pre-register as required at [activities.sibfl.net](https://activities.sibfl.net) or by calling [305.792.1706](tel:3057921706). Participants will receive Zoom details via email one hour before the event start time.

## Virtual September Meetings

### Special City Commission Meeting

FY 2020-21 First Budget Hearing  
Tuesday, September 8 | 5:30 PM

### Regular City Commission Meeting

Thursday, September 17 | 6:30 PM

### Special City Commission Meeting

FY 2020-21 Second Budget Hearing  
Friday, September 18 | 5:30 PM

View additional details at [sibfl.net/events](https://sibfl.net/events).



# HURRICANE SAFETY

Labor Day traditionally marks the end of summer, but for residents in South Florida, September is the peak of hurricane season. Due to higher than normal ocean temperatures, experts predict 13-19 named storms, 140% above normal, for the 2020 season through November.

We were fortunate that Hurricanes Isaias and Laura did not impact our city, but we still must be vigilant and closely monitor developing storms. Do not let your guard down and stay storm ready:

- Remember, Sunny Isles Beach is in Storm Surge Zone B and may be ordered to evacuate.
- Prepare your home to minimize damage from power fluctuations, wind and storm surge.
- Pack a “Go Box’ in advance, with essential documents, medications, plus three days of water and food per person.
- Stock up on food, medication and other supplies.
- Stay tuned to local news for the storm timeline and strength and adjust your plan as needed.
- Follow the direction of the Miami-Dade County Emergency Operations Center.



Sign up for storm alerts and City updates delivered straight to your phone or inbox at

**SIBAlert**

[SIBALERT.NET](https://www.sibfl.net/sibalert)

[READ MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S HURRICANE READINESS GUIDE](#)

[SIBFL.NET/HURRICANE](https://www.sibfl.net/hurricane)

## APPLY FOR OR RENEW YOUR RESIDENT ID CARD

When a hurricane hits, there is a possibility the City will be required to evacuate, and damage may be widespread enough that a lockdown is necessary. In this case, residents will be required to show identification upon reentering the City. To expedite this process, we strongly recommend applying for or renewing your Sunny Isles Beach Resident ID Card. Having a valid, City-issued Resident ID Card will enable officers at the check points to easily verify your Sunny Isles Beach residency.



**YOU CAN APPLY OR RENEW YOUR SIB RESIDENT ID CARD ONLINE TODAY AT [SIBFL.NET/RESIDENTID](https://www.sibfl.net/residentid).**

## FLOOD INSURANCE

As a coastal community, our streets are more prone to flooding than other cities. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods, but you can purchase a separate flood policy to cover the building's structure and contents. Remember: even if the last flood missed you or you have done some flood-proofing, the next flood could be worse. Do not wait for the next flood to buy insurance protection. There is a 30-day waiting period before National Flood Insurance Program coverage takes effect. Contact your insurance agent for more information on rates and coverage.

**FOR MORE RESOURCES ON FLOODING, VISIT [SIBFL.NET/FLOOD](https://www.sibfl.net/flood).**

**FOLLOW US** @CityofSIB    





# SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS

**NEW & RENEWAL  
APPLICATION OPENS:  
AUGUST 31, 2020**

**APPLICATION  
DEADLINE:  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2020**

A Short-Term Vacation Rental is any unit in a condominium, apartment or cooperative that is leased or rented to an occupant for a rental period of six months or less. Owners or responsible parties operating a Short-Term Vacation Rental must obtain a Short-Term Vacation Rental License prior to advertising, leasing or renting a multi-family dwelling unit. Licenses expire and must be renewed each year.



## RENEWALS

Submit your renewal documents online through your portal account. A renewal fee of \$400 is paid after the application is reviewed and approved. Submit your renewal application by September 30, 2020 to avoid late fees.

Short-term vacation rental enforcement is ongoing. Violations for non-renewal will be effective December 1, 2020

**WATCH A STEP-BY-STEP VIDEO ON HOW TO  
RENEW YOUR LICENSE**



## NEW APPLICATIONS

Read the application requirements to review the application process and what you need to apply. Once you have all of the required documentation, you can apply [online](#).

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SHORT-TERM  
VACATION RENTAL APPLICATION PROCESS.**

Due to COVID-19, there are additional restrictions and requirements for short-term vacation rentals.

**READ MORE AT [SIBFL.NET/REOPENING-STR](https://sibfl.net/reopening-str).**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [SIBFL.NET/SHORT-TERM-RENTALS](https://sibfl.net/short-term-rentals),  
CALL 305.792.1740, OR EMAIL [INFOPZ@SIBFL.NET](mailto:infopz@sibfl.net).**