



Islander

Follow us @CityofSIB |     YouTube

SEPTEMBER 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE Mayor

“ School at Norman S. Edelcup Sunny Isles Beach K-8 began on August 17 and with that comes many exciting announcements. ”



Larisa Svechin
Mayor

To start, I would like to welcome our new principal, Mr. Marc W. Schwam, to the City of Sunny Isles Beach. I had the opportunity to sit with Mr. Schwam to learn about his lovely children and wife. He is a lifelong educator, who is passionate about providing an inclusive and supportive environment for our resident's children. I am confident that with his leadership, our schoolchildren will thrive, our school will be safe, and our parents will be proud to send their children to NSE SIB K-8.

To support these efforts, SIBPD will be supporting the school's police by bringing back our beloved Sergeant Gonzalez as a full-time school resource officer. Sgt. Gonzalez first started at the school as the founding SRO and has deep and meaningful relationships with the teachers, staff, students, and parents. I have known Sgt. Gonzalez for over 12 years—she is fiercely devoted to the safety and well-being of our youngest residents. The expectation is that with these changes, our school will once again lead the district in student scores, athletics,

mathematics, science, and the arts. I am confident that Mr. Schwam will be a valued collaborator and innovator, adding to the richness of the fabric of our community.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the years of dedication of our founding Assistant Principal, Ms. Tapia, who regrettably is moving on to another school. I've had the pleasure of knowing Ms. Tapia and seeing her unwavering commitment to our community. She has been an integral part of SIB, instrumental in helping to bring the highest standards of education, a loving mentor to the teachers, a warm and inviting presence for our parents, and a true friend to many. With the deepest respect, may she be successful and happy in her next position. We will miss her terribly.

Please join me in a warm and hospitable welcome to Mr. Schwam, welcome back to Sgt. Gonzalez, and best wishes to Ms. Tapia.

Contact Mayor Larisa Svechin at mayor@sibfl.net or 305.792.1753.

MESSAGE FROM THE City Manager's Office

I wanted to keep you updated on our budget process and our proactive efforts to share information with you.

As of this writing, we have had three budget workshops with the Mayor, Commissioners, and the public, along with numerous one-on-one meetings with each of the elected officials. Our budget process started on April 20, 2023, when we had our first philosophical meeting to discuss our budget. The process has been very interactive with the elected officials, including reviewing our different department budgets line by line.

It is important to note that, in the past, we have had TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) revenues that have helped fund major capital projects which are not anticipated in the foreseeable future. In 2022, ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds were received and allocated for the provision of government services. We will not receive any of these monies going forward. Therefore, any future monies to finance major capital projects will come from the fund balance and reserves of the General Fund.

Some residents have contacted me and shared their comments about the budget. We are incorporating many of those suggested changes into our budget.

Thank you for your feedback. Our workshops are open to the public and commission meetings are open for you to attend and share your comments.

There is a lot of misinformation being presented by others regarding the budget. Our budget is healthy and strong with admirable reserves including \$10 million set aside just for hurricane relief should we have to deal with that or any such disaster. Last year, we were presented with the “Distinguished Budget Presentation” award and the “Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting” award from the Government Finance Officers Association. Additionally, we must complete an annual audit by an independent firm which yielded zero findings, further affirming the exceptional work of our Finance Department.

Our tentative budget is also posted online for you to review at <https://www.sibfl.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/FY-23-24-Tentative-Budget-electronic-copy-FINAL.pdf>.

You are welcome to meet with me and I will answer any questions you may have on the budget, or any other questions or concerns you may have about the city. I plan on posting future messages here to keep you updated.



Contact City Manager's Office at citymanager@sibfl.net or 305.792.1701.

Collaboration

Commissioner Fabiola Stuyvesant

When it comes to governing, it is less what we can do alone and more what we can achieve together. Elected officials need to be made aware of what the issues are, reach out to the proper agencies and become agents of change in search of a solution.

In January 2023 I participated in a public meeting at our NSE SIB K-8 school to discuss issues affecting our children's educational experience. As a result, a "task-force" was created with representatives from MDCPS, SIB community leaders, and parents. Many steps were promptly put into action to address cleanliness, teacher shortages, security, etc. However, despite the progress made and due to the overcrowding situation, MDCPS made the decision to put a cap on new enrollments. It is extremely unfair for residents of SIB to be denied enrollment in our school because students from other cities are taking their spots. Another school must be built. Nevertheless, we in the task-force continue to look for short and long-term solutions.

In another instance, residents of Poinciana Island (my home residence) approached me seeking help in communicating with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and DERM regarding their finger pier applications. I am proud that after several meetings and reviews with these agencies, we were able to update the permit process to bring the unpermitted structures to compliance and for owners to apply directly to the agencies to build their finger pier.

Nonetheless, so much work continues to be done, but working together we will be able to accomplish more. Please do not hesitate to reach out – we can only help if we know what the issues are.



Contact Commissioner Fabiola Stuyvesant at seat3@sibfl.net or [305.792.1751](tel:305.792.1751).

Fulfilling Promises to Residents

Vice Mayor Jerry Joseph

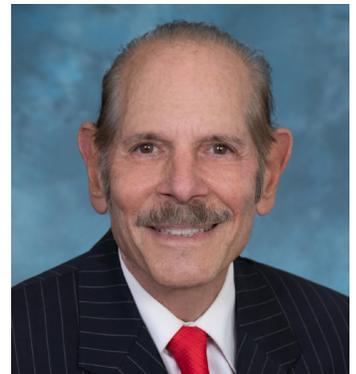
It is quite easy for elected officials to spew promises during election time and beyond. When an elected official takes office, it is easy for some to overlook their promises to Residents.

Every city government must accept input and criticism from Residents, and if an error in judgment is found, it is never too late to undo a mistake for the betterment of the city.

I have made it my mission to adhere to my promises to Residents, which includes assisting in fair condo elections, 189 Street and Collins Avenue red light and crosswalk installation, helping several condo elevator

repairs, a weekly market, correcting drainage issues and adding additional sewers in Golden Shores, Golden Gate red light and crosswalk, "No Wake" signage on our Intracoastal and increasing all-year no wake zones, and bringing public tennis courts to Sunny Isles Beach.

I am also working to bring more cultural events, an annual art festival, a philharmonic center and a beach walk for resident safety.



Contact Vice Mayor Jerry Joseph at seat1@sibfl.net or [305.792.1754](tel:305.792.1754).

Expanding Our Civic Engagement

Commissioner Jeniffer Viscarra

As many of you know, one of my main objectives is to improve civic engagement in Sunny Isles Beach. Civic engagement can be volunteering, being properly informed, attending an event, taking a city survey, or sharing a concern with your Commission.

In short, any time an SIB resident takes time out of their day to learn, help, or participate in our community, they are civically engaged.

This year SIB residents will have a new opportunity for civic engagement. Building on the success of the Residents' Academy, I will lead our first community legislative advocacy program with the help of Local Voices United, a non-partisan organization that advocates for the empowerment of municipalities and Home Rule.

Unlike the Residents' Academy, the advocacy group will not always meet on a set day and time. When participants are ready, they may work independently and will be able to team up with Florida friends and family. You can make a difference!

Sometimes legislative advocacy is focused on helping a bill pass and become a law. Other times it is focused on preventing a bill from moving forward at all. We won't know whether to support or oppose until we see what's filed by our state legislators. Either way, I look forward to advocating with you and for you.



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

Beware of Disinformation

Commissioner Alex Lama

When the Internet went mainstream in the mid-1990s and the flow of information started to proliferate, the thought was that these new sources of information would empower people to have more data and be better equipped to know the truth. It was an exciting time and felt liberating. The underlying thought was that we no longer had to rely on a handful of sources for our information. People finally had control over the institutional entities and bad actors that tried to hide the truth or mislead the public.

Fast forward to 2023 and we are now grappling with the issue of disinformation. Disinformation pervades our lives, from product reviews and medical information to news and politics. We no longer know what to believe, or even worse, we believe information that is false. A lot of the same actors who we thought could no longer fool us or keep us from the truth, now exploit digital media to keep us confused, manipulating narratives for their own agendas - agendas that do not have your best interest in mind.

As Mark Twain stated, "It's easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled."

None of us like to be fooled or manipulated for the benefit of someone's personal and ill-intentioned agenda. We

need to be cognizant and question what we read, hear, and watch. Here are a few tips on how to spot what is real and what is fake:

- 1) Have a critical mindset: Question if the information is accurate and if it makes sense to you.
- 2) Check the source: See if the entity or person providing the information is reputable and free of any controversies and issues.
- 3) Verify the info: Talk to other people and experts to verify the information and question if it makes sense to them.
- 4) Use common sense: If the information presented is full of hyperbole and plays into your fears, it needs to be questioned.

Working in advertising has made me apprehensive about people presenting information, especially political in nature, in a way that looks like the marketing campaign of a product. When you see this, it is most likely a marketing campaign - and the product being pushed is their own selfish agenda.



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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

Federal Holiday:

Labor Day

Monday, September 4

City Facilities Closed. SIBshuttle will not run.



Special City Commission

Meeting: First Budget Hearing

Tuesday, September 5

5:30 PM

Commission Chambers, Government Center
18070 Collins Ave.



September 6, 13, 20, 27

Wednesdays | 3 - 4 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Gateway Market

September 6, 13, 20, 27

Wednesdays | 5:30 - 10 PM

Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Mini-FLOW

Florida Licensing on Wheels

Friday, September 8

9:30 AM - 1 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Pre-registration required. Call 305.792.1706.

Teens Only: Cook-off

Friday, September 8

7 - 9 PM

Pelican Community Park, 18115 N. Bay Rd.

Pre-registration required.

Beach Cleanup

Saturday, September 9

8 - 10 AM

Trump International Beach Resort

18001 Collins Ave. (on the beach)

Coffee with a Cop

Tuesday, September 12

10 AM - 12 PM

Starbucks, 17100 Collins Ave.

Lunch n' Learn with Florida

Historian Cesar Becerra

Tuesday, September 12

11 AM - 12 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Residents: FREE | Non-Residents: \$10

Pre-registration required.



Teen Talk

Tuesday, September 12

6 - 8 PM

Pelican Community Park, 18115 N. Bay Rd.

Doc Chats:

Blood Cancer Awareness

Wednesday, September 13

11 AM - 1 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Lunch is included. Pre-registration required.

Parks & Recreation Master

Plan Open House

Wednesday, September 13

6 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Special City Commission Meeting:

Second Budget Hearing

Thursday, September 14

6:15 PM

Commission Chambers, Government Center

18070 Collins Ave.

Cultural Trip:

Funky Buddha Brewery

Friday, September 15 | 10 AM

1201 NE 38 St, Oakland Park, FL

Bus departs Gateway Center at 10 AM

Residents: \$25 | Non-Residents: \$35

Pre-registration is required.

Regular City

Commission Meeting

Thursday, September 21

6:30 PM

Commission Chambers, Government Center,

18070 Collins Ave.

AARP Smart Driver

Safety Course

Friday, September 22

9 AM - 4 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

AARP Members: \$20 | Non-Members: \$25

Pre-registration required.

All Day Fun Zone

Monday, September 25

8 AM - 6 PM

Residents: \$30 | Non-Residents: \$45

Pelican Community Park, 18115 N. Bay Rd.

Lunch is not included.

Midday Movies: Guardians of

the Galaxy

Monday, September 25

11 AM - 1 PM

Residents: Free | Non-Residents: \$10

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Pre-registration required.

Senior Roundtable

Wednesday, September 27

12 - 1 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Pre-registration required.

Full Moon Yoga

Friday, September 29

7 - 8 PM

Trump International Beach Resort

(on the beach), 18001 Collins Ave.

Pre-registration encouraged.

Hispanic Heritage Celebration

Saturday, September 30

6 - 9 PM

Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.



**FOR A COMPLETE LIST
OF EVENTS, VISIT**

sibfl.net/events

SPOTLIGHT ON...

CODE COMPLIANCE

Among many other processes, the Code Compliance Department regulates and coordinates the issuance and renewal of Local Business Tax Receipts (LBTRs) and Certificates of Use. All businesses are inspected, and their licenses are delivered in person by a Code Compliance officer whose primary responsibility is to ensure all businesses are complying with city and state laws.

It is that time of year again for businesses to renew their Local Business Tax Receipt (LBTR) and Certificate of Use. The City of Sunny Isles Beach attempts to notify all businesses that their business tax receipts are due for renewal, however, it is the taxpayer's responsibility to renew the receipt by September 30 to avoid late renewal delinquent charges. Licenses are valid until September 30 of the following year.

Renewals for LBTRs and Certificates of Use are only accepted through your business's online portal account. First-time applicants must submit their application in person at the Sunny Isles Beach Government Center.

For more information, visit sibfl.net/code-compliance.

INSIDE THE *Isles*

KING TIDES & 172 STREET DRAINAGE

King tides are the highest predicted tides of the year for coastal cities. While they occur in both the fall and spring seasons, the highest tides in southeast Florida occur in the fall. This year, King Tides are predicted to occur August 29 - September 4, September 26 - October 3, October 14 -18, October 25 - November 1, November 13 - 15 and November 24 - 28.

In our ongoing efforts to enhance our infrastructure and minimize street flooding risks, we are pleased to share the successful conclusion of the 172 Street Storm Drainage project. The road has been raised one foot, a strategic measure aimed at preventing the intrusion of King Tides onto the street and improving the operation of the drainage wells.

These improvements will allow for better storm drainage on 172 Street as we enter the height of the rainy season and the South Florida Hurricane Season.

HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION

ALL AGES | FREE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 | 6 - 9 PM

Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

SIBFL.NET/HISPANICHERITAGE