

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: January 29, 2025

TITLE: DISCUSS UTILIZING 7605 COLLINS AVENUE AS A POTENTIAL BASE OF OPERATIONS FOR OCEAN RESCUE.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Administration recommends the Building Department maintain a minimum of 51% of the available space of the building to be used for Building Department services with the remainder of the space potentially made available to be shared for other compatible City uses and / or City services as determined by the City Commission. Any shared use of the space would necessitate that the non-Building Department entity pay a fair market prorated rent to the Building Department.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

On March 13, 2024, the City Commission approved Resolution 2024-32945, authorizing the purchase of the property located at 7605 Collins Avenue. This acquisition was financed using reserves from the Building Department Fund, with the intention of establishing a satellite office for the Building Department in North Beach. Currently, the Building Department leases a small space in North Beach at 962 Normandy Ave.

The purchase was made to facilitate the department's growth and enhance service delivery to the community. It aims to provide adequate space for inspectors, plans examiners, building code compliance officers, as well as clerks and customer service staff who currently operate from the leased location. It's important to note that funds allocated to the Building Department are designated solely for fulfilling the statutory obligations of a municipal building department.

The acquisition of the property was entirely funded by the Building Department. Additionally, the department has covered property maintenance expenses and has earmarked \$1,000,000 for a capital project to renovate and retrofit the building for office use.

Further, with regard to a base for operations for Ocean rescue, on November 6, 2018, the electorate of the City of Miami Beach approved the issuance of \$439,000,000 of general obligation bonds, including \$72,000,000 for police, fire, public safety, and security improvements. The development of a new North Beach Ocean Rescue Sub-Station was included in the projects that would be funded, with \$5,000,000, by the General Obligation Bonds (GOB), replacing the existing double-wide trailers with a permanent facility that will contain Ocean Rescue, County beach maintenance and Parks Operations, within the beach maintenance compound located at the south end of North Beach Oceanside Park.

As this will be a shared facility with Miami-Dade County, the project was initially funded with \$1,000,000 in tranche 1 of the GOB, with the balance to be issued in tranche 2, in order to commence feasibility studies and due diligence prior to negotiations with the County for project development and facility management. Once the feasibility study is complete, the City will finalize negotiations with Miami-Dade County (MDC). The final agreements, to be approved by the City and Miami-Dade County Commissions, will establish the County's contribution for the design and

construction of the project prior to proceeding with issuance of an RFQ for A/E design services, currently scheduled in spring 2025.

On December 11, 2024 the City Commission sponsored by Commissioner Tanya Bhatt, approved item C7 O, directing the administration to host an open house event located at 7605 Collins Avenue to facilitate a community discussion regarding potential future uses of the property and report back via Letter to Commission with the results and feedback gathered during the open house, along with any recommendations for next steps regarding the future utilization of the property. This meeting is being scheduled for February.

## **ANALYSIS**

Following the purchase of the property, several discussions have taken place regarding potential alternative uses for the space. A sunshine meeting was held on September 17, 2024, to tour the property and explore the best future uses, including potential involvement from Ocean Rescue. The minutes from that meeting are attached as Exhibit "A."

It is essential to note that if the Commission decides to change the property's use beyond serving the Building Department, the Building Department Fund must be fully reimbursed for all expenses incurred to date. Currently, the Building Department has expended \$6,521,607 on the property. Any shared use of the space would necessitate that the non-Building Department entity pay a fair market prorated rent to the Building Department.

Additionally, the Building Department and the Fire Department have engaged in discussions about the possibility of sharing the space. However, the Fire Department and Ocean Rescue face challenges sharing the property, primarily given the public-facing nature of the Building Department's operations.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The Building Department has already allocated \$1,000,000 in a capital project for retrofitting of the home for office use.

## **Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate?** (FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on .

See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

## **CONCLUSION**

Based upon the information presented, and after the community open house takes place, the Administration recommends that a decision be made on secondary uses of the property, if any. This will allow the Building Department to move forward with a plan to make this property the most efficient extension of City services in North Beach.

## **Applicable Area**

North Beach

**Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?**

No

**Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?**

No

**Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying?** No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

**Department**

Building

**Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

**Co-sponsor(s)**

Commissioner David Suarez

**Condensed Title**

DISCUSS UTILIZING 7605 COLLINS AVENUE AS A POTENTIAL BASE OF OPERATIONS FOR OCEAN RESCUE.