

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, DIRECTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO DEVELOP A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”) FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WATER TAXI SERVICE BETWEEN ONE OR MORE LOCATIONS IN MIAMI BEACH AND ONE OR MORE LOCATIONS IN MIAMI AND TO PRESENT THE DRAFT RFP FOR THE APPROVAL BY THE CITY COMMISSION PRIOR TO ISSUANCE.

WHEREAS, on June 28, 2023, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2023-32644, waiving, by a 5/7th vote, the formal competitive bidding requirement and accepting the recommendation of the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (“FERC”) at its May 24, 2023 meeting, directing the City Administration (“Administration”) to: 1) negotiate a one (1) year Agreement with Poseidon Ferry, LLC (“Poseidon”) for a water taxi pilot program (“Pilot Program”); 2) identify funding; 3) identify locations where the operation will be conducted; and 4) define the City contribution and fare structure; and further requiring that the final Agreement be subject to approval by the City Commission; and

WHEREAS, on June 28, 2023, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2023-32645 directing the Administration to explore the possibility of developing a new dock for water taxi service and study the financial components, including grant funding opportunities, and add water taxi services to the City’s legislative priorities; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 2023-32645 emphasized the importance of pursuing a competitive solicitation process for future water taxi services; and

WHEREAS, on September 13, 2023, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2023-32746, approving the term sheet reflecting the essential business terms of the Pilot Program and authorizing the Administration to negotiate and execute a one (1) year Concession Agreement with Poseidon; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2024, the Concession Agreement between the City and Poseidon for a one (1) year Pilot Program was executed; and

WHEREAS, the Concession Agreement provided for Poseidon to operate water taxi service using one (1) vessel operating between the floating dock in Maurice Gibb Memorial Park in Sunset Harbour and the Venetian Marina & Yacht Club in Miami, for approximately 11 hours a day, seven (7) days a week, at a cost to the City of \$600,000; and

WHEREAS, the Pilot Program began on June 30, 2024; and

WHEREAS, since the launch of the Pilot Program, Poseidon’s service faced significant operational challenges, including multiple mechanical failures, service suspensions, and ongoing customer service complaints. As a result, ridership remained low, with an average of 50 passengers per day; and

WHEREAS, at the July 24, 2024 City Commission meeting, Item C7 AH, sponsored by Vice-Mayor Fernandez, Commissioner Bhatt, and Commissioner Magazine, directing the Administration to terminate the Concession Agreement with Poseidon for material default, was referred to FERC for a discussion and then to return to the September 11, 2024 City Commission meeting; and

WHEREAS, during the July 26, 2024 FERC meeting, the Committee discussed this item and referred it to the September 11, 2024 City Commission meeting with a favorable recommendation to terminate the Concession Agreement with Poseidon due to Poseidon's material default; and

WHEREAS, at the September 11, 2024 City Commission meeting, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2024-33247, terminating the Concession Agreement with Poseidon; and

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2024, a Sunshine Meeting was held by Commissioner David Suarez to discuss and explore possible smaller-scale alternatives for a water taxi service; and

WHEREAS, the recommendation from the Sunshine Meeting was to bring this item before the City Commission for further discussion and to direct the Administration to prepare a competitive solicitation for future water taxi services; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the competitive solicitation is to ensure that a future water taxi service is reliable, meets the needs of the community, and is procured through a transparent and competitive process; and

WHEREAS, the Administration recognizes the need for a reliable water taxi service to complement the City's multi-modal transportation network.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, that the Mayor and City Commission direct the City Administration to develop a Request For Proposals ("RFP") for the establishment of a water taxi service between one or more locations in Miami Beach and one or more locations in Miami and to present the draft RFP for the approval by the City Commission prior to issuance.

PASSED and ADOPTED this _____ day _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

Steven Meiner, Mayor

Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk

(sponsored by Mayor Steven Meiner,
Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt,
Commissioner Laura Dominguez,
Commissioner Alex Fernandez,
Commissioner David Suarez)

APPROVED AS TO
FORM & LANGUAGE
& FOR EXECUTION

 10/29/24
City Attorney *DH* Date