

MIAMI BEACH

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: March 12, 2025

TITLE: DISCUSS THE POTENTIAL CREATION OF A SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT TO FUND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GUARD GATES AND/OR IMPLEMENTATION OF OTHER SECURITY FEATURES IN VENETIAN ISLANDS.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee (“PSNQLC” or the “Committee”) discuss and provide policy direction on creating the Venetian Islands as a Special Taxing District.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

On February 26, 2025, the Mayor and City Commission approved the dual referral of item C4 AN, sponsored by Commissioner David Suarez and co-sponsored by Commissioner Joseph Magazine, to the PSNQLC and the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (“FERC”) to discuss the potential creation of a Special Taxing District to fund the implementation of guard gates and/or other security features in Venetian Islands.

ANALYSIS

The Venetian Islands in Miami Beach are comprised of three artificial islands: San Marino Island, Di Lido Island, and the Rivo Alto Island, whose boundaries are depicted in Exhibit A, attached hereto. At the request of the sponsors, this item addresses the costs, feasibility, and procedures for establishing a Special Taxing District to augment security measures in these communities.

Currently, the Facilities Management Division (the “Division”) oversees the contract maintenance services and budgets of four (4) Special Taxing Districts (the “Districts”) within the City: Allison Island¹, Biscayne Beach, Biscayne Point, and Normandy Shores. Under the scope of services funded in these budgets are janitorial services, extermination services, gate access, repair and maintenance, security guard services, telecommunications, utilities, and other general maintenance services (i.e. HVAC maintenance, repair, etc.) for the guardhouses. By way of reference, the operation budgets for the Districts are included hereto as Exhibit B. The City also provides other services not contemplated in these budgets, including landscape and lighting maintenance.

Security guard services vary from one District to another, including security officer levels (level 1-5, armed or unarmed), and whether these are stationary, roving, or a combination thereof. Additionally, all Districts are also equipped with license plate recognition cameras (LPRs) and

¹ On December 13, 2023, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2023-32846, approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Allison Island HOA, authorizing the HOA to select, and contract directly with, a Security Services Contractor and receive payments from the City for the security guard services from the funds appropriated pursuant to the Special Taxing District for each Fiscal Year, commencing for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, subject to annual renewals for each subsequent Fiscal Year by agreement of the parties.

convenience gates, with access controlled through RFID tags or verified via the guardhouse attendant. Below is a summary of the Districts' current service level and associated costs for security guard services in FY2025:

FY 2025 - Current Level of Service

Special Taxing District	Security Services Contractor	Details	Level	Original Hourly Rate	Days from 10/01 to 09/30	Total
Normandy Shores	Security Alliance	Guardhouse - 24/7 service	1	\$ 23.33	365	\$204,370.80
		Rover - 7 hrs. per day (split with Parks)	1	\$ 23.33	365	\$ 29,804.08
		Annual Cart Rental (split with Parks)				\$ 2,880.00
		Total				\$237,054.88
Biscayne Beach	FPI	128 hrs. per week	1	\$ 23.33	365	\$155,711.09
		40 hrs. per week	5	\$ 25.88	365	\$ 53,978.29
		Total				\$209,689.37
Biscayne Point	Security Alliance	88 hrs. per week	1	\$ 23.33	365	\$107,051.37
		80 hrs. per week	3	\$ 24.39	365	\$101,741.14
		8 hrs. per day - 56 hrs. per week	1	\$ 23.33	365	\$ 68,123.60
		Annual Cart Rental	1		365	\$ 7,200.00
		Total				\$284,116.11
Allison Island	United Allied**	Independently contracted and managed by HOA per Resolution No. 2023-32846			Total	\$282,148.97

Within Miami Beach there are other security neighborhoods that are not managed by the City's Division. Two such examples are Palm, Hibiscus and Star islands, which are managed by Miami-Dade County's Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department. Like the City, these Districts maintain specific operating budgets to cover expenses for passive security programs, general maintenance to guardhouses (cleaning, pest control services, etc.) as well as landscape services. For comparison, and by way of reference these budgets are attached as Exhibit C.

Establishing a Special Taxing District

Chapter 18 of the Miami-Dade County Code ("County Code") establishes a process for the creation of special assessment districts for a wide array of services, including security guard services. Homeowners within a defined geographic area can petition for the creation of a district, in order to fund additional services beyond what is currently provided by the City. These services are billed to property owners as non-ad valorem special assessments, which are included on their annual property tax bill.

The first step for homeowners, under the County Code, is to submit a letter of intent to Miami-Dade County, signed by 10% of property owners within the affected area. The letter of intent must include the boundaries of the proposed district. A petition package is then prepared for homeowners to complete. The petition must be signed by 50% plus one of the resident property owners within the area. Following certification of the petition, an Ordinance will be prepared for approval by the Board of County Commissioners. Once approved, the County will conduct an election, in which the approval of a majority of qualified voters will be required to create the district.

As part of this process, the City Commission will need to adopt an initial Resolution approving the creation of the district. Assuming a majority of the qualified voters are in favor of the district, the County would create the District. If in the future the District wished to transfer to the City, then the City will be required to enter into an Interlocal Agreement with the County and the Tax Collector to transfer control of the district to the City and provide for billing and collection of special assessments by the Tax Collector.

Other Considerations

The streets within and surrounding the Venetian Islands are public streets. Any proposed security gates to control and restrict access would require approval by Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works ("MDCDTPW"), which has jurisdictional authority to approve any permits related to the installation or reconfiguration of convenience gates in communities. The City's Transportation & Mobility Department would collaborate with MDCDTPW and submit a traffic memorandum that focuses on a queuing analysis, in order to review and comment on the placement of the gates. Any funds expended by the City for queuing analyses and/or traffic studies, would need to be repaid to the City by the district when established as well as the cost for construction of the gate or gates.

The process of establishing a security district could require at least a two-year commitment to complete. The foregoing is presented for the Committee's consideration for creating Venetian Islands as a Special Taxing District.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

TBD

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-notices/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the Committee should discuss and review the benefits and process to establish Venetian Islands as a Special Taxing District.

Applicable Area

Middle Beach

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

Yes

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

Facilities and Fleet Management

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner David Suarez

Co-sponsor(s)

Commissioner Joseph Magazine

Condensed Title

Discuss Potential Creation of a Special Taxing District to Fund the Implementation of Guard Gates and Other Security Features in Venetian Islands.