

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt
DATE: January 31, 2024

SUBJECT: REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS
SPECIAL EVENT GUIDELINES AND CITY SPONSORSHIPS, FEE WAIVERS AND OTHER
SUBSIDIES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

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

If so, specify name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s): N/A

ANALYSIS

Please place on the January 31, 2024 agenda a referral to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee ("FERC") to discuss further refining the Special Event Guidelines and a review of City sponsorships, fee waivers and other subsidies for Special Events.

While special events are part of the fabric of our community, it seems that we may have hit a tipping point where the number of events, and the size/impact of so many events outweigh the perceived benefits. Benefits to be contemplated are not just the possible beneficial economic impact (or whether the cost outweighs the ROI), but also the quality of life impact such as traffic, public space closures before/after events, noise and smell pollution, etc. This discussion item would seek to provide strategic direction for event parameters which are welcomed into and/or subsidized by our city; where in the city they are located, and how affected residents and businesses are noticed with sufficient time to have meaningful dialog and input early enough in the process to be constructive.

Under the leadership of my colleague, Commissioner Alex Fernandez, the City's Special Event Guidelines (the "Guidelines") underwent an overhaul in 2023 that resulted in some improvements. I believe there are some areas where additional refinement and/or clarification of the Guidelines and/or amendments to Section 12-5 of the City Code could better enable City staff to implement the Commission's policy direction as embodied in the Guidelines. Below are some examples.

- The current Guidelines contemplate that events with anticipated attendance of 150 or more persons are subject to community review by the corresponding neighborhood or business association(s). In addition, for large events with an expected attendance of 1,000 or more persons within the general boundaries of the Art Deco Cultural District (i.e. 5th to 16th Streets) to properties or neighborhoods within a 500-foot radius if activating west of the dunes, and within a 1,000-foot radius if activating east of the dunes, they are expected to advise the community of the Special Event Community Review meeting. The City Manager must consider input from the neighborhood association(s) in determining whether to grant a Special Event Permit or what conditions to impose upon granting of the permit. A neighborhood association is entitled to appeal the Manager's decision to the City Commission at its next available meeting.
- Notwithstanding the various steps contemplated by the Guidelines, an event producer is required to submit its application just 90 days prior to load-in. Even if this deadline is strictly adhered to, a 90-day period seems inadequate to enable neighborhood associations to appeal decisions of the City Manager to the City Commission when there is a lack of consensus. In this regard, it would be beneficial to specify an earlier deadline for applications in the Guidelines and, as noted below, in Section 12-5 of the City Code.
- There are also some inconsistencies between Section 12-5 of the City Code and the current Guidelines that should be resolved. For example, Section 12-5(2) indicates that applicants must submit applications no less than 60 days in advance whereas the Guidelines require submission for special events on public property at least 90 days prior to the event, but if on private property, either 30 or 60 days prior depending on. In addition, the Special Event Guidelines only requires community review for certain events held on public property. In its current form, Section 12-5 implies that all special events, whether on public property or private property, must present their plans for review at the monthly special events community review meeting.

I would also like the FERC to review sponsorships, fee waivers and other subsidies provided by the City for special events. Although I understand the City’s desire to provide support for certain special events that are beneficial to our local hospitality businesses and appealing to our residents and visitors, some of these events are sufficiently established and profitable such that sponsorships are not truly justifiable. I believe some of these sponsorships could be phased out over time without impacting the quality of activations in the City. Attached as [Exhibit A](#) is a schedule of sponsorships for special events funded by the City in fiscal year 2023, as well as sponsorship commitments to date for fiscal year 2024.

City staff and/or members of the Administration responsible for implementing the Special Event Guidelines and administering City sponsorships for special events should be prepared to:

- provide feedback on the current Guidelines and identify opportunities to improve the process, including community outreach
- outline the current approved list of events for 2024 (and beyond if applicable) and their economic/branding impact to the City;
- present the sponsorship budget for the 2024 fiscal year to the FERC;
- review the strategic vision for how events are vetted/screened, and how it is determined whether or not to allow a new event to take place.

SUPPORTING SURVEY DATA

N/A

FINANCIAL INFORMATION


N/A

<u>Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-14?</u>	<u>Does this item utilize G.O. Bond Funds?</u>
No	No

Legislative Tracking
Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

Sponsor
Co-sponsored by Commissioner Joseph Magazine

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	
	Exhibit A