



COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: April 23, 2025

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE SPECIAL EVENT SPONSORSHIP FUNDING FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 FOR TEN (10) SPECIAL EVENT ORGANIZERS IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$399,912 TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO MIAMI BEACH-BASED SPECIAL EVENTS; AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY CLERK TO EXECUTE THE SPONSORSHIP AGREEMENTS RELATED TO THE APPROVED FUNDS.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends the approval of the Miami Beach Special Event Sponsorship recommendations for fiscal year 2025/2026 for ten (10) special event organizers in the total amount of \$399,912.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

The Miami Beach Special Event Sponsorship Program (the "Program") was created on June 23, 2021, via Resolution No.2021-31742 to assist the City in the review of event sponsorship and fee waiver requests. The Program process is formalized and allows the Administration to properly analyze and budget special event sponsorship requests.

The Program is available for events held in Miami Beach. The purpose is to provide financial assistance and in-kind support to high-quality local festivals, special events, community events, or programming that promote community engagement and elevates Miami Beach as a world-class tourist destination.

The City of Miami Beach considers special events that:

- provide unique and engaging experiences that increase resident quality of life;
- increase tourism by hotel rooms block contract(s) and targeted tourist attendance;
- promote Miami Beach as a national and international tourist destination;
- accessible to the general public; and
- strengthens Miami Beach by enhancing the City's Cultural Events.

The City's current sponsorship process is within the City Code:

Section 12-6 of the City Code defines a sponsorship as any contract, grant, or other commitment by the City to fund an event, either through:

- A cash or in-kind contribution, in any amount; or

- A reimbursement for City special event-related costs (police, fire, sanitation); or
- A waiver of special event permit fees (including user fees, admin fees, and square footage fees), in excess of \$25,000.

Section 12-7(c) of the City Code provides that "in considering approval of a Sponsorship for an event, the City Commission may consider:

- whether the event organizer has exercised good-faith, diligent efforts to apply for grant funding that may be available from the City's Visitor and Convention Authority ("VCA") or Cultural Arts Council ("CAC");
- the Event organizer's history and performance in delivering quality Events;
- any benefits being directly provided to the general public with respect to the Event, such as free or discounted tickets to persons residing in the City of Miami Beach, seniors, veterans, or members of disadvantaged groups;
- whether the event is accessible to the general public (either as a ticketed event or otherwise); the demonstrable economic impacts associated with the Event;
- the demonstrable media commitments secured by the Event organizer for the Event; or the efforts undertaken by the Event organizer to mitigate any quality-of-life impacts associated with the Event, including noise, littering, traffic, or parking impacts associated with an Event.

In Section 12-7 of the City Code, sponsorship requests are generally to be reviewed well in advance of the date of each event, either as part of the City Commission's annual budget process, or through applications to the VCA or CAC. Any sponsorship request that falls outside of the standard review process is subject to Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee ("FERC") advisory review, as well as a heightened 5/7ths approval requirement by the City Commission.

The Special Event Sponsorship Process addresses these elements and provides a platform for event organizers to apply for city sponsorship in advance and allows the Administration time to do proper due diligence and budget planning for the fiscal year, while also allowing for opportunities to curate a fiscal year of engaging, unique, entertaining, educational, and fun community events to benefit Miami Beach residents, businesses, visitors and culture.

ANALYSIS

Since its inception, the Administration has witnessed an increased interest in the Program, both from producers of large-scale events and community event organizers. To date, the Tourism and Culture Department (TCD) has managed four cycles of the Program. At the July 26, 2023, City Commission meeting the Mayor and City Commissioners voted to approve the revisions to the Special Event Guidelines via Resolution No. 2023-32701. The approved revisions included the bifurcation of the Special Event Sponsorship Program, to allow the Program to be independent from the guidelines.

At the September 12, 2023 City Commission meeting, the Mayor and City Commission voted via Resolution No. 2023-32745 to amend and restate the City's Special Event Sponsorship Program requirements by (1) creating two distinct event sponsorship categories, including minimum requirements and evaluation criteria, for "Major Special Events" and "Community Engagement events," and an evaluation process to review

and score sponsorship requests based upon weighted criteria, and (2) establishing maximum sponsorship funding amounts per event.

The Program reviews non-profit status, length of event, history of event, hotel room block, number of attendees, resident/community benefit, marketing, and public relations exposure, and more. Applicants are required to have a mandatory dollar for dollar (\$1 to \$1) match and demonstrate this match through cash, other matching sponsorships, and/or in-kind contributions.

Accordingly, in its fourth year, the program applications opened on January 1, 2025, and closed February 28, 2025. The program is hosted at: MBEventSponsorship.gosmart.org. For each cycle, applicants who meet the requirements are scored by a review panel and subsequently approved by the Mayor and City Commission.

For the category of Major Special Event, thirteen (13) event organizers opened the application, nine (9) event organizers completed the application. For the category of Community Engagement Event, ten (10) event organizers opened the application, and six (6) event organizers completed the application and qualified for review. During the months of February and March the fifteen (15) applicants who met all requirements, including deadlines, were reviewed, and scored by a panel consisting of City staff, and members of the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority. Incomplete applications were disqualified, and applicants were invited to apply during the next session, which launches on January 1, 2026, and will close on February 28, 2026.

Application review included an extensive review process that reviewed non-profit status, length of event, history of event, hotel room block (when applicable), whether attendees are regional, national and/or international, resident/community benefit, marketing, and public relations exposure, utilization of local venues, tax documentation, and more. Applicants were required to have a mandatory dollar for dollar (\$1 to \$1) match and demonstrate this match through cash, other matching sponsorships, and/or in-kind contributions.

According to the Special Events Sponsorship Program, an application must score at least 65% on the Sponsorship Score Card for the administration to recommend that the sponsorship be awarded. Only ten (10) met the threshold. Based on these guidelines, the administration is making the following funding recommendations:

Special Event Category	Applicant Name	Event Name	Event Date	Requested Funding	Average Score	Recommended Award
Major Special Event	The Fashion Shows LCC dba "Miami Fashion Week"	Miami Fashion Week	October 21, 2025	\$ 100,000	72.75	\$ 72,750
Major Special Event	Miami Music Festival, Inc.	Miami Beach Holiday Festival of Lights	December 10-14, 2025	\$ 100,000	88.25	\$ 88,250
Major Special Event	GroundUP Music Foundation, Inc.	GroundUP Music Festival Miami Beach	March 13-15, 2026	\$ 50,000	88.25	\$ 44,125
Major Special Event	Miami Takeover LLC	Miami Takeover	July 24-27, 2026	\$ 50,000	91.33	\$ 45,667
Major Special Event	Sportworx International BV	Queen & King of the Court	September 24-27, 2026	\$ 100,000	77.75	\$ 77,750
Community Engagement Event	Bais Menachem, Inc.	Simchas Bais Hashoeiva	October 12, 2025	\$ 20,000	90.20	\$ 18,040
Community Engagement Event	Friendship Circle of Greater Miami, Inc.	Bike 4 Friendship	March 1, 2026	\$ 20,000	67.20	\$ 13,440
Community Engagement Event	Miami Beach Orchid Society	Orchids and Arts Festival	May 2-3, 2026	\$ 5,000	74.80	\$ 3,740
Community Engagement Event	Hued Songs, Inc.	The Juneteenth Experience	June 18-19, 2026	\$ 20,000	92.00	\$ 18,400
Community Engagement Event	Almodovar Musica LLC	Miami Beach Salsa Festival	September 27, 2026	\$ 20,000	88.75	\$ 17,750

Event Descriptions provided in applications are listed below by category.

Community Engagement Category

Hued Songs – Hued Songs presents the 6th annual production of the multidisciplinary, inclusive performance of The Juneteenth Experience, bringing Black joy and artistry to citizens across Miami-Dade County. The June 18 & 19, 2026 performances of the Juneteenth Experience at Miami Beach's iconic Colony Theatre culminate a month-long celebration of community activations and performances across Miami-Dade County, starting on May 20 with a multidisciplinary performance at Green Space Miami.

Bais Menachem – SBH (Simchas Bais Hashoeiva), a joyous Jewish holiday celebration, is an annual event that has become a beloved tradition in Miami Beach. Rooted in cultural significance, Simchas Bais Hashoeiva began in ancient times and was celebrated in the temple in Jerusalem. This event is a time for community members to come together in unity and celebration, embodying the spirit of shared joy and cultural vibrancy. Now in its 6th year, SBH of Miami Beach transforms 40th St between Royal Palm and Prairie into a lively cultural hub. The focal point of the celebration is a dynamic main stage featuring energetic live music acts that captivate and engage attendees. The event offers a unique and immersive experience with seating arrangements, spaces for mingling, and dancing spread throughout the blocked-off section of 40th St.

Miami Beach Salsa Festival - Miami Beach Salsa Fest has been the official Hispanic Heritage celebration of the City of Miami Beach. This year the event is planned for the date of September 27th, 2025. The event will have live salsa orchestras, live children's dance showcases, singers, authentic dances from different Latin countries, Latin food, and much more. Miami Beach Salsa Fest will also feature free salsa dance classes for the public and salsa DJ's. Guaranteed seating will be offered for Seniors and children. Also, the event hopes to bring a big-name artist to make the event even more successful with the help of these funds from the City of Miami Beach.

Miami Beach Orchids and Arts Festival - The Orchids & Arts Festival, scheduled for May 3-4, 2026, promises a weekend dedicated to celebrating orchids. Hosted by the Miami Beach Orchid Society the festival will feature orchid and art exhibits, musical performances, dance showcases, educational sessions, and a vibrant vendors market. Emphasizing our Florida native orchid species, the festival aims to raise awareness about the importance of preserving our delicate ecosystems. The festival takes place at the Miami Beach Botanical Garden, 2000 Convention Center Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33140. Festival hours are 10 am-4 pm daily.

Bike 4 Friendship - Bike 4 Friendship is an annual cycling event that promotes inclusivity, community engagement, and economic prosperity in Miami Beach. Benefiting Friendship Circle of Miami Beach and North Dade, the event raises critical funds for programs supporting children, teens, and young adults with disabilities. A minimum of 120 cyclists will participate, joined by at least 240 supporters, including family members, volunteers, and community members. The ride follows a scenic route along the Miami Beach Boardwalk, showcasing the city's waterfront beauty. Following the ride, participants and supporters will gather for a post-ride Family Fun Day, featuring a BBQ and carnival. The event fosters awareness, strengthens community bonds, and encourages active lifestyles. By bringing together local and visiting cyclists, Bike 4 Friendship contributes to Miami Beach's vibrant, inclusive, and philanthropic spirit while providing a lasting benefit to individuals with disabilities and their families.

Major Special Event

Miami Music Festival - Miami Beach Holiday Festival of Lights will turn an entire block on Ocean Drive into interactive displays with vibrant projections accompanied by live musical performances and a festive holiday village. The festival uses state-of-the-art projection mapping,

a technological innovation that overlaps video onto all surfaces, turning ordinary buildings into interactive displays. Holiday-themed graphics will be projected across 5 consecutive buildings highlighting the unique Art Deco architecture to create a delightful light and music experience. MMF will present three performances each day, featuring MMF's talented singers and orchestra alongside beloved holiday characters, including Santa Claus, The Grinch, and Elsa. The visual elements projected onto the building will be holiday-themed and customized to the rhythm of each song, allowing the performers to interact with the graphics behind them.

Sportworx International - Queen & King of the Court is a spectacular beach volleyball concept where each round five teams compete in a timed elimination race. One match consists of three rounds of 15 minutes. In between rallies there is a maximum of 8 seconds. After each round, the team with the least number of points is eliminated. If there is more than one team with the lowest number of points, the team with longest stay advances to the next round. If the longest stay is also equal, the team that reached that longest stay first continues to the next round. The Queen & King of the Court Beach Volleyball Event stands as a pinnacle of athletic excellence, bringing together the world's foremost beach volleyball players, including esteemed World and Olympic champions.

The Fashion Shows LCC dba "Miami Fashion Week" - The grand finale of Miami Fashion Week 2025—a spectacular event that embodies style, creativity, and cultural celebration. Our vision features an extraordinary fashion show, headlined by a celebrated designer, which will serve as the highlight of this prestigious week-long celebration. After the stunning runway showcase, attendees will be treated to an exhilarating concert by a renowned international artist, enhancing the evening's atmosphere and ensuring an unforgettable experience for everyone involved. This closing event not only aims to spotlight the pinnacle of fashion but also seeks to engage the community and nurture an appreciation for the arts within Miami Beach. We believe this enchanting evening will leave a memorable mark on attendees and participants alike, contributing significantly to the cultural richness and economic vitality of our cherished city.

Miami Takeover LLC - In its 17th year, the Miami Takeover Weekend has become a signature yearly travel event for the mature traveler (30-52). Next year the weekend event is scheduled to take place July 24th through July 27th, 2026 and its purpose is to bring together like minded mature travelers and provide them with a stress free travel getaway in Miami Beach, one of the world's ideal vacation destinations, centered around entertainment, peer networking, community service and the opportunity to expose travelers to Washington, DC culture through the power of live music performances and personal interaction. The weekend festivities kick-off with an afternoon networking meet and greet for weekend travelers. Three additional social and community service events are planned during the remainder of the weekend highlighted by a cultural exchange music and arts festival that features live performances of Go-Go which is the adopted official music of the city of Washington, DC.

GroundUp Music Festival - The New York Times named the GroundUP Music Festival Miami Beach as one of the "Top 10 Definitive Moments of the Decade" in music. The 10th annual GroundUP Music Festival Miami Beach will take place on March 13-15, 2026, at the Miami Beach Bandshell. Each year at the festival, five-time Grammy-winners Snarky Puppy, acclaimed by Rolling Stone Magazine as "one of the most versatile bands on the planet," offer daily masterclasses with other festival artists and play daily sets including a "Family Dinner" set each night. The Family Dinner sessions featuring Snarky Puppy playing with a diverse array of music icons as guests with the band, and there will also be full music sets by other renowned artists TBA from all over the world, as well as Snarky Puppy sets and daily workshops, masterclasses, and other interactive opportunities for the audience and artists to meaningfully engage with each other (with hundreds of free and heavily discounted tickets to local students and seniors).

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The amount awarded for special event sponsorship program for FY 2025/2026 is \$399,912. The Special Event Sponsorship program recurring budget of \$400,000 was adopted in the FY 2025 budget process #160-0380-000349-25-406-548-00-00-00-

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate?

(FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

If applicable, the Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on:

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

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CONCLUSION

The Administration recommends the approval of the Miami Beach Special Event Sponsorship recommendations for fiscal year 2025/2026 for ten (10) special event organizers in the total amount of \$399,912. The Special Event Sponsorship program recurring budget of \$400,000 was adopted in the FY 2025 budget process.

The Program recommended funds will provide financial assistance and in-kind support to ten (10) dynamic, impactful events. Together with annual contractual events (such as South Beach Wine & Food, Miami Beach Pride, and the Hyundai Air & Sea Show), these special event sponsorships will support quality and well-financed events. In addition, the events will assist in promoting tourism and economic and cultural development efforts that should positively impact Miami Beach.

Applicable Area

Citywide

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

Tourism and Culture

Sponsor(s)

Co-sponsor(s)

Condensed Title

Accept Rec/Approve FY 2026 Special Event Sponsorship Funding, MB-Based Events. TC

Previous Action (For City Clerk Use Only)