


{{item.number}}

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager 

DATE: May 21, 2025

TITLE: **A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, APPROVING A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$1,900,000 TO NEW WORLD SYMPHONY, INC. ("GRANTEE"), FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SOUND SYSTEM AT SOUNDSCAPE PARK; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH GRANTEE FOR THE FOREGOING PURPOSE (GRANT AGREEMENT); AND FURTHER, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND CITY CLERK TO EXECUTE THE GRANT AGREEMENT ACCORDINGLY.**

RECOMMENDATION

It is the recommendation of the Administration that this resolution be accepted.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

Soundscape Park ("the Park") is a 2.5 acre, City of Miami Beach ("City") owned, park located at 400 17th St, in the Miami Beach Redevelopment Agency (RDA). Adjacent to the Park is the New World Center, home of the New World Symphony ("NWS"). The Park features a world class, state-of-the-art Audio/Video system used to simulcast an average of ten (10) free symphonic performances by the New World Symphony ("Wallcast"), movies presented by the City, holiday concerts, an audible art installation, and other multimedia presentations. The Park was collaboratively developed by the City of Miami beach and the New World Symphony as part of a development agreement dated January 5, 2004. As part of this agreement, the city assumed the responsibility of purchasing and maintaining the sound system, and NWS assumed the responsibility of purchasing and maintaining the projection equipment.

The sound system, built on Meyer Sound's Constellation Audio System, uses speakers distributed throughout the park to replicate the natural acoustics of concert halls that have been analyzed and catalogued. In the case of Soundscape Park, the sound system replicates the natural acoustics of the New World Center Concert Hall so that the audience outside is listening to nearly the same concert as the audiences inside the hall. The design's original intent was to allow for audiences to experience the symphony free of charge, while still enjoying the immersive experience had by those with a paid ticket.

The sound system was commissioned in 2011 and had an anticipated useful life expectancy of 10 years. Solotech (formerly ProSound) was the vendor that originally installed the system and has since maintained it. They have been able to extend that four years longer than originally anticipated. At a conditions assessment in September of 2024, Solotech with Meyer Sound, estimated that the system has deteriorated to approximately 40% of its intended operational capacity, causing uneven coverage and repeated failure of components. Being an outdoor installation that is in proximity to the ocean also accelerates this deterioration. Replacement parts for the system are no longer manufactured, as Meyer is currently in the fifth generation of this

product line and are available only occasionally on the used-gear market, as other users decommission their failing systems. It is believed that the system has a high probability of failure and is not stable enough to confidently operate for another season.

The proposed one-for-one replacement of the system was estimated at approximately \$2,400,000. At the request of the Administration, Solotech and Meyer have revisited that estimate and redesigned the system, without compromising its quality or intended objectives. The redesigned system has been quoted at \$1,600,000, with another \$300,000 (approximately) required for site repairs and preparation to receive the new system. The \$300,000 for site repairs and preparation is already funded from savings in an associated Soundscape Park project,

On May 15 2025, the GO Bond Oversight Committee unanimously passed a motion to support the allocation of \$1,600,000 in accrued earned interest from the 2019 Parks GO Bond toward the replacement of the Soundscape Park sound system with the project delivered via a grant to New World Symphony to manage the project on behalf of the City.

ANALYSIS

The Administration has familiarized itself with the state of the system and believes that it's in the City's best interest to leverage New World Symphony's ability to execute the project this summer for several reasons.

- The system is significantly past its intended useful life expectancy and experiencing dramatic physical deterioration. It is difficult to predict when the system will reach a point of critical failure. When it does, it will result in the cancelation of New World's Wallcast, the City's Outdoor Movie Series and possible collaborations around Art Basel, among other events.
- This generation of speakers is no longer supported, and replacement parts can only be found occasionally on the used market. In its current state of decline, it is likely the technicians servicing the system will not be able to source parts for future failures, extending repair times and costs
- While the speakers are manufactured in the United States, the cost of raw materials and construction continue to rise. If not contracted at this time, the project will have to wait at least until summer of 2026 and will be more susceptible to price increases.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The total project cost of the proposed work to replace the Soundscape Park sound system will be approximately **\$1,846,070.67**

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

It is proposed that this project will have two (2) funding sources.

- 2018 General Obligation Bond: \$1,600,000

- Project # 23318: \$290,000

CONCLUSION

It is the recommendation of the Administration that this resolution be accepted, and the Administration be authorized to enter into a grant agreement with New World Symphony for the replacement of the Soundscape Park Sound System, to be funded from the 2018 GO Bond and the savings from the existing Soundscape project number 23318.

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?

Yes

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)

Co-sponsor(s)

Previous Action (For City Clerk Use Only)