



Islander

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JULY 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE Mayor

“ Inflation has been a constant concern in the country over the last few years impacting nearly every aspect of our lives. ”



Larisa Svechin
Mayor

The cost of living in South Florida has skyrocketed across all planes and affects us all. Particularly, property insurance rates are at an all-time high. A necessary expense, especially due to our geographic coastal location, insurance protects our homes and personal property.

On the legislative front, several new state laws that address and strengthen the property insurance market for homeowners were recently passed. Signed into law last month, CS/SB 7052 prohibits authorized insurers from cancelling a property insurance policy during a pending claim until the earlier of when the property has been repaired or one year after the insurer issues the final claim payment. HB 793 prohibits insurance companies and agents from engaging in several deceitful practices. The bill limits Collateral Protection Insurance (CPI), insurance that protects lenders if the borrower is unable to prove adequate property insurance coverage, to the time only when a homeowner does not have regular insurance. Lenders cannot “double dip,” or require homeowners to procure CPI before their regular policy has expired.

HB 799 requires property insurers to allow for rate discounts for homeowners who take windstorm mitigation measures, requires property insurance rates to include wind uplift prevention in windstorm damage mitigation techniques, and revises rate change limitations for specified policies by Citizens Property Insurance Corporation.

In the aftermath of the Surfside condominium tragedy, the state reevaluated building inspection measures and mandates. The

previous 40-year recertification requirements were lessened to 25 years when the state passed SB 4-D last year, which created new requirements for milestone inspections of condominiums and cooperative association buildings that are three stories or taller. As our city is within three miles of the coastline, all condos three or more stories built between 1983 and 1997 must receive a recertification inspection by the end of 2024 and then every 10 years after. For all buildings built after 1997, they must receive a recertification inspection once the building reaches 25 years and every 10 years thereafter. What this boils down to is that condominiums must be proactive by planning and putting in the work throughout the life of the building rather than when the building is up for inspection.

At the local level, our city participates in FEMA's Community Rating System, a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that not only meet, but exceed minimum requirements put in place by the National Flood Insurance Program. Sunny Isles Beach is rated a Class 8 community, which translates to a 10% discount for our residents when purchasing flood insurance.

While the city and state are working to alleviate some of the cost burden of property insurance, condominiums and homeowners should plan for enough reserves to cover the rising costs of insurance. Taking an active role in your condominium or homeowner's association will empower property owners to take control of their investment and know their rights.

Contact Mayor Larisa Svechin at mayor@sibfl.net or 305.792.1753.

MESSAGE FROM THE City Manager's Office

Summer is always a time for celebration in Sunny Isles Beach! Every year in June, we celebrate the City's anniversary with a party for the entire community. This year was extraordinary as we brought the event back to our namesake. The beach, our most valuable commodity, was the perfect site for the 26th anniversary, aptly named Beach Bash.

What was most rewarding was seeing our friends and neighbors, clad with their valid Resident ID cards, who attended and stayed throughout the entire event. Both the City Commission and our office received high praise about the event, including compliments about how it was truly for our residents. Over and over again we heard sentiments of the pride they felt by being a part of this great city.

This pride was not exclusive to residents, however. Our wonderful team of employees across all departments played a role in this year's event. It is a true testament to their commitment to making this city the Height of Living for their residents, fellow employees, the business community, and visitors. From months of planning to execution to a long night of clean-up, our team worked together like never before to deliver a most memorable event, and all under budget!

On behalf of our residents and the Commission, we thank the entire Sunny Isles Beach workforce who had a hand in the success of the event. Starting with Public Works assisting in the background, Finance processing purchases and contracts, Building securing permitting, IT supporting our online sales, and Human Resources promoting it to employees, to Code Compliance support with parking, Transportation operating the shuttle bus, Police and Ocean Rescue providing a safe venue, and Media for the marketing strategy. And much gratitude to the Parks Division and the entire Cultural and Community Services Department led by Gayle Vasile and Special Events Coordinator Dydra Udell for the long days, many hours of planning and overall implementation.

The vision for this event was grand and the result was a resounding success. Thank you to all who signed up to get your wristbands early, who renewed your Resident ID card, who came and danced and enjoyed, and in the end, boasted about how exceptional your city is to live, work, play and thrive.

For those who may have missed it, check out the highlights on our digital photo gallery at sibfl.net/photos or watch the recap video on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com).



Contact City Manager's Office at citymanager@sibfl.net or [305.792.1701](tel:305.792.1701).

Florida Legislative Highlights for 2023

Commissioner Alex Lama

The State of Florida concluded its 2023 legislative sessions on May 5. Below are some outcomes that affect local governments and Florida residents.

Sovereign Immunity:

CS/HB 401 (Beltran) and SB 604 (Gruters) - The failed bills proposed an increase in the statutory limits on liability for tort claims against the state, counties, and municipalities. HB 401 would have raised the limits from \$200,000 per person and \$300,000 per incident to \$2,500,000 per person and \$5,000,000 per incident; SB 604 would have increased the caps to \$400,000 per person and \$600,000 per incident. A successful claim of such monetary amounts could potentially mean bankruptcy for cities. The failure of the bills benefits smaller municipalities with limited budgets.

Residential Building Permits

SB 682 (DiCeglie) and CS/HB 671 (Esposito) - The bills failed, which is beneficial to local governments as these would have lowered local permit fees by 75% if the applicant retained a

private provider, reduced how many times a municipality can ask an applicant for additional information, and considered the applications approved if the timeframes were not met.

New Protections

for Vulnerable Seniors:

SB 232 (Garcia) and HB 603 (LaMarca) passed this session. The bill punishes the exploitation of people 65 years or older. Offenders who defraud a person 65+ of property or services, or engage in the fraudulent creation of a plan to disburse and distribute possessions such as a will or trust will be subjected to a level 7 first-degree felony, level 6 second-degree felony or level 4 third-degree felony.

To learn about state legislation and send messages to legislators, visit floridaleagueofcities.com.



Contact Commissioner Alex Lama at seat2@sibfl.net or [305.792.1752](tel:305.792.1752).

Guiding Residents Toward Meaningful Advocacy

Commissioner Jeniffer Viscarra

Most cities are not like Sunny Isles Beach. And most of Florida is not like South Florida. Yet, when a new state law is created, it applies across all counties and municipalities, whether coastal, rural, or industrial. Sometimes that means that a law intended to help a particular kind of area hurts another part of the state. How can we help our city avoid the burden of such unintended consequences? The answer is: Sunny Isles Beach's first Legislative Advocacy Program, whose focus will be non-partisan municipal and Home Rule issues. Senator Jason Pizzo, Scott Dudley (from the Florida League of Cities), Representative Fabián Basabe, and I introduced the concept at the Town Hall meeting on July 6. The intended role of the Advocacy Program is to prepare, guide and assist residents to support or oppose bills during the legislative session.

Many bills are introduced each year. The tricky part is knowing whom to contact and on what issues. While communicating with your elected officials is an excellent

start, reaching out to the members of individual committees as they prepare to vote on a bill that would impact us is generally more effective. My goal is for the Legislative Advocacy Program to identify bills of concern and the members who need to hear from you, as well as provide sample emails you can use. We need to be heard by senators and state representatives who are not familiar with us and how their policies affect us. Your voice matters! The Legislative Advocacy Program will help carry it to Tallahassee.



Contact Commissioner Jeniffer Viscarra at seat4@sibfl.net or [305.792.1750](tel:305.792.1750).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY

Full Moon Yoga on the Beach

Monday, July 3

7:45 - 8:45 PM | FREE

Samson Oceanfront Park (on the beach),
17425 Collins Ave.

Pre-registration is encouraged.



July 5, 12, 19, 26

Wednesdays | 3 - 4 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Gateway Market

Wednesdays, July 5, 12, 19, 26

5:30 - 10 PM | FREE

Gateway Park, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Town Hall Meeting:

*Legislative Update & Kick-Starting
Local Advocacy*

Thursday, July 6 | 6 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Cultural Trip: NSU Art Museum

Friday, July 7 | 10 AM

1 E Las Olas Blvd, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Bus departs Gateway Center at 10 AM

Residents: \$16 | Non-Residents: \$24

Pre-registration is required.

Beach Cleanup

Saturday, July 8

8 AM - 12 PM | FREE

Samson Oceanfront Park, 17425 Collins Ave.

Lunch n' Learn with Florida Historian Cesar Becerra

Tuesday, July 11

11 AM - 12 PM | FREE

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Residents: FREE

Non-Residents: \$5

Pre-registration is required.

Light refreshments included.



Summer Movie Series

Tuesdays, July 11, 18, 25

12 PM | FREE

Gateway Center,
151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

*Pre-registration
is required.*

Light refreshments included.



Cultural Trip:

Miami Seaquarium

Friday, July 14

10:30 AM

4400 Rickenbacker Causeway,
Key Biscayne, FL 33149

Bus departs Gateway Center at 10:30 AM

Residents: \$30

Non-Residents: \$35

Pre-registration is required.

City Commission Budget Workshop

Wednesday, July 19

9 AM

Commission Chambers, Government Center,
18070 Collins Ave.

Regular City Commission Meeting

Thursday, July 20

6:30 PM

Commission Chambers, Government Center,
18070 Collins Ave.

Cultural Trip: Everglades Boat Tour

Friday, July 21

8:30 AM

1101 NW 23 St, Miami, FL 33127

Bus departs Gateway Center at 8:30 AM

Residents: \$20

Non-Residents: \$35

Pre-registration is required.

Bike Rodeo

Ages 4- 10

Sunday, July 23

9 AM - 12 PM

1101 NW 23 St, Miami, FL 33127

First Floor Parking Garage

*Open to Sunny Isles Beach Resident ID
cardholders only.*

Pre-registration is required.

Senior Roundtable

Wednesday, July 26

12 - 1 PM

Gateway Center, 151 Sunny Isles Blvd.

Pre-registration is required.

Cultural Trip:

Hard Rock Casino

Friday, July 28 | 9 AM

1 Seminole Way, Hollywood, FL 33314

Bus departs Gateway Center at 10:15 AM

Residents: \$5

Non-Residents: \$10

Pre-registration is required.



**FOR A COMPLETE LIST
OF EVENTS, VISIT**
sibfl.net/events

SPOTLIGHT ON...

MEDIA DIVISION

This month we spotlight our Media division. From social media and email notifications to broadcasting Commission Meetings and even this newsletter, the team is responsible for the City's public messaging and media strategy.

Recently, the Media Division was recognized by the National Association of Government Communicators for their work on Live and Play, the City's premier recreation magazine, where you can find information about all activities and events each season.

The City is in the process of redesigning our website, sibfl.net, to curate a more usable and accessible site that simplifies content management, provides resident-focused information, and maintains high standards for visual appeal.

Another project in the works for the department is the design of a branded mobile app, GoGov. This app will serve as a portal for citizen requests and questions, with a searchable knowledge base that provides tools for enhanced citizen communication and engagement as well as important city information found on our website.

Follow us on Social Media @CityofSIB |     YouTube

INSIDE THE *Isles*

Parks Maintenance

Each of our 11 City-operated parks are open year-round for residents to enjoy. While we love having so many outdoor spaces for you to choose from, we must not forget the laborious work that our Parks staff puts in day in and day out to maintain our green gems.

Arriving before the parks open and working after they close, our Facilities Parks Technicians are responsible for ensuring maintenance and safety so that every time you visit one of our parks, you have the best experience.

From cleaning playground equipment and testing the water features to maintaining lawns and managing repairs, our parks require consistent work to uphold the high standards we have for our patrons.

Learn more about our city's parks at sibfl.net/parks.

GET INVOLVED

PHOTO CONTEST

Do you take stunning photos of Sunny Isles Beach?

Submit your best pictures of Sunny Isles Beach to our annual photo contest and they could be featured in next year's City calendar, on our social media pages, in our publications (like this one!), or our other media platforms. Photos can showcase our cityscape, landscape, nature, or anywhere else within Sunny Isles Beach limits.



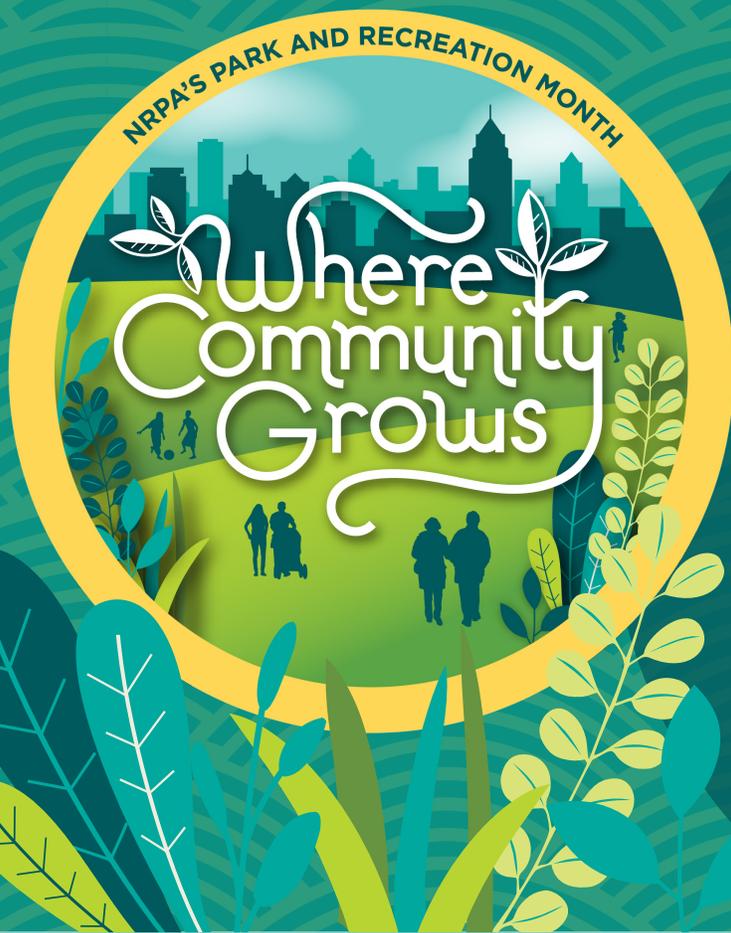
View all submission requirements and submit your best photos online at sibfl.net/photocontest.

NOMINATE A VETERAN

We are accepting nominations for Sunny Isles Beach veterans to be added to our Veterans Wall at Heritage Park. Our Veterans Wall honors veterans who served or are serving in the United States military. Service men and women who are, or were residents of Sunny Isles Beach themselves, can be nominated.

Nominations must be received by September 1, 2023, in order to be recognized at our annual Veterans Day Celebration on November 11.

Nominate a veteran at sibfl.net/veterans.



July is park and recreation month, and we are excited to celebrate our stellar Cultural & Community Services team who works 365 days a year to serve our residents.

This year's theme recognizes how vital our park and recreation professionals are in bringing people together, providing essential services to our citizens, and fostering the growth of our communities.

Our CCS staff, those you see daily and those behind the scenes, work tirelessly to provide the best events, diverse programs and activities, pristine parks, and the utmost customer service to all who live and work in Sunny Isles Beach.

EVENTS

Our events team plans, coordinates and executes upwards of 85 unique events each year from our annual anniversary celebration to our weekly Gateway Market to outdoor movie nights in the park. The calendar of events is carefully planned so that our residents of all ages have opportunities to connect with the city and each other. Check out all events at sibfl.net/events.

PARKS

Our parks staff consists of 17 Facilities Parks Technicians and Supervisors who maintain our 11 parks across the city. From playgrounds to water features to exercise equipment, nearly every resident lives within walking distance to at least one of our parks. Explore our parks online at sibfl.net/parks.

RECREATION/ATHLETICS

Our recreation staff supports countless programs and athletics each season, in addition to our summer camp, teen events, and senior programs. Programs are curated to offer a diverse range of activities where residents can try a new skill, learn a new topic, or just have fun with their friends and neighbors. Check out all activities online at activities.sibfl.net.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS

You can find one of our 12-person customer relations team at each of our three city facilities. Whether they are answering questions over the phone, assisting residents register for an activity, or checking tickets at an event, our Customer Relations Specialists are always willing to help.

Islander

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MEDIA DIVISION**

18070 Collins Avenue, Sunny Isles Beach, FL 33160
305.792.1706 | sibfl.net