

GALT MILE NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GMCA
MAY 2017

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ELSS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE FROM ELLYN BOGDANOFF

THE ENDGAME

WEEK 7 OF SESSION

By Ellyn Setnor Bogdanoff

***Last May, an official from the Fire Marshals union played out a charade choreographed six years earlier, when the 2010 fire sprinkler opt-out legislation filed by then Statehouse Representative Ellyn Bogdanoff was on the verge of approval by the legislature. Unable to block Bogdanoff's bill, Fire Marshals employed by the Fire Sprinkler Associations offered to withdraw opposition to the legislation if she agreed to remove an Emergency Life Safety System (ELSS) from the opt-out bill. Since an ELSS is an undefined stew of fire safety elements, the Fire Marshals told Bogdanoff that it would help associations and their fire safety engineers to frugally comply with local fire codes. Of course, that was just smoke.**

Six years later, Fire Sprinkler Association lobbyists cashed in on the slop they sold to Bogdanoff. After dispatching an official from the Fire Marshals union to solicit a "friendly" interpretation of the Florida Fire Prevention Code (FFPC), they would leverage the resulting Declaratory Statement to demand the installation of an Emergency Life Safety System (ELSS) in thousands of Florida high-rise associations. Since local Fire Marshals enjoy sole statutory approval authority over any ELSS in their jurisdiction, the stage was set for a statewide \$multi-billion bait and switch. Although barred from officially requiring sprinklers in associations that opted out, local Fire Marshals could reject any ELSS that didn't include a \$multi-million sprinkler system. Brazenly exceeding their authority, local Fire Marshals began ordering associations to immediately install sprinkler systems; others arrogantly specified an engineer and contractor for these installations.

At a meeting with Galt Mile officials, Fort Lauderdale Fire Marshal Jeff Lucas disagreed with the basis for the Declaratory Statement, observing "I would think if you opt out, then you opt out of all," and suggested that associations "pursue this with the State". Lucas admonished that an ELSS would be more expensive than a sprinkler system, and most Galt Mile associations would have to cough up \$millions. To provide the neighborhood association with an opportunity to legislatively address the Declaratory Statement during the upcoming session, he agreed to temporarily refrain from enforcing the measure.

Taking his advice, Galt Mile officials met with Statehouse Representative George Moraitis (R - Fort Lauderdale) and association advocate Donna Berger, who helped Ellyn Bogdanoff draft her 2010 fire sprinkler opt-out bill. Angered by a conspiracy to circumvent the intent of the legislature and bloodlet \$billions from association homeowners, Moraitis and State Senator Kathleen Passidomo (R - Naples) filed legislation that would provide associations with the right to opt-out of the costly ELSS. Given her intimate familiarity with the legislative process, the specific issues at stake and the slippery tactics of the same opponents she faced in 2010, former Representative and State Senator Ellyn Bogdanoff also headed to Tallahassee.

Last month Bogdanoff updated Galt Mile officials about the legislation's progress through the first half of the session, which was forwarded to thousands of Galt Mile residents facing \$multi-million assessments. By mid-April, Moraitis' House Bill 653 had been vetted in two committees, and scheduled for two more. Passidomo's Senate Bill 744 survived its first committee, with two to go. Bogdanoff's reports covering the frenetic second half of the session follow next, including an endgame that proved a double-edged sword. As Week 7 began on April 18, 2017, Bogdanoff sent the following snapshot. - [editor]*

It was a slow week last week. Between the holidays and budget, the legislature was only in Tallahassee 1½ days. That's not necessarily a bad thing. I would have written to you on Friday but I would have nothing to say and that would be boring. However, we are making great progress this week. The House bill was up in committee yesterday. It seemed touch and go by the panicked text messages I was receiving. I ran to the committee room, heels and all, to testify, only to enter the room noticing a calm. It was relatively empty and there was George Moraitis, smiling and perfectly content with how the bill was moving. I looked at my fellow lobbyist who represents another interest on the bill and asked why he hit the alarm bell. He shrugged. Ugh. I called leadership to TP the bill.

Continued on page 5



Continued on page 5

This bill can't die in committee, I declared. I was assured it was fine. Not only was it fine, it only got 2 no votes. I wanted to smack my fellow lobbyist upside the head. Setting their hair on fire is a well-known pastime of many lobbyists. Session fatigue starts to set in around the 7th week and every small gesture, comment, or text sets them off and the issue seems insurmountable. Having been on the inside has helped me recognize the warning signs of lobbyists who are about to set their hair on fire. How I missed this one I will never know. I just hope that I have not been infected with the syndrome. Maybe it is like the Pod people in that movie... I digress...

Anyway, you have to love George, he laughed it off and is ready to push the bill to its next committee and then on to the floor. The Senate version is up Wednesday at 1PM. There is a strike-all and the goal appears to be to match up the Senate and House bills. The strike-all draft I read will require a sign on the building advising the firefighters that the building does not have sprinklers in the common areas. It will be up to the Fire Marshall to choose where the sign goes and how big it will be. I will be speaking to the Senate sponsor to make sure that it is not a neon, flashing sign. There are no limitations in the bill and at the very least it should be placed in a reasonably visible location but not obstruct the aesthetics of a building. The Fire Marshalls have been testifying against the bill... you know what they say about payback.

After this week, we will have 2 weeks to go. The bills are in a good place and should hit the House or Senate floor by next week. I may ask you to start emailing your legislators to encourage them to get the bill up and out. I will keep you posted if we need all hands on deck. The good news is we only have 2½ weeks to go but that is also the bad news. As my law professor used to say "Nothing is safe when the legislature is in session."

Until next time...

Ellyn

***On March 28, 2017, just before the bill was approved by the House Civil Justice and Claims Subcommittee (10 Yeas vs. 4 Nays), Fire Sprinkler Association lobbyists Buddy Dewar and William Stander advised the committee to kill the bill and force homeowners to buy fire sprinklers (dropping any pretense that the bill was about an ELSS). Arguing that the cost was reasonable, they cited a 2009 DBPR study in which one of six retrofit projects was estimated at \$8633 per unit. Warning that retrofit proposals often include other improvements, they explained that unnecessary aesthetic upgrades were not required by code, but because "homeowners don't like exposed pipes in the lobby and along their hallways."**

Upon returning to the podium, Moraitis told the Committee that walls and ceilings must be demolished when retrofitting a structure, and after the equipment is installed, restoring these walls and ceilings is neither optional, nor an "aesthetic upgrade". Waving a document he submitted earlier, Moraitis declared "This is a current vendor proposal for \$15,000 per unit."

The panicking lobbyist mentioned by Bogdanoff was Travis Moore, who has ably supported the bill on behalf of the Community Associations Institute (CAI). Bogdanoff's encounter with Moore took place on April 17, 2017, in the House Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee, where a fiscal review had been mandated to address the controversial Condominium Termination issue discussed last month. As expected, Committee members explored the huge retrofit costs mandated by the Florida fire code.

Exclaiming that the cost was irrelevant, Rick Butcher from the Fire Marshalls Union told the committee "If they didn't think it was important, they wouldn't have put it in the code." Committee Vice Chair Rep. Neil Combee (R - Polk County) asked Butcher, "Who are 'they' - these folks who write the code?"

Butcher explained, "It's a technical committee. It's done by a group of equipment experts in their field, and it's passed to the national NFPA, which puts it into the fire code every 3 years." Combee then asked "And these experts are people in the fire equipment business?" "Yes," said Butcher, "Manufacturers and installers who want to make their equipment safer." Combee retorted, "So, the people that make this stuff also make the rules about what goes into these buildings." Butcher went mute. The Committee approved the bill by a vote of 11 Yeas vs. 2 Nays.

Earlier, Bogdanoff met with firefighters to elicit their concerns about the legislation. In contrast with the Fire Marshalls who were paid lobbyists, they assured her that they had no problem with the bill, but asked if a sign could be placed on an association property indicating whether the common areas were sprinklered. Bogdanoff agreed to let the State Fire Marshall determine the location and size of the sign - although it wouldn't be ostentatious. On April 29, with one week left in the session, Bogdanoff sent the following update about accelerating events - [editor]*

FINAL WEEK OF THE SESSION

By Ellyn Setnor Bogdanoff

You will have to forgive me for my short emails but things are happening fast and if you blink up here, you could lose your bills and any money you may have in the budget. Last week we were sweating it. The bill was possibly dead. The Senate bill was stuck in its last committee of reference and the Chair of that committee said she was likely done with meetings. The bill would never get to the Senate floor. On to plan B. Rep. Moraitis asked another member if he could amend his bill on the floor and hitch a ride with a bill that was likely to pass.

Not one we are thrilled with but it was going to pass whether we hitched a ride or not. It is hard enough to find a bill that is germane to our issues, let alone a member willing to take the chance that his/her bill will suffer because of our issues.

Our House bill was on the floor on Friday. We were told that we could amend our bill onto the other member's bill but needed to get permission from the Senate sponsor. I ran over to the Senate and met with staff. They said the Senator would be happy to take the House bill up with our language so we were safe. Late Thursday night, as we are on a 1 hour notice for meetings, our Senate Committee Chair noticed another meeting for Friday and our Senate bill was on the agenda... whew. Back to plan A, which was a good thing because Friday morning the other bill sponsor decided that our bill could sink his and he was not comfortable putting our language on his bill. Plan B was dead.

Our bill passed out of its last committee of reference in the Senate on Friday and is headed to the Senate floor. Rep. Moraitis' bill was heard and rolled over to third reading. We have a tight time line because the Senate or House will not be on the floor Monday. Assuming the bill is passed out of the House on Tuesday, it heads to the Senate and Senator Pasidomo is free to pick it up in messages and BOOM, we are done. But it ain't over until it is over. With fingers and toes crossed, you may get a one sentence or one word response from me when and if it passes because the last week of session is nuts. All in all, we are in good shape heading into the last week of session.

The moral of the story: A bill is dead until it is not or it is alive until it is dead.

Until next time...

Ellyn

Continued on page 8

EDITOR'S COMMENTARY:

Chip LaMarca's APRIL 2017 Newsletter

By Eric Berkowitz

In his April 2017 constituent update, District 4 Broward Commissioner Chip LaMarca uses a pictorial roadmap to demonstrate how the Broward Convention Center will evolve into a full blown Exposition Community featuring a Headquarters Hotel surrounded by venues for entertainment, shopping, dining, and recreation - for both visitors and residents, announces the precursor to a lucrative long-term agreement between Port Everglades and Royal Caribbean Cruises, invites constituents to share in a rebate for promoting water conservation to friends and neighbors and details how a newly installed State-of-the-Art Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system will expedite emergency response times countywide - benchmarking one of the largest Emergency 911 consolidations in the nation.

Racing for Room Nights

Commissioner Chip LaMarca's campaign to reinvent the aging Greater Fort Lauderdale / Broward County Convention Center as a world class exposition venue may finally bear fruit. Three years ago, in his June 2014 Newsletter, LaMarca surmised that enhancing the County's Convention Center with a dedicated hotel and a facelift would plug a fiscal leak through which the County loses tens of \$millions in new business every year, exclaiming "This has been a goal of mine since being elected in 2010."

Despite its strategic waterfront location by the Port Everglades tourism nexus, the snake-bit Convention Center has been burning cash for years. Consultants have repeatedly told the County Board that the Convention Center is unable to compete with similar venues in other second tier cities because it lacks an integrated lodging facility. Warehousing thousands of guests who attend the 280 annual Convention Center events in 50 different local hotels is a marketing nightmare.

Without an affiliated hotel, Convention Center officials are precluded from even bidding on more than one third of the prospective convention opportunities - those that require dedicated lodging. To compete with other second tier convention cities that offer onsite lodging, the Center must offset their lack of a hotel with a laundry list of expensive perks, further squeezing embattled profits. Three bungled County initiatives to correct this competitive shortcoming were, in varying proportions, flummoxed by stupidity, turf protection... and greed.

Early Plans Bungled

When the Greater Fort Lauderdale / Broward County Convention Center opened in 1991, an initial County attempt to build a related hotel abutting an International Trade Mart flopped. When reconsidered in 1997, threats of an African-American tourist boycott prompted the County Commission to exclusively evaluate hotel plans submitted by minority-owned developers. Shortly after real estate magnate R. Donahue Peebles was awarded the hotel contract, the County learned that it had inadvertently agreed to cover any of the developer's defaulted payments. When partnering hotel management company Wyndham International pulled out along with the National Baptist Convention - another project partner - Peebles threw in the towel and sued the County for development costs. He lost; as the project washed out for the second time.

On November 1, 2007, the Broward Commission selected a bid winner from two world-class hoteliers (and their partner developers), each of which pre-

sented plans for a 1,000-room Convention Hotel on 17th Street - next to the Broward Convention Center on Eisenhower Boulevard off Southeast 17th Street at Port Everglades. Rejecting a plan submitted by Marriott and developer Hensel Phelps Construction, a ten-person selection committee chaired by tourism Guru Nicki Grossman that included 8 Broward Commissioners instead awarded the project to Hilton Hotels and their developer FaulknerUSA by a close six to four vote.

Both bidding teams planned on using hotel revenues to repay \$400 million raised from Broward-authorized tax exempt bonds. While Marriott declined any public backing, Hilton wanted an annual \$6 million pledge of hotel bed taxes as a guarantee against missed loan payments. Also, if the hotel took a dive, Broward taxpayers would pay down the debt service. Hilton's ace-in-the-hole was former Executive Director Christopher Romer of JP Morgan Securities, who pledged to purchase all \$398 million of Hilton's bonds, while Marriott would have to chase investors in a recessionary credit market.

Since Marriott's plan was financially self-sufficient while Hilton placed every Broward taxpayer on the hook for their debt, President Mark Schultz of FaulknerUSA, Hilton's partnering developer, conceded that opponent Marriott's deal was far better for the County. When informed that the Commissioners ignored the risk to taxpayers and selected his team's less favorable project, a disbelieving Schultz declared, "I'm shocked!" Most residents were not surprised. Broward Commissioners had achieved nationwide notoriety for pilfering the County cookie jar while throwing taxpayers under a bus. Opting for expedience over prudence, our County Commissioners were primarily driven by enlightened self-interest as Hilton lobbyists offered committee members a more intriguing buffet of personal and political "incentives" than their Marriott peers.

Hilton vs. Marriott Backfires

When word got out that Hilton banking partner JP Morgan Chase was suing FaulknerUSA for \$6.1 million in defaulted loans from a similar project in Austin, Texas, the questionable County decision became juicy media fodder. In addition to a \$6.6 million court judgment stemming from a hornet's nest of litigation over flooding problems in the Austin Hilton Convention Center Hotel, FaulknerUSA was facing \$millions more in liabilities from 17 lawsuits (and 68 liens) by irate condo owners, unpaid subcontractors and project organizer Austin Convention Enterprises Inc. Despite under-the-table damage control "agreements" between project lobbyists and suspiciously vested public officials, the project began to unravel.

After demanding proof of FaulknerUSA's fiscal health in January of 2008, County Administrator Bertha Henry stoically announced, "There is nothing that says Faulkner is dropping out of this deal, but they have to respond to us that they have the wherewithal to do this project. We will not enter into a development agreement with a company that is not stable." Seeking to hedge against anticipated County intentions to sever besieged FaulknerUSA from the project, Hilton brought Hensel Phelps Construction - the partner of rival bidder Marriott - to an emergency meeting with County officials. With Commissioners circling the wagons in classic "CYA" formation, Hilton's frantic eleventh hour attempt to salvage their project by switching dance partners proved futile.

Continued on page 7

On December 8, 2009, the County Commission officially pulled the plug on the \$400 million project, but not before frittering away another \$1.6 million in pork payouts to LMN Architects; Hospitality Real Estate Counselors; the law firm of Siegel, Lipman, Dunay, Shepard & Miskel; the engineering firm Craven Thompson & Associates; the urban planning firm Hughes Hughes Inc.; the architectural firm Arch Alliance and the law firm of Squire Sanders - for no ostensible reason. To avoid threatened legal action, intimidated Commissioners also refunded FaulknerUSA's \$2 million deposit - with interest. The after-effects of this fiasco lingered for years, as deflated County Commissioners tried to distance themselves from attempts to revive the project.

A 4th Bite at the Apple

As the recession faded and tourism spearheaded the State's economic recovery, visitors from all over the planet returned to Florida's coasts - or marched inland from Orlando to the Everglades. When a 2013 study by hospitality consultant HVS demonstrated the need for more hotel space and meeting facilities near the Convention Center, it spurred renewed interest in an expanded convention center complemented by an affiliated hotel, shops and entertainment. In 2014, the scales finally tipped in the project's favor, as even traditional opponents conceded to an inevitable one-time infrastructure enhancement that would inject \$hundreds of millions into the local economy.

The Broward Workshop re-ranked the convention center project as a top priority. Spooked by the prospect of competing with an integrated retail space, local businesses and commercial property owners long opposed to the project relented when offered input into the selection of onsite merchants. Having lodged conventions for decades, even local hoteliers concerned about losing room nights to a dedicated convention center hotel began supporting the project when the burgeoning tourist economy created a growing shortage of lodging around the convention center.

Noting how a bond issue that partially funded the convention center in 1991 had expired in 2013, former tourism Czarina Nikki Grossman asserted that it was "the appropriate time to bring up convention center expansion," adding "Then we could compete fairly with other tier-two convention sites around the country."

Exploring design concepts at an April 1, 2014 County Commission Workshop, consultant HVS rolled out four Master Plan options featuring an expanded convention center and a headquarters hotel nested in a fully integrated retail space offering nightlife, shops and restaurants. Having reviewed the consultant's fiscal impact study after the Workshop, County Administrator Bertha Henry exclaimed "Let's do this, let's get it done," and placed the four design presentations on the County Commission meeting agenda.

With the procurement process at hand, on May 19, 2015, the County Board designated itself as the Direct Procurement Authority (DPA) for the Broward County Convention Center Expansion and Headquarters Hotel Projects. By June 24, 2015, the County Board had received contractor applications from 1) Cohen Brothers Development Corporation of Florida LLC; 2) Fort Lauderdale Convention Center Hotel LLC; 3) Hensel Phelps Development, L.L.C.; 4) Matthews Southwest Holdings, Inc.; 5) Omni Hotels Management Corporation; 6) The Related Companies, L.P. and PRH Investments, LLC. By April 26, 2016, five contractors had either withdrawn or were disqualified, leaving only Matthews Southwest Holdings (MSW) of Lewisville, Texas, and its development team. When the County Board learned that MSW's general contractor for the project was Tutor Perini Building Corp., they went ballistic and dropped anchor.

Since Tutor Perini was battling with the County over

cost overruns in two other Broward projects (the new county courthouse and the airport south runway), on August 10, 2016, MSW dumped the GC in favor of Plantation-based Balfour Beatty Construction. Although somewhat cloudy, the issues surrounding the conflict are consistent with the Broward Board's historically dysfunctional perspective, as the County had filed a legal action against Tutor Perini for \$34 million in damages, which it settled six months later by paying the company \$18.9 million.

Six days later - with Tutor Perini out of the picture - the County Board finally gave MSW the green light at the August 16, 2016 Commission meeting. They also approved a \$30,373,750 Final Purchase Agreement for the acquisition of the 78-year leasehold interest in the adjacent Portside Yachting Center, LLC (PYC) - providing MSW with an additional 4.5 acre design footprint.

On November 1, 2016, the County and the City of Fort Lauderdale agreed on one of the two design schemes crafted by MSW. Although a County project, the City has final approval over what is built on the site. On April 4, 2017, MSW released its project renderings for a presentation to the County Commission.

The \$550 million project calls for a 400,000 sq. ft. addition to the existing 600,000 sq. ft. Convention Center, an intermodal transportation area, a rooftop event site and a Headquarters Hotel with 800 rooms. Unlike the L-shaped hotel demonstrated to stakeholders in 2016, the new oblong design is located on the former portside site and lines up with the convention center, leaving nothing to block an open view of the Intracoastal Waterway. The 320-foot height limit was imposed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the iconic Sailfish fountain at front of the center will be relocated under the supervision of the artist. The presentation also provided a delighted LaMarca with grist for his April 2017 Newsletter - which is located elsewhere in this edition - [editor]*

Read Chip LaMarca's Newsletter
on page 12

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Moraitis' House bill was approved in the House Commerce Committee - its final committee stop - on April 24 (23 Yeas vs. 3 Nays) and sent to the House floor. Thanks to a fortunate scheduling quirk, on April 28, the Senate Bill finally cleared its last stop in the Senate Rules Committee (12 Yeas vs. 0 Nays). Although Ellyn was pleased that both bills were out of committee and parked on the floor, in the few remaining days, the legislation still had to be approved in both chambers. Tick Tock. On May 2, Ellyn squeezed out the following frenzied message - [editor]

FINAL DAYS OF THE SESSION

By Ellyn Setnor Bogdanoff

I am writing you from the 4th floor of the Capitol waiting for the Senate to go back in after a lunch break. The House is busy working and Rep. Moraitis passed his bill out and it is on its way to the Senate with a few fleas.

Rep. Diaz was amended onto the ELSS bill, to avoid conflicting statutory language.

The Governor signed off on our language, in particular, because we upped the voting to two-thirds. The Governor's office expressed some concerns about the Diaz bill, which creates criminal penalties for some acts (that are quite frankly, criminal) and other provision that carry some costs.

However, none of those provisions are anywhere near the cost of an ELSS system. I've attached the bill for your review (link below), and I don't want to set off any alarm bells, but this just made my job 100 times harder. I may need to solicit your help in letting the Governor's office know we will eat the fleas for the greater good.

Let me know your thoughts on the bill. I may update you if the Senate passes it out today. It hasn't been received yet but it's only 2PM.

Until next time...

Ellyn

***While bouncing between the House, Senate and the Governor's office, Moraitis and Bogdanoff had to quickly and convincingly resolve obstacles that commonly sink bills in the home stretch, by negotiating problematic concessions on the fly. Agreeing to sacrifices**



required for the legislation's survival is colorfully characterized as "eating fleas" - [editor]*

BOGDANOFF'S FLEA MARKET

***In 2006 and 2009, shortly after Fire Sprinkler opt out bills were overwhelmingly approved in the House and Senate, a contingent of fire marshals employed by the Fire Sprinkler Associations convinced Governors Jeb Bush (in 2006) and Charlie Crist (in 2009) to veto the bills. This time, when the Fire Marshalls took a run at Governor Rick Scott during Week 5 of the session, Senator Passidomo was hot on their heels, and toughened the voting standard to deter a veto. To placate Scott, the bills would be amended to require that associations opt out of an ELSS by a two-thirds vote of the full membership, not a simple majority.**

Not surprisingly, thousands of associations that voted to opt out of the sprinkler retrofit did so with the approval of 95% - 100% of the membership. As such, resetting the ELSS opt-out standard at two thirds of the voting interests shouldn't adversely impact the outcome, given how a \$multi-million assessment looms as the alternative.

In noting that "Rep. Diaz was amended onto the ELSS bill," Bogdanoff is referring to legislation sponsored by Sen. René Garcia (R - Hialeah), Sen. José Javier Rodríguez (D - Miami) and Rep. J. José Félix Díaz (R - Miami-Dade). In the House, Diaz filed House Bill 1237 (HB 1237) while Garcia and Rodriguez co-sponsored companion Senate Bill 1682 (SB 1682) in the other chamber. According to the DBPR, condos in Miami-Dade recorded the highest number of complaints of any Florida county for forged ballots, financial fraud, election irregularities, missing records, and disappearing funds. Of the 1,908 complaints received statewide, 566 were filed in Miami-Dade.

Armed with a scathing report by a Miami-Dade Grand Jury, the three Miami lawmakers hoped to rein in the criminal abuses by rogue boards and shady management companies that permeate their districts. In short, Board members who are convicted of committing crimes will be subject to Felony charges. These include forging election ballot envelopes or voting certificates, the theft or embezzlement of association funds and destroying or concealing official records in furtherance of a crime. The bill also term limits board members after eight consecutive years, unless there are an insufficient number of candidates or if they are elected by a two-thirds supermajority of the full membership.

Although aware that certain provisions were problematic, Moraitis hesitantly agreed to incorporate the "Diaz" language to guarantee survival of the ELSS opt-out bill. If Moraitis' Bill hadn't passed its final review in the House Commerce Committee - which Diaz chaired - it wouldn't have reached the House floor. Additionally, the stand-alone version of the Miami condo bill (HB 1237) had already been unanimously approved in the House and Senate and enrolled by 2 p.m. on May 1, almost 2 hours before Moraitis agreed to add the language to his bill at 3:49 p.m. Unless it was vetoed by the Governor, the Miami condo legislation would be enacted whether or not it was included in the ELSS opt-out bill.

After noting Scott's concern about criminal penalties for board members, Bogdanoff mentions other provisions that "carry some costs. Since the bill will require

Continued on page 9

condo associations with 150 or more units to publish a litany of association documents on a password protected web page, most associations will have to fund changes to their websites by the July 1, 2018 deadline. Shortly before Bogdanoff sent the above message on May 2, Moraitis' bill was unanimously approved by the full House (119 Yeas vs. 0 Nays).

STEPPING INTO THE SUNSHINE

Despite daunting odds, the next day brought the silver linings that Moraitis and Bogdanoff hunted for months. On May 3, 2017, Pasidomo's Senate Bill 744 was swapped out for the House Bill and laid on the table (euthanized). After Moraitis' House Bill 653 was approved by the full Senate (36 Yeas vs. 1 Nay), it was ordered enrolled at 12:09 p.m. - and packed off to the Governor's desk.

If the bill survives the Governor's veto pen - which it should - battalions of high rise association homeowners throughout the State will recover a right to forgo the huge special assessment that's been hanging over our heads since last May (A detailed analysis of the legislation's impact is forthcoming). Once armed with the Statutory ELSS Opt-Out, two issues remain central to avoiding a \$multi-million assessment.

First, a minimum of two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of a high-rise association's unit owners must cast a vote to opt-out of retrofitting an ELSS. Since this vote carries a "zero-sum" impact, owners who fail to cast a vote will be considered to have voted against the opt-out (and for an assess-

ment). Second - and equally important - the vote must be conducted and subsequently registered according to the terms specified in the amended Statute. Since one regulatory misstep will void the vote's impact - and trigger an assessment - the association's attorney should organize and oversee the entire process.

It's also worth noting that a \$multi-billion ambush by the deep-pocketed sprinkler associations-seemingly conceived and executed over the past six years - was thwarted by some sleepy retirees in Northeast Fort Lauderdale (with contributions from association homeowners across the State). Not too shabby!

To punctuate the successful Statutory slugfest undertaken to reinstate of our rights as homeowners, GMCA President Pioteraci has invited Governor Rick Scott to sign the bill into law at the Beach Community Center, mirroring a similar ceremonial bill-signing by Charlie Crist when Bogdanoff's 2010 sprinkler retrofit opt-out legislation was enacted. Whether or not Scott will show up is currently running 6-5 and pick 'em. More to come... - [editor]*

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED
28 Spring Home Design & Remodeling Show (Through 5/29) Broward County Convention Center Info.: 305-667-9299 Weston Town Center Classic Car & Truck Show Weston Town Center (1675 Market St.) 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-349-5900	29 Lost World Dinosaurs (Through 9/4) Flamingo Gardens Info.: http://www.flamingogardens.org Memorial Day Ceremony Jaco Pastorius Park 11 a.m. Info.: 954-630-4507	30 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 Monty Python's Spamlot (Through 6/4) Marshall E. Rinker, Sr. Playhouse 7:30 p.m. Tix.: http://www.kravis.org	31 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063
4 Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-396-3622	5 Culinary Creations Dinner Kravis Center, WPB 6:30 p.m.: Hors D'Oeuvres 7:30 p.m.: Dinner Info.: 561-494-0515 Commissioner Bruce Roberts: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center, 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033	6 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 Caregiver's Support Group BHIP Private Dining Room (1st floor), 2:30 p.m. Info.: 954-776-8961	7 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063 Hukilau Polynesian Festival (Through 6/11) Hyatt Regency Pier 66, Hilton Ft. Laud Marina, and the Mai-Kai Noon to 4 p.m. Info.: 754-900-TIKI (8454)
11 Gipsy Kings Kravis Center 8 p.m. Tix.: http://www.kravis.org Dancing By The Sea LBTS, 6 to 8 p.m. Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events	12 Food Truck Invasion Cultural Plaza (414 Lake Ave.) Lake Worth 6 to 10 p.m. Info.: www.lakeworth.org/calendar	13 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 Finding Neverland (Through 6/25) Broward Center for the Performing Arts Tix.: www.browardcenter.org	14 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063 Vice Mayor Bruce Roberts Telephone Town Hall Meeting Discuss City programs, services or ideas to improve Fort Lauderdale 7 to 8 p.m. Join Discussion: 855-840-6970
18 Featured Creatures Flamingo Gardens 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: http://www.flamingogardens.org Kirova Ballet Academy Presents "Dream and Dance" Aventura Center Tix.: www.browardcenter.org	19 Commissioner Bruce Roberts: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center, 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033 Palm Beach Business Expo Embassy Suites Hotel, Boca 5 to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-838-9644	20 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 High Tea & Trivia Broward Health Imperial Point Cafeteria 3 to 4:30 p.m. RSVP/Info.: 954-759-7400	21 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063
25 40th Anniversary Celebration Morikami Japanese Gardens Info.: http://morikami.org Dancing By The Sea LBTS, 6 to 8 p.m. Info.: www.lbtsevents.com/events	26 Commissioner Bruce Roberts: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center, 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033	27 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268 Alzheimer & Dementia Support Broward Health Imperial Point Medical Library 2:30 p.m. Info.: 954-776-8961	28 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063

MAY 28: 28th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Craft Festival, The Delray Beach Tennis Center, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 561-746-6615

MAY 28: Memorial Day KidzFest, Flamingo Gardens, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Info.: 954-473-2955

MAY 30: International Tuesdays, Gullstream Park, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Info.: www.gullstreampark.com

JUNE 2: First Friday Jazz Jams, ArtServe (1350 E. Sunrise Blvd.), 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., 954-524-0805

JUNE 2-3: West Palm Beach Antiques Festival, South Florida Fairgrounds, WPB, Info.: 941-697-7475

JUNE 3: Ft. Lauderdale Story Slam, World and Eye Arts Center (109 NW 5th St.), 7:30 to 8:45 p.m., Info.: 954-540-9897

JUNE 3: Kravis Center Presents: Trevor Noah, Alexander W. Dreyfoos, Jr. Concert Hall, 8 p.m., Tix.: www.kravis.org

JUNE 3: Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Drop-off Events, Community Park (1660 NE 10th St. in Pompano), 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-828-8000

JUNE 3: Extreme Kayak Fishing Summer SLAM Series, Pompano Beach Fishing Pier and Public Beach, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Info.: joe@extremekayakfishing.com

JUNE 6: A Taste of Italy: Dinner & Wine Auction Hosted by PACE Center for Girls Broward, Casa D'Angelo Ristorante, 6 to 9 p.m.

JUNE 17: Wilton Manors Stonewall Parade & Street Festival, The entire length of Wilton Drive, 9 a.m. to after dark, Info.: 954-357-2895

ONE SOURCE FOR COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

THU

FRI

SAT

1	2 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Funkability Playboys Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m.	3 Lanakila Iki Ocean Challenge Fort Lauderdale Beach (1100 Seabreeze Blvd.) 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Info.: 305-213-5802
	First Friday Food Trucks Flamingo Gardens 5 to 9 p.m. Info.: http://www.flamingogardens.org	North Beach Art Walk Broward Art Guild 7 to 11 p.m.
8	9 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: School of Rock Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m.	10 Dig The Beach Volleyball (Through 6/11) Anchor Park, Delray Beach 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Info.: 561-241-3801
Colors of the Caribbean Concert Series Hollywood ArtsPark at Young Circle 6 to 10 p.m. Info.: 954-921-3500	Sushi & Stroll Morikami Japanese Gardens 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tix.: http://morikami.org	Smoke on the Water BBQ Feast & Competition Esplanade Park 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 954-468-1541 Ext. 205
15 ArtStroll LBTS Info.: 954-909-2200	16 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Bushwood Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m.	17 Marine Industry Day Esplanade Park 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 954-524-2733
G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.		Father's Day Fishing Tournament Royal Palm Park, Oakland Park 7 to 10 a.m. Info.: 954-630-4507
22	23 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: Bungled & Botched Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m.	24 2017 Intergalactic Bead and Jewelry Show (Through 6/25) Emma Lou Olson Civic Center, Pompano Info.: 888-729-6904
		5th Annual Triumph 5k Run/Walk 2017 Vista View Park in Shelter #8, Davie 7 a.m. Info.: 954-499-0909
29 IV Savor Food & Wine Exhibition DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Miami Airport & Convention Center 2 to 8 p.m. Info.: 305-358-5988	30 Friday Night SoundWaves Performer: The Free Rads Ft Lauderdale Beach Hub (Las Olas & A1A) 6 to 9 p.m.	1
G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting Place: Nick's Italian Restaurant 11:00 a.m.	Friday Night Music in the Square Anglin's Square (El Mar & Commercial Blvd.) 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Info.: 954-776-5092	

LOTS HAPPENING IN TOWN !

JULY 8

Moonlit Movies

Movie: Storks

Jaco Pastorius Park, 3 p.m.

Info.: 954-630-4507

JULY 8-9

25th Annual International Mango Festival

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Info.: 305-667-1651

JULY 15

Citywide Yard Sales

Jaco Pastorius Park

8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Info.: 954-630-4495

JULY 15

6th Annual Boca Burger Battle

Sanborn Square Park (72 N. Federal Hwy.), Boca Raton

6 to 10 p.m.

Info.: 561-338-7594

JULY 25-30

LBTS BugFest 2017

Registration: <http://www.lbtsevents.com/bugfest-by-the-sea>

JULY 29

Underwater Pier & Beach Cleanup

LBTS

Info.: 954-616-5909

FOR A COMPLETE
LISTING OF EVENTS,
GO TO THE
CALENDAR AT
WWW.GALTMILE.COM

First Saturday of Every Month: Beach Cleanup, Commercial Blvd. & the Beach LBTS (Meet at Pavilion), 9 to 9:30 a.m., Info.: 954-776-1000

First Saturday of Every Month: North Beach Art Walk, 3280 NE 32nd St, 7 to 11 p.m., Info.: 954-537-3370

Second Saturday of Every Month: Beach Sweep, Fort Lauderdale Beach Park, 1100 Seabreeze Blvd., 7 to 11 a.m., Info.: 954-593-8501

Second Saturday of Every Month: Burlock Coast Farmer's Market, Burlock Coast at the The Ritz-Carlton, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Info.: myfortlauderdalebeach.com

Second Tuesday of Every Month: Orchid Greenhouse Tours, Bonnet House, 11 a.m. to Noon, Info.: 954-703-2606

Mondays: Food Trucks at Artspark, 5:30 to 10 p.m., Youngs Circle in Hollywood

Thursdays: BHIP Farmer's Market, Broward Health Imperial Point Medical Arts Pavilion (633 N Federal Hwy.), 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sundays: Tour-the River Ghost Tour, Stranahan House & Water Taxi, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-524-4736

Sundays: Las Olas Sunday Market, 333 East Las Olas Blvd. & SE 4th Ave., 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Info.: 954-426-8436

Saturdays: Saturday Night Under the South Florida Stars, Fox Astronomical Observatory at Markham Park, Sunset to Midnight, Info.: 954-384-0442

Daily: Yoga on the Beach, Ocean Manor Resort (4040 Galt Ocean Dr.), 9:30 a.m. (weather permitting), Mats supplied, \$10 donation, Open to the Public, Info.: 754-701-0197 or 516-840-1455



Chip LaMarca's

APRIL 2017 Newsletter

Dear Broward County Residents,

I am honored to serve as your county commissioner, representing our coastal communities from Deerfield Beach to Fort Lauderdale and all of the amazing communities in between. Here are some recent highlights from around Broward County.

Convention Center Expansion and Headquarters Hotel Update

The Broward County Commission initiated a landmark project to expand the existing Convention Center facility and add an on-site headquarters hotel. The vision for the project is to expand the Convention Center by 300,000 square feet and add a headquarters hotel with at least 800 rooms that takes full advantage of the services around this great location. The planned expansion and new on-site hotel at Broward County's Convention Center is expected to bring an immediate positive economic impact not only to the local community, but also throughout the state. This expansion can generate larger events, more meeting attendees and increased overnight stays. With larger events and more traveling conferences, there is also an expected increase in full time jobs available for residents of Broward County as well as increases in local and state tax revenues.

Broward County's long-time vision of expansion and an on-site convention headquarters hotel will become a reality in the near future and while the current 600,000 square foot facility is al-

ready the core of a successful meeting and convention location, future growth is on the horizon to accommodate the numerous inquiries and needs of larger events. The economic impact analysis of the Convention Center expansion reported over 47 more events annually, an estimated 50 percent increase in new attendees, and more than 115,000 new annual overnight stays. The report also stated that new annual spending of \$83.1 million (in 2013 dollars) can be made by delegates, exhibitors and event organizers, providing 721 permanent full-time jobs, more than \$96 million in future annual tax revenues (in present value); more than \$70 million to the State of Florida, \$21 million to Broward County and \$1.1 billion in recurring economic impacts over a 20-year period.

Recently, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) was presented with the conceptual design for the Convention Center Expansion and Headquarters Hotel Project. These conceptual drawings are based on feedback from the Board, the City of Fort Lauderdale and the County team (staff and consultants). Many of the features were discussed and incorporated in the conceptual design. These features include: creating a synergy between the meeting and event facilities of the Hotel and Convention Center expansion, connecting to existing facilities, adding a new event courtyard to create a center of activity on the Port Everglades waterfront, and maximizing economic return through flexibility. The location of the Hotel was also very important, therefore locating the Hotel on the current site of the Portside Yachting Center was critical to connect directly into the existing Convention Center. The County Commission unanimously agreed to acquire the Portside Yachting Center property to maximize the overall project area.

This creates a more efficient and sensible traffic flow and maximizes views of the waterfront for both the community and guests. Also included in the design is the creation of an iconic place that utilizes a campus approach and connects all facilities with a public open space system for community recreation and events and creates a pedestrian friendly environment that can be supported by retail and entertainment venues. Additionally, in order to encourage public transportation and significantly improve traffic flow, the location of the intermodal space will be located at the front door providing space for traffic to be on the property instead of on the street, efficient drop off and pick up access, and easy access to parking as well as the street.



An updated construction schedule was also provided that gives the community a good idea of the major components of the project. Ground breaking is expected for late fall 2018 and the entire facility is expected to be open to the public by late fall 2021. As your Broward County Commissioner, this is a project that I have been extremely excited about and I'm looking forward to seeing it come to fruition. This expansion and new headquarters hotel will not only create an iconic destination in Broward County, it will also provide residents with a beautiful public destination right in our own back yard.

Port Everglades Update

The Board of County Commissioners recently approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Broward County's Port Everglades and Royal Caribbean Cruises. The MOU provides the framework for a new long-term business agreement that includes complete, customized renovations of Port Everglades's Cruise Terminal 25, which is slated for completion by October 31, 2018. The MOU allows negotiations to move forward toward a final agreement that must be approved by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners. The new agreement will be effective on January 1, 2018, and expire on Sept. 30, 2026 with options to extend the agreement for four years, followed by another five years. Royal Caribbean Cruises also announced that the newest Celebrity Cruises ship *Celebrity Edge* will be in Port Everglades beginning in the fall of 2018.

State-of-the-Art 911 Technology

Broward County's Regional 911 Consolidated Dispatch Centers are now using Motorola Solutions' PremierOne™ Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system to more rapidly and accurately communicate critical information with police, fire and other first responders to help residents, business owners and visitors during emergencies. The new CAD system is one element of Broward County's \$113 million investment in emergency communication operations and system improvements, which have already resulted in Broward County having one of the fastest emergency response times in the nation.

Nearly 20,000 public safety professionals are impacted by this rollout along with Broward's residents. This is the largest PremierOne CAD cutover in the United States, involving 150 workstations, 31 interfaces and 3500 mobile units. Dispatchers use PremierOne CAD to capture and quickly communicate critical information with first responders. While on route to an incident, the new system gives first responders access to prioritize mission-critical information such as the nature of the emergency, and possible hazards or conditions at the location. 911 customers are



encouraged to provide feedback on their call experience through an online feedback form, or by calling the Broward County Call Center at 311. Feedback will be used to enhance the 911 experience for future users.

April is Water Conservation Month

Broward Water Partnerships is educating residents about the importance of saving water with an effort to reward those whose friends participate in a rebate program. Anyone who has already received a rebate for trading a water-guzzling toilet for a WaterSense® High Efficiency model or is in the application process, can win an extra \$100 by convincing five friends to take advantage of the program. All rebates must be processed and completed by April 30, 2017.

For more information visit Conservation-Pays.com or call 800.270.9794.

The Resident's Guide to Government provides a convenient resource to help people stay connected to their local government. It includes contact information for County officials and Federal, State, and local agencies. Visitors can subscribe to eNews and social media sites. Please sign up at www.Broward.org/District4 to receive email updates from our office. If there is anything that we can do to assist you with your vision for a better Broward, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 954-357-7004 or by email at clamarca@broward.org.

As always, it is my honor to serve you.
Best regards,

Chip



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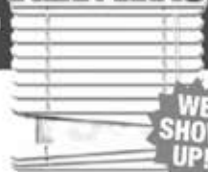
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Here's five heart healthy tips:



1. Quit smoking - Nicotine constricts your blood vessels, making your heart work harder



2. Get your nutrients - The food you eat affects your weight, cholesterol and blood pressure



3. Control your cholesterol - Reduce intake of saturated and trans fat to maintain healthy arteries



4. Pass on the salt - Shake the salt habit and keep your blood pressure reading near the optimal 120/80



5. Get daily exercise - Commit to a physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day, every day to lower your risk for obesity



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