

MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # **195-2016**

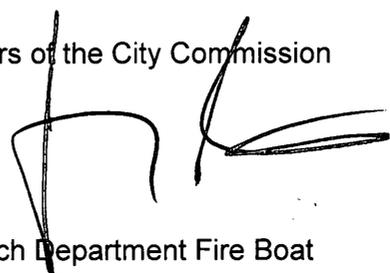
LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Philip Levine and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: May 4, 2016

SUBJECT: Expected Delivery of Miami Beach Department Fire Boat



The purpose of this LTC is to inform the Mayor and members of the City Commission that the Fire Department is expected to receive delivery of the fire-rescue boat on Friday, May 6, 2016.

The City of Miami Beach is a barrier island that has a total area of 18.7 square miles, of which 7.0 square miles is land and 11.7 square miles or 62.7% is water. There is a vast amount of water related response territory including the Intracoastal Waterway, Biscayne Bay and the beaches on the ocean side that cannot be accessed by land craft. The Fire Department has no waterborne immediate life-saving response capabilities and will soon fill this gap by the arrival of our fire boat. The City of Miami and Miami-Dade County provide mutual aid to the surrounding municipalities of Key Biscayne, and Coral Gables. This makes them responsible for an enormous geographical area creating a gap that cannot be closed. The acquisition of the combination fire and rescue boat, staffed by a highly trained Waterborne Response Team, will help close this gap and enhance regional service to the South Florida area by providing not only service in Miami Beach waters but responding to mutual aid calls in the region.

The City of Miami Beach has a history of waterborne related incidents. These incidents include persons falling from seawalls, cars in canals, children drowning in canals or at the beach, frequent boat crashes and numerous marine vessel fires. The City of Miami Beach is also host to significant tourist and recreational marine events such as the Miami Yacht Show.

We are accessible from the mainland only by causeway, air or through the water. If any of these causeways were compromised by either natural or man-made acts, the vessel will facilitate evacuation or re-entry immediately. The fire boat will help secure the Intracoastal Waterway, the ocean side as well as the large and small waterways in the City of Miami Beach and effect rescues in a waterborne or near water emergency.

Of utmost importance is the need to complement an aging water supply. While the Fire Department works with Public Works to flow test and flush hydrants; the department at times has less than ideal fire flows to many of our island communities. The fireboat can be a lifeline in these situations by pumping water from the bay that can be used for firefighting.

The Miami Beach Fire Department looks forward to the expected delivery of the fire boat to fire station #4.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Fire Chief Virgil Fernandez.