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## **NEW FT. LAUDERDALE BUDGET UNVEILED...**

# **23.7%**

**Property Tax Increase to Rescue City**

**KA-BOOM.** That's not the construction noise emanating from the concrete restoration next door. It's the other shoe dropping. It has taken the form of a 23.7% municipal tax increase, the largest in 14 years. Fort Lauderdale residents have tasted the service cuts and fee increases following the budget crises. Anyone with "city business" has experienced the acrimony that permeates city hall. City employees have been feeling the sting of a short leash. The municipal work force took the pummeling that accompanied downsizing. Job titles were swapped or eliminated, forced furloughs were mandated, schedules became moving targets and morale tanked as the City of Fort Lauderdale continues to perform a balancing act to stay fiscally afloat. Now, it's our turn to feel the pain.

Acting City Manager Alan Silva unveiled the new Fiscal Year 2004 - 2005 Proposed Operating Budget for the City of Fort Lauderdale to the Mayor and the City Commissioners on July 15th for consideration at the July 20th Commission Conference Meeting. Should the proposal for budget year 10/1/2004 to 9/30/2005 be approved, two things would transpire. Our taxes would

Continued on page 7



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### Budget...Continued

Acting Manager Silva asserted that the service levels were skirting bare minimums. The work force has been trimmed to levels that have elicited concerns from Police and Fire officials. Many top positions have been abandoned by high level employees responding to the beating that municipal morale experiences on a daily basis. While this year's budget will do little to ameliorate the immediate concerns of veteran employees, it will neutralize a \$38 million deficit that needs to be cured before the City can improve on its existing employment obligations. During this two-three year period of adjustment, employees will continue to contend with the stress resulting from years of budgetary mismanagement. Residents will have to pay increased fees and taxes for the "sins of the past" in addition to the current services received while enduring barely acceptable service levels. Once this obstacle is overcome, there's no reason why Fort Lauderdale couldn't resume being "the Venice of America".

For additional information about the Fort Lauderdale Budget Dilemma, go to the Galt Mile Community Association web site ([www.galtmile.com](http://www.galtmile.com)). Click on the "Issues" section of the horizontal navigation bar atop every page. Scroll down to "Budget Bust" and click. Alternatively, simply click on the "Quick Connect to Issues" drop-down menu on the upper right side of the Home Page and click on "Budget Bust". The Section offers a chronology of relevant Fort Lauderdale Budget articles that depict how the Budget Crunch affects our municipal services and your wallet. Links to the actual budget proposal and supporting documentation are available from the articles on the web site.

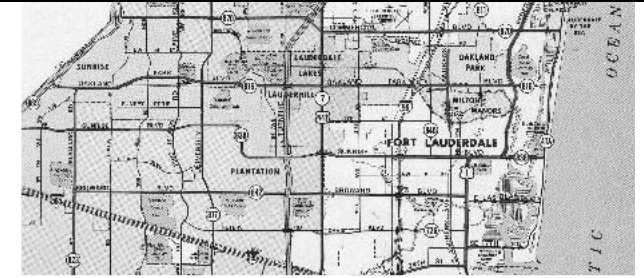
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# Broward Candidates Are Set to Run



The qualifying deadline for candidates aspiring to office in Broward County election districts was Friday, July 16th at Noon. Hopefuls will vie for a variety of elective offices including the State Senate, the State House of Representatives, the Broward County Commission, The Broward County School Board and a half dozen Broward County Constitutional positions. Filing qualifies the candidates to run in the August 31st primaries or non-partisan School Board races.

Galt Mile residents belong to Senate District 25 and House District 91. District 91 Statehouse Representative Elyn Bogdanoff was granted her wish to "win by less of a cliffhanger." After defeating former Lauderdale-by-the-Sea Mayor Oliver Parker by a paper-thin 12 votes (along with six other candidates) in a January special election to fill Connie Mack IV's vacated house seat, no one opted to run against her six months later. Unopposed, Representative Bogdanoff secured her House seat for two more years. Incumbent Senator Jeffrey Atwater wasn't quite as fortunate. While he won't face a Democratic challenger, he will face write-in candidate Alex Schraf.

Other candidates who won uncontested seats were Senators M. Mandy Dawson, Steven A. Geller and Gwen Margolis. In the Statehouse, Richard A. Macheck, Irving Slosberg, Jack Seiler, Ron Greenstein, Eleanor Sobel, Timothy M. Ryan, Mike Davis, Rafael Arza, Kenneth Gottlieb and David Rivera joined Ms. Bogdanoff as unopposed seat winners. Ilene S. Lieberman and Ben Graber were returned unopposed to the Broward County Commission. Clerk of Courts Howard C. Forman and State Attorney Mike Satz were also returned to their respective offices. Chief Assistant Public Defender Howard Finkelstein will replace Alan Schreiber as Broward's Public Defender, his Television celebrity (on air legal analyst for the FOX networks local affiliate, WSVN Channel 7) establishing a name recognition that presented an insurmountable obstacle to intimidated potential opponents. Only Benjamin J. Williams won an uncontested Broward County School Board seat.

The aspirants who successfully filed prior to the deadline are as follows:

**(I) - Incumbent, (E) - Elected Unopposed, (W) - Write-In Candidate**

### Candidates for State Senate

District	Republicans	Democrats	Others
District 25	Jeff Atwater (I)		Alex Schraf (W)
District 27	Michael Fletcher	David Aronberg (I)	Stan Smilan
District 29		M. Mandy Dawson (I) (E)	
District 31		Steven A. Geller (I) (E)	
District 34	Fabio A. Andrade	Nan H. Rich	
District 35		Gwen Margolis (I) (E)	
District 39	Joseph E. Delaney	Larcenia J. Bullard (I) Sheila L. Chamberlain Ron Saunders	Micaela Junco (W)

### Candidates for State House of Representatives

District	Republicans	Democrats	Others
District 78		Richard A. Macheck (I) (E)	
District 83	Carl J. Domino (I)	David Prestia	
District 85	Andy Edwards	Shelley Vana (I)	
District 86		Anne M. Gannon (I)	Zacharia Varughese (W)
District 87	Adam Hasner (I)	Caravita "Cara" Sansonia Doug West	
District 88	Ed Heeney	Susan Bucher (I) Joel Silver	Dan Gladstone (W)
District 89		Mary Brandenburg (I) Elna Laun	
District 90		Irving "Irv" Slosberg (I) (E)	
District 91	Elyn Bogdanoff (I) (E)		
District 92		John P. "Jack" Seiler (I) (E)	
District 93		Christopher "Chris" Smith (I) Sallie Tillman-Watson	Katherine Debriere (W)
District 94		Matthew "Matt" Meadows (I) Eric Hammond	Henry Bonner (W)
District 95		Ron Greenstein (I) (E)	
District 96		Ari Abraham Porth Mark Weissman	Michael Natale Daniel Steven Nicolaison (W)
District 97	Susan K. Goldstein	Barbara Herrera-Hill Martin David Kiar	
District 98	Eugene C. Cunningham	Franklin Sands	
District 99		Eleanor Sobel (I) (E)	
District 100		Timothy M. "Tim" Ryan (I) (E)	
District 101	Miko Davis (I) (E)		
District 102	Rafael "Ralph" Arza (I) (E)		
District 103		Wilbert "Tee" Holloway (I) Joseph "Joe" Cook	Trevor Kincaid
District 105		Kenneth "Ken" Gottlieb (I) (E)	
District 112	David Rivera (I) (E)		

Continued on page 5

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Budget...Continued

public agencies where the City's best interest is served by doing so."

All efforts directed toward lowering any tax bill would be most welcome, as long as they don't involve smoke, mirrors, rabbits, hats, etc. Fort Lauderdale residents have become wary of promises to deliver services absent the visible resources to pay for them. Although nobody relishes paying taxes, most people like a delayed 911 response even less. Fort Lauderdale should never again be forced to decide which critical services need to be weakened (i.e. Station 13 Medical Transport) in order to insure the City's survival on a weekly basis. The Fort Lauderdale electorate, after watching the City's finances crumble, has become highly sensitized to the adequate funding of our services and responsible government oversight. A word to the wise...

**July 20th City Commission Meeting – Budget Discussion  
Commission OKs 33% Property Tax Increase**

The Fort Lauderdale City Commission agreed with Alan Silva that the time has come to face the fiscal realities that confront our city. The fantasy that one can buy more by paying less was finally dispelled. For years the Commission spent money on a growing litany of services while creating the illusion that clever budgeting, not adequate funding, would address the adjunctive expense. Governmental agencies culling out "waste and abuse" are often rewarded with some combination of cutting taxes and/or holding the line while improving services. Fort Lauderdale resorted to a less traditional method to sponsor its tax cuts and service improvements. They used magic. Our municipality hypnotized itself into believing that it was viable to pay for last years bills with next years growth. As Mr. Silva pointed out, "We cannot 'grow' ourselves out of a fiscal problem (the new growth in valuation does not even cover the built-in salary cost of merit/step increases)". He repeatedly insisted that the Commission focus on the sustainability of their efforts. At the July 20th Commission meeting, Commissioners voted to pass Mr. Silva's \$416,424,311 budget, 10.4% higher than this year's budget, which is consistent with his mandate to put Fort Lauderdale back on its fiscal feet.

The Commission also decided to further increase property taxes in lieu of passing an 89% Fire-Rescue fee increase. The 11.5% increase in the millage rate (from 5.1970 to 5.7951) contained in the original budget proposal will jump to a 19.5% increase (from 5.1970 to 6.21) under the new configuration. This is about a 33% increase over the rolled back rate as opposed to the 23.7% increase in the original budget proposal. This is the rate that would have to be charged to collect the same amount of resources that were collected last year. Although the additional property tax increase will fully fund Fire-Rescue operations to the same extent as the proposed non-ad valorem fee increase from \$63 to \$119, the Commission balked at some of the provisions accompanying the fee increase. Under the proposed fee increase, non-profits, governmental agencies and charitable institutions would have pay for "services received" from Fire-Rescue. The increased property tax would relieve them of that responsibility. Moral questions and collection difficulties clouded the appeal of enforcing even a 50% assessment to these entities.

Broward Candidates...Continued

The filings included a slew of write-in candidates. Without explosive name recognition, write-in candidates have virtually no chance of winning an election. Since, by definition, their names don't appear on the ballots, even those voters with intentions of writing in a candidate risk invalidating their votes by simply misspelling the unlisted name. The main reason that write-ins proliferate is component to political maneuvering.

When all the contending candidates for an office belong to one party, the primary serves as the election. The general electorate, regardless of party affiliation, chooses among the homogenous (single-party) field. For instance, when three Democrats are competing for votes, Republican voters would likely tilt the election in favor of the Democrat with the strongest Republican ideations. Conversely, Democratic voters selecting from an all-Republican field would be predisposed to help elect the Republican with overt Democratic leanings.

If a write-in candidate qualifies, a primary is mandated in which participation in the selection is limited to registered members of the same party; thereby eliminating any influence that voters registered to other parties would exert on the outcome. The primary winner then faces the negligible challenge posed by the write-in candidate. The general electorate is excluded until the field narrows to the one viable candidate chosen in the primary.

Of the nine write-in candidates, five affect races wherein all of the other candidates belong to the same party (four in the Statehouse and one in the Broward County Commission). Due to the write-in candidate, the probable winners will be decided by members of the candidates' party, not the general electorate. All's fair in love and...

Find additional information about local political developments on the Galt Mile Community Association web site (www.galtmile.com), including links to the candidates and the Broward Supervisor of Elections web site. Contact data for Supervisor Brenda Snipes' office is Room 102, Government Center, 115 South Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301; Phone: (954) 357-7050, Fax: (954) 357-6685. Please don't forget to vote on August 31st and November 2nd. It might be the most important thing you do this year!

**Broward County Officers Candidates**

Office	Republicans	Democrats	Others
<b>Clerk of Courts</b>		<b>Howard C. Forman</b> (I) (E)	
<b>Sheriff</b>		Kenneth Jenne (I) Karl Tozzi	
<b>Property Appraiser</b>	Mark J. Taravella	Steven D. Johnson J.R. Markham Lori Nance Parrish	David Longstaff (W) John J. Makos
<b>Election Supervisor</b>	Steve Shin	Brenda Calhoun Snipes (I) Jamie Bloodworth Miriam McKinzie Oliphant	
<b>Public Defender</b>		<b>Howard Finkelstein</b> (E)	
<b>State Attorney</b>		<b>Mike Satz</b> (I) (E)	

**Candidates for the Broward County Commission**

District	Republicans	Democrats	Others
<b>District 1</b>		<b>Ilene S. Lieberman</b> (I) (E)	
<b>District 3</b>		<b>Ben Graber</b> (I) (E)	
<b>District 5</b>	Rick "Doc" Bruns	Suellen H. Fardelmann Alex G. Fekete Lois Wexler Roger B. Wishner	
<b>District 7</b>		John E. Rodstrom (I) Randy Dunlap Robert L. McKinzie, Jr.	Robert J. Trafford (W)
<b>District 9</b>		Josephus Eggelletion Jr. (I) Allen B. Jackson	

**Candidates for Broward County School Board**

District	Candidates
<b>District 2</b>	Douglas E. Costa, <i>Beverly Ann "Bev" Gallagher</i> (I) and Patricia "Patti" Good
<b>District 3</b>	Phyllis Adams, Maureen S. Dinnen, Marvin Quittner and Warren Sturman
<b>District 5</b>	<b>Benjamin J. Williams</b> (I) (E)
<b>District 9</b>	Robin Bartleman, Gloria Burnell, Ruth Carter-Lynch, Minerva Casanas-Simon, Marvin Silverman and Terry W. Snipes

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### Budget...Continued

increase and the City could pay its bills. The smoke and mirrors budgets that were historically floated in City Hall had lulled Fort Lauderdale residents into believing that it was reasonable to continually lower taxes while increasing services. This expectation came to a crashing halt last December as the City admitted that its fiscal policies were inherently unsound and required immediate budgetary CPR. The time has come to pay for past indiscretions.

In summarizing his "Guiding Fiscal Philosophy", Mr. Silva expressed, "Being fiscally conservative and prudent means the realistic funding of requirements to restore fiscal sustainability and provide the level of services that citizens have come to expect and may or may not result in tax cuts. Re-establishing fiscal balance, correcting the excesses of the past, maintaining credible service levels, and responding to new demands for services do have costs. This message provides a 'reality check' for municipal finances." Describing the foundation upon which he crafted this budget, he offered his "observations during nine months of profound changes and cutbacks:

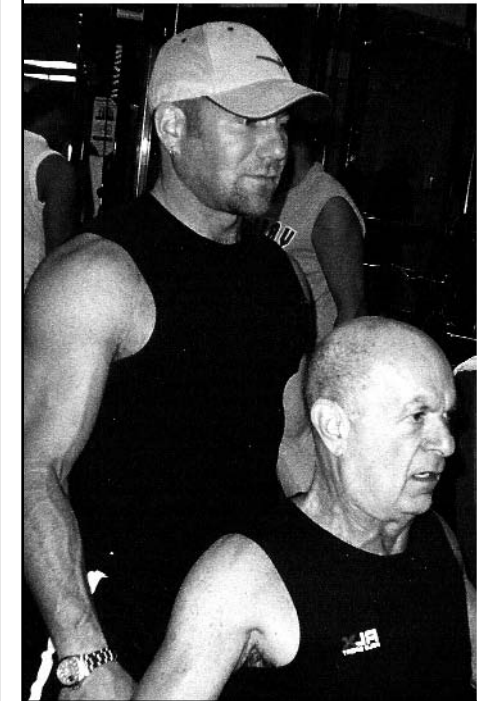
- The highest priority must be the restoration of fiscal stability and sustainability, which requires steps to provide adequate funding of reserves and resolve the insurance deficit situation;
- We need to realistically estimate revenues and project expenses;
- We cannot "grow" ourselves out of a fiscal problem (the new growth in valuation does not even cover the built-in salary cost of merit/step increases);
- The workforce base has been dramatically reduced and further reductions will impact service quality and/or the existence of certain services/programs; and,
- Past budgets have created certain unrealistic illusions: greater expectations for salary increases by employees and questionable expectations for low, unsustainable, millage by taxpayers.

The unfortunate truth is that we need to pay for fiscal stability and the services we receive. History has shown fiscal decisions postponed become fiscal problems compounded. It is extremely difficult for a fiscal conservative to propose property tax and fire assessment increases; however, given the City's financial condition and the City Commission's articulation of program priority and service levels, there are no other viable alternatives. We need the leadership to act decisively with the fiscal dilemma that confronts us. Learning from the unfortunate experiences of July 2003, we need to advertise a millage that funds the appropriate level of services and allows public debate on how we provide for fiscal stability, what services we provide, and how we organize effectively and efficiently to provide them."

The proposed "all funds budget", which totals \$416,424,311, is 10.4 percent higher (\$39.2 million) than the budget adopted for the current fiscal year. The General Fund Proposed Budget is

Continued on page 9

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<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Public School Begins	<b>17</b> American Idols LIVE! Office Depot Center Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Computer Sale War Memorial 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5380
<b>22</b> Computer Sale War Memorial 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5380	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Marlins vs SF Pro Player 7:05 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>25</b> Marlins vs SF Pro Player 7:05 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>26</b> Marlins vs SF Pro Player 7:05 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>27</b> Marlins vs COL Pro Player 7:35 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>28</b> Marlins vs COL Pro Player 6:05 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com
<b>29</b> Marlins vs COL Pro Player 3:05 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Broward Primary Elections Polls 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Las Olas Labor Day Weekend Art Fair 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
<b>5</b> Las Olas Labor Day Weekend Art Fair 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  SunTrust Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985	<b>6</b> Labor Day  Commissioner Christine Teel: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center 7 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033	<b>7</b> Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall 6 p.m.	<b>8</b> Van Halen Office Depot Center 7:30 p.m. Tix.: ticketmaster.com	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>

## A l o o k a h e a d

- September 16 Galt Mile Community Association Meeting Nick's Italian Restaurant, 11 a.m.
- September 28 Incubus Office Depot Center, 7:30 p.m.
- October 20 - November 14 Ft. Lauderdale International Film Festival
- October 28, 2004 - November 1 Ft. Lauderdale International Boat Show



Budget...Continued

\$248,881,059, which represents a 15.7 percent increase (\$33.8 million) over the current year's General Fund budget. This plan warrants an 11.5 percent increase in the millage rate from 5.1970 to 5.7951 (\$5.79 for every \$1000 of assessed value). This represents an increase of 23.7% above the rollback rate (the rate that would yield the total revenues collected last year). Excluding debt service, the proposed operating millage is increased from 4.8288 to 5.4319, or 24.8 percent above the rolled-back rate. Mr. Silva asserts that these strikingly large increases are a direct result of the City's previously back rate. Mr. Silva asserts that these strikingly large increases are a direct result of the City's previously unrealistic budgetary policies. He states, "We must confront the reality that our situation is based on a cumulative imbalance of \$37 million over the past four years as follows:

- \$21 Million in insurance deficits that should have been funded in previous years;
- \$7 Million in precipitous draw downs of reserves that allowed an artificially low millage;
- \$4 Million in capital outlay and improvement deferrals (in FY 2004 alone);
- \$4 Million in foregone revenues created by the untimely assessed value adjustments made by the County Property Appraiser's Office and the Value Adjustment Board; and,
- \$1 Million in one-time, non-recurring, short-term revenue "fixes" in FY 2004."

Silva continues, "Over the past four years, had the City set the millage at realistic levels, rather than reducing it each year, the rolled-back rate would have been closer to adequate this fiscal year. Rather than the 24.8 percent increase over roll back we are considering, the increase would have been 15.8 percent. Indeed, the Proposed Budget could have actually reduced the millage by 0.0929. Given the twin goals of re-establishing fiscal stability and funding Commission priorities, this analysis is important as it shows how budget decisions today affect funding options in future years."


The \$199,920 average valuation of Fort Lauderdale properties will command a property tax increase of \$123.99 for homesteaders and \$264.01 for non-homesteaders. The \$227,992 average market value condominium will shoulder an increase of \$143.50 for homesteaders and \$301.01 for non-homesteaders. The single-family homeowner, whose average market value property is assessed at \$327,881, will pay an additional \$212.93 with a homestead exemption and \$432.99 without one.

The City's levy represents slightly more than one-fifth of the overall tax bill. Broward County, the Broward County School Board and others also impact the final totals.

Continued on page 10

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**Budget...Continued**

Over the last ten years, the City's tax bill for the average homeowner claiming a homestead exemption has increased 11 percent. This is barely a 1 percent increase per year. Broward County, with a millage that is currently 27 percent higher than the City's, has gone up 3 percent (over ten years) for the same category of homeowner. The School Board, with a millage 56 percent higher than the City's, has gone up 2 percent. Over the ten year period, taxing entities levying against Fort Lauderdale properties with lower millage than the City have charged tax bills reflecting greater increases than those charged by the City. The South Florida Water Management District increased by 36%, the Florida Inland Navigation District by 22%, the North Broward Hospital District by 30%, and the Children's Services Council by 37% over a four-year period. Under the proposed budget, the City's portion of the tab would increase from 22% to about 26% depending upon how other taxing entities set their millage. In comparison to other Broward Cities, Fort Lauderdale, with the county's largest population, resides in the lowest third for charged millage.

The budget proposal assumes the passage of an 89% Fire-Rescue non-ad valorem fee increase from \$63 to \$119 to address 100% of Fire-Rescue's operational expenses. This adds another \$56 increase to the tax bill. Non-passage of this increase will add another \$8,355,000 to the property tax requirement, raising the combined millage rate to 6.2307. It also proposes to remove the exemption that non-profits and governmental agencies have historically enjoyed, demanding instead that they pay for services received. The proposal increases Water and Sewer Rates by 6%,

costing the average customer \$3.36 more per month. While a 6% stormwater management rate increase will only cost an additional 15 cents per month, Parks and Recreation user fees will rise by 10 to 15 percent as an alternative to additional property taxes. The Occupational License Fee, unaltered since 1997, will jump to its 5% annual statutory limit.

Had it not been for almost \$800,000 in savings realized from hiring and expenditure freezes, the City projected ending the last fiscal year with a paltry \$86,330 in the General Fund or approximately 0.034 percent of operating expenditures. In contrast, 12 percent of operating expenditures is a generally accepted benchmark for minimal reserves. This fiscal disconnect drew the attention of leery bond rating agencies. Responding to Fort Lauderdale's peculiar fiscal history, Moody's Investor Service lowered the City's general obligation bond rating from Aa2 to Aa3 in the past year; the rating for non-general obligation borrowing is even lower. The budget proposal contains a three-year plan to beef up reserves to 5% of the General Fund in order to bolster investor confidence. Working Capital Reserves will be increased from \$2 million to \$3 million, a \$1 million appropriation will be made to the Stabilization Reserve and the Emergency Reserve (the City's "Rainy Day Fund") will receive \$2 million. Despite the additional \$4 million in reserve appropriations, Fort Lauderdale will continue to lag behind other Florida municipalities in that category. Hollywood's 2003 fund balance of \$5,640,766 represents 5% of their budget, Coral Springs' 2003 balance of \$16,406,549 was 27% of their budget and Miami's 2003 unreserved fund balance of \$136,905,142 was a whopping 40% of their municipal budget.

Continued on page 15



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Teel...Continued

Commissioner Teel, responding to a recurring concern of the Galt Mile Community Association, explained the City's continued neglect of the Galt Ocean Mile as a ramification of Fort Lauderdale's budget woes. After assessing Galt Mile residents to fund the extremely successful neighborhood rehabilitation project known as "A Smile on the Mile", Fort Lauderdale committed to maintain the resident-financed project in a "Disney-like fashion", alluding to the impeccable maintenance at the famous Kissimmee resort. The pink aggregate sidewalks that line the street have been repeatedly marred by FP&L, Comcast, AT&T, BellSouth and assorted developers despite the contractual promise to return the excavated areas to their original condition. Contractors have offered paper thin explanations such as "we couldn't find any pink aggregate" by way of excuse. Galt Mile Presidents Council Chair Pio Ieraci drew Commissioner Teel's attention to another example of the City's non-compliance with their maintenance obligation; the severe deterioration of the landscaping for which we paid. In the spirit of cooperation, Mr. Ieraci offered a solution that would compensate for the City's current inability to finance the landscaping improvements needed to enhance the block's appearance. He suggested that green-thumbed resident volunteers be allowed to contribute their efforts to freshen up the wilted foliage in the swales and



the mini-parks along the street. The project would be organized by the Association. Resident manpower would be recruited to carry out the "Urban Forester's" directions. The Community would provide the resources while the City contributed the technical guidance. Pio Ieraci asked Commissioner Teel if City Hall would permit this ad hoc alliance to temporarily fulfill the City's maintenance commitment to the Galt Mile. Proclaiming Mr. Ieraci's suggestion as an excellent idea that should warrant the appreciation of the City Commission, she agreed to attempt securing permission to actualize this volunteer effort.

Commissioner Teel has proven repeatedly that she is a tireless supporter of the Galt Mile, working incessantly to further neighborhood improvements and community services. Despite the tenuous disposition of Station 13, which is subject to intermittent "dropped shifts" resulting from Fire-Rescue's budgetary constraints, the Medical Transport hasn't missed one shift. The Commissioner imparted, "Every day I call (Fort Lauderdale Fire) Chief Otis Latin to verify that Transport 13 is in service". That telephone call is most likely the main reason that the Chief's daily response is, "Yes". Generally, the first sensation experienced after hearing an ambulance siren isn't gratitude, however, Commissioner Teel's persistence merits an exception. Thanks...

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Information provided by Eastside Properties

Twelve more properties were sold in the Galt Ocean Mile Community:

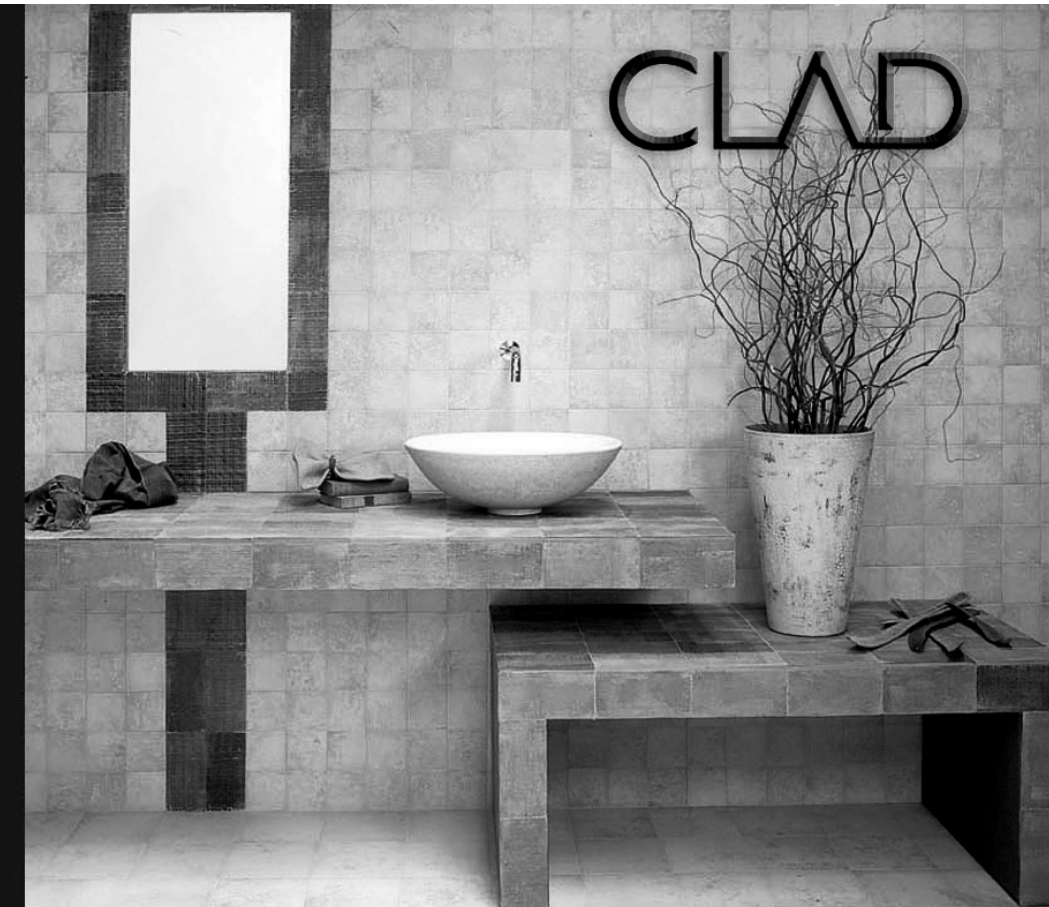
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|---|--|
| <b>L'Hermitage #PH2709</b><br>(4/5)<br>\$2,900,000 - closed 5/24/04 | <b>Playa East #PHB</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$427,500 - closed 5/27/04            |
| <b>Galleon #1502</b><br>(1/2)<br>\$355,000 - closed 5/28/04         | <b>Coral Ridge Towers N. #1703</b><br>(1/1)<br>\$179,950 - closed 5/5/04 |
| <b>Galt Towers #1A</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$271,500 - closed 5/6/04        | <b>Commodore</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$330,000 - closed 5/19/04                  |
| <b>Plaza East #18J</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$321,500 - closed 4/30/04       | <b>Plaza East #17M</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$390,000 - closed 5/19/04            |
| <b>L'Ambiance #1506</b><br>(3/2)<br>\$585,000 - closed 5/4/04       | <b>Regency Tower #805</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$331,600 - closed 5/21/04         |
| <b>Southpoint #1208N</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$465,000 - closed 5/24/04     | <b>Ocean Club #404</b><br>(2/2)<br>\$310,000 - closed 5/21/04            |



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Teel...Continued

Since then, the City finances experienced a train wreck. At the contract renewal negotiations, Commissioners made clear that the City's gesture of support made when Fort Lauderdale was fiscally healthy needed rethinking. The show is a cash cow for its promoters, MDM Group Ltd. and subsidiary Pro Series Inc., bringing in millions every year. Senior sponsor McDonald's shells out \$2.5 million each year for Title sponsorship alone. TV revenues, promotional sales and enormous corporate financial support (40 + corporate sponsors) all inure to the promoters' bottom line. When the City tried to propose a return to the Show supporting itself, Mickey Markoff of MDM Group and Johnny Williams of Pro Series Inc. slammed the door. The promoters not only refused to open their books to the City, they threatened to sue if the City didn't continue the gratis services. At a time when Fort Lauderdale's budget is hemorrhaging, services are being cut back and layoffs are circling above employees' heads like vultures, the promoters feel it appropriate to force the residents of Fort Lauderdale to foot the bill for their "free" show.

The formula works like this. The City will provide \$458,571 in Fire-Rescue, Public Services, Parks & Recreation and Police Services to the Air-Sea Show for which the promoters will reimburse the city \$171,039. Parking revenues of \$43,634 will lessen the bloodletting. The rest, \$243,898, will be picked up by the City and the Community. Not exactly a free show. Commissioner Teel hopes to renegotiate this one-sided arrangement and roll back the clock to when the Show paid its own way. The promoters' attitude isn't enigmatic. Why would they want to strangle the city that nourished their golden goose for the past decade? Evidently, it's because they can. Commissioner Teel requested that residents contact the City Commissioners in support of renegotiating the City's contract with the promoters.

Commissioner Teel also addressed one of the neighborhood's danger zones. GMCA President Robert Rozema has bitterly complained for years about the intersection of Galt Ocean Drive and A1A one block north of Oakland Park Blvd. The southbound traffic light at A1A and 32nd Street, designed to allow the traffic from Galt Ocean Drive to access southbound A1A, is regularly ignored by drivers. The latest accident victim of this traffic hazard is Galt Mile Community Association Director and Ocean Club President Rose Guttman. At the June 14th City Commission meeting, Commissioner Teel asked Peter Partington to look into some permanent improvement that would lessen the attendant danger. The Commission discussed several options, ranging from increasing the auxiliary signage to installing a highly noticeable cyclops style traffic light. The problem will require attention on the State level, as A1A falls under the dominion of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The irrepressible Ms. Guttman took matters into her own hands, enlisting Florida State Senator Jeffrey



Atwater's assistance to correct the ineffective traffic signal.

Continued on page 8

Budget...Continued

Funds were also allocated to address \$6.3 million of the City's health insurance fund deficit, \$1.6 million in other insurance increases, \$5 million in contributions required to the City's two defined benefit pension plans and \$1.5 Million in Termination Pay for employees participating in the DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Plan) program. \$4 million was appropriated for capital improvements and \$3 million towards capital outlay (mobile reporting equipment for FLPD, Fire-Rescue bunker gear and hose packs, computers, paint for the Kinney Tunnel and the beach Wave Wall, street fixtures, etc.). \$5.4 million was assigned to "Commission-Articulated Priorities". These include expenses reviewed and discussed by the hard-pressed City Commission during the past year. Projects important to Galt Mile residents such as restoring Engine 13 and Rescue 13 to adequate operating levels by hiring 8 firefighters for \$562,000 (thereby reducing overtime) and expediting the permitting process by hiring 1 administrative assistant for \$71,000 will be funded.

The recommended increases in the proposed budget are statutory maximums. While the City Commission can lower the various rates and fees in the fall, they cannot be raised after the maximum millage rate is set (by August 4th). This allots several weeks for the Mayor and the City Commission to formulate a public sweetener to help the medicine go down. It also provides adequate flexibility for new City Manager George Gretsas when he takes the reins on August 2nd. Mr. Silva anticipates that the public will be afforded an opportunity for input during the September 8th and September 21st City Commission meetings. He elaborated, "The Proposed Budget will be presented to the Budget Advisory Board for its comments and suggestions, as well as any citizen group that would like to discuss these recommendations." The Budget Advisory Board provides input regarding the taxpayers' perspective in the development of the annual operating budget, advising the City Commission on service levels, priorities and fiscal solvency. Their report is due by August 15th. Acting Manager Silva has made it clear that the budget should reflect Fort Lauderdale's commitment to sound fiscal planning in addition to offering the incoming City Manager Gretsas all the tools required to run the City efficiently.

Inferring that the budget was harsh, Mayor Naugle stated, "I think we need to do some cutting and I won't vote for it. I want to work with my colleagues on the commission to bring the number down without sacrificing public safety." The Mayor might be alluding to some of the financial advantages anticipated from the strategic outsourcing of certain services. For instance, discussions with the Broward Sheriff's Office about assuming Fire-Rescue Dispatch (a potential \$800,000 savings) are underway. Mr. Silva stated, "City staff has evaluated and the Commission has reviewed opportunities for alternatives to using City employees for service delivery. A staff recommendation on potential outsourcing/privatization opportunities was approved by the Commission on May 18, 2004. The most viable options are being considered by the new City Manager. The City has a strong track record for outsourcing with the private sector and partnering with other

Continued on page 16

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District 1 City Commissioner Christine Teel addressed a June 17th Galt Mile Community Association Advisory Board luncheon meeting at Nick's Italian Restaurant. The Commissioner cast light on an assortment of issues currently affecting Galt Mile residents. She announced the selection of a new City Manager, George Gretsas, to take the reins from Acting City Manager Alan A. Silva. She described him as enthusiastic and energetic. She praised his commitment to his work, which commonly places Mr. Gretsas in his office until 4 AM mopping up details. Her delight with the Commission's selection was apparent, characterizing his intensity as one of the critical traits that City Commissioners sought in the aspiring candidates. A workaholic, Mr. Gretsas is an attorney who recently completed a 6 year stint as the Executive Officer to White Plains, N.Y., Mayor Joseph Delfino. Ms. Teel said that in his capacity as the man behind the Mayor, Mr. Gretsas demonstrated a dogged persistence and a single-mindedness of purpose while tackling challenges. While acknowledging that Mr. Gretsas never served as a City Manager and lacks experience in budgeting and balance sheet preparation, his deficiencies would be offset by a close collaboration with Alan Silva, the Acting City Manager with impeccable budgeting skills. This relationship, combined with Gretsas' anticipated hunger to achieve, underwrites Commissioner Teel's stated optimism. Ms. Teel also pointed out that Mr. Gretsas lays claim to the unusual accomplishment of being elected to his community's School Board at the age of 21 and subsequently serving three full terms.

Although Mr. Gretsas was offered a contract by the City Commission, as of the Advisory Board meeting (June 17th), he hadn't as yet accepted. He is immersed in preparatory discussions and conference calls with top municipal management. Commissioner Teel estimates that Mr. Gretsas, should he elect to sign the contract, would take the helm on August 1st.

Commissioner Teel spoke to a strange relationship that the City of Fort Lauderdale maintains with the promoters of the annual Air-Sea Show. The Air-Sea show is a nationally recognized celebration. The weekend long May event envelopes the entire city in waves of pride and patriotism. Millions of spectators (about 4 million in 2004), on the tube or first hand, have converged on Fort Lauderdale for the past ten years to participate in this Salute to the Military. The combination of Fleet Week and the Air-Sea Show has also attracted millions of dollars to the city's economy. Hotel rooms and ancillary tourist accommodations are sold out. The town is awash in tourist dollars for the long weekend. Cash registers cachink away as a pit stop for the sales tax revenues that ultimately help pay our municipality's expenses. The residents of the city know this. So do the promoters.

The Air-Sea Show was originally arranged as a self-sustaining event. In 1999, the city offered to provide certain services on the cuff.

Continued on page 6

**Budget...Continued**

Commissioner Moore also objected to the regressive nature of universal fees as a revenue source.

It will also afford incoming City Manager George Gretsas additional flexibility. Mr. Gretsas assumes the driver's seat on August 2nd, at which time he will have to decide how the city's resources should be distributed. The accepted budget numbers are maximums. They can be lowered in the fall. They cannot, however, be increased. During the public hearings on September 8th and September 21st, Commissioners, Mr. Gretsas and the Mayor can make adjustments to the budget based on feasible input gleaned from the electorate. Anticipating the public pressure to lower the property tax, the additional increase provides a buffer designed to absorb some of the political heat. It will allow city officials to lower some of the budget numbers without subverting the municipality's ability to pay the bills.

The alarm registration ordinance, a money-raising tactic that yielded disappointing results, was reconfigured to concentrate on response rather than registration. After a one-time \$50 registration fee, residents will be charged escalating fines for police/fire response to tripped alarms. The first response is on the house. For homeowners, the second, third, fourth and fifth response will incur fines of \$40, \$75, \$100 and \$200. For businesses, the amount assessed will depend upon whether the Police or Fire-Rescue responds. After the first free response, the assessment for police response will be \$100, \$150, \$200 and \$400 for the second through the fifth alarms. Should Fire-Rescue answer the call, assessments of \$100, \$200, \$400 and \$400 for the second through the fifth alarms will be charged. Other fees, including a 10% to 15% increase in Parks and Recreation fees, were essentially approved as proffered in Mr. Silva's proposed budget (see above).

Continued on page 18

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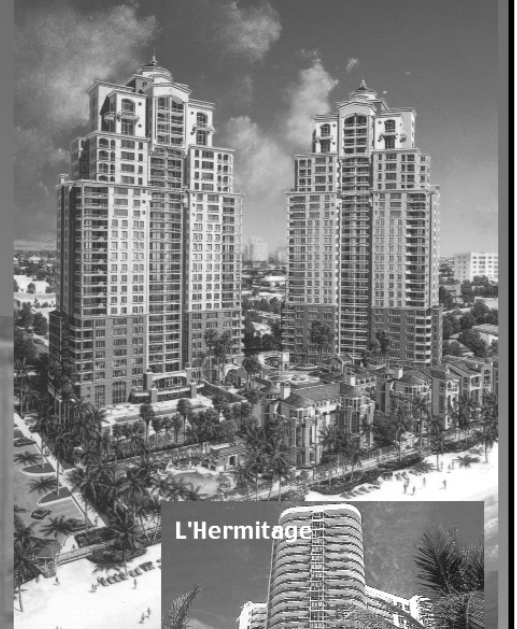
- Las Olas - Spacious 3/3, Pool, Renovated offered at \$899,000
- Landings Deepwater Intracoastal 3/3 Villa offered at \$1,575,000
- Great Selection of new Condos in Miami, Fort Lauderdale & Palm Beach
- One Bedroom Oceanfront starting at \$166,000
- Two Bedroom Ocean Views starting at \$300,000



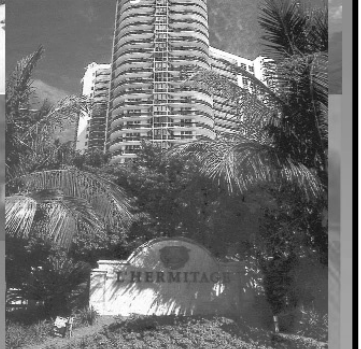
CARL S. MARZOLA  
President, CRS, CIPS

- Brand New Oceanfront Condos starting at \$800,000
- Have 3 to 12 unit, great cash flow, owner will assist with finance
- Great selection of Beach Area Motels & Hotels - from 40 units to 100 units. New Intracoastal hotel/condo prices starting from \$200,000
- Townhomes available starting from \$300,000 and up
- Rentals Available (Annual/Seasonal)
- Restaurant Opportunities Available
- Fantastic deals at L'ambiance:
  - Corner unit, 3 bedrooms/2 baths, 14th floor... LOWEST PRICE \$537,000
  - SE corner, marble floors, 3 bedrooms/2 baths, 11th floor... \$825,000
  - SE corner decorator ready, direct ocean views, 17th floor, 2 parking spaces... \$819,000

The Palms



L'Hermitage



**Telephone: 954.564.8182**  
**Toll Free in U.S. & Canada:**  
**1.800.991.9230**

Website: <http://www.atlantic-props.com>

E-Mail: [carl@atlantic-props.com](mailto:carl@atlantic-props.com)

3438 N. Ocean Blvd.  
Galt Ocean Mile • Fort Lauderdale