



**Town of Surfside
Town Commission Meeting
AGENDA**

**January 17, 2012
7 p.m.**

Town Hall Commission Chambers - 9293 Harding Ave, 2nd Floor
Surfside, FL 33154

Supplemental No. 1

1. Opening

- A. Call to Order**
- B. Roll Call of Members**
- C. Pledge of Allegiance**
- D. Mayor and Commission Remarks – Mayor Daniel Dietch**
 - 1. Announcement Regarding Special Commission Meeting on Monday, January 23, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. to vote on Young Israel Litigation Settlement**
- E. Agenda and Order of Business Additions, deletions and linkages**
- F. Community Notes – Mayor Daniel Dietch**
- G. Employees of the Quarter; Front Office Staff - Darlene Martinat, Sabrina Ferreira, Treva Bolus, LaSonya Nixon, Magalie Bichotte and Mayte Gamiotea – Yamileth Slate-McCloud, Human Resources Director**
- H. Recognition of Larry Feder for his contributions to the Holiday Toy Drive – David Allen, Chief of Police**
- I. Recognition of Parking Enforcement Officer Willie Perez for Police Civilian of the Month December 2011 – David Allen, Chief of Police**
- J. Officer of the Month presentation for Sgt. Rory Alberto, Detective Alberto Knight and Reserve Officer Rolando Baldomero – David Allen, Chief of Police**
- K. Beautification Committee Members Recognition- Commissioner Marta Olchyk**
- L. Presentation by Aletha Player – FPL District Representative – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager (SET FOR TIME CERTAIN AT 7:45PM)**

2. Quasi-Judicial Hearings (None)

3. Consent Agenda (Set for approximately 7:55 p.m.)

All items on the consent agenda are considered routine or status reports by the Town Commission and will be approved by one motion. Any Commission member may request, during item 1E Agenda and Order of Business, that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed separately.

Recommended Motion: To approve all consent agenda items as presented below.

*** Denotes agenda items as “must haves” which means there will be significant impacts if the item is not addressed tonight. If these items have not been heard by 10 p.m., the order of the agenda will be changed to allow them to be heard.**

- A. **Minutes** - December 13, 2011 Regular Town Commission Meeting **Page 1-9**
December 12, 2011 Beautification Committee Meeting **Page 10-11**
- B. **Budget to Actual Summary as of October 31, 2011** – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager **Page 12-13**
- *C. **Town Manager’s Report (Points of Light)** – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager **Page 14-27** **Points of Light No. 15 pulled by Town Manager for separate discussion**
- *D. **Town Attorney’s Report** – Lynn M. Dannheisser, Town Attorney **Page 28-31**
- *E. **Projects Progress Report** – Calvin, Giordano and Associates, Inc. **Page 32-34**

4. Ordinances

(Set for approximately 8:30 p.m.) (Note: Good and Welfare must begin at 8:15)

A. Second Readings (Ordinances and Public Hearing)

- *1. **Temporary Construction Fences** – Sarah Sinatra, Town Planner **Page 35-38**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA AMENDING CHAPTER 90 “ZONING” AND SPECIFICALLY AMENDING SECTION 90-56.1 “CONSTRUCTION FENCING” OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE CODE OF ORDINANCES PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

[This Ordinance delegates to the Town Manager the authority to waive temporary construction fencing setback requirements and approval of certain graphics on said fencing]

- *2. **Town of Surfside Amended off Street Parking compliance for SD-B40 and Religious Places of Public Assembly Ordinance** – Lynn Dannheisser, Town Attorney **Page 39-47**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA AMENDING CHAPTER 90 “ZONING,” ARTICLE VII “OFF-STREET 1. PARKING AND LOADING,” DIVISION 1 “OFF-STREET PARKING,” SECTION 90-77 “OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS” OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE CODE OF ORDINANCES FURTHER CLARIFYING OFF-STREET PARKING COMPLIANCE FOR THE SD-B40 ZONING DISTRICT AND OFF-STREET PARKING COMPLIANCE FOR RELIGIOUS PLACES OF PUBLIC

ASSEMBLY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

[This Ordinance makes applicable the off-street parking requirement options for mitigation to changes of use from service business to retail or restaurant within the SD-B40 district and for religious places of public assembly. It also allows an opportunity for a property owner to apply for a reduction in mitigation on a case by case basis]

***3. Awning Ordinance – Sarah Sinatra, Town Planner Page 48-54**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA AMENDING THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING CHAPTER 14 “BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS” AND SPECIFICALLY AMENDING SECTION 14-52 “COMMERCIAL STANDARDS ESTABLISHED”; AND CHAPTER 90 “ZONING” AND SPECIFICALLY AMENDING SECTION 90-47 “YARDS GENERALLY, ALLOWABLE PROJECTIONS”; SECTION 90-49 “AWNINGS AND CANOPIES”; AND SECTION 90.99 “APPENDIX-EXHIBIT A, DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES, MULTIFAMILY AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES.”; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

[This Ordinance provides design review standards for awnings in the downtown business district]

B. First Readings Ordinances

(Set for approximately N/A p.m.) (Note: Good and Welfare must begin at 8:15)

5. Resolutions and Proclamations

(Set for approximately 9:00 p.m.) (Note: Depends upon length of Good and Welfare)

**A. Casino Gambling Expansion Opposition Resolution – Roger M. Carlton,
Town Manager Page 55-58**

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA, URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO REJECT ANY AND ALL EXPANSIONS OF GAMBLING IN FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

***B. Approval of Loan Application for State Revolving Funds for the Construction of Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Infrastructure – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager Page 59-77 (Linked to Item 9J)**

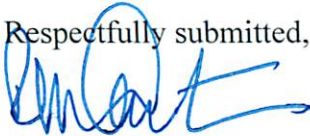
A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; MAKING FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN APPLICATION FOR \$9,312,881 FOR CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITES ASSOCIATED SURFSIDE WATER, WASTEWATER AND STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE LOAN AGREEMENT; ESTABLISHING PLEDGED REVENUES; DESIGNATING AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES; PROVIDING ASSURANCES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

- 6. Good and Welfare (Set for approximately 8:15 p.m.)**
Public comments for subjects or items not on the agenda. Public comment on agenda items will be allowed when agenda item is discussed by the Commission.
- 7. Town Manager and Town Attorney Reports**
Town Manager and Town Attorney Reports have been moved to the Consent Agenda – Item 3.
All items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine or status reports by the Town Commission and will be approved by one motion. Any Commission member may request, during item 1E Agenda and Order of Business, that an item be removed from the consent agenda and discussed separately.
- 8. Unfinished Business and New Business**
- 9. Mayor, Commission and Staff Communications**
 - *A. Town Sponsored Candidate Debate Presentation from the League of Women Voters– Mayor Daniel Dietch (SET FOR TIME CERTAIN AT 7:30PM) Memo and Attachments**
 - B. Local Business Tax Receipt and Certificate of Use: Non-compliant Businesses Action Program – Joe Damien, Code Compliance Director Page 78-79**
 - C. Massive Parking Problem – Commissioner Edward Kopelman Page 80 (Linked to Items 9D & 9I)**
 - D. Abbott Lot Parking – Vice Mayor Joe Graubart Page 81 (Linked to Items 9C & 9I)**
 - E. 95th Street “Streetscape Project” – Vice Mayor Joe Graubart Page 82**

- F. Incorporating the ‘name’ of new businesses established in Surfside – Vice Mayor Joe Graubart Page 83-84**
- G. Resort Tax Audit Update – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager Page 85-88**
- H. Downtown Vision Process Continuum – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager Page 89-95**
- *I. Request for Proposals for Municipal Parking Structure(s) – Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager-Page 96-106 (Linked to Items 9C & 9D)**
- *J. 88th Street & Byron Avenue Traffic Calming Design Alternatives- Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager Page 107-110 (Linked to Item 5B)**
- K. Discussion of Miami Dade County Water and Sewer Department’s Miami Herald Article of January 16, 2012 Re: Risks of Replacing 54” Line Under Government Cut - Mayor Daniel Dietch**

10. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,



Roger M. Carlton
Town Manager

THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990, ALL PERSONS ARE DISABLED; WHO NEED SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING BECAUSE OF THAT DISABILITY SHOULD CONTACT THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK AT 305-893-6511 EXT. 226 NO LATER THAN FOUR DAYS PRIOR TO SUCH PROCEEDING. HEARING IMPAIRED PERSONS MAY CONTACT THE TDD LINE AT 305-893-7936.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 286.0105, FLORIDA STATUTES, ANYONE WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE COMMISSION, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING OR HEARING, WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE, MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE WHICH RECORD SHALL INCLUDE THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED.

AGENDA ITEMS MAY BE VIEWED AT THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK, TOWN OF SURFSIDE TOWN HALL, 9293 HARDING AVENUE. ANYONE WISHING TO OBTAIN A COPY OF ANY AGENDA ITEM SHOULD CONTACT THE TOWN CLERK AT 305-861-4863. A COMPLETE AGENDA PACKET IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE TOWN WEBSITE AT www.townofsurfsidefl.gov

TWO OR MORE MEMBERS OF OTHER TOWN BOARDS MAY ATTEND THIS MEETING.

THESE MEETINGS MAY BE CONDUCTED BY MEANS OF OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA TECHNOLOGY, SPECIFICALLY, A TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL. THE LOCATION 9293 HARDING AVENUE, SURFSIDE, FL 33154, WHICH IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, SHALL SERVE AS AN ACCESS POINT FOR SUCH COMMUNICATION.



Town of Surfside

To: Town Commission

From: Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager

Date: January 17, 2012

Subject: Additional Information for League of Women Voters

Attached is a communication from the League of Women voters clarifying their debate format (Attachment A). The communication forwarded via e-mail Friday, January 13, 2012 (Attachment B) provides the national format which differs lightly from the local format.

Roger Carlton

From: Roger Carlton [rcarlton57@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 6:19 PM
To: Roger Carlton
Subject: FW: Municipal election forum

Importance: High

From: terryarose@bellsouth.net
To: rcarlton57@hotmail.com
Subject: FW: Municipal election forum
Date: Fri, 13 Jan 2012 19:37:13 -0500

Dear Mr. Carlton:

Here is the email I sent you last week. I look forward to seeing you at 7:30 pm next Tuesday evening. Have a lovely weekend.

Terry A. Coble

From: Terry Coble [mailto:terryarose@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Wednesday, January 04, 2012 10:25 PM
To: 'rcarlton@townofsurfsidefl.gov'
Cc: gmpardo@bellsouth.net; mrstierheim@msn.com
Subject: Municipal election forum

Dear Mr. Carlton:

Thank you for contacting the League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County regarding the upcoming Surfside municipal elections. Our Voter Services Chair, Gigi Pardo, will be in touch with you concerning the event. Below is the format that we use for candidate forums for municipal elections. Gigi and I will also be able to attend the January 17th meeting of the Surfside town council to explain the format and answer any questions. Thank you for arranging a time certain for us of 7:30 pm.

Sincerely,

Terry A. Coble, President
LWV of Miami-Dade County
305-751-0504
Cell 786-473-9936

CANDIDATE FORUM PROTOCOL

Residents of the Town of _____ will each be given an index card to write a question for the candidates' responses. **[one question per card][no personal or organization identification required]**

Between 5:45 and 6:00pm the Facilitator will collect the cards and the Moderator will sort through the questions, which the Moderator will pose to the candidates for their individual responses during the candidate forum.

Each Candidate will be allotted:

- Two minutes for an opening statement
- Two minutes for a closing statement
- Two minutes to respond to each question
- Candidates wishing to rebut should do so at the beginning of their turn for the next question

Candidates will select a number from a bowl to determine the order of their opening and closing statements. The order in which questions are answered will alternate among the candidates.

Sandra Novoa

From: Roger Carlton
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2012 1:32 PM
To: Daniel Dietch; Edward Kopelman; Joe Graubart; Marta Olchyk; Michael Karukin
Cc: Lynn Dannheisser; Lynn Blackberry; Duncan Tavares; Sandra Novoa
Subject: FW: League of Women Voters
Attachments: Miami Dade League of Women Voters.pdf; National League of Women Voters.pdf

Agenda Item 9A for the January 17, 2012 Town Commission meeting is a discussion of the proposed Candidate Forum. It has been set for a Time Certain at 7:30 pm. During the December 13, 2011 Town Commission meeting the Town Attorney and the Town Manager were asked to investigate various procedures for moderating the Forum and it is our conclusion that the League of Women Voters would be an appropriate choice. The first attachment above is information about the Miami Dade League which recently moderated a candidate forum in the City of Miami. The second attachment is the national policy that the League uses for their moderated debates.

During the Campaign Skills Seminar provided by the Miami Dade Commission on Ethics and Public Trust held at Town Hall on January`12, 2011, it was learned that the Commission on Ethics could moderate a candidate forum as well. We are investigating that possibility as well.

From: Sandra Novoa
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2012 1:05 PM
To: Roger Carlton
Subject: League of Women Voters



Sandra Novoa, CMC
Town Clerk
Town of Surfside
9293 Harding Avenue
Surfside, Florida 33154
Phone (305) 861-4863 Ext. 226
Fax (305) 861-1302
snovoa@townofsurfsidefl.gov



The League of Women Voters® of Miami-Dade County

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About The League

➤ The League's Mission:

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

- The League is nonpartisan and does not support or oppose candidates.
- The League supports issues and legislation only after careful member study.
- The League encourages citizens to participate in complex decision making processes that result in important public policy.
- The League's National Lobby Corps represents League positions on Capitol Hill, carrying the voice of League members to the corridors of Congress and the Administration.
- The League's State Lobby Corps represents League positions in Tallahassee.
- League members serve as official observers, election volunteers, and conduct civic participation training around the world.

➤ The League's Trusted Nonpartisan Reputation:

The League of Women Voters is the most trusted not for profit organization in the United States. As such, League chapters are often called upon to convene community issue forums as well as host candidate debates.

The League also works at local, state and national levels to generate democratic conversation among members, educate the general public and policy makers on pressing issues, and take concerted action to bring about social change.

The League structure enables all members to be community - based activists whose actions hve local, state and national impact through association with others of like mind.

➤ Current Board of Directors of Miami-Dade League

- [Click here to view](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 2011 Elections

The League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County will be distributing a 2011 Voters' Guide with information on the positions of City of Miami, City of Miami Beach and City of Hialeah candidates in the November 1, 2011 municipal elections. Look for the Voters' Guide in the Miami Herald and on this website. [Click here for more details.](#)

October 21, 2011 Candidate Forum

The Miami-Dade League will be holding a forum for candidates for Districts 1 and 2 City of Miami Commission candidates on the evening of October 21, 2011 at Miami City Hall. The event will be televised. Please visit this website or follow us on Facebook for updates on this event. [Click here for more details.](#)

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

Sign up here to receive Miami-Dade League updates and calls to Action!

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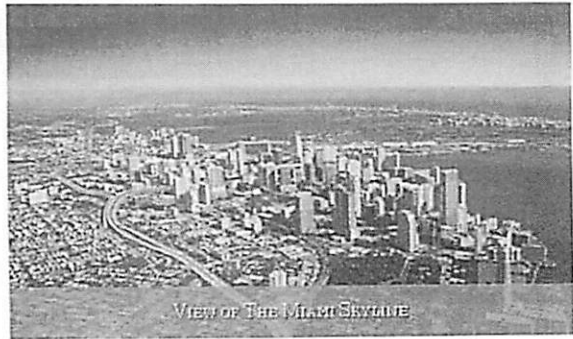
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Welcome to the LWV of Miami-Dade

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to men as well as women.

WE INVITE YOU TO EDUCATE YOURSELF ON THE MOST CURRENT EVENTS.

- Read the latest edition of our newsletter, *The Miami-Dade Voter*
- Call to Action: State Redistricting
- 2011 Legislative Session Summary
- Municipal Elections Set for November 1, 2011

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY REDISTRICTING PROCESS?

Census data have revealed major population shifts since 2000. The County Commission will be redrawing its thirteen districts based on these shifts. Hearings are being held now throughout the county. [Click here](#) for a list of hearing dates and locations, and for additional information on the process. Remember, democracy is not a spectator sport!

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League of Women Voters

DEBATE WATCHING 101

August 06, 2008 | by LWW

Introduction

Candidate debates have a long history in American politics. At every level of government—from city council to state legislature, from Congress to President of the United States—candidates participate in debates to help voters understand who and what they stand for.

Watching debates is an important way for voters to learn more about the candidates and the issues before the election, so that they can cast an informed vote. At the same time, voters need to view debates with a careful eye to get the most information. Candidates rehearse thoroughly for debates, making it hard to get candid, spontaneous answers. Debates can emphasize form over substance, such as the candidates' appearance instead of their stands on the issues. You may watch a debate and still not get answers to the questions you have about the candidates and issues.

You can get the most out of a debate by thinking about the issues and candidates in advance, by viewing the debate with care, and by continuing to research the issues and the candidates after the debate. Debate Watching 101 provides background information and tips to help you get the most out of watching a candidate debate.

What Is a Debate?

A debate is an event at which candidates who are running for an elected office meet face-to-face to answer questions that are asked of them. This gives the candidates a chance to state their views and to respond to their opponents' statements. It gives viewers a chance to directly compare the candidates and their positions.

Debates usually take place in front of a live audience and may also be televised or broadcast on the radio or the Internet. A televised or broadcast debate allows many more people to watch and learn about the candidates and issues.

Debates can follow different formats, or a combination of formats. The most common formats are:

- **Single moderator:** one moderator asks the questions;
- **Panel:** a panel of journalists or experts questions the candidates;
- **Town hall:** questions are submitted by members of the audience or randomly selected voters, in person or by phone or email. The Town Hall format allows for questions to be submitted in advance or during the debate.

The debate usually begins with an introduction of the candidates, who may also be given time to make opening statements. The heart of the debate takes place when the candidates are asked questions and they respond. There usually is a time limit for responses. The questioner may ask follow-up questions to get the candidates to explain or clarify their responses. Some debates give candidates an opportunity to "cross-examine" or ask questions directly of each other. At the end of the debate, the candidates are usually given time to make closing statements.

Before the Debate

Thinking about and preparing for the debate before it takes place will enable you to get the most from watching it. It will familiarize you with the candidates and issues. The preparation will help you focus on what to look for in the debate so that you will get the information you need in deciding who to vote for. It will help if you take some time before the debate to:

- Follow the campaign to learn about the candidates and their backgrounds;
- Find out what the important campaign issues are;
- Decide what issues are most important to you;
- Think about the questions you may have and the information you want to get from the debate to help you in your decision making;
- Open your mind to new opinions/impressions of the candidate regardless of party affiliation.

You may want to make plans to get together with friends or family to watch the debate. Watching the debate in a group and discussing it afterwards helps to clarify your thoughts about what was said in the debate and how the candidates performed.

A debate might not include all of the candidates for the office. Before the debate, note which candidates are included and which are not. If all candidates are not participating, try to find out why. Some debates

include only candidates who have significant support, on the theory that the voters should be able to compare the candidates with a realistic chance of winning. Others invite all candidates who have qualified for the ballot. Sometimes candidates who are invited choose not to participate. Candidates with a strong lead might refuse to participate because they think there is no advantage to be gained by debating a lesser known opponent.

During the Debate

When watching the debate, ask yourself questions like these to help you judge the fairness of the debate and the performance of the candidates.

The debate format and questions:

- Does the format give each candidate an equal opportunity to speak and respond to questions?
- Are the questions clear, fair and equally tough on all candidates?
- Do the questions cover the issues that are important to you?
- Is the moderator in control of the debate? Does the moderator need to say less and let the candidates say more?

The candidates:

- Do they answer questions directly, or do they evade them or fail to answer the specific question?
- Do they give specifics about their stands on the issues, or do they speak in generalities? Do they support their positions and arguments with facts and figures?
- Do they talk about their own policies and positions, or do they mostly attack their opponents?
- Are their proposals realistic? Can they actually carry out the promises they are making?
- Do they appear sincere, confident and relaxed?
- Do they show how their backgrounds and experience qualify them to hold the office?
- Are their answers consistent with their previous positions, and if not, do they explain why?
- What image are they trying to create?
- Do their responses appear overly rehearsed or "canned"?

Media coverage:

- If you are watching the debate on television, are reaction shots or other techniques used to create a sense of drama or conflict?
- Are you being influenced by comments made by reporters and commentators immediately before and after the debate?

After the Debate

It will help clarify your thoughts about the candidates and the issues if you take some time after the debate to reflect on what you have just seen and heard. You can do this by:

- Comparing your impressions with others who watched the debate;
- Asking yourself, based on the information you got from watching the debate, which candidate appears most qualified for the office;
- Identifying the issues on which you agree with a candidate and those on which you disagree, and deciding whether that makes you more or less likely to vote for a particular candidate;
- Asking yourself if you learned something new about the issues or the candidate;
- Thinking about whether you have more questions about the issues or the candidates that you want to follow up;
- Getting more information about the candidates' positions from news reports, candidate Web sites and nonpartisan voter information Web sites such as VOTE411.org.
- Watch later debates for more information or to confirm your current impressions of the candidates

Conclusion

Candidate debates give voters a chance to hear the candidates speak and respond to their opponents. They give candidates a chance to present their message directly to a wide audience. As a voter, asking yourself the right questions before, during and after the debate can help you make the most of this opportunity to learn about the candidates and the issues.

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Town of Surfside

To: Town Commission

From: Roger M. Carlton, Town Manager

Date: January 17, 2012

Subject: Discussion of Miami Dade County Water and Sewer Department's Miami Herald Article of January 16, 2012, Re: Risks of Replacing 54" Line Under Government Cut

Mayor Daniel Dietch has requested that a discussion item be added to the January 17, 2012 Town Commission Agenda (Item 9K).

A summary of the issues related to this and the urgency of the situation will be made verbally by the Town Manager

The Miami Herald

Posted on Mon, Jan. 16, 2012

Report: Sewage pipe in sorry shape

CMorgan@MiamiHerald.com

An aging pipeline carrying 25 millions gallons of raw sewage a day under Government Cut has at least three sections so brittle that a consultant has warned Miami-Dade County that it could potentially rupture under normal working conditions.

County engineers, however, insist that the vital pipeline — which transports everything flushed down the toilet in Miami Beach, Surfside and Bal Harbour to a treatment plant on Virginia Key — is sound enough to remain in daily use. But they acknowledge it will make an on-going \$32 million job to replace the line before a major Port of Miami dredging project more complicated and expensive.

The weakest segments are close to the spot contractors had targeted to drill into or “hot tap” the existing concrete pipe in order to connect to a new shaft being drilled deeper under the rocky bottom of the busy shipping channel. The findings, in a consultant’s analysis ordered by the county, significantly raise the risk of the fragile pipe crumbling during that critical phase of work.

“If this were to fail, I think it would be a catastrophic event,” said John Renfrow, director of the Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department. “You’d have to close down the beaches and it would be an environmental mess.”

The condition of the 54-inch-diameter force main isn’t entirely surprising. In August, Renfrow issued an emergency order for a \$196,000 internal inspection when the county confirmed the pipeline was built with concrete sections produced by Interpace, a long-defunct company whose defective products have failed in a string of ruptures across the county over the last decade. Over time, steel reinforcing wires inside the concrete pipes have corroded or degraded.

An initial inspection report, filed last month by Pure Technologies, which used a specially designed robot device to electromagnetically scan two miles of pipe, pinpointed the worst problems close to where the “hot tap” junction had been planned. It’s near the Miami Beach marina where the pipe slopes down from the shoreline toward the bottom of the shipping channel.

Two 20-foot pipe sections, according to the Pure report, were distressed along their full length. Another has so many broken wires that Pure recommended it also be immediately repaired. Four other segments also had broken wires but were in marginally better shape. An analysis by Pure found that three weakest segments could fail “under normal operating and surge conditions” but also noted that real-world operating pressures were typically lower.

Vincente Arrebola, the county's assistant director of waste water operations, said the consultant used "worst-case" scenarios in its analysis — factoring in peak operating and sudden "surge" pressures unlikely to occur all at once. The Government Cut pipe operates at less than half the pressure used in the analysis, he said.

"We do not think we would have these kinds of pressure that could cause this to fail," Arrebola said.

With the Port of Miami scheduled to begin dredging as early as this summer in an effort to lure a new class of larger cargo ships, the county is under a time crunch to replace the pipe, installed in 1979, with a new pipe placed deep enough to be safe from blasting and hydraulic cutters.

Environmental groups and Fisher Island homeowners are challenging the dredging, so the work could be pushed back, but the county is still aiming to replace the section under Government Cut by October.

The plan calls for two micro-tunneling machines to drill a new shaft and place new pipe 40 feet deeper into the limestone. They are downsized versions of the massive borers that are digging the Port of Miami tunnel, which along with the port dredging is part of massive business expansion plan at the port. Once the new pipe is in place, contractors intended to "hot tap" the old pipe, still carrying sewage, and divert the flow into the new connection.

While the rest of the work can continue, the "hot tap" is on indefinite hold.

The Pure report raises the prospect of the pipe bursting even before workers could try drilling into it. The pressure of the 10 feet of rock on top of the pipeline, the report found, is likely helping "contain" the weak sections — and the foul stuff running through it.

The report has sent contractors back to the drawing board for a major plumbing job that Renfrow likened to "heart bypass surgery."

"If you're going to splice into the aorta but you find it's in spot that could rupture, you've got to find another place to do it," he said.

Renfrow said he expects new proposals and estimates back from contractors within weeks. Possible fixes could include moving the hot tap connection somewhere onshore in Miami Beach. That could significantly raise the price tag, requiring more pipe and more drilling. There could be additional costs to purchase easements for the work as well as political complications.

the Miami Beach commission, which has raised questions about the county's plan to replace the line, voted to block Miami-Dade from using its land for the work.

Renfrow said he's hopeful that the city and county can work out a solution with the city to repair a problematic pipeline that will likely need even more fixes down the road. The Pure Report covered only the Government Cut section of the pipeline. Judging by the result, and other failures of Interpace pipe, sections under Miami Beach may need fixing as well.

The Government Cut pipe has burst once before, in 2000, but not because of a defect. Contractors installing new boatlifts at the Miami Beach Marina accidentally drilled through

it. The resulting gusher of raw sewage cost \$2.5 million to repair and the stinking slick closed surrounding waters for days.

Miami Herald Writer Daniel Ducassi contributed to this story.

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