



# V I L L A G E   O F   K E Y   B I S C A I Y N E

Office of the Village Manager

## MEMORANDUM

*Village Council*  
Mayra P. Lindsay, *Mayor*  
Franklin H. Caplan, *Vice Mayor*

Luis F de La Cruz  
Theodore Holloway  
Michael E. Kelly  
Edward London  
James Taintor

*Village Manager*  
John C. Gilbert

DATE: March 19, 2014  
TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Village Council  
FROM: John C. Gilbert, Village Manager  
RE: Public Relations Firm Recommendation

### RECOMMENDATION

At the February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Village Council Meeting, it was the consensus of Council to direct the Manager to get in touch with several PR (Public Relations) companies and report back to Council.

Given that direction, I sought recommendations from the Village law firm, the Village State/Local lobbyist, and the Key Biscayne Foundation. The focus of the effort was to find a Public Relations firm with experience representing government entities to assist the Village regarding our immediate issues at the Marine Stadium and bicycle safety along the Rickenbacker Causeway.

After reviewing three (3) recommendations and one (1) unsolicited proposal, I am making the following recommendation to Council as the best suited firm for our immediate short term need and the potential long term need at the Village should Council so decide.

Attached to this memorandum is a proposal from Schwartz Media Strategies. The proposal is for services, issues management, litigation support and crisis counseling. The fee for the proposed services is eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) per month renewable on a quarterly basis.

Representatives will be in attendance at the Special Council Meeting on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. I am available for any questions, thoughts or concerns.

**TO:** Mayor Lindsay, Key Biscayne  
**PROJECT:** Key Biscayne communications game plan  
**DATE:** March 2015

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Dear Mayor:

Thank you for briefing us on the Village's current state of affairs and upcoming legislative and legal priorities. Following is an overview of our recommended communications plan in support of your administration. We look forward to launching as soon as possible in partnership with your team.

#### **SITUATION OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES**

Once a remote island community dominated by retirees and snowbirds, Key Biscayne has evolved into a destination for residents and tourists from around the world over the past 30 years.

All signs indicate this trend will continue. Meteoric population growth in Miami's urban core has had a direct impact on Key Biscayne's property values and desirability, with the island coming to be viewed as an easily accessible community within reach of downtown Miami.

At the same time, the island is one of South Florida's most popular recreational destinations, home to beaches, marinas, parks, a golf course and a tennis center. In this sense, Key Biscayne is very much 'Miami-Dade's playground.'

Case in point: more than 7 million cars pass over the Rickenbacker Causeway each year, even while the Village's full-time population hovers near 10,000. Despite this imbalance, local government has succeeded at balancing the island's popularity among visitors and the strong quality of life quotient that residents have come to expect.

Innovative municipal programs, efficient governance, smart investments in infrastructure and services, and strong advocacy in support of community education have earned high marks among locals. These initiatives, coupled with the civic engagement of Village residents, have combined to infuse the island with a 'small town' vibe.

Still, like any city, Key Biscayne is facing a set of challenges. Residents are fiercely anti-development just as Miami emerges as one of the world's most sought after cities for inbound investment; villagers are constantly in the position of dispelling the notion that the community is 'elitist'; a series of high-profile traffic accidents involving cyclists have cast a dark cloud over the island; and a proposal to redevelop the Miami Marine Stadium site threatens to hinder access for residents and visitors.

Fortunately, the village benefits from the leadership of a forward-looking Mayor and council which is committed to preserving the island's quality of life and its destination appeal.

#### **Our campaign will set out to achieve the following objectives:**

- Preserve and strengthen Key Biscayne's brand as a desirable and safe place to live and visit
- Enhance the Village's positioning as a well-managed municipality, home to a fiscally-responsible administration, an engaged population, and a track record of implementing sound policies
- Shape public opinion surrounding sensitive issues confronting the island, including supporting litigation opposing the redevelopment of Miami Marine Stadium and the perception that the Village is unsafe for cyclists

## CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES

Following is a rundown of how we intend to achieve the above objectives, organized by our short-term litigation support strategy and our ongoing master strategy on behalf of the Village's brand:

### Short-term campaign strategy & litigation support:

- Educate the public about what's at stake should the City of Miami move forward with its plans to redevelop the Marine Stadium site (reduced access to the island, giving up waterfront land, spending public dollars without a long-term revenue plan, etc.)
- Create a sense of urgency in the public domain, with the goal of galvanizing support for the Village's case among residents, visitors and activist groups who have an affinity for the island
- Clarify and counteract inaccurate information that penetrates the media and the public dialogue, while at the same time highlighting the City's money-driven motives
- Proactively establish a clear message about the Village's record to promote and ensure cyclist safety, with emphasis on the investments being made in this arena

### Ongoing campaign strategy:

- Use proactive media relations as a vehicle for communicating our positive campaign messages and advancing storylines that highlight the Village's governance, destination appeal and strong quality of life offerings
- Align our communications campaign with the Village's agenda, in turn raising the Mayor's public profile as a hands-on, innovative leader who is addressing the challenges facing the island and running an efficient government
- Spotlight innovative initiatives underway in Key Biscayne, with an emphasis on Village safety, education, infrastructure improvements, and efforts to curb wasteful spending
- Position Key Biscayne as a recreation destination for downtown Miami's growing population, in turn building enhanced value in the eyes of one of the fastest-growing communities in Florida
- Create a proactive messaging platform that serves as the foundation of our campaign, while the same time developing a fast-action response protocol that ensures Key Biscayne won't be caught flat-footed when news breaks

## TARGET AUDIENCES

- **Miami and Miami-Dade County consumers and residents (multilingual)**
- **Key influencers and stakeholder groups**
  - Elected officials (City and County)
  - Downtown Miami residents
  - Island visitors (boaters, golfers, cyclists, park patrons, etc.)
- **Key Biscayne residents and businesses**
- **Media:**
  - **Print:** Miami Herald/El Nuevo Herald, South Florida Business Journal, Daily Business Review, Diario Las Americas, Florida Trend, etc.
  - **Broadcast:** Local TV affiliates (English/Spanish), NPR/WLRN, etc.
  - **Online/blogs:** Huffington Post, Curbed, Watchdog Report, Transit Miami, etc.
  - **Lifestyle:** Ocean Drive, Miami Magazine, Indulge, Brickell/Key Biscayne Magazine, S. Fla. Business and Wealth, Venues, etc.
  - **Community newspapers/publications:** New Times, Biscayne Times, Miami Today, Islander News, Miami Herald Neighbors, etc.
  - **Mainstream consumer/business:** NY Times, Wall St. Journal, Bloomberg, Associated Press, The Atlantic, etc. (where appropriate)
  - **Real estate, hospitality and urban planning:** GlobeSt.com, Real Estate Forum, The Real Deal – South Florida, CityLab, Metropolis, American City & County, etc.

## **CRAFTING & DELIVERING THE MESSAGE**

Advancing the right messages among our target audiences on a consistent basis is the single most important thing we can achieve at the outset of our campaign. Following is a breakdown of how we plan to organize and communicate our messages – both proactively and reactively, in managing and mitigating sensitive issues.

### **Proactive campaign messages**

Our team will create a messaging platform to be used as a touchstone for all future interviews, public addresses, press statements, marketing materials, etc. Key themes we intend to emphasize include:

- Key Biscayne is renowned for strong municipal governance and policymaking
- The Village has an unsurpassed track record in the areas of safety, education, the environment and investing in infrastructure and recreation
- Revered by visitors as ‘Miami’s playground,’ Key Biscayne is one of the few outdoor oases within striking distance of Miami’s urban core (and its fast-growing population) – and is viewed as a destination for families from across South Florida
- The Key Biscayne community is civic-minded, politically engaged, and actively involved in sustaining its quality of life for all to enjoy
- With more than 125,000 cyclists crossing the bridge to Key Biscayne each year, cyclist safety is paramount to the island’s recreation landscape – which is why leadership has advocated for enhanced bike paths, dedicated bike lanes, and more

### **Litigation support messages**

Our campaign will consistently drive a series of favorable messages that amplify the arguments laid out in the case versus the City of Miami while exposing the real motives fueling Miami’s plan:

- The City’s development plans are inconsistent with the Marine Stadium property’s intended land use and original deed
- Plans to develop the stadium site and surrounding parking lot will cause irreparable harm to one of Miami’s greatest treasures, Key Biscayne, by cutting-off access for everyone and putting a strain on existing island resources and services
- The City of Miami’s true intentions are about making money – and they have no concrete plan to achieve that goal
- The City’s plans should be approved by public referendum, given the site’s waterfront location

### **Fast action response protocol**

Our team will serve as the Village’s external media clearinghouse – managing both proactive and reactive media relations surrounding all institutional initiatives. Depending on the nature of the inquiry, we can arrange for an on the record interview with the Mayor or an authorized spokesperson and/or provide a prepared statement in line with our approved messaging. This centralized approach will ensure swiftness in our response and accuracy in our message going forward. Subject that would activate our fast action response protocol include:

- **New development proposals**
- **Cyclist accidents**
- **Key legal proceedings and court decisions**
- **Environmental concerns**
- **Sensitive council votes**

### **Content creation and social media**

Where appropriate, we will create and leverage original content to advance our campaign messages – both proactive and reactive. This content may include media- and consumer-friendly ‘myth vs fact’

sheets, infographics, viral videos, compelling images, and more. Additionally, we will plan to launch a social media and digital content campaign aimed at educating and engaging our key audiences online.

**PROACTIVE MEDIA RELATIONS:**

Our approach to media relations goes well beyond simply reacting to the news cycle. We serve as strategic counselors who will proactively position the project in a favorable light while casting Key Biscayne as an ideal destination for residents and visitors, while positioning the Village as a model for fiscal responsibility, community leadership and recreational haven for the entire City.

SMS will push the media relations agenda and shape positive news coverage to strengthen public perception of the Village. At the same time, we will leverage the City of Miami lawsuit as a timely vehicle to engage with select media influencers and communicate the key messages in support of our agenda – both for the litigation and for the broader campaign goals.

- **Media tour/Editorial boards:** SMS will arrange a series of sit-down interviews with key members of the press over the next 30-45 days, with the goal of educating reporters and editors on the lawsuit, creating a sense of urgency for its coverage, and planting the seed for deeper storylines on Key Biscayne as one of Miami's 'gems.'
- **Feature stories:** SMS will proactively 'pitch' in-depth articles highlighting the project plans and the expertise of its development team – both in the near term and over the coming months, post-approval. Sample storylines include:
  - Leadership profiles on the Village and its smart policymaking/fiscal conservatism (at a time when most municipalities continue to struggle, Key Biscayne operates effectively and efficiently with little to no overhead)
  - Lifestyle articles on Key Biscayne as 'Miami's Playground'
  - Investments in biking safety and infrastructure for cycling enthusiasts
  - How Key Biscayne is 'serious about sea change' – taking innovative measures for other communities to model
  - Human interest pieces on the civic engagement of the Village and its residents
  - Major/signature events taking place in Key Biscayne
- **Expert source positioning:** By keeping abreast of regional, municipal, and urban development trends, SMS will proactively position our campaign spokespersons as subject area experts who can offer insight on various topics – serving as sources for relevant stories and as authors of editorials that we write and place. Topics may include:
  - Rising property values in South Florida
  - Raising standards for quality education in Miami
  - Financial strain experienced by numerous cities/counties in the face of budget shortfalls
  - Miami's new urbanism and how population growth is creating more need for active parks and green space within the urban core
  - Sea level rise and storm surge issues
- **Institutional news/Announcements:** SMS will develop and release customized news announcements so as to maintain a steady flow of momentum surrounding our campaign. Examples include:
  - Significant legal decisions, filings, motions, etc. that may impact the course of litigation
  - Budgetary milestones
  - Major infrastructure/public works projects
  - Municipal awards and recognitions

- Top-level government hires

### **SURROGATES**

As we embark on this comprehensive campaign, favorable third party voices will be critical to support our message and underscore the validity of our position.

Working with Village leadership, we will move quickly in identifying qualified, credible advocates who are comfortable speaking positively about Key Biscayne, what it has to offer both residents and visitors, and how the City's proposal for the marine stadium would cause irreparable harm to the entire Miami community. Examples of relevant surrogates will include:

- Engaged residents and business leaders
- Key members of the administration (Mayor, Council members, department heads)
- Recreational enthusiasts (boaters, cyclists, beach-goers, etc.)
- City and County thought leaders/executives

### **PROGRAM BUDGET**

Our base fee for public relations services, issues management, litigation support and crisis counseling is \$8,000 per month, renewable on a quarterly basis. This translates into roughly 35 hours of service per month. Services provided within the scope of the retainer will include: proactive and reactive media relations, message development, media material creation, issues management, crisis communications, and ongoing marketing counsel.

Projects and services not provided under the retainer include the development of marketing materials (i.e.: collateral pieces, HTML emails, direct mail projects, illustrations, graphic design work, etc.), social media management, event planning, etc. Fees for these projects will be determined on a per-project basis and billed separately, subject to prior written approval.

We believe this level of service will provide the right amount of time needed to develop, implement and maintain a successful, ongoing campaign for Key Biscayne and the impending litigation. We are prepared to begin effective immediately.

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## Schwartz Media Strategies' Clients

Following is a list of our firm's clients, broken down by sector. Representatives of these companies and organizations are available as references upon request.

### **CONSUMER, ARTS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Miami Downtown Development Authority (DDA)  
Walmart  
Miami Beckham United  
WLRN – National Public Radio  
Developing Minds Foundation  
Children's Movement of Florida

### **REAL ESTATE & HOSPITALITY**

Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL)  
Skanska USA  
J.P. Morgan  
Miami Worldcenter  
Blanca Commercial Real Estate  
InterContinental Miami hotel  
Aztec Group  
13th Floor Investments  
Continental Real Estate Companies (CREC)  
Newgard Development/Centro & One Flagler  
Rilea Group/The Bond, 1450 Brickell & One Broadway  
The Gale Ft. Lauderdale  
Brickell Bay Office Tower  
Pipeline Workspaces  
University of Miami Life Science & Technology Park/Wexford Science & Technology  
Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW-Miami)  
Carrfour Supportive Housing  
Pinnacle Housing Group  
Melo Group  
GTIS/Biscayne Beach  
Adler Kawa Real Estate Advisors

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Bilzin Sumberg  
Kluger Kaplan Silverman Katzen & Levine  
Leesfield & Partners  
Hall, Lamb and Hall, PA  
Podhurst Orseck  
Levine Kellogg Lehman Schneider & Grossman  
Apollo Bank