



The Beautiful VILLAGE OF BISCAYNE PARK

August 2012



Village of Biscayne Park
640 NE 114th Street
Biscayne Park, FL 33161
Tel: 305 899 8000
Fax: 305 891 7241
www.biscayneparkfl.gov

VILLAGE COMMISSION

Mayor Noah Jacobs
Vice-Mayor Roxanna Ross
Commissioner Bryan Cooper
Commissioner Bob Anderson
Commissioner Barbara Watts

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION

Ana M. Garcia, Village Manager
Maria C. Camara, Village Clerk
Mitchell Glansberg, Chief of Police
Charles Smith, Finance Director
Bernard Pratt, Public Works Director
Issa Thornell, Parks & Rec Director

“A lot of people get impatient with the pace of change.” James Levin

As autumn starts there are many changes all around us. The kids have started back to school, football season always brings hope, even for those of us following the Dolphins, and soon enough, any number of holidays will be upon us. For those of us that are transplanted Floridians, we have memories of the leaves turning beautiful hues of red, orange or yellow. While there are other changes that we feel individually, there are also changes going on for the Village as a whole.

As your new mayor, I and the commission as a whole, work daily with the Village to implement changes to better Biscayne Park. For example, the Police Department is currently implementing new procedures to enhance the already high quality of service that it provides. Through the new program of community policing, the Department will be using a number of different approaches to protect the commu-

nity. There is a significant change coming with the Department, Chief Glansberg will be retiring in October. I want to take a moment to thank him for his dedication and valued service.

The new boards are all working quite well individually, as well as in concert with one another. The Parks and Parkways Board is working together with the Ecology Board to give us new plantings in and around the Village. These new plants will serve two purposes. Not only will they beautify the spaces around us, but also will afford the opportunity for the residents to learn a bit more about the plants themselves, because near the display there will be identification markers. I also want to take a moment to mention the Recreation Advisory Board. It put together a wonderful children’s safety day, and has numerous other ideas for the near future. Members of the other boards have been working diligently behind the scenes to enforce, maintain and improve our Code. There is even a committee whose entire purpose is to raise money to help fund projects: the Biscayne Park Foundation.

Even though most of these committees already have a full compliment of members, they welcome and encourage people at their respective meetings. If any of these committees interests you please feel free to come to a meeting, and put your ideas forward. If you have the time, and want to be a board member, we have a board that is forming in the near future. The Charter Review Committee will look at the city charter and determine if changes are in order.

During the campaign last fall, I heard that people wanted change. If you can find a few hours a month, and have a specific interest, you can impact some of these changes. Even if you do not have time for a meeting please email, call or knock on my door, and I will do anything I can to assist you in any way I can.

All the best,

Mayor Noah Jacobs

njacobs@biscayneparkfl.gov



Mayor Jacobs (center) surrounded by fellow commissioners, staff and board members at the Arbor Day / Earth Day event in April.



McGruff and friends at the Children’s Safety Day event in August.



Police Chief Mitch Glansberg (fourth from right) flanked by Biscayne Park’s finest.

It Takes A "Village" To Improve The Quality of Life In Our VillageSometimes That Means Getting Help From "Outside Villagers"

For example.....William Jennings Bryan Elementary School operates their Primary Learning Center just outside our Village at NE 12th Avenue and 121st Street. Unfortunately over the last couple of years the school grounds started looking really crummy. It was a terrible example to the kids - many of them are our Biscayne Park kids. It sent a really bad message - why should the students care if the adults don't?

I was able to reach out to our School Board Representative Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall (this school is actually just outside her district) and her office steered me to the right people to get those grounds back in shape. She hadn't forgotten our many conversations while she was running for office about my concerns and had seen for herself how rundown these grounds had become.

As more young families move into our community we hear more concerns expressed about the public schools in our area. Currently our Village is divided into three public elementary school districts - Miami Shores, William Jennings Bryan, and Gratigny. In some cases children who live next door to each other go to two different public schools. Many of you shared your concerns with me during the last election campaign, including preferring one elementary school district. The possibility of having all our kids in one school district continues to be an issue we need to explore. **Please fill out and turn in the survey in this newsletter to let us know your thoughts on this issue.**

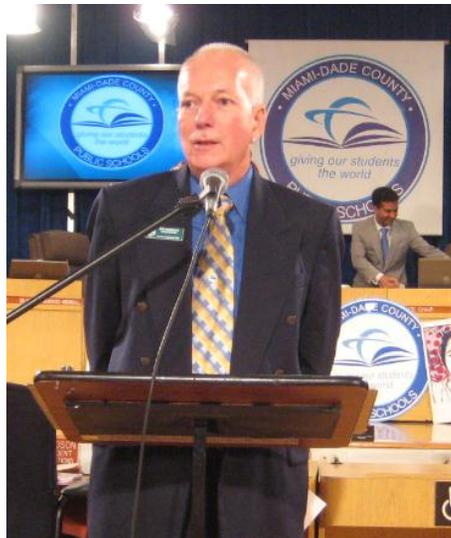
Whether it's the school board, the county or Tallahassee - we need to make sure they all know we exist. It's not "acting like we're a big city" by getting ourselves out there - **it's being a smart city** - it's the only way to get what we need and try to ease our tax burden. We won't always win - Governor Scott vetoing our \$150,000 log cabin restoration money for example - but we have had successes. While so many cities, El Portal for one, lost their storm

water monies (money we used for street drainage improvements) our Village did not.

On July 18th, I was honored to be recognized at the Miami Dade County School Board Meeting with a proclamation in honor of my years of service as one of your commissioners. That sure wasn't something I ever expected - I have served this long 'cause I actually like doing what I do!

My point is - in a small community like ours we can't go it alone. We all - especially those of us you trusted to serve as your elected officials - have a responsibility to reach out to every resource we can to improve what's in and around our village. It all affects us. It's the right thing to do. **Contact me with your questions and concerns - together we can make our village even better.**

Commissioner Robert "Bob" Anderson
banderson@biscayneparkfl.gov



Commissioner Anderson accepting a Proclamation from the Miami Dade County School Board (July 2012)



Please look for the survey included in this newsletter and take a few minutes to fill it out and return to us. Your input is important to us!



Over two years ago, a majority on the commission -- led by then Mayor Roxanna Ross -- eliminated commissioner

columns in our Village Newsletter at a "special" meeting. (This was in response to a column I wrote titled "Naked Politics" that was never published*.)

Today, I am happy to report that, with our new Commission and the greater transparency of Mayor Jacobs, I am once again free to report our current happenings:

Thumbs Up:

- Thanks to the leadership of Captain Atesiano, we finally have a true community policing plan; one that includes intelligent predictive policing and more effective patrolling to stop crime before it occurs. Our officers are also now getting to know our residents to build positive relationships and to protect and serve in new ways.
- Our Manager, Ms. Garcia, has reformed the excesses of prior code officers. With Commission support, we have outsourced code enforcement, and have de-politicized and lessened arbitrary or excessively aggressive treatment of our residents.
- Commission approved a road/median closure -- after a group of neighbors complained about traffic and quality of life issues.
- Commission is close to approving a Charter Review Committee, in order to adapt our system of government to changing needs.
- Commission supported a resolution against FPL -- and its plan to raise your energy rates.

Questionable:

- While a large number of our tax-paying residents are struggling and un- (or under-) employed, plans are moving forward to raise taxes; also to build a new government building costing approximately 1 million dollars.
- ANNEXATION -- For the sake of expanding the tax base, a controversial proposal is back: The annexation of an adjacent and somewhat blighted area of Miami-Dade County (east of railroad tracks). Sufficient details do not exist; nor has it been made public other than during Commission Meetings.

(Continued on page 3)

Thumbs Down:

• The Code Review Committee has recommended that the Commission restrict the timing of putting up/taking down of your holiday lights.

• Code Review has also recommended that all boats and recreational vehicles be located behind your front building line, behind a fence, which will eliminate many families from enjoying such recreation, and likely negatively impact home sales.

• Commission voted to change the 85-year old park-like nature of Biscayne "Park". Our corner lots – defining the openness that landscape architect Arthur Griffing established here in the 1920s – can now have side and front yard portions fenced; while "interior" lot owners are prevented from choosing historical picket or other tasteful fences approved in Miami Shores or Coral Gables.

• Officials and a few supporters still seek to limit what you and I read – attempting to ban the *Biscayne Times* from distribution. (Go to: www.biscaynetimes.com/images/stories/art_0512/bt_0512.pdf , "Shut My Mouth", p.58.

* Want to read what spurred Commissioner Ross to first eliminate communications from commissioners in 2010, see <http://www.biscaynepark.org/>

Commission passed an Ordinance to change our Village's 79-year tradition of standalone elections—and eliminate the scheduled 2015 election—while giving themselves an extra year in office. Your vote at the polls will decide the change in November.

Commissioner Bryan Cooper

Polishing the Gem that is Our Village of Biscayne Park, Protecting our Community and Planning for the Next Generation



Subtle changes are going on in town. There is a regeneration developing. Our 80th Anniversary approaches in 2013, and the time for reinvestment in Biscayne Park is NOW.

Polish: With state and county funding, areas previously exposed to flooding were recently improved; there is now a plan for additional improvements as funds become available. We also polished several areas with landscaping and trimming, reconditioned the ball field, and expanded community activities. Your support, personal and business contributions helped bring some of these enhancements to fruition.

Protect: FDLE (Department of Law Enforcement, 2011) numbers inform that Biscayne Park is one of the safest communities in Miami Dade County.¹ Clearance rates show that our police officers work diligently to solve crime and recover stolen property. Since our human experience is more than statistics, certain life qualities cannot be quantified, and your input matters, I ask each of you: HOW ARE WE DOING?

Plan: Village revenues and spending priorities are outlined in the Budget, funded primarily (79%) through property taxes, utility/franchise fees and revenue sharing, paid by us to ensure that our community services meet our expectations. The goal is to reinvest our dollars wisely, to produce quality services today, and to secure a sustainable future for our Village. Currently, we allocate resources to the following functions, by order of priority: public safety, aesthetics and protection of property, leisure activities and planning for the future. In order to meet expectations, we need to hear from you: HOW ARE WE DOING?

As a legislative body, your Commission aims to improve access, representation and quality of life in the Village. To that end, I recently brought two measures approved by Commission: Letting voters decide when to hold Village Elections -- the question will be on the November 2012 ballot, when we expect to count the largest number of voters;² and, Domestic Partnerships -- by unanimous decision, we now recognize the importance of committed familial relationships.

Thanks for entrusting me with this gem -- our Village, where some things have changed -- public art, increased maintenance, a cross-trained workforce coordinating efficient services that deliver; where some things are in transition – Thank you for 17 years of dedicated service, retiring Chief Mitch Glansberg; and, where many things remain constant – personalized hometown services, lush tree canopy and expansive medians, architecture as interesting and varied as our residents.

Working together we can continue to make the Village of Biscayne Park a better place to be.

Roxanna S. Ross, Vice Mayor

Cell Phone: 305.710.0620

PS: Biscayne Park Citizens Crimewatch is an email-based network supporting public safety by knowing your neighbors, observing and reporting irregular activities to the police. Be a good neighbor – if you see something, say something. Sign up at biscaynepark_crimewatch@yahoo.com

¹ <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Content/home.aspx>.

² Voter records (2004 – 2011) show that nearly twice as many voters participate in general elections compared to those who participate in Biscayne Park stand-alone elections. http://www.miamidade.gov/elections/resources_election_results.asp

Captain Ray Atesiano proudly holds his Police Officer of the Year Award, a recognition given to him by the Florida Police Chief's Association this past July. Our entire commission also share their pride in Captain Atesiano's accomplishments.





Let's Talk

First, I would like to thank those who voted for me and I would also like to reiterate my intent to well serve all of Biscayne

Park's residents so that our Village remains a wonderful place in which to live. A newly elected Commissioner without prior municipal experience faces a steep learning curve when assuming office. I am still on this trajectory, as those who have attended or watched Commission meetings are surely aware. In this regard, I would like to thank the already seated Commissioners, Bob Anderson, Bryan Cooper, And Roxanna Ross and Biscayne Park's fine Administrative staff for their help, advice, and good will. I would also like to recognize former commissioners Steve Bernard and Al Childress for their service to the Village.

In the past months the Commission has voted on a variety of issues, more than a few of which involved making difficult decisions; there were compelling arguments on both sides. In this regard, your thoughts are very important to me and I welcome your assessment of the issues at hand. It was, for example, a discussion with a resident that led me to decide that the date of Biscayne Park elections was so significant an issue given today's political climate that the matter should be decided by the voters themselves rather than by the Commission. Please email me and provide your phone number if you would like to discuss this matter. So too, please contact me if you would like to know more fully my reasoning on any given vote. Sometimes, when I concur with an argument presented by another Commissioner, I don't say much so that the meeting can proceed. Later it dawns on me that I should have something brief to indicate my thoughts (learning curve). Regarding your opinion on Village matters: before too long, we may have a polling apparatus in place so that we will be able to obtain a sense of residents' interests and concerns.

We are enjoined by our attorneys not to write about matters that may come up for a vote before the Commission, so as to avoid potential violation of the Sunshine Laws.

Accordingly, I will not address some "in the works" projects that I would love to discuss. It is important, however, that you be apprised of a couple matters that may come before the Commission in the near future as they warrant your attention and participation: 1) The Code Review Board has submitted its report of "Proposed Changes to Chapters 6-8 of the Village Code," which, among other things, includes rules for property maintenance and the parking of boats and recreational vehicles; 2) Consideration of possible annexation of some nearby parts of unincorporated Miami-Dade. With each of these matters, the Commission decided to hold a workshop, dates yet to be determined. Last but not least is the matter of funding the Log Cabin's much needed restoration and the construction of a new Village Hall. Any ideas? Any benefactors?

Commissioner Barbara Watts

bwatts@biscayneparkfl.gov



Top: Commissioner Watts at the Children's Safety Day with McGruff. Bottom: Future business leaders right here in Biscayne Park!

Village of Biscayne Park

Parks & Recreation Department

Program Schedule

Adult Kick Ball Thursday's 6:00pm-8:00pm- August 16th-September 27th

Golden Gates After- School Program 2012-2013 School Year

Youth Flag Football Saturday's 10am- 12pm -October 6th -January 8th

Coach Joe's Youth Soccer Monday-Thursday October2012 -January 2013

Save These Dates!!

SPECIAL EVENTS

Biscayne Park Foundation Presents Food & Tunes Friday September 21 6:00pm

Halloween Funhouse Saturday October 27th 5:00pm-7:00pm

Movie Night in the Park Friday November 16th

For More Information Please Contact The Parks & Recreation Department

recreation@biscayneparkfl.gov

(305) 893-3711

Visit our Facebook page and "LIKE" us to receive updates and information about upcoming events.

www.facebook.com/pages/Village-of-Biscayne-ParkParks-Recreation-Department



Promoting Village Businesses

By
Ana M. Garcia,
Village Manager

Do you run a home based business or have a business outside our Village that you wish to promote? We want to assist you in communicating to all our residents as well as the residents in our neighboring communities of Miami Shores and El Portal! Earlier this month, Mayor Noah Jacobs and I were invited to speak to the Greater Miami Shores Chamber of Commerce by their Executive Director Jesse Walters. We were warmly greeted by local businesses from the Shores as well as several residents from Biscayne Park who run successful businesses from their homes as well as outside our Village.

Since we have partnered with Miami Shores this year with our participation in the Egret, the free monthly publication circulating in our Village, Miami Shores and El Portal, we now have another tool to not only further communicate with our residents but we can also spread the word beyond our boundaries and provide valuable information to our neighbors. More than 15,000 people can be reached through the Egret and our goal is to look at possible benefits for our residents.

This year we will celebrate 80 years of incorporation and plans are under way for several special events and one of those events will center around promoting local businesses as well as providing our residents the opportunity to enhance their home based business and/or register to start a new home based business this year. I will seek support from the Miami Shores Chamber as we look to plan a very special event this spring and also have the Chamber provide our residents valuable information on the benefits of membership.

We kindly remind those that have a home based business in the Village that a Home Occupational License is required (section 16.18 of the Village's Municipal Code of Ordinances) at a cost of \$50.00 per year. We currently have several home based businesses registered in Biscayne

Park and we want to ensure all that are operating a business can reap the benefits. In a small town like ours it's a wonderful thing to know there are photographers, electricians, plumbers, accountants, doctors and all types of individuals with talents in a multitude of trades and professions that you can reach out for all your needs.

Please contact me at villagemanager@biscayneparkfl.gov. I welcome your input and ideas on this topic or any other discussions we can share.

What a better way to celebrate our home town than to bring people together – the benefits are endless!



Do I Need A Landlord Permit To Rent Out My Property?

In the Village of Biscayne Park, a property owner must obtain a Landlord Permit PRIOR to leasing, subleasing, renting or allowing the occupancy of any dwelling or dwelling unit for the purpose of tenancy.

The objective of the permit is for the property to comply with the requirements of applicable building, housing and health codes; additionally for the landlord to maintain and upkeep the aesthetics of the property to the standards of the Village. The Village, landlord, and tenant all benefit from a Landlord Permit; overall the permit enhances the quality of life in the Village.

The law requires that a landlord, prior to permitting the property to be occupied by a tenant, and prior to the collection of rent, procure a Landlord Permit from the Village Building Department. The Landlord Permit fee is \$50.00 per unit. Permits are valid for one year, from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

If the property has obtained its Landlord Permit for three consecutive years and has received no violations during those three consecutive years, than the Landlord Permit fee shall be waived.

It is the landlord's responsibility to obtain or renew the Landlord Permit to avoid fines; failure to pay the required

Landlord Permit fee may result in the issuance of a civil citation and result in a triple permit fee.

Any questions relative to Landlord Permits please contact csosacruz@biscayneparkfl.gov or call (305) 899-8000.

Thank you,
Candido Sosa-Cruz
Code Compliance

The Facts about Permits in the Village of Biscayne Park

By Jeanie Bridges, Building Manager

- Most home improvement projects require a permit. If you are not sure, please contact the Building Department for clarification.
- Have your contractor register with the Village before you begin any project. This provides a paper trail should there be any issue with the workmanship later.
- When having a burglar alarm installed, a permit is required which is then followed by the registration with our Police Department. Please be sure to check with your alarm company who will install and who will monitor before you complete and pay for the installation and verify that a permit was pulled with the Village of Biscayne Park.
- The Village has its own Planning & Zoning Board which meets twice a month. Any exterior work must come before the board for their approval prior to a permit being issued. The meetings are open to the public if you are interested in learning about the process.

Lastly, we extend an invitation to all of our new residents to contact the Building Department with any questions regarding any home improvement projects that you may be considering.

We look forward to meeting you and welcoming you to Biscayne Park!





Please Keep Off The Grass **By Captain Ray Atesiano**

For those of us who either live or work in Biscayne Park, there are many things to be proud of, some of which are our quiet streets, lovely homes, lush landscapes, and the feeling of community.

Our medians are a source of pride to both individual residents and to the community as a whole. We take great pride in them and in our efforts to maintain them. Our Public Works staff do a great job to keep them looking beautiful and healthy, and our Police Department insure the safety of pedestrians and drivers alike by enforcing the law prohibiting parking on, or vehicles cutting through the medians.

Section 316.090(2) of the Florida State Statute reads: *No vehicle shall be driven over, across, or within any such dividing space, barrier, or section, except through an opening in such physical barrier or dividing section or space or at a crossover or intersection as established unless specifically authorized by public authority (i.e. emergency vehicles).* This is considered a moving violation with an attached penalty of \$179.00 and 3 points on your license.

We also ask that if you use a lawn service, please advise them to make every effort not to park on the median while they are servicing your property.

Our medians and our tree canopy provide value to our community and we ask for your respect and consideration.

Crime Prevention Spotlight: Vehicle Burglaries **By: Captain Ray Atesiano**

When it comes to crime prevention, the police are only one part of the overall equation. Just as in any other city, the Village of Biscayne Park has experienced its share of property related crimes.

The focus of this article is to place the spotlight on the crime of vehicle burglary. This particular crime appears to be on the rise in both Miami-Dade as well as Broward County. We are fortunate that in the Village of Biscayne Park to have less than seven reported vehicle burglaries for this calendar year. Even better, none of these burglaries have been smash or pry jobs. This means that no damage was done to the car as a result of the crime.

We will first highlight the common traits of the victim vehicles as well as the crime itself.

1. All vehicles victimized were left unlocked.
2. The vehicle either had no alarm or the alarm system was not activated.
3. The vehicles were parked in dark areas.
4. Loose items such as change, GPS units, sun glasses, iPods, and cell phones were left visible.

We have seen what all the victim vehicles had in common. We will now focus on the second half of crime prevention. Below is what should be done to prevent becoming a victim of a vehicle burglary.

1. Always keep your car doors locked.
2. If you have an alarm, use it!
3. Do not leave any items visible inside your vehicle.
4. Always call the police if you see or hear any suspicious activity.



Remember, as the old saying goes, *“an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”* As always, the officers of The Village of Biscayne Park are here to protect our residents. Any cares or concerns, do not hesitate to call us. Together, let’s keep Biscayne Park safe.

Emergency Evacuation Assistance Program

The Emergency Evacuation Assistance Program (EEAP) provides evacuation assistance to those residents who live in an evacuation zone and that may require specialized transportation assistance or whose medical needs prevent them from evacuating on their own. Be prepared and apply BEFORE an emergency occurs.

Link to Information for Elderly to assist them in an emergency:

<http://www.miamidade.gov/fire/evacuation-program.asp>

Application to Miami-Dade County to register for Emergency Evacuation for those with Special Needs:

<http://www.miamidade.gov/fire/library/hurricane/OEM/EEAP-Application-English.pdf>

<http://www.miamidade.gov/fire/library/hurricane/OEM/eeap-brochure-spanish.pdf>

<http://www.miamidade.gov/fire/library/hurricane/OEM/EEAP-Application-creole.pdf>

Link to Miami-Dade Emergency Services Home Page:

<http://www.miamidade.gov/oem/EEAP.asp>

Link to evacuation Centers

<http://www.miamidade.gov/fire/library/hurricane-evacuation-centers.pdf>



VILLAGE OF BISCAYNE PARK

SURVEY

At the August regular commission meeting, it was agreed to have this survey included in this newsletter to obtain resident input. Please take a few minutes to answer these five questions, and submit your completed survey to us as follows:

- > Drop off your survey in person to **Village Hall (640 NE 114th St)**. We are open Mon-Fri from 9:00am to 5:00pm.
- > Fax your response to us at **(305) 891-7241**
- > Scan and e-mail your response to **villagehall@biscayneparkfl.gov**

- 1 Do you have or will have children of elementary school age entering school in the next six (6) years? **YES** **NO**

- 2 Do you intend to put your children in public school? **YES** **NO**

- 3 Does it matter to you that there are three public elementary school districts within the Village of Biscayne Park? **YES** **NO**

- 4 Would you be in favor of the entire Village of Biscayne Park having just one elementary school district? **YES** **NO**

- 5 If you answered yes to question no. 4, which school district would you prefer?
 - Gratigny Elementary (11905 N. Miami Ave, Miami, FL)
 - William Jennings Bryan Elementary (1201 NE 125th St, North Miami, FL)
 - Miami Shores Elementary (10351 NE 5th Ave, Miami Shores, FL)

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING TO THIS SURVEY

Name: _____

Address: _____

Biscayne Park, FL 33161

E-Mail: _____

Comments (Optional):

PATRICK JAIMEZ



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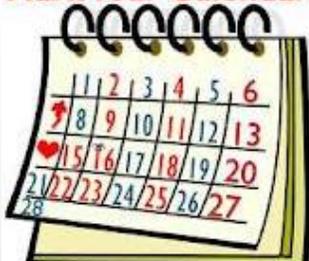
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(305) 892-1700 / Fax: 892-9111
Cell: (305) 215-9494

DENIS MURPHY

**Charles Alan Ross, PA
Certified Public Accountant**

11166 Griffing Blvd
Biscayne Park, FL 33161
786.464.9070--Voice
305.710.6629--Mobile
877.356.7202—Fax
Chuck Ross, President

Mark Your Calendar!



QUARTERLY SATURDAY TRASH PICK UP

The next scheduled village-wide Saturday trash pick up is scheduled for Saturday, September 22nd, from noon to 5:00pm. Please, when planning and preparing for this pick-up, remember that only yard debris and trash will be picked up – no garbage, no building materials, no appliances. Also, the size of the pile to be picked up cannot exceed 2 cubic yards (3' x 3' x 6'). As always, if you have any questions, please contact our Public Works Department at (305) 893 4346, or publicworks@biscayneparkfl.gov.