

MINUTES OF THE
FIRST GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE VENETIAN
CAUSEWAY COALITION
MARCH 9, 2005 7:15 PM 20 ISLAND AVENUE BELLE ISLE

The meeting was called to order by Herb Frank, President of the Belle Isle Residents Association. Herb welcomed everyone and introduced Barbara Bisno, President of the Venetian Causeway Neighborhood Alliance and Matt Leibowitz, President of the Venetian Islands Homeowners Association.

After each spoke a few minutes about the new coalition, Ms. Bisno introduced Michael Bauman, Causeway Administrator, Miami-Dade County. Mr. Bauman presented the following information in regard to the Venetian Causeway Toll Plaza.

The Toll Plaza will restart operations between April 4 and 15, 2005. Message boards, placed at both entrances of the Venetian Causeway, will announce the opening date to motorists. Large residential building managers will be advised when the Causeway management will set up registration for residents to reactivate or buy new transponders. This year's fee may also be paid at the Rickenbacker Causeway, beginning on March 14, and a temporary office will be set up at the new toll plaza in the near future. The permanent office will not be functional until the Toll Plaza begins operations.

The fee for those with transponders will be \$24.00 per year for residents and \$60.00 per year for Commuters. Individual tolls will be \$.75 per usage, though there will be an attempt made to increase this fee to \$1.00. In addition, a \$20.00 deposit will be required for each new transponder. The transponders will be good from 4/13/05 and expire on 5/30/2006. In order to pay the resident fee, one will need to prove ownership of residence (a tax bill will suffice) or other proof of residence for renters will be required. Each member of an owner/resident family is entitled to a transponder. If someone has an obsolete transponder, the gate keeper will permit the automobile to get through the gate, free, for short grace period after the Toll Plaza opens. For more information one can call 305 854 2468

The next speaker, Dulce Sirgado, Section Head, Bridge Engineering, Miami-Dade County, and a representative of the County contractor who is performing the inspections of the bridges, discussed the current condition of the bridges on the Causeway and narrated a slide presentation regarding the repairs. The nature of the decay, the reasons thereof, and the general plan of repair was explained. There is a significant amount of needed repair work to be done, primarily on that part of the bridges facing the water. The County will make every effort to keep traffic flowing during the repair period. As the specifications for the design of the repairs are not complete at this time, it is not known whether any bridge will need to be closed during repair. Ms Sirgado stated that the neighborhood associations would be kept fully informed of the plans as they proceed and every effort will be made to cause as little disruption to traffic as possible. The repair project of the twelve bridges will take approximately two years to complete and the design specifications should be completed by May.

Henry Sori, Assistant Director of Public Works, Miami-Dade County discussed the plan for the Streetscape along the entire Venetian Causeway. He was joined by a member of his staff, Donald Shockey from the Miami Beach Capital Improvements Office and Diane Johnson, from the Miami Capital Improvements Office. Approximately \$9 million dollars has been set aside by the County, Miami, Miami Beach, FDOT, and MPO to be used for this effort. It is expected to take approximately 3 years to complete this project. A consultant to develop a master plan and design documents will be retained. The residents of the community will be invited to participate in the master planning process. At this time it is expected that design of the plan will be completed by July, 2006. Bidding for the job will be completed by October, 2006. The work should begin in December, 2006 and be completed by November, 2007.

Those in attendance were very appreciative of the presentations made by all those presenters.

Matt Leibowitz spoke about the concerns of Miami Beach residents with regard to boats moored in the Miami Beach waterways. He indicated that the City is investigating this and will be holding a meeting in the future to determine how to insure that those people mooring their boats conform to requirements.

The meeting ended at 8.45 PM