



**Economic Development Committee  
Semi-Annual Report to Council  
Feb. 19, 2019**

**1) Members**

Name	Committee Position	Nominated by
Michael J Huffaker	Chair	Jeffrey Rodriguez
Andrea Graham Rechichi	Vice Chair	Carlos Alvarez
Elizabeth Coto	Secretary	Marilyn Ruano
John Tingle	Vice Secretary	Nelson Rodriguez
Gustavo Beltran	Member	Manny Cid
Ivan Lambert	Member	Manny Cid
Jorge Alvarez	Member	Josh Dieguez
Ladd Howell	Member	Marilyn Ruano
Magaly Rubio	Member	Luis Collazo
Mara Falero	Member	Carlos Alvarez
Martin Lumbi	Member	Nelson Rodriguez
Neill Robinson	Member	Luis Collazo
Steve Brimo	Member	Jeffrey Rodriguez
Alex Castro	Member	Josh Dieguez

On behalf of the Economic Development Committee, I am pleased to offer this semiannual report as a detailed update on our activities. As reported in past updates to the Council, the Committee has continued to focus on not only promoting economic development in Miami Lakes by attracting new businesses but also to retain and expand our current businesses. Our goal is to build a robust, resilient and inclusive economy in Miami Lakes.

The following summarizes the activities of the committee from September 2018 through mid-February 2019:

**2) Best of Miami Lakes**

In conjunction with Small Business Saturday, the EDC sponsored the Best of Miami Lakes competition. Almost 850 businesses were nominated by citizens in seven categories. More than 3300 votes were received and the winners were announced at the Festival of Lights on Main on November 24<sup>th</sup>. The Best of Miami Lakes are:

- FOOD – Best Café: Vicky Bakery
- FOOD – Best Lunch Spot: Beverly Hills Café

- FOOD – Best Dinner Restaurant: Dr. Limon
- Best Retailer/ Shopping: Blacc Boutique
- Best Beauty and Fitness: Spa at Shula's
- Best Health: Specialty Smiles
- Best Professional Services: The Firm Law Group

### 3) Business Expo

Providing financial and marketing support to the Miami Lakes Chamber of Commerce, the EDC sponsored the annual Business Expo on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Over 30 local businesses displayed their services and products to almost 750 Expo attendees. It was the best attended and most energized Expo in recent memory.



### 4) International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Leadership Summit

Committee Chair, Michael Huffaker, attended this national conference held in Ft. Lauderdale January 27-29. This event provided an excellent opportunity to learn about the organizational, financial and theoretical foundations used by communities to build robust, resilient and inclusive economies. No Committee or Town funds were used for our participation in this event.

### 5) Jingle Bell Jog 5K

In a secondary way the EDC co-sponsored the Veteran's Committee Jingle Bell Jog with a \$1,000 donation, by participating in the race and staffing a booth for the EDC at the race Start/Finish line.



#### 6) Cooperation with the Beacon Council

- i) To strengthen ties with and leverage the benefits of the Beacon Council, the Committee Chair and staff liaison, Charisma Glassman, have attended various Beacon Council events and committee meetings. We are currently working on convening a breakfast meeting with their Life Sciences Committee and representatives of the life sciences companies based in Miami Lakes. The goal in this process is to strengthen and grow this market segment in Miami Lakes.
- ii) The EDC, on behalf of the Town, placed a full-page profile in the Beacon Council's publication *Advantage Miami 2019*.

#### 7) Business Newsletter

With editorial participation of the Economic Development Committee, The Town started a digital bimonthly newsletter called "Miami Lakes Biz" that will be emailed to all registered businesses in the Town. Topics will include:

- i) New Business in Miami Lakes
- ii) Local Business Events
- iii) Business Executive in Spotlight
- iv) Free Financial Tips
- v) Free Tech Tips
- vi) Employment and Workforce News
- vii) Government Highlights
- viii) More local news
- ix) Free Discount Coupons from local businesses and restaurants (conditions from vendors may apply)

## **8) Misc. Activities**

- i) Continued scheduling of networking events
- ii) Continued contacting new businesses in Town
- iii) Enhanced partnership with Chamber of Commerce
- iv) Conducted survey of all registered businesses (results coming soon)
- v) Extended contract of staff support, Charisma Glassman, through the end of March 2019.
- vi) Recommended Large and Small Businesses of the year for the Mayor's State of the Town address.

The Economic Development Committee will continue its efforts to market Miami Lakes as a superb place to locate a business, to maintain a business and to expand a business. We will attempt to do so in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the existing business community and consistent with the overall strategic plans of the Town.

On behalf of all the members of The Economic Development Committee, I would like to thank the Mayor, Town Council and staff for their continued support.

Michael Huffaker, Chair