



City of Miami Commissioner Marc D. Sarnoff

Thursday, March 19th, 2009

Dear Friends,

Today the City Commission passed the four agreements in the first vote approving the baseball stadium that will be leased by the Florida Marlins at the old Orange Bowl site.

Let me make it clear from the start, I am not happy with the results of today's vote. I've spent hundreds of hours pouring over the details of this deal and I am not satisfied that there are enough protections for South Florida taxpayers. The facts and numbers surrounding this stadium are immense. Omitted was a guarantee that no stadium money will ever come from the city and county general funds. The cost of police, firefighters, and even trash pick-up comes from that fund. These are the men and women whose jobs would be at risk if the stadium cost exceeds the amount of tourist dollars brought in. These are the people elected officials should be protecting---the people who work so hard to make our city and county a safer place to live. Once again, this is not about whether or not I support baseball in Miami. This is about protecting our taxpayers. It's really as simple as that.

First Vote

The vote was 3-2 with myself and Commissioner Regalado opposing the agreement.

I opposed the stadium under the financing deal proposed because the County will be using a financing plan, which will employ interest only financing [CAB Bonds] for a significant portion of the 35-year life of these bonds, due to inadequate bed tax revenue. This is how \$515 Million becomes \$1.8 Billion.

In so voting, the City approved Hunt Moss to be the Master Contractor/General Contractor, responsible for the construction of the stadium itself, estimated to cost approximately \$515 Million.

Three commissioners voted and passed the agreement for construction of the stadium, which left the vote for the contract for the public infrastructure groundwork surrounding the stadium.

Second Vote

The next vote was the most difficult vote I have made on the Commission.

I believe I've made a strong case over the past few weeks that this is not the deal for us to approve. I've received a lot of support from the public and am very grateful for that. As disappointed as I am with the outcome of the vote on the stadium itself, I found myself in the tough position of deciding whether or not to support allowing Hunt Moss to control the local subcontractors, who will inevitably build the public infrastructure.

This vote was on the smaller package, estimated to be approximately \$25 Million. This involves the sewer and plumbing connections to the stadium, the streets and sidewalks, among other items. The baseball agreement effectively provided that the Marlins and Hunt Moss would bear any cost overruns attendant to the public infrastructure, only if Hunt Moss were provided the General Contractor position for the public infrastructure. The intent was to eliminate any potential for a second general contractor to have disagreements on time and placement of plumbing, sewers, sidewalks, etc., with Hunt Moss - causing delays, allowing for a potential argument and finger pointing for cost delays that could be born outside of bed tax revenues or our General Fund. Stated more simply, if we employed only one conductor, the orchestra must follow his lead versus two conductors and the chaos that would ensue.

My vote was a considered and mature decision. On the first vote, the Commission had already approved the four stadium agreements allowing Hunt Moss to act as the General Contractor; it was time to prevent any potential for more hemorrhaging or cost overruns.

Third Vote

The final vote was unanimous to accept CDT funding source from the County to pay for the parking garage.

I sincerely hoped that the majority of commissioners would understand and appreciate the concerns of this deal and would not have approved it. There are claims that a "no" vote on the Master Contractor on the infrastructure would have killed the deal. I strongly disagree. It would have merely delayed what appears to be the inevitable and would certainly have added potential untold costs to an already massive project. Sometimes in life we have to make a mature decision which deep down inside we don't want to make. I've fought against this stadium deal as hard as I could. The Marlins even made significant concessions to my demands. Not large enough for me to vote for the stadium. But certainly key parts to the deal that never would have been possible if the stadium was approved in February. We didn't have a full commission then. We did today and clearly one commissioner today made the difference to the Marlins.

I genuinely work with the best interests of the public at heart. Some days, like today, may be frustrating. But I am very proud to serve as your Commissioner.

Sincerely,

Marc D. Sarnoff
City of Miami Commissioner

District 2

[Forward email](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe**®

This email was sent to dkarsh@miamigov.com by dkarsh@miamigov.com.

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe](#)™ | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



City of Miami Office of Commissioner Marc D. Sarnoff | 3500 Pan American Drive | Miami | FL | 33133