



## **BLASTING CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**September 19, 2024**

**6:30 P.M.**

A meeting of the Blasting Citizens Advisory Committee took place on Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 6:43 p.m. at the City of Miramar Parks & Recreation conference room, 2200 Civic Center Place, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Miramar, Florida 33025.

### **I/II. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

The following member was present:

Chairperson Ryan Millay, Sunset Falls  
Vice Chairperson Patricia Lara, Nautica (Remote)  
Jorge Solis, Riviera Isles  
Melissa Thomas, Huntington  
Audrey Tomlinson, Miramar Resident  
Rose Thompson, Miramar Resident

The following members were absent:

Edward Daizovi, Sunset Lakes

A quorum was achieved.

City staff present:

Candice Cobb, City Attorney  
Leah deRiel, Recording Secretary

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- **August 15, 2024**

Chairperson Millay made a motion to approve the minutes of August 15, 2024, as

presented; Mr. Solis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Solis gave a PowerPoint presentation to update the board highlighting the following:

- A review of the board's purpose: the board's objective was not to stop blasting, rather, it was for the residents affected by blasting vibrations, and the mining company, with its blasting activities to find a compromise satisfying to both
- White Rock Quarries was a private, family-owned company
- The residents sought to restrict blasting within residential zones to .15 inches per second (ips); this was the objective residents sought to accomplish over the last three or four years
- Unfortunately, the State of Florida Fire Marshal set a limit of .5 ips on the blasting, a significant difference
- The difference in the effects of the blasting depended on the medium through which the vibrations flowed, whether through water or soil
- The blasting varied in the number of days per week, times per day, and the times of day when blasting was done
- Photographs were provided to illustrate the close proximity of the mining activity
- The number of homes being impacted needed to be established
- There were three seismographs installed around various Miramar communities: two in Riviera Isles, and one in Huntington.

Ms. deRiel stated there were five seismographs installed in Miramar communities under the State Fire Marshal pilot program; two seismographs were installed as part of Broward County's seismograph monitoring, bringing the current total to seven seismographs.

Mr. Solis continued:

- It was important to establish where the seismographs were located to better measure the effect of the blasting
- Three bills were presented in Tallahassee in an effort to address the adverse effects of White Rock Quarries blasting in both Miami-Dade, and Miramar communities; they were put forth by State Representative Tom Fabricio, **the first in 2022, House Bill (HB) 441; in 2023 HB 777, and in 2024, HB 245 unclear ?? 13:22**; none of the three bills passed
- Efforts to accomplish change through laws, the Florida State Legislature,

- etc. achieved very little progress
- Supporters for change included affected Miramar residents, Miramar elected officials, and Miramar lobbyists, and the State representatives
  - State representatives included: Robin Bartleman, who sought reelection in the upcoming elections; Lauren Book, the representative for District 103; though Representative Fabricio was not a Miramar representative, he served Miami Lakes residents, and he pushed the agenda for change in blasting levels for the Miami residents he represented
  - The goal was to work with the State's Fire Marshal, and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), as they controlled the necessary regulations
  - The metrics currently published on blasting were from 2023, and could be found on the City's website; there was good information to be read
  - The board could ask the City to have someone analyze the metrics for the seven seismographs in Miramar, and draft daily reports, so the board could get a true sense of the regularity, and the effects of the blasting
  - In his review of some of the existing reports, he found some reaching as high as .6 and .7
  - The daily reports generated from the hard data would allow the board to review the metrics on a monthly basis; if the metrics were not compliant, then some action could be formulated, etc.
  - Possible actions could include: presenting the findings to the City Commission at one of their monthly meetings, so they were aware of the results being yielded from the seven seismographs
  - The board could request one member of the City Commission to be a mentor for this program; they would be invited to attend board meetings, and act as a go-to person for funding, community resources, and next steps direction; they would act as a voice for the board inside the City
  - The board needed to engage with the City's State representatives and lobbyists to advocate on residents' behalf with the State Fire Marshall regarding lowering the blasting level to .15; this could be in the form of a event in Miramar, where the Fire Marshal, etc. could be taken on a tour to illustrate what was happening in the City
  - The Miramar lobbyist could review the reports with the Fire Marshal and the CFO, so they were aware of the current seismograph readings, and the lobbyist could share the residents' message that the level needed to be lower than .5
  - White Rock Quarry needed to understand the effect of their blasting as it came closer to residential homes, and the need for them to be good citizens by reducing the extent to which their mining activities adversely affected surrounding residences; this would be achieved by lowering the blasting level
  - Miramar should continue its partnership with the City of Miami Lakes,

whose blasting advisory board was very active; though they were more mature in the activist process, they, too, had yet to accomplish anything significant in getting blasting levels lowered.

Chairperson Milay thanked Mr. Solis for a comprehensive presentation. If the presentation was to be made to elected officials, and there were political considerations involved, the board needed to be responsible to their stakeholders, and the homeowners' associations (HOA). He pointed out a number of spelling errors on the first page, which should be corrected first before sending the presentation to elected officials, etc. Regarding the delta between .15 and .5, if the City were successful in getting the level reduced to .15, would this be a significant impact in blast mitigation.

City Attorney Cobb answered yes; moving the legal blasting vibrations from .5 ips to .15 ips. Regarding reading the results from a seismograph, the ips was a vector quantity, so it took into account lateral and vertical displacement, summed up the two, and calculate the ips, which would be larger than either one, as it was the combined movement.

Ms. Tomlinson wondered if going from .5 to .15 would allow White Rock Quarry to continue efficient extractions.

City Attorney Cobb responded White Rock would have to change the way they blasted; they would need to use less charge per blast in more holes closer together, requiring an overall increase in the amount of blasting material utilized.

Ms. Thompson wished to know how it was determined that .15 came was the ideal level, asking if this correlated with industry standards, etc.

Mr. Solis replied the ask was coming from the original **(unintelligible 27:00)** in Representative Fabricio's documents working with the Miami Lakes Blasting Advisory Board in advocating to change the existing law. He believed the .15 was a recommendation resulting from studies done by FIU and other scientists working with Representative Fabricio, and Miami Lakes.

Vice Chairperson Lara stated the Miami Lakes, and its Blasting Advisory Board were the entities able to advocate to change the blasting levels, since the blasting was actually taking place in Miami-Dade. A significant amount of scientific data, reports, etc. were presented by these entities, some in conjunction with Representative Fabricio, including blasting rates, etc. She was confused why the board sought to, again, start from scratch, as the work of the various stakeholders in Miramar and Miami had already gone a significant.

Mr. Solis explained his presentation was to help the board clarify what it sought to achieve, and how the involvement of elected officials, both local and state, could facilitate whatever actions and outcomes the board sought to achieve. At present, the board had no specific ask of the elected officials who appointed them. He acknowledged that Miami Lakes had accomplished much in the gathering of data, etc., but changes in blasting levels had yet to be realized in the last two or three years. Representative Fabricio, while understanding Miramar was affected, really represented Miami Lakes; no Miramar elected officials or representatives were doing anything for affected Miramar residents. Mr. Solis stressed the aim was not to go back to the beginning, rather, it was to move forward with the data from prior studies, and to gather new data from the seismographs installed around Miramar to alert decision makers as to what was truly taking place in Miramar communities affected by blasting. The board needed to engage the members of the City Commission more effectively, so they became more involved in what the board sought to achieve.

Vice Chairperson Lara explained since 2000, the City of Miramar, and Broward County took steps to ensure no type of dynamite blasting was allowed in neither the City nor the County. Again, as the blasting was not actually taking place in Miramar, it presented a dilemma for the City with regard to changing the existing laws regarding blasting levels. She said this was the reason Miramar joined forces with Miami Lakes, as that city had the ability to advocate for changes to the law governing blasting. All Miami Lakes and Miramar residents affected by blasting were in agreement with the need to lower the level to something that did not damage homes and other surrounding buildings. Ms. Lara believed the fact that Miami Lakes was successful in some of their efforts in Tallahassee was a signal for the City to continue working with them in their efforts for change in the blasting levels allowed by law. It was also political issue, as there were political supporters in Tallahassee whose focus was more on how much money the mining companies brought in, rather than on the damage their mining activities were causing surrounding buildings.

Ms. Tomlinson remarked Mr. Solis was not asking the board to start over; rather, he was recommending the board take a different approach to that of the board continuing to meet each month, and discussing the same issues repeatedly. He suggested the board work on something tangible it could present to the elected officials that they could work with Miami-Dade on their efforts in Tallahassee, and continuing to work with Miami Lakes. It was important for the elected officials at the state and local levels to be more aware of what was taking place in Miramar, so they could better position themselves to work on behalf of the Miramar residents. Even if it was done before, the board, and the residents it represented could not stop just because previous efforts were unsuccessful.

Vice Chairperson Lara commented with the recent incinerator issue that might end up being located at the old Opa-Locka West Airport site, she was not sure of the extent to which the blasting issue would matter, as placing an incinerator at that location would have detrimental effects on Miramar residents, such as impacting the air quality, residents' quality of life, health, etc.

Chairperson Millay understood the positions voiced by the board members, stating Mr. Solis was not suggesting the board try to get the City or County to draft legislations regarding blasting. However, he did not think it unreasonable for the board to work on drafting some document based on hard data that could be presented to the City's elected officials, so they could begin to work on the Miramar residents' behalf with regard to the damage their homes were suffering due to the nearby blasting. He thought such work was part of the board's tasks with regard to the blasting issues affecting Miramar communities. The board had a few months during which they could do a more detailed review of Mr. Solis's presentation, and discuss it in more detail at subsequent meetings, and making adjustments where desired. He agreed with Mr. Solis, and Ms. Tomlinson that the board should draft some talking points that board members could then take to the City's elected officials. The presentation prepared by Mr. Solis that he then communicated to the board was a very comprehensive document the board could use as a point from which to move forward. Mr. Millay suggested board members review the document, and when they returned for the October meeting, they could, if desired, add a few more slides, and amend existing slides where needed, etc. The goal was for residents affected by blasting to get more advocacy at the local, county, and state levels. He agreed the coming of an incinerator in such close proximity to Miramar's borders was a very bad thing,

Vice Chairperson Lara agreed with all that was being said, and she remained on Miramar's Blasting Committee because she believed in the resident's cause, and in the City's support. It was just after dealing with the blasting issue for over 20 years, and all the work that went into the effort over the years, she no longer believed Miramar residents would achieve success on the blasting issue, and this was with all support from elected officials, and the data yielded from multiple scientific studies commissioned by the Miami Lakes Blasting Advisory Board, etc.

Chairperson Millay referred to slide number two in Mr. Solis' presentation, where it stated blasting was not allowed in Broward County, suggesting the presentation identify the specific County statute number that prohibited blasting in Broward. The name of the quarry doing the blasting should be named specifically, which was White Rock Quarries, and its specific location in northern Miami-Dade County. He wished anyone reading the report, or viewing the presentation to be able to specifically identify the references as to their location, statute numbers, etc. For bullet number three under multiple explosions per day, he asked for

reference to be made to the Florida State Fire Marshal, and how they captured such information, as there could be a member of the Commission who was unaware of the entity responsible for capturing, and reporting such information.

Ms. deRiel pointed out the majority of the seismographs were located in Dade County.

Chairperson Millay wished it made clear that Miramar's Blasting Advisory Committee represented the City Commission, acting as liaisons with the communities they represented. He recalled Ms. Thompson's request for Vizcaya, asking if for some room to be left to make that information more comprehensive. With regard to the seismographs installed at seven locations, it was important to identify which entity maintained them; specifically, two were maintained by a certain authority, and five were maintained the State Fire Marshal.

Ms. deRiel affirmed the five seismographs maintained by the State Fire Marshal were located equidistant, and spread across along I-75, and along the C-9 Canal. One of the two Broward County seismographs were located in Riviera Isles.

Chairperson Millay questioned how information on the location of the seismographs could be shared with the public without providing residents' specific address.

Ms. deRiel pointed out the address of each seismograph location would be named in the documents, but it was no more than information that could be pulled from the Broward Property Appraiser's website.

Chairperson Millay sought clarification on the bills that were filed.

Ms. deRiel suggested reviewing the blasting report drafted by the Miami Lakes Blasting Advisory Board, as all this information was contained in that report.

Vice Chairperson Lara affirmed the Miami Lakes Blasting Advisory Board put together a very extensive 2024 opinion, which was provided to Miramar blasting board members; the report contained scientific evidence, legal opinions, etc. She thought this report was one of the most supportive documents ever prepared, and presented; it was presented to the Miami Lakes Mayor, and it was taken up to Tallahassee, though she was unsure to whom it was actually presented there.

Ms. Thompson recalled at the last Miami Lakes meeting, they requested more formalized help from the City of Miramar; they wished to get more Miramar residents onboard when they took their fight to Tallahassee. Hence the board

members seeking to formalize the board's efforts to resolve the blasting issues in Miramar, so they could be included with those of Miami Lakes to substantiate that a problem truly existed. They asked for residents to join them in going to Tallahassee. There was no significant support from affected Miramar residents on previous trips to Tallahassee, so Miami Lakes wanted Miramar to make a greater effort to join them in their efforts to address the blasting issue.

Ms. deRiel questioned if a resolution of support from the City of Miramar would help with furthering the efforts being spearheaded by Miami Lakes.

Chairperson Millay answered yes. He stated Miramar's City officials should have discussions on the blasting issues with Miramar's state representatives. He moved on to the slide titled: Plan to Action, stating his interpretation of bullet one, Daily Metrics Published, meant something the board would take to their appointing City Commissioner to request some oversight. He asked that the link be sent to the board members.

Ms. deRiel pointed out the link was to the most recent seismograph readings from the County's seismographs, which was different from those maintained by the State Fire Marshal; the latter might be located on another website.

Chairperson Millay asked Mr. Solis to make a note to, possibly, embed a second link to the State Fire Marshal's seismograph data. Regarding action on explosions over .15, he questioned if the board was asking Miramar's elected officials to file a formal complaint with regard to seismograph readings on specific dates that showed they were above allowed limits.

Ms. deRiel explained the board could provide information that showed, for example, the total number of blasts over .15. She assumed these would be talking points the board would use when making its presentation to the City Commission.

Chairperson Millay answered yes. The presentation should state the board would do a monthly review, and discuss the seismograph data. He noted, on the second bullet asking that one member of the City Commission be appointed as a mentor, and look to engage White Rock Quarries within the scope of their authority, as well as occasionally attend monthly board meetings. The members of the City Commission could be individually canvassed by the board to determine their willingness to participate. Next was the engagement of state representatives, and the State CFO to work on lowering the force of the blast from .5 to .15. He recently learned lobbyists were being wielded to advocate for mining interests quite aggressively, asking if the City could dedicate, even part time, a lobbyist to petition for the cause of reducing the acceptable force for



blasting. Mr. Millay agreed the board should continue to engage with the Miami Lakes Blasting Board, having a Miramar board member attend their monthly meeting when possible.

Ms. Tomlinson recalled Miami Mayor Levine Cava was to **(unintelligible 1:19:34)** a report, asking if this was done.

Mr. Solis answered yes; that report stated everything was fine; thus, it was determined there were no problem from the current blasting practices of White Rock Quarries. Miguel Martinez gave some pushback at those results, stating Miami Lakes had evidence to the contrary.

Chairperson Millay restated his belief that Miramar's blasting board should endeavor to be good partners with Miami Lakes's blasting board, backing the latter up in their efforts. He did not see Miramar residents, or elected officials crossing county lines, and challenging Miami elected officials as the route to take. He agreed Miramar's elected officials should be approached for guidance, so the board should review the presentation provided by Mr. Solis, and prepare to refine the board's report at the next meeting in anticipation of presenting it to the City Commission.

City Attorney Cobb reminded board members any board discussions must take place at the monthly meetings only to remain in compliance with the Florida Sunshine Law.

Chairperson Millay commented, in the interim before the next board meeting, he would contact each member of the Commission to determine their level of interest, and responsiveness to act with regard to the board's efforts.

**V. OPEN DISCUSSION: NONE**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

Next meeting: October 17, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

  
Ryan Millay, Chairperson  
RM/cc