

Memorandum



Date: June 4, 2009

To: Alex Muñoz
Assistant County Manager

From: Jack Kardys, Director
Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department

Subject: Response of the Office of the Mayor – Monroe County Commissioner Carruthers

I am responding to an inquiry received from County Commissioner Heather Carruthers regarding establishing a naturalist beach in Monroe County. The Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department has provided the following information regarding the clothing optional beach at Haulover Park.

The clothing optional beach at Haulover was established approximately 18 years ago. The South Florida Free Beaches organization was instrumental in moving this issue forward. A brief description of the beach follows:

The clothing optional portion of the beach is approximately one-quarter mile long and is located on the northern end of Haulover Park (see attached map). The total length of the ocean beach at Haulover Park is 1.25 miles. The clothing optional section is denoted by a drift fence across the beach at both ends but there is unimpeded access. There are also signs informing beach goers that they are entering the clothing optional area. The upland side of the beach is protected by a planted sand dune that runs almost the entire length of the beach. The dune prevents a beach view from any of the activity areas (picnic area, restrooms, shelters, etc.) west of the beach. There are a number of crossovers through the dune that allow access to the beach. There are several of these in the clothing optional area. Signs as mentioned above are also posted at those particular crossovers. Except for the extreme southern end of the park, all parking at Haulover is west of A1A. There are four main parking areas at Haulover that have tunnel access under A1A to the beach. The northern most parking area (approximately 400 vehicles) is directly opposite the clothing optional beach and this is the preferred parking area for those who wish to use that part of the beach. There are only a few residential structures (condominiums) north of the park that have any view of the clothing optional beach.

In response to Commissioner Carruthers questions:

Economic impact – To our knowledge there are no official area-wide economic impact studies regarding the contributions of the Haulover clothing optional beach. However the B.E.A.C.H.E.S. Foundation Institute has distributed (see attached) their version of the benefit of the Haulover naturist beach. The County makes no claim as to the validity of the assumptions or methodology used to gather this information.

As regards Haulover Park alone it is possible to get a fairly accurate estimate of the economic impact for that facility. Parking revenue is the primary economic indicator. In FY 08-09 the expected annual parking revenue for Haulover Park is approximately \$1,264,000. Given the proclivity of those who use the clothing optional beach to park in the north parking area, it is estimated that \$800,000 in parking revenue is directly attributable to the users of the clothing optional beach. The park does not gather information on the number of users or frequency of use; where they come from, or; the distinction between locals and visitors. The existence of Haulover Park is noted in several Naturist publications having world-wide distribution and helps draw naturist visitors to the park. There are other smaller impacts such as revenue from concessions and services, but these are relatively minor.