

The Miami Times

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Mayor vetos oversight panel, Jordan blocks

Matter to return to dais April 10 de-

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The restoration of civilian oversight of county government — seriously wounded after a veto by Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez — was resurrected by Commissioner Barbara Jordan.

At the Feb. 21 meeting, commissioners were set to vote on an override of

Gimenez's veto of the resolution that would have created the Independent Community Panel, an agency that previously operated as the Independent Review Panel.

The IRP, created in the aftermath of the 1980 McDuffie uprising, was popular in the Black community, as well as with civil rights and civil liberties organizations.

But Jordan was short of the

“When citizens have a complaint, they need a vehicle to register that complaint.”

Commissioner Barbara Jordan



two-thirds majority of commissioners necessary for an override. With 13 members present she needed nine of 13 members. At best, she may have received eight votes — one short needed.

The back and forth started after the Feb. 6 commission meeting, when

commissioners voted 7-5 to restore funding to its oversight agency — and to authorize a new name. Under the ordinance, \$170,000 to fund the agency would be taken from the Miami-Dade Police Department budget. Those voting no were Commission Chairman Esteban Bovo, Joe Martinez, Rebeca Sosa, Javier Souto and Jose “Pepe” Diaz.

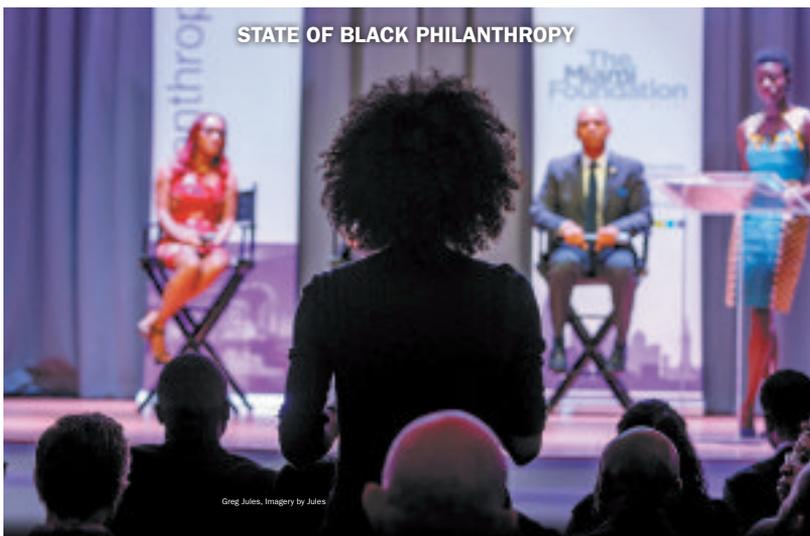
Instead, Jordan made a motion to reconsider her proposal, which pulled

the item off the table from discussion. That motion is rarely used in such a manner. But, Jordan said later, it kept the ICP alive.

“It was a strategic move to avoid having to start all over again with the process,” Jordan said, adding she would bring the item back to the full commission on April 10.

In the interim, she will consider suggestions for the ICP structure that Gimenez

SEE VETO 5A



STATE OF BLACK PHILANTHROPY

Greg Jules. Imagery by Jules

MAKING A CASE FOR GIVING BLACK

JULIANA ACCIOLI

Special to The Miami Times

Over the past decade or so, Black philanthropy has taken an increasingly more significant role in the global fabric for civic action. According to a 2012 report from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Black people are more inclined to give back: Each year, African American households give away, on average, 25 percent more of their incomes than their white counterparts, whether it's through charitable organizations, individual donations, businesses or social enterprises.

So how are philanthropic organizations using that rising force in addressing systemic issues and how are they creating opportunities within the communities they serve?

These questions were the starting point for Miami Foundation's annual State of Black Philanthropy, held this past Wednesday at the Overtown Arts Performing Center. The event, which

brought together philanthropic leaders, set out to consider local organizations' challenges and how their work can have a more effective, sustained impact.

Moderator Nadege Green, a reporter for WLRN Public Radio, lead the discussion with questions ranging from engaging donors from different, local Black communities to the transparency in organizational practices.

Barron Channer, a member of the board of directors of the American Friends of Jamaica, spoke about philanthropy as a heterogeneous sector, going

SEE GIVING 5A

Kalyn James (standing) facing Wendy Ellis, Barron Channer and Nadege Green on stage.

Pierre's seat safe - for now

Court rules in favor of North Miami Beach commissioner

NYAMEKYE DANIEL

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In addition to battling medical issues for the last several months, North Miami Beach Commissioner Frantz Pierre is in a fight to keep his commission seat.

Due to an illness, Pierre's attorneys say, the commissioner has been attending meetings virtually.

But an attorney's interpretation of the words “attend” and “present” may determine whether Pierre will remain in his seat.

Pierre hasn't been physically in commission chambers but has attended and participated by telephone or video conferencing, which was previously authorized by the city attorney and the commission, according to his complaint.

But according to City Attorney Jose Smith, attending meetings virtually is a violation of the city charter. That finding set in motion the wheels to fill Pierre's seat, which was deemed vacant by a consulting attorney.

North Miami Beach Mayor George Vallejo and Commissioners Barbara Kramer and Anthony F. DeFillipo all asked the city attorney to investigate the issue after a resident question Pierre's absenteeism.

Attorney for Pierre, Benedict Kuehne, said his

According to Kuehne, Pierre believes the attempt to remove him from his seat is a way to silence the only minority member of the commission.

client has attended meetings and has his voting record to prove it.

“Pierre, despite his health issues, continues to fulfill his duties to the benefit of the residents of the city, and he will continue to do so until the end of his term,” said Kuehne. Pierre was elected in 2015 to a four-year term.

What's worse, Kuehne's client, the lone Black person on the commission feels like he is being targeted.

One issue is what the word “attend” means.

If a commissioner fails to attend meetings for 120 days, his or her seat becomes automatically vacant, according to the city charter.

SEE PIERRE 6A

A \$120 million pitch for GO Bond in North Miami

Top dollars allocated for new city hall and expansion of contemporary art museum

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After more than two years of discussions, North Miami City Council members have given the go-ahead to send a \$120 million general obligation bond to residents later this year.

Now, Mayor Smith Joseph and city

officials must sell voters on the idea to finance myriad improvements, including a new municipal complex.

That could prove a hard sell in North Miami, where six years ago voters rejected a smaller bond to expand its Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA).

Approval of such a bond could

mean higher taxes for some residents. Mayor Joseph, the chief proponent of the bond, said he's ready. In an interview, he said it's a matter of educating the public.

“It would be a missed opportunity if we don't repair the infrastructure

SEE GO BOND 4A

Museum of Contemporary Art located at 770 NE 125th St., North Miami, FL 33161.



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