

COUNCIL GUESTS

**Marina M. Blanco-Pape, P.E., MSME, B.Arch**

FDEP Qualified Stormwater Management Inspector

Division Director

Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources
Division of Environmental Resources Management
Water Management

Marina M. Blanco-Pape has a Bachelor of Architecture and a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering, both from the University of Miami. Ms. Blanco-Pape is a licensed Professional Engineer and a Stormwater, Erosion, and Sedimentation Control Inspector, in the State of Florida.

Ms. Blanco-Pape has over thirty-eight years of experience in professional engineering practice and senior management. Experience includes success and leadership positions in an engineering/architectural consulting firm, utility company (electric), governmental-utility agency (water, wastewater, and stormwater), transit agency, and as faculty in two universities. She has extensive experience in industrial, commercial, and residential design (mechanical and civil engineering, and architectural); program and project management; construction management; grant and contracts administration, negotiations, bidding, and claim resolution. Ms. Blanco-Pape also has extensive professional experience negotiating and reporting to regulatory agencies such as the USEPA, FEMA, USDA- NRCS, USACE, FTA, FDEP, SFWMD, and FDOT.

Ms. Blanco-Pape has managed large engineering programs including:

- Miami-Dade County Water and Sewer Consent Decree/Settlement Agreement Pump Station and Sewer Collection Rehabilitation Program mandated by the USEPA;
- Miami-Dade County Secondary Canal Dredging Program including dredging, bank stabilization, and culvert replacement cost shared by FEMA, State and local funding;
- Miami-Dade County's Transit Major Capital Improvement Program;
- US Army Corps of Engineers Miami River Dredging;
- Miami-Dade County's Beach Renourishment Program;
- Miami-Dade County's Stormwater Master Plan and Stormwater Utility; and the
- Miami-Dade County's FEMA CRS and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination (NPDES) MS4 Programs.

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Alexander Dambach, AICP

Planning Development Manager
Planning Division
Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources
Miami-Dade County

Alex Dambach manages non-routine projects that update and implement the Comprehensive Development Master Plan, and he advises the Administration and Board of County Commissioners on planning and development-related policy decisions. Previously he was the Planning Supervisor for the City of Oakland Park, Florida where he oversaw the Planning and Zoning Division and conducted several major projects including large housing development plans, revised downtown development policies, and updated regulations for signage and infill development.

Earlier in his career, Alex led planning and zoning departments for urban cities in the Washington, DC; Chicago; and New York City metropolitan areas. He started his planning career as a downtown manager and economic development planner. For several years he was the Supervising Planner for Newark, NJ helping shepherd that city's remarkable revitalization. He is very proud of his accomplishments there, which include award-winning plans for Newark's Downtown District and redevelopment policies and urban design standards for small-lot infill development in older, dense, urban neighborhoods. Alex also managed the writing of the redevelopment plan and managed the entitlements process for the Prudential Center Arena. He also has personal experience in the construction industry and has renovated a few older buildings on his own. Alex has a master's degree in city and regional planning from Ohio State University.

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Pete Gomez, MA

Director, Department of Emergency Management
Miami-Dade County

The Emergency Management Department supports over 2.8 million county residents' disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation needs. He is a highly motivated and enthusiastic Fire Service professional with a current specialty in the field of Emergency Management. With over 35 years of experience in just about every aspect of the Fire Service, Pete brings a very well-rounded perspective and wealth of experience to any organization. A dynamic leader with great people skills allows him to work closely with all disciplines as well as the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Pete joined the public sector as a Police Officer in the City of Hialeah in 1983 and worked there until 1985 when he joined the Miami Fire Department. Previously, as a member of the Miami Fire Department, he was proactive in becoming certified in many of the special response areas such as the Dive Team, Hazardous Materials Team, and the Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR). Pete has held the ranks of Lieutenant, Captain, and Executive Assistant to the Fire Chief. Prior to joining Miami-Dade County, he held the rank of Assistant Chief of the Division of Emergency Management, with the responsibility of being the City's Emergency Manager. He also served as the Senior Director for the Academy for International Disaster Preparedness at Florida International University, his last assignment being to the Training Divisions in charge of all recruit training as well as all in-service training for the fire department. As the Assistant Chief of Emergency Management, Pete was the administrator of the Department of Homeland Security's Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) which brings millions of dollars into the South Florida region for Homeland Security. The Urban Search and Rescue Team is one of the 28 Federally funded Teams that respond to disasters nationally and internationally such as the World Trade Center collapse and the recent earthquake in Haiti, the response to Florence, and most recently, the Pan Handle of Florida for Hurricane Michael.

He is a member of the State of Florida's Domestic Oversight Council, and Executive Board, Co-Chair of the Special Response Teams Coordinating Group, and belongs to the Regional Domestic Security Task Force. Pete was one of the founding committee members of the City of Miami's Sea Level Rise Committee.

Pete received an Associate of Arts degree from Miami Dade Community College and his Bachelor's degree from St. Thomas University in Fire Science Management. He received his Master's degree from American Military University graduating Cum Laude with a 3.975 GPA.

Being married to his wife Denise of 35 years, Pete has a 30-year-old son who graduated from Florida State University and a 27-year-old daughter who also graduated from FSU with her bachelor's degree and a Master's in Business Administration from FIU.

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Charles LaPradd

Agricultural Manager

Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources

Miami-Dade County

Mr. LaPradd was born in Homestead, Florida, to a pioneer family whose roots date back to the 1800's in Miami-Dade County. He has worked at all levels of agriculture, including growing, sales, marketing, and shipping tropical fruits, vegetables, and foliage plants. In May of 2005, Mr. LaPradd was appointed as the first Agricultural Manager for Miami-Dade County, a position he still holds. In this position, he acts as an advocate for Miami-Dade County's agricultural interests and serves as a single point of contact between the agriculture industry and Miami-Dade County.

Prior to this appointment, LaPradd was employed at the City of Homestead as the Communications & Marketing Manager and in 2003 became the Planning & Economic Development Administrator for the City. LaPradd has also held positions as Vice-President & General Manager of Kendall Foods Corporation and Marketing & Communications Director at the South Florida Growers Association and Coral Reef Nursery.

While attending college, he also worked with the Dade County Farm Bureau, the Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association, and as Administrator for the Ag Institute of Florida.

LaPradd holds a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of Central Florida and an Associate of Arts from Miami-Dade Community College. He resides in the Homestead area with his wife Cynthia, son Charles John, and daughter Carly Jeanette.

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Dr. Jesse P. Spearo, CEM, MEP, FPEM, FMI

Emergency Management Administrator and Public Safety Professor
Department of Emergency Management
Miami-Dade County

Dr. Jesse Spearo has served as a successful public safety practitioner for over 20 years, having worked in the private sector and at all levels of government including Federal, Tribal, State, County, and Municipal. He has responded in a command or general staff role to nearly a dozen Presidential Disaster Declarations. He is the author or co-author of over 50 emergency management plans and publications and regularly presents his findings at national and international conferences.

In 2022, Dr. Spearo was appointed as Assistant Director at Miami-Dade County Department of Emergency Management, where he oversees the newly created Prevention and Protection Directorate. He is responsible for the preparedness and resiliency efforts for one of the most populous and vulnerable areas of the country. Additionally, he is an adjunct professor at several institutions including Florida International University and Georgetown University.

Professionally, Dr. Spearo is a Certified Emergency Manager through both the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) and the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). Dr. Spearo is recognized as a Florida Master Instructor (FMI), FEMA Master Exercise Practitioner (MEP), and graduate of FEMA's National Advanced Academy and National Executive Academy. He also is a credentialed Type-3 Situation Unit Leader and an Emergency Accreditation Program (EMAP) Assessor.

Dr. Spearo holds a Ph.D. in Public Safety and Emergency Management; a dual Master's of Science in Emergency Planning Administration and Criminal Justice Administration; and a Bachelor's of Arts in Criminal Justice and Political Science.

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