



PRESS RELEASE

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Surfrider Foundation
South Florida Chapter

Surfrider is a non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to protection and preservation of our world's oceans, waves and beaches.

Surfrider exposes corruption & scandal between Bal Harbour Village and developer WCI

Local Surfrider Foundation volunteers have exposed corruption & scandal between WCI Communities, developer of the One Bal Harbour project, and Bal Harbour Village. After enduring 4 months of illegal beach access closure where the Village failed to uphold the law and protect citizens' rights to access the beach, members of the Surfrider Foundation's South Florida Chapter took action and uncovered a scheme wherein WCI and The Village exchanged over \$200,000 for illegal closure of beach access.

Village Manager Alfred Treppeda appears to play a critical role in this abuse of the public's trust. He received a certified letter from the Florida Dept. of Transportation (FDOT), who leases the land to the Village for \$1 a year, directing him not to sub-lease the land to WCI. Surfrider uncovered copies of the illicit checks and the illegal agreement Manager Treppeda exchanged with WCI to exclude the public from the State property.

Surfrider discovered the scandal didn't stop there. While hiding their illegal sub-lease from one FDOT Division, The Village and WCI went to another division within FDOT and wasted hundreds of hours of State personnel time seeking permit approval to permanently reduce the public's ability to access the beach at Haulover Inlet. In addition, WCI and The Village ignored Surfrider's concern that their proposed changes would reduce the public's ability to access Bal Harbour's beaches, while at the same time increasing the Dade County taxpaying public's costs share for future beach re-nourishment projects in Bal Harbour.

Surfrider informed FDOT District 6 Secretary Johnny Martinez, whose agency was deceived and manipulated by The Village and WCI. Surfrider recently received a phone call from FDOT personnel who advised that the District Secretary would shortly announce a resolution to the backroom deal. Surfrider Foundation members look forward to regaining beach access along with justice being served to The Village and WCI for abusing the public's trust.
