



Tampa Bay Rays
One Tropicana Drive,
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
www.raysbaseball.com
727.825.3137

November 29, 2024

Dear Pinellas County Chairwoman Peters,

We are writing in response to your letter to Mr. Auld and myself dated November 25, 2024.

We disagree with the characterization of the conversation between Commissioner Scott and Brian Auld. The conversation primarily concerned the near-term challenges to our business given the damage to Tropicana Field as well as the dynamics related to the location of our home games in 2025. Brian Auld did not waver from our commitment to the new ballpark project.

In that regard, it is worth correcting certain inaccurate comments made by Commissioner Latvala that our decision to play at Steinbrenner Field is inconsistent with the spirit of our new ballpark agreements. The new Non-Relocation Agreement states that, in the event of a Force Majeure that requires a temporary relocation, the Team “must use commercially reasonable, diligent and good faith efforts to cause an alternate site at which Team Home Games are played pursuant to Section 2.2(c) to be located in Pinellas County, Florida in the first instance and if an alternate site is not available in Pinellas County, then Hillsborough County, Florida, in each case taking into account the availability therein of an alternate site with sufficient seating capacity that complies with MLB Rules and Regulations and the need to obtain MLB Approval to play at an alternate site.” Our criteria and process for selecting Steinbrenner Field are fully consistent with the spirit of this agreement.

When it comes to honoring the spirit of the new ballpark agreements, it is Pinellas County not the Rays that falls short. At the November 19 meeting, Mr. Crowell indicated that when the Pinellas County Commission met in late October, he expected a simple up or down vote on the supplemental bond resolution and did not expect any type of delay. The item had been reviewed without debate at a workshop five days earlier. It was supposed to be a simple administrative action.





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While, as a technical matter, under the agreements, there are longer outside dates for a variety of conditions to be satisfied, the Rays have always made it clear that the viability of the project depended on having certainty about the project's approval and funding prior to the 2024 November elections. The Rays were willing to advance the project for 2028 delivery knowing that Pinellas County's final approval would take place before the elections. **We would not have gone forward with the project if a future Pinellas County Commission had the ability to revoke the approval we all celebrated in July or to unilaterally delay the project's completion into 2029.**

In response to your question regarding the status of the various agreements, they are in effect until a party terminates or outside dates are reached. The Rays have fulfilled its obligations to date and continue to wait for decisions and actions by the City of St. Petersburg and Pinellas County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Silverman".

Matt Silverman
President, Tampa Bay Rays

CC: Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners
Barry Burton, County Administrator

