

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 22, 2024

5:00 PM

City Hall, Commission Chambers

Sustainability Advisory Board

Chairperson Teddy Lhoutellier
Vice Chairperson Martin Pinilla
Board Member James Brock
Board Member James Covey
Board Member Katrina Erwin
Board Member Nicolas Eterovic
Board Member Joseph A. Fadel
Board Member Dipak Joshi
Board Member Gabriela M. McGrath Moreira
Board Member Anabella Smith
Board Member Tiffany Troxler

1. Roll Call

Present: 8 - Lhoutellier, Etercovic, Brock, Pinilla, Fadel, Joshi, Covey and Smith

Excused: 3 - McGrath, Moreira, Erwin and Troxler

2. Call To Order:

Meeting called to order at 5:08 P.M. by Teddy Lhoutellier.

MOTIONS:

December 11, 2023, Meeting Minutes – Jasper motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Martin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Martin motioned to excuse Katrina, Tiffany, and Gabi from the January meeting; Joe seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**PHYSICAL QUORUM (8): Teddy, Joe, Dipak, Martin, Jasper, Anabella, Nicolas, and James
Quorum was met at 5:07 P.M.**

3. Public Comment: 2 minutes each guest

4. Approval of December SAB Meeting Minutes

Present: 11 - Board Member Smith, Board Member McGrath, Moreira, Board Member Fadel, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Board Member Covey, Board Member Etercovic, Vice Chairperson Pinilla, Board Member Erwin, Board Member Joshi and Board Member Brock

5. Keep Coral Gables Beautiful Program Updates (KCGB)**i. Recent Events:****1. Christmas Tree & Holiday Cardboard Recycling – Dec. 26 to Jan. 12**

- a. Residents brought their Christmas trees and excess cardboard boxes to be recycled to the Youth Center. Christmas trees were also picked up as a separate trash pick-up. The trees are then recycled and mulched. The mulch is used at our City's parks and green spaces. According to Greenspace, the city has not paid for mulch in the last few years since mulching of the Christmas trees and other tree debris generated through ongoing maintenance, etc.**

2. Pinewood Cemetery Invasive Plant Removal Event – Friday, Jan. 19

- a. To celebrate Florida's Arbor Day, 50 volunteers came out to our second Pinewood event. Over 8,000 pounds of invasive plants were removed from the north side of the historic cemetery.**

ii. Upcoming Events & Updates:**1. Post-Valentine's Day Litter Cleanup – Sat, Feb. 24th**

- a. KCGB is hosting a Post-Valentine's Day cleanup at Matheson Hammock Park & Marina on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 9 a.m. This event is in partnership with Miami-Dade County's monthly cleanup at the park and BLUE Missions.**

2. NexTrex Plastic Film Recycling Program

- a. A new program under KCGB will be launched in the near future to recycle plastic film. Mayor Lago pushed to start a plastic recycling program and recommended NexTrex. Three bins arrived before today's meeting, and they will be strategically placed in City facilities. Once the bins are full, staff will collect, weigh, and drop off the collected material at a store who is also partnered with NexTrex to be properly recycled. This program is free to participate in.**

3. Keep America Beautiful Conference

- a. Solanch will be attending the KAB conference in San Diego from February 12 through 14. KAB reached out to KCGB to present on the success of the Battery Recycling Program and paid 90 percent of the trip's expenses for Solanch. There will be an update in February's meeting.**

6. Sustainability City Commission**i. Electric Leaf Blowers Update 2023**

- 1. The City is continuing to look researching electric leaf blowers. Greenspace has been testing over the past few years. The Commission opted to decide in early 2024. The City did adjust the noise ordinance a few years ago and further restrict the hours when leaf blowers can be used, both for residential and commercial use.**
- 2. Teddy suggested reaching out to him because his contact at Cornell University and the issue on the logistic side is the reachability on electric leaf blowers. At Cornell, there are solar recharge for battery packs that can be used by the university.**

ii. FDOT Grant - \$15,000

- 1. The FDOT grant has been approved by the City Commission and KCGB is now officially under contract and will be working on new projects with the funding.**
- 2. KCGB is currently applying for several other grants to increase program funds and create new programs:**
 - a. KAB – Great American Cleanup, submitted, involves a cash grant for supplies used for the Great American Cleanup season. The Cigarette Litter Prevention Program’s application is due in February and will have more information in February’s meeting.**
 - b. FBA – KCGB is applying once again for the FBA grant due at the end of January to start another program to replace the Reverse Vending Machine. Big Belly reached out about their product, solar powered compacting waste bins. If KCGB receives the funding, the new program will be to install these recycling bins in the City parks where there is no recycling bins or collections at the moment.**

7. Member Comments**A. Teddy:**

- i. Teddy brought up that each Board member has plans for their time on the Sustainability Advisory Board and wanted everyone to provide an update on their goals.
- ii. UM will be hosting a Compost 101 workshop in the coming weeks.

B. James:

- i. James spoke about his long-term goals on the Board, which are composting and shade to tackle the growing issue in waste management and the increasingly hotter summers. Shared his interest in vermiculture as he has been doing that at home and how it is helpful in food waste. The Board is interested in hearing more about vermiculture. He is planning on speaking more about it during the next meeting.

C. Joe:

- i. Joe is going to be working with Vice Mayor Anderson on a presentation at the farmers market on how to care for plant life without the use of pesticides and insecticide. He will be bringing that presentation to the next Board meeting in February. He is interested in finding more information at the Sustainability Village at the Farmers Market.
- ii. Teddy brought up the Carbon Tax that Joe had shown interest in during a previous meeting and Teddy has some contacts who are experts in the Carbon Tax, he offered to put them in contact with Joe. Joe is interested and would like to discuss this more.

D. Martin:

- i. Martin's on-going project with the City Manager, Peter Iglesias, is to create more walkable spaces and parks throughout the City. He has a current project he has been working with Teddy on for a few years to build a park near UM in an open space that is available. The last meeting with the City Manager to hopefully get this future park approved this year.
- ii. He is interested in this new movement called Sustainability of Life and it is based on how people have been able to live longer than the average life span. Scientists have been looking at these groups of people and studying their living spaces. Cities worldwide are being certified because they mimic similarities to the same ideologies. He mentioned that it could be possible for Coral Gables to look into this movement. He plans on sharing this

information with the Board.

E. Anabella:

- i. Anabella would like to help Martin with his topic on the Sustainability of Life movement. She offered to help with bringing vendors to the Sustainability Village to discuss using recycled materials to make products. Diego informed her and the rest of the Board of the plans for the Sustainability Village. There will be eight to ten sustainability vendors and non-profit organizations.**
- ii. She is continuing to work on the Green Business and Green Lodging application. She is finding out more about the hotels and businesses and will be reaching out to the nine hotels that are within Coral Gables. She wants to be involved with the application process.**

F. Jasper:

- i. Jasper has been watching the Giralda sewer line connection take place for the last few months, thankfully coming to an end and having a good outcome. He has a lot of experience instituting urban residential composting. He offers perspective based on his experience to anyone who is interested. He is Interested in working with James on his composting project.**

G. Nicolas:

- i. Very happy to see the Energy & Water Dashboard taken to Procurement and Matt will be able to provide an update very soon. Is interested in green yard waste and how to keep it out of the landfill. Teddy can share a contact that collects the debris and makes it into mulch. Matt says the City is taking measures to find new ways to compost/mulch yard waste within the City.**

H. Matt:

- i. Board members can now send topics they would like to discuss during the meeting to staff two weeks before so they may be put on the agenda.**
- ii. Has an update on sea level rise and how CG has received funding to complete the update on the vulnerability assessment. New state requirements on cities vulnerability assessments are necessary to apply for state grants and funding. Diego is working on updating it soon. Matt would like to bring in Hazen & Sawyer to present and answer any questions. Teddy asked if there are any discounts on insurance for residents once the vulnerability assessment was done. Matt says it will be included if the Community Rating Score**

(CRS: 1-10). The County's CRS lowered from a 5 to a 3, giving a 35 percent discount to county residents. Coral Gables' CRS lowered from a 7 to a 5 over a year ago.

- 8. Next Meeting – Wednesday, February 28th, 2024, at 5:00 P.M.**
- 9. ADJOURNED: 6:02 p.m.**