

CITY OF CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS  
 CITY OF CORAL PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING  
 2151 Salzedo Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Asst Chief Conf Room Coral Gables 33134  
 WEDNESDAY, June 5, 2024  
 MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY:
	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	
Jennifer Ward Sando	*	P	P	P	P	P							Mayor Vince Lago
Justine Chichester			P	P	P	P							Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Mary Palacio-Pike	*	P	P	P	P	E							Commissioner Kirk Menendez
Bonnie Blaire	*	P	P	P	P	P							Commissioner Melissa Castro
Vanessa Bedoya	*	P	E	P	P	PZ							Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
													Ex-Officio Member Chamber of Commerce

PZ = Via Zoom

A – Absent  
 E – Excused Absence  
 (-) – No Appointment  
 (\*) – No Meeting  
 (\*\*)-No Meeting – COVID19

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

**QUORUM:** Quorum was reached

**STAFF:**

Raquel Elejabarrieta – Human Resources Director  
 Carolina Vester – Deputy Community Recreation Director  
 Eglys Hernandez – P/T Administrative Assistant Labor Relations & Risk Management  
 Catie Hastings – Community Recreation – D.E.I. Coordinator  
 Ana Lam, Crime Watch Volunteer (School Community Relations Committee)

**GUEST:**

**CITIZEN ADVISORS:**

Deborah Dietz  
 Jennifer Durocher, Director of UM-NSU Card

**PUBLIC GUEST:**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting called to order at 10:10am

**MEETING ABSENCE:** None

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

May 1, 2024  
 Motion by: Bonnie Blaire / 2<sup>nd</sup>: Justine Chichester / Approved unanimously.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT:** None

**BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The board acknowledged Chairperson Mary Palacio-Pike was not in attendance and therefore determined if the meeting was to proceed a Deputy Chairperson would have to be put into place. Board member Jennifer Sando stated she would be happy to be Deputy Chairperson, board agreed.

**UM Card Program – Autism Friendly Business**

Dr. Durocher provided information regarding the UM program in place at this time where autism friendly businesses are identified. Dr. Durocher stated the program is currently back logged and it is not able to do a city-wide initiative, however if there is a business who is interested, they can apply.

**Accessibility of Special Events – Carolina Vester, Deputy Community**

Ms. Vester shared and reviewed a special event application which is completed prior to a special event taking place. Ms. Vester advised there is currently a committee in place where various components of the city are represented such as police, fire, electrical, etc. and they review as well as provide notes on the application. Ms. Vester provided information on the different types of events which take place in the city, such as grant approved, city events, etc.

Ms. Vester stated that even though there are several reviews of the application and site plan, sometimes on the day of the event there is an unforeseen change. Ms. Vester stated at that point it is impossible to shut down the event. Ms. Vester advised the next step is to conduct a debriefing after the event has taken place. Ms. Vester stated they will be advised that they did not adhere to the site plan and to ensure going forth any events, they would need to address issues and correct same. Ms. Vester stated they will also be advised if at the next event they do not comply, they will no longer be able to conduct events in the city. Ms. Vester stated after further discussion with Mr. Fred Couceyro, Director of Community Recreations Department, who is the head of the committee, it has been determined there may be an opportunity early on during the process to have Catie sit on the committee and review the plans where any concerns can be addressed. Ms. Vester stated it is hard to mitigate anything on the actual day of the event.

Ms. Dietz expressed concern regarding events not been properly set up, such as inaccessible restrooms and accessibility to mats. Ms. Dietz stated after plans are reviewed, there needs to be follow-up to ensure set up is done completely. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated it would be best for staff to meet with the law department to discuss the city ADA compliance, liability, etc. and will update the board at the upcoming August meeting.

**Upcoming Sensory Friendly 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 – Catie Hastings:**

Ms. Hastings provided information regarding the upcoming sensory friendly 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Ms. Hastings requested assistance regarding distribution of flyers for this event, provided information regarding cost per vehicle and change in length of event. Ms. Vester also provided information regarding the main 4<sup>th</sup> of July event and the services put into place regarding accessibility. Ms. Chichester advised she will be attending the main 4<sup>th</sup> of July event utilizing her walker and will provide feedback on her experience with the services being offered.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**October – National Disability Awareness Month – Proclamation**

The board agreed to have Disability Independence Group (DIG) be the recipient of this year's proclamation. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised it will be presented at the October 8, 2024, meeting and further information will be provided as it gets closer.

**Update: ReelAbilities – Ms. Catie Hastings:**

Ms. Hastings provided update regarding ongoing planning of this event. Ms. Hastings advised she is receipt of over seventy forms. Ms. Chichester stated it is very interesting watching all the films and then trying to be thoughtful about the review forms and who would come to see the films. Ms. Chichester stated Ms. Hastings held a very good meeting and feels this event will be a great one. Ms. Hastings stated she is looking into commencing promoting this event at upcoming events to start up interest. Ms. Chichester stated a lot of help is needed so that it can be properly promoted. Ms. Hastings advised movies could be paired with other activities, such as if a basketball movie is shown

it can be paired with a basketball clinic and if a sponsor can be obtained it would be nice to have a cocktail party with the last film.

Ms. Elejabarrieta requested that My Squad flyers for upcoming June (Exhibit 1) & July (Exhibit 2) events be distributed to the board via email.

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised board Police department will be doing the Fight Like a Girl Defense force course. Officer Flores provided additional information regarding this six-day self defense course being offered commencing on June 17, 2024. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated to please keep in mind when signing up, be able to commit with the six days. The board discussed the availability of perhaps conducting these types of courses for people with disabilities.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**NEXT MEETING:** August 7, 2024

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 11:05am

# **EXHIBIT 1**

# MY SQUAD

AT THE CLUBHOUSE

A SOCIAL CLUB FOR ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND AUTISM

## Paint and Sip Mocktail Party

Wednesday

June 26 at 6 p.m.

at Ruth Bryan Owen Waterway Park  
3940 Granada Blvd.

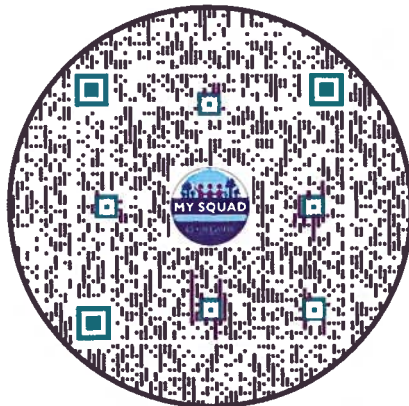
- 1 Eat pizza for dinner.
- 2 Mix your own mocktails.
- 3 Paint with dots and scraper.

Cost: \$5 per person

Register at [playgables.com](http://playgables.com)

or scan this code with your phone,  
then click "Event Calendar":

For help registering or questions:  
Email Catie and Ryan:  
[PlayForAll@CoralGables.com](mailto:PlayForAll@CoralGables.com)



# **EXHIBIT 2**

# MY SQUAD

AT THE CLUBHOUSE

A SOCIAL CLUB FOR ADULTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES AND AUTISM

## Flashlight Tag and Beverage Pong

Wednesday

July 31 at 6 p.m.

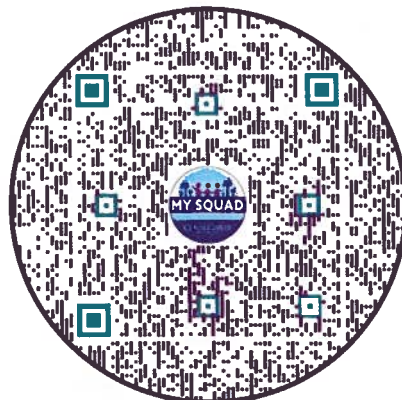
at Ruth Bryan Owen Waterway Park  
3940 Granada Blvd.

- 1 Eat pizza for dinner.
- 2 Play beverage pong inside.
- 3 Play Flashlight Tag outside in the park after dark.

Cost: \$5 per person

Register at [playgables.com](http://playgables.com)

or scan this code with your phone,  
then click "Event Calendar":



For help registering or questions:  
Email Catie and Ryan:  
[PlayForAll@CoralGables.com](mailto:PlayForAll@CoralGables.com)