

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MAY 5, 2008**

**Coral Gables War Memorial Youth Center, Room 222
Coral Gables, Florida**

MEMBERS:	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	APPOINTED BY:
Robert Berman	P	+	+	P	+	P	+	+	P	P	+	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Tamara Hartnett	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Rick Munarriz	E	+	+	P	+	P	+	+	P	P	+	P	Comm. Maria Anderson
Elizabeth Kakouris	P	+	+	P	+	A	+	+	E	P	+	P	Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Bruce Steinberger	P	+	+	P	+	P	+	+	P	P	+	P	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Sydney Josepher*	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	P	-	-	P	City Manager David Brown
Dr. Patricia A. Whitely	P	+	+	P	+	P	+	+	P	P	+	P	Vice President, Student Affairs, UM
Rudy Fernandez*	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	E	-	-	-	Vice President, Community Relations, UM
David Rivero	-	-	-	P	-	P	+	+	E	P	-	P	Director of Public Safety, UM
Claudia Mendina*	-	-	-	P	-	-	-	-	P	-	-	P	Student Government President, UM
Brandon Gross*	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	P	-	+	P	Interfraternity Council President, UM

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Edward M. Weller, Building and Zoning Department

A = Absent
E = Excused
P = Present
+ = No Meeting
***** = New Member

GUESTS:

Janet Gavarrete, University Planner; Margot Winick, Asst. Vice President, Media and Community Relations, U.M.; Vivian Miller; J.C. del Valle; Sebastian Marmol, Coral Gables Gazette.

Recording Secretary:

Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Berman at 5:05 p.m. Committee members introduced themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBUARY 4, 2008:

Mr. Rivero made a motion to approve the February 4, 2008 minutes as amended. Mr. Steinberger seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

III. UPDATE ON U.M. PLANNING & CONSTRUCTION INITIATIVES:

Ms. Gavarette updated several issues and reported as follows:

- U.M. is continuing to work towards compliance on the internal road. Details were reviewed.
- There has been no net loss of parking spaces due to project parking shifts. The University is connecting the parking lots internally.
- The pedestrian overpass that goes to the Metrorail Station across from Mariposa has been approved by the City's Board of Architects, and the County is proceeding with development of plans. It is scheduled for completion in late 2010.
- Freshman living on campus will not be permitted to have cars on campus this coming school year, which will reduce cars on campus by 500 on a daily basis.

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- The Guide to Public Sculpture, Community Campus Guide and Public Sculpture Program documents were distributed, all part of a U.M. master plan, also distributed, that satisfies all requirements for exemption in accordance with the City's agreement and the Art in Public Places Ordinance.
- Construction projects were updated, including the Alumni Building, Mark Light Stadium, the Serpentine lot, the University Village townhouses, the Palley addition to the Museum.
- An economic study was distributed for further study and shows that the University is one of the three largest employers in Miami-Dade County, with a total economic impact of \$4.5 billion, and the largest economic enterprise in Coral Gables.
- Three minor UMCAD amendments will be proposed to the City.

IV. UPDATE/PRESIDENT OF INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL: BRANDON GROSS

Mr. Gross reported that fraternities will expand from 11 to 13. At the Association for Greek Letter Organizations (AGLO) awards banquet, awards were presented to numerous organizations and individuals for charity and philanthropy work, including funding for United Cerebral Palsy. In the Fall, the Council will begin a deferred recruiting system which will defer recruitment of first-year students to the Spring semester. This will foster a new marketing approach, one of which will be to involve the community in the new strategies, including a United Way collection.

V. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STUDENT GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE:

As the new Student Government Vice President, Claudia Mendina expressed appreciation for participation on the Committee. Recently elected to the position, she is currently working on several initiatives with the University administration and will have a report prepared for the next meeting.

VI. MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Weller reported that Ms. Hartnett notified him via e-mail of her inability to attend the meeting.

Mr. Rivero made a motion to excuse Ms. Hartnett and Mr. Fernandez from the meeting and, in the case of Mr. Fernandez, from the February meeting as well. Dr. Whitely seconded the motion, which passed.

A discussion ensued about the City's meeting attendance policy, which Mr. Weller will research and report on at the next meeting.

VII. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Copies of the annual report were distributed to all Committee members prior to the meeting. For the benefit of new Committee members, Mr. Weller explained the purpose of the report and the issues it addresses. The report was reviewed with Chair Berman and submitted to the City Commission as a draft.

Mr. Steinberger made a motion to accept the report as written. Mr. Rivero seconded the motion, which passed.

VIII. SCHEDULE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting shall be the first Monday in October 6, 2008 (unless a meeting is necessary prior to the October meeting).

IX. MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR:

City Election Issue: Mr. Gross requested Committee input regarding the issue of the month of the City election regarding the Commission term limit issue. He summarized the background regarding the Commission's decision to hold the election in April rather than November, and comments made regarding

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the impact of "transient" University student voters. Speaking on behalf of the students, Mr. Gross said many were very offended by the comments and the Commission's decision, and want the best opportunity to be allowed to vote on City issues.

Discussion ensued, and Committee members said the students' concern was a legitimate grievance, and indicated they would discuss the issue with their appointing Commissioners. Chair Berman urged Committee members to e-mail the Commission urging them to reconsider their decision and stating that the full Committee supported the position of the students.

University Commencement: Dr. Whitley informed the Committee that commencement exercises would be held May 8, 9, and 10, stating that traffic might be heavier during that period. She explained University efforts to lessen the impact of congestion. In addition, she is working to solidify transportation to Dolphin Stadium, transporting students from the campus to the stadium for games. A plan will be prepared over the summer and will be presented to the Committee for feedback. The University's Media Relations office will keep neighbors apprised. Ms. Gavarette added that many of the colleges within the campus would hold events, with small, standardized directional signs placed on swales to guide people to their locations.

Committee Meeting Venue: Mr. Berman reported that he e-mailed Mayor Slesnick to stress the importance of having a single, stable meeting venue. Mr. Weller explained the background of the City's decision to hold fewer meetings in Commission Chambers. There followed a discussion about holding the meetings at the University. Dr. Whitley, Mr. Rivera and Ms. Gavarette will research campus locations.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward M. Weller
Secretary to the Community Relations Committee