

CITY OF CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS  
 CITY OF CORAL PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING  
 2151 Salzedo Street 1<sup>st</sup> Floor CMR A Room  
 VIRTUAL – VIA ZOOM  
 WEDNESDAY, December 1, 2021

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY:
	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	
Blake Sando						P	*	P	*E	P	P	P	Mayor Vince Lago
Samantha Duran						P	*	P	*V	E	E	P	Rhonda Anderson
Mary Palacio-Pike						P	*	P	*V	P	P	P	Kirk Menendez
Philippa Milne						P	*	E	*P	P	P	P	Jorge L. Fors, Jr.
Haley Moss						A	*	P	*E	A	P	E	Michael Mena
Vanessa Liebl									*P	P	P	P	Ex-Officio Member Chamber of Commerce

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

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

**QUORUM :** Quorum in person reached

**STAFF:**

Raquel Elejabarrieta – Labor Relations & Risk Management Director  
 Melissa DeZayas – Public Works, Sr. Transportation Engineer  
 Eglys Hernandez – Labor Relations & Risk Management

**GUEST:**

Jennifer Sando

**CITIZEN ADVISORS:**

Bonnie Blaire  
 Debbie Dietz  
 Dr. Jennifer Durocher, Director of UM-NSU Card

**PUBLIC GUEST:**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting was called to order at 10:10am

**MEETING ABSENCE:**

Haley Moss

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

November 3, 2021

Motion by Blake Sando / 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion: Philippa Milne / All approved unanimously

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** None

**BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Holiday Park – Ms. Elejabarrieta / Ms. Kofkin**

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Board Holiday Park will be opening this upcoming Friday, December 3, 2021. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated there will once again a date and time available specifically for families with children with disabilities to attend. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated it would be Sunday, December 19, 2021, from 9:00am to 11:00am and families will be required to register. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised registration is already open.

Mr. Sando stated it was a great event last year however, there was very little participation and feels information should be better distributed to the community. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised once flyer is available, it will be provided to all.

**Follow Up: Ms. Palacio**

Ms. Palacio stated regarding having “follow up” of meeting being sent to let Board members of what needs to be done prior to next meeting. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated further research and clarification from law department needs to be conducted regarding this due to the Sunshine law. Ms. Milne asked if a Board member finds an interesting article and would like to share it with the Board, could it then be emailed to staff and have it distributed in that matter. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated it would be ok to distribute as information not as a directive to take any type of action. Ms. Dietz suggested perhaps the information can be added to the agenda as a “*To do list.*”

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Review Resolution: Self-Contained Classrooms (Exhibit 1) – Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Elejabarrieta conducted review of pending resolution regarding Self-Contained classroom. Board expressed interest and discussed rewording resolution whereas instead of requesting a self-contained classroom in an elementary public school, that it would request self-contained classrooms for students with disabilities in elementary, middle and high schools. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised resolution will be updated as requested by Board and will be emailed to all.

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised she will request to be placed on the agenda for the School Community Relations Committee upcoming meeting on December 17, 2021, and will present Resolution. Ms. Sando advised School Community Relations Committee has been made aware of resolution and have stated they are supportive.

Board agreed it would be best for representatives of both, Advisory Board on Disability Affairs and School Community Relations Committee be present to present the resolution at commission meeting in January.

Motion to approve Resolution regarding Self-Contained Classroom as per changes discussed by Board.

Motion by Blake Sando / 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion: Philippa Milne / All approved unanimously

**G.U.I.D.E. – Ms. Palacio / Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Palacio shared with Board registration has been open and she currently registered her son and is awaiting meeting with police department. Ms. Palacio stated there have not been many registrations. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised currently only six families who have registered. Ms. Liebl asked regarding having

any post cards or flyers available. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised there are post cards available and will be distributed.

#### **Alzheimer's Month – Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised during the last commission meeting in November, Commissioner Menendez issued a Proclamation concerning Alzheimer's, and it was the first time G.U.I.D.E. program after going live was officially promoted targeting this population which could benefit from this service. Ms. Sando asked if the Senior Citizen board would be made aware of this service. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised along with Ms. Palacio they attended the Senior Citizen's board meeting prior to program going live sometime in October, information distributed, and they expressed interest in the program.

#### **Communities of Excellence – Ms. Palacio / Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Palacio advised of telephone conversation in conjunction with Ms. Elejabarrieta and Ms. Mary Snow, who oversees the education part of the Communities of Excellence Baldrige Award program. Ms. Palacio stated Ms. Snow was advised of city's efforts regarding self-contained classrooms at city schools and how Ms. Snow mentioned the lack of a self-contained classroom within the city is the missing link. Ms. Snow stated if the city wishes to be part of the Communities of Excellence, the city needs to have this type of classroom available. Ms. Palacio advised Ms. Snow is also part of the Mayor's Blue-Ribbon Committee and she is on board with this effort. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated Ms. Snow will be kept up to date regarding this effort.

#### **Best Buddies – Employment – Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Board of current positions available at the Senior Adult Activity Center and how Best Buddies was contacted. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised city in the past has been in communications with Bes Buddies and upon further review, it has been determined this employment opportunity may be a great start point for this program. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised interested candidates from Best Buddies along with their job coaches came to the Senior Adult Activity Center to get a better idea of job and location. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated there were two interested candidates of which both would be qualified for the position. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised how they came prepared and asked questions. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised the candidates process regarding applying for the positions. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated she hopes both candidates apply, and city continues building relationship with Best Buddies.

#### **My Squad – Ms. Kofkin / Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Board of next upcoming event on December 15, 2021, Magical Wintery Fun being held at the Senior Adult Activity Center. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised of future programs beginning in January. Ms. Elejabarrieta also advised of a civic Saturday, where they will help with clean up. Ms. Palacio stated she believes that taking them out of the Adult Senior Center for activities is a great idea, however, feels work regarding better promotion of activities is needed.

Ms. Blaire addressed regarding registration challenges faced by folks who wanted to participate in the activities and feels perhaps this needs to be reviewed as it may be a barrier. Ms. Blaire stated most of the participants need the assistance from someone to complete the current requirements for participation. Ms. Blaire also feels having better communication regarding of upcoming events may also be helpful. Ms. Kofkin stated registration is needed, however an interested participant can send a simple email or set up for assistance with process. Ms. Dietz expressed she feels consistence is important, such as keeping event at same place, same time, same date. Ms. Dietz expressed even though change of venue sounds like fun, maybe difficult to maintain attendance.

Board members asked regarding flyers available reference to upcoming events. Ms. Kofkin advised flyer has been made available in the past and information is now available on City's E News. Dr. Jennifer Durocher stated an idea instead of creating a flyer monthly, perhaps one flyer covering for example

Jan/Feb/March, pre-selecting dates, times and locations can be made available. Dr. Durocher stated this advance notice will facilitate scheduling for those interested.

**Discussion on Accessibility – Ponce de Leon Corridor & others: Ms. DeZayas / Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Elejabarrieta introduced Ms. Melissa DeZayas to Board. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated an email was submitted to Board regarding concern of accessibility on Ponce de Leon Corridor. Ms. Palacio stated residents have also brought to the Boards' attention issue regarding audible crosswalks. Ms. Palacio stated Board has been discussed these in the past and feels it once again needs to address them.

Ms. Dietz and Ms. Blaire advised during the Miracle Mile project, audible crosswalks were addressed and promised, however upon completion of project were not incorporated.

Ms. DeZayas addressed the Board and explained these two subjects are different and will need to be addressed individually. Ms. DeZayas explained to Board status regarding accessibility and Ponce De Leon project. Ms. DeZayas explained process required via Miami-Dade County regarding audible crosswalks as well as other needs. Ms. DeZayas stated it would commence with a required study and it does take a long time.

Mr. Sando asked if Miami-Dade County builds a new crosswalk, is there any legal requirement they must make it accessible or must provide an audible crosswalk. Ms. DeZayas stated there is not and it would have to be a request from a resident with a disability tied to audible to get an audible crosswalk.

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised it would be best if Board would choose a specific concern and proceed in best way to address it. Mr. Sando stated he believes it is easier to concentrate on existing crosswalks and how to make them accessible. Board agreed this discussion requires further attention; therefore Ms. DeZayas will be attending January meeting to further aid and advise best way to continue with process. Ms. DeZayas provided information on ongoing Ponce De Leon project including sidewalks.

Mr. Sando asked regarding resident making a request regarding crosswalk, could he do request on behalf of his son. Ms. DeZayas advised she will go back to the County and gather more information reference requirements.

**TO DO LIST:**

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised she will be updating Resolution and send same to Board

Ms. Elejabarrieta will try to get on the School Community Relations Committee board meeting of December 17, 2021, to address Self-Contained Classroom Resolution

Ms. DeZayas will be gathering from Miami-Dade Country regarding requirements to request an audible crosswalk at existing crosswalks and will advise Board upcoming meetings

Board then can work on identifying specific crosswalks

Ms. Elejabarrieta to work with Ms. Dietz regarding history regarding audible crosswalks on Miracle Mile and will forward information to Ms. DeZayas

January Board meeting – it was determined would be for January 5, 2022

Ms. Milne stated she will not be present traveling

Dr. Jennifer Durocher advised she will be on call

Ms. Palacio requested G.U.I.D.E. information be distributed to Board

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**NEXT MEETING:** January 5, 2022

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 11:13am  
Motion by Adjourn: Blake Sando / 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion: Philippa Milne / All approved unanimously

# EXHIBIT 1

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

**RESOLUTION  
CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS URGING THAT THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES SUPPORT AND REQUEST MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL TO ENSURE THAT THERE ARE SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS WITHIN THE CITY BOUNDARIES**

**WHEREAS**, the Coral Gables Advisory Board on Disability Affairs (the "Board") advises and provides input to City staff regarding matters affecting individuals with disabilities in an effort to support inclusion and full and effective participation of individuals with disabilities within the City of Coral Gables; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to make a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to students with disabilities ages 3 through 21; and

**WHEREAS**, FAPE must include special education and related services that are provided by the public school system at no cost to the parent, which meet the standards of the state and which are in conformity with the student's individual educational plan (IEP); and

**WHEREAS**, one related service offered by Miami-Dade County Public Schools for students with disabilities are self-contained classrooms; and

**WHEREAS**, a self-contained classroom is a class composed of children who would benefit from special services within a structured classroom composed solely of children having special needs. In a self-contained classroom, students share similar academic requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, City residents should not have to take their children to public schools outside of the City because there are no self-contained classrooms in a public school within the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board believes that City residents shall be entitled to all services as required to assist a child with a disability within the child's neighborhood public school.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS:**

**SECTION 1.** That the foregoing "Whereas" clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Resolution

upon adoption hereof.

**SECTION 2.** That the Coral Gables Advisory Board on Disability Affairs urges the City of Coral Gables to support and request Miami-Dade County Public Schools to offer self-contained classrooms for students with disabilities in public elementary, middle, and high schools located within City boundaries.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON  
DISABILITY AFFAIRS ON THIS 1<sup>st</sup> DAY OF DECEMBER 2021

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RAQUEL ELEJABARRIETA  
SECRETARY TO THE BOARD



