

CITY OF CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS
 CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
 WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2017 8:00 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY:
	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	
Sally Baumgartner	*	P	P	P	E								James C. Cason
Patricia Sowers	*	P	E	P	P								Patricia Keon
Blake Sando	*	P	E	P	P								Vince Lago
Richard Whittington	*	P	P	P	P								Frank C. Quesada
Marie-Ilene Whitehurst	*	P	E	P	E								Jeannette Slesnick

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
(-) – No Appointment
(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

1. Raquel Elejabarrieta, Director of Labor Relations and Risk Management / ADA and Non-Discrimination Coordinator
2. Lorena Garrido, Public Works Department

GUEST:

1. Carolina Vester, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director
2. Ericka Kofkin, PT Special Population Coordinator (Parks & Recreation Department)
3. Stephanie Throckmorton, Assistant City Attorney

CITIZEN ADVISORS:

1. Bonnie Blaire
2. Debbie Dietz, Disability Independence Group

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Blando called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

MEETING ABSENCE:

Mrs. Baumgartner and Mrs. Whitehurst were excused.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

- April 5, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Whittington moved to approve the April 5, 2017 meeting minutes. Mrs. Sowers second the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Mrs. Elejabarrieta announced Ms. Vester, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director is present along with the newly hired PT Special Populations Coordinator, Ericka Kofkin. Having Parks & Recreation staff present was discussed in order to share their vision for special population and Board's ideas for the development of the adult program at the Youth Center.

Ms. Vester explained this special populations subdivision is new for the Parks & Recreation Department. The idea was to include various disabilities such as physical, cognitive, obesity, and trauma. In addition, the special populations subdivision includes a part time Special Populations Coordinator (Ericka), part-time Special Populations Counselor (year around) and a part-time Special Populations Counselor for the summer season. This will assist with inclusion efforts as well as provide one-on-one assistance.

Ms. Vester discussed the three phases this subdivision would include:

Phase One – look into inclusion for all offered programs. The registration forms were amended to allow parents to add the special need /accommodation being requested as well as include any medical information. Seven days notice is required for these special needs/accommodation and such requests will go through Ericka.

Phase Two – specialized programming and events. This would be anything specifically for a disability, need, or special event (i.e. Special Olympics).

Phase Three – phase-out program for young adults. Will partner with the Center for Independent Living to develop volunteer opportunities.

Ms. Vester added that one of the first projects for Ericka will be to create a handbook for staff, identify some of the needs, and training opportunities for staff and volunteer.

Ericka discussed her schooling in special education and past experience which included: encouraging swimming of the deaf and blind, worked in parks and recreation, ran after school program for children with disabilities and summer camp and much more.

Mr. Sando asked if Ericka would have the two counselors report to her. Ms. Vester replied yes and that Ericka would handle more of the administration portion and the two counselors would report to her. All positions are part-time, limiting their operations to 29-hours per week.

Mr. Sando also inquired about the specialized programs and if this entails specific events or reoccurring events. Ms. Vester responded the events could be either specific or reoccurring and they first would need to identify the needs, budgetary needs, and possible partnerships with other organizations.

Mr. Sando asked if this division would serve the entire special needs population: youth, young adults, adults, etc. Ms. Vester said not adults, as Ericka's primary focus is the Youth Center which means children, youth, and young adults. Mr. Sando asked how "youth" is defined (21 years or younger?). Ms. Vester replied that this would need to be clarified. However, programs in the Youth Center end at age 15. This is when the volunteering phase-out program would start at age 15.

Ms. Vester added that the Adult Activity Center is under the Parks & Recreation Department and may offer opportunities for the adult special needs population.

Mr. Sando stated this Board has been discussing putting together a social program or opportunity for adults with disabilities to get together. Being that this new special populations subdivision has been created, he asked what opportunities, if any, can the City offer towards this population. He asked if this division can assist with this vision.

Ms. Vester stated they could assist with this and that it would go through her, the Parks & Recreation Director, Ericka for coordination, and Mrs. Elejabarrieta. She added, depending on the program, it may also require City Commission and / or City Manager approval. The budget also needs to be looked into, as there are limited funds for special needs, accommodations. Ms. Vester suggested for the Board to identify the needs and/or suggestions for approval. Mr. Sando stated that one of the ideas the Board discussed was having a movie night at the Youth Center. Ms. Vester added that having a movie night indoors, in the theater, may be easier however, it could be done outside. This would require cost for equipment rental and other associated costs which may be subsidized by partnering with different organizations/associations. Both the City and Board, may reach out to different organizations to assist.

Mr. Sando mentioned another idea discussed by the Board: having a reoccurring venue of the month as a hosted event, whether it's restaurant or bar, for individuals with disability to socialize.

Mrs. Elejabarrieta stated she has discussed with City staff about creating awards for businesses that follow the inclusionary principles and received positive feedback. This may be accomplished through the Chamber of Commerce and the City's Economic Development Department. The award can be presented at a City Commission meeting.

Ms. Vester suggested adding a requirement to have interested businesses in this award, take students who have gone through the City's volunteer program into their business / work environment. This would help with the transitioning program.

Mrs. Sowers motioned the below resolutions. They were seconded by Mr. Sando and both resolutions passed unanimously:

A Resolution by the Coral Gables Advisory Board on Disability Affairs recommending that the City of Coral Gables develop a program recognizing businesses in the City that have shown a commitment to the principles of inclusion and encouraging businesses within the City to become more inclusive of individuals with disabilities.

A Resolution by the Coral Gables Advisory Board on Disability affairs urging the City of Coral Gables to develop a recreation program for young adults with disabilities.

BOARD-RELATED COMMISSION ITEMS: None.

CITY UPDATE: None.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS: None.

PROGRAM: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned 9:02 a.m.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 8:00 am to be held at the *Coral Gables Youth Center's Conference Room.*