

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
WATERWAY ADVISORY BOARD
 HYBRID MEETING AT CITY HALL/ZOOM
 WEDNESDAY, November 1, 2023 - 5:30 P.M.
 MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS	District	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	APPOINTED BY:
		22	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	
Manny Chamizo	2	P	A	P	A	P	A	P*	*	*	P	P	A	Vince Lago
Pat Nolan	1										P	P	P	Melissa Castro
Juan A. Galan Jr	3	P	P	P	P	P	A	P	*	*	P	P	A	Rhonda Anderson
Kevin Ritzenthaler	1	*	*	A	A	P	P	P	*	*	A	A	P	Kirk Menendez
Nancy Sanabria	7										P	P	P	Ariel Fernandez
Douglas Yoder	CR	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	*	P	P	P	Peter Iglesias
Bertram Goldsmith	7	E	P	P	P	A	P	P	*	*	P	P	P	Commission-As-A-Whole
Levi Meyer	6		A	P	P	A	A	P	*	*	P	P	P	Board-As-A-Whole

P – Present
P*- Present (zoom)
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
R – Resigned
(-) – No Appointment

(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

- Lorena Garrido, Central Administration Division Manager
- Yanissey Solivera, Administrative Assistant
- Sergeant Guido Antezana, Marine Patrol

GUESTS:

- Gonzalo Sanabria

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Mr. Yoder. The roll call was done, and quorum was met.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

Mr. Goldsmith made the motion to approve the minutes of October 4, 2023, seconded by Ms. Sanabria, all were in favor, and adopted unanimously.

DISCUSSIONS:

Mrs. Sanabria shared that the City's newsletter posted an article regarding a non-profit organization named Miami Waterkeeper, who advocates for South Florida's watershed and wildlife. Mr. Yoder said that this organization has been around for several years and is an active group, particularly with respect to the protection of Biscayne Bay. Mrs. Sanabria said that it would be good to get involved and promote the waterway events.

Mr. Meyer brought up the subject of the list of priorities. He suggested compiling the topics and bringing these matters to the attention of the residents that live on the waterways. Mr. Yoder stated that to ensure a positive outcome, the correspondence should be sent by mail. Mr. Meyer said that establishing a task force would be a good strategy to address all the topics in the list of priorities, even if it requires having workshop meetings between the monthly meetings.

Mr. Meyer shared that the Coral Gables Community Newspaper has a digital platform and an in-house studio which he has used in the past to conduct interviews. He inquired about allowing the Board to use the studio to conduct interviews with the City Manager or the City Mayor to discuss the issues and challenges the Board is encountering along the waterways. He stated he would be happy to take charge of hosting those interviews as it would bring awareness to residents living on the waterway and the authorities that manage the waterway projects.

Mr. Meyer brought up the subject of mangroves and tree trimming. He stated that based on the map, the Board reviewed during the previous meeting, there are several problematic areas which the City is required to maintain; however, the City doesn't have the funds in the current budget to trim those areas which in his opinion is a perfectly logical explanation for a homeowner to say in the event they are cited. Mrs. Sanabria suggested reinstating a line item to the City's budget for mangrove trimming. Ms. Garrido stated that the budget for mangrove trimming is in the books, it just needs to be resubmitted for approval. Mrs. Sanabria asked if there were funds in the budget the prior year and if so, were they utilized. Ms. Garrido said yes, it was in the budget and the City did some trimming but it was minimum. Mrs. Sanabria asked how much was in the budget for mangrove trimming the prior year. Ms. Garrido said \$50,000.

Mr. Yoder stated that there are several ways to finance the mangrove trimming project. He said that the City can fund it and assess the property owners or take enforcement action that requires the property owners to do it themselves. Mrs. Sanabria said that she prefers to implicate the property owners first. Mr. Yoder said that the downside to implicating the property owners is that each property owner must get a separate permit from DERM.

Mr. Sanabria introduced himself and discussed the following topics.

- Signage on the waterways.
- Assessing the homeowner for projects on the waterways.
- Additional vessel for Marine Patrol.

Mr. Meyer made a motion to coordinate workshop meetings between their monthly meetings with the presence of at least 2 Board members and the presence of City staff to comply with the Sunshine law. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ritzenthaler, all were in favor, and adopted unanimously.

Ms. Garrido asked the Board if the workshop meetings would be reoccurring meetings. Mr. Meyer said that they can discuss it at the first meeting. Mr. Yoder inquired about the time for the meetings and the Board agreed to conduct the meetings in the morning.

OLD BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Mr. Goldsmith to appoint Douglas Yoder as Chairman of the Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ritzenthaler, all were in favor, and adopted unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Meyer to appoint Nancy Sanabria as Vice Chair of the Bord. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goldsmith, all were in favor, and adopted unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

2024 Board meeting schedule review.

MARINE PATROL REPORT:

Sgt. Antezana reported on a couple of incidents they had in October on the waterway. He said there were thefts from boats at the marina located at 1390 South Dixie Hwy and are still trying to identify the subjects. They also had problems with the strong winds as they were blowing the derelict vessels out of the Grove area.

Mr. Meyer inquired about the additional vessel. Sgt. Antezana said that they are still working on it. Mrs. Sanabria asked Sgt. Antezana who would the Board reach out to if they wanted to inquire about the additional vessel. Sgt. Antezana responded that they can reach out to Chief Hudak or the City Manager.

Sgt. Antezana shared that the force main replacement project is almost completed.

Mrs. Sanabria brought up the subject of signage. She asked Sgt. Antezana if they had made any progress. Sgt. Antezana said that there hasn't been any progress with the signage.

Mr. Yoder inquired about the king tide. He asked Sgt. Antezana if the king tide created problems along the waterway. Sgt. Antezana responded yes, that when the tide is high, he notices docks under water without a wake.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, December 6, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.