

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**Communication Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, September 17, 2015, 8:30 a.m.**  
**Youth Center Conference Room**  
**405 University Drive**  
**Coral Gables, FL**

MEMBERS	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	A	S	COMMISSIONERS
	'14	'14	'14	'14	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	'15	
Herb Levin <b>Margarita Delgado</b>	P	P	P	*	*	P	P	*	*	P	R	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Luba De Witt <b>Derrek Space</b>	P	E	E	*	*	P	P	*	*	P	A	P	Commissioner Pat Keon
<b>Les Pantin III</b>	P	P	P	*	*	P	P	*	*	P	P	A	Commissioner Vince Lago
<b>TJ Villamil</b>											P	E	Commissioner Frank C. Quesada
<b>Connie Crowther</b>	P	P	P	*	*	P	P	*	*	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

A = Absent  
E = Excused Absence  
P = Present  
R = Resigned  
\* = No Meeting

**STAFF AND GUESTS:**

Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon, Public Affairs Manager

Chairperson Margarita Delgado brought the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

**Motion:**

**Ms. Connie Crowther made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 2015 meeting. Mr. Space seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Chair Margarita Delgado asked for self-introductions of Communications Committee members.

Ms. Connie Crowther said she has known Ms. Delgado for many years. Ms. Crowther was Assistant Vice President of University Relations for Florida International University. She founded her own company Crowther and Company Communications, which is celebrating its 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She was past president of PRSA Miami Chapter and keeps very busy with a lot of projects, especially writing for magazines. She is very happy to be a part of this Committee.

Mr. Derrek Space is Strategic Planning Business Partner for AIG. His parents were very involved with the Junior League of Miami. He was previously a member of the City's Property Advisory Board and wanted to be a part of the Communications Committee. His area of

expertise is digital marketing and building various platforms for the Latin American market. He loves living in the City of Coral Gables.

Ms. Margarita Delgado is president of MRD consulting, a public relations agency that has been in business for more than 25 years. She has been a resident of Coral Gables for more than 40 years. Her public relations business services various sectors such as transportation, environment, gaming, and commercial real estate. She had an office in Washington DC for 10 years with clients from all over the world but close it because she was tired of being on a plane. She has been a member of many civic boards such as the Miami Parking Authority and was an Appointee for the White House Conference on Small Business. Ms. Delgado is happy to chair this board.

### **Report from Public Affairs**

Ms. Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon distributed copies of the new publication "*Living in the City Beautiful*" produced by the Office of Communications, with Michelle Cash as the lead manager of this project.

Ms. Crowther complimented the magazine saying that it has a really good layout, and contained interesting information. She liked several items from the magazine. It was well branded with the colors from Coral Gables, reminding readers about the City's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is a very useful magazine, she said.

Ms. Crowther announced that the Coral Gables Chamber magazine is being launched this morning at their monthly breakfast. She has not seen the final issue, but will bring copies to members at the next meeting. Ms. Crowther was involved in writing the articles for the Chamber magazine.

Ms. Higgins Fallon also informed members that the City will be doing a weekly full-page ad on the Sunday's Herald Neighbors section. She distributed samples of possible layouts, in full color. The final layout is still to be determined, but information will be included from various departments. She is currently working on an internal process to make this weekly task easier to handle. She will report back when the layout is finalized.

Ms. Higgins Fallon also reported about the successful soft launch of the City's Facebook page. Ms. Crowther showcased the current page on her I-Pad and thought that the strategy of not making a big fanfare of the launch to be very clever and a very good suggestion from Mr. T.J. Villamil. Ms. Higgins Fallon pointed to members that metrics for Facebook are very encouraging. A video posted on Friday had more than 9,000 views in less than a week. Ms. Crowther said it is very rewarding to see the city now using social media to communicate.

Ms. Higgins Fallon also provided a metrics report on the last few issues of e-News. The issue of September 16 had an open rate of 28.4%; the issue of September 9 had an open rate of 25.2%; and the issue of August 26 had an impressive open rate of 38.6%.

### **Report on Coral Gables Television**

Ms. Higgins Fallon said that both Mr. Michael Rocha and Ms. Michelle Cash were at the Chamber's breakfast assisting with the Mayor's State of the City speech. She showed members a CGTV package regarding an autistic child receiving tennis lesson at one of the City's summer programs. Members liked the production.

Ms. Higgins Fallon also updated members about the upgrade of CGTV's studio. The City Manager has been very supportive about the need to upgrade the current studio which they have been using at the Police Building basement for more than five years. She showed images of the studio's new look with a modern background and a new anchor desk, very much like what CNN uses. Mr. Rocha is very excited about this upgrade and staff can't wait to create additional shows in this new setting.

### **Current Events and Projects**

Ms. Higgins Fallon updated members about current issues and projects of the City. A new Chief of Police has been announced. As mentioned, this morning is the State of the City speech by Mayor Cason taking place at the Biltmore Hotel. She also talked about the City Charter Review and the need to inform the public of current updates. Finally, she presented a recap on the Paseo de la Riviera Project on US1.

Ms. Margarita Delgado talked about the need to inform the public about big development projects. Based on her experience, she knows that projects that interrupt traffic are a hot button that creates friction among the public. She mentioned that the City is going through a lot of projects and it is very important to look at all these developments, and how they public will be affected, from a holistic point of view.

Ms. Connie Crowther agreed. She also thinks it is very important to share every project update with the public. Ms. Delgado agreed that there needs to be a person designated to be in contact with the neighbors around the clock.

Mr. Derrek Space said that it is important for the City to use Twitter and effectively communicate in 140 characters or less. Due to his extensive travel for work, he is in contact communication via his cell phone at all times. He suggested that once the Office of Communications has the proper budget, to assign a dedicated staff to do this ground work.

Ms. Margarita Delgado read the previous minutes where members were asked to bring their #hagtag ideas and suggested to discuss this at the next meeting. She also read that the City is working with long-time friend Stan Adkins as a consultant, who she respects and admires.

Upon the announcement that Ms. Michelle Cash has submitted her resignation, Ms. Connie Crowther wanted to send her regards to Ms. Cash, as she has done a very good job for the City.

Ms. Higgins Fallon distributed the latest copy of e-News. With no further issues to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.