

CORAL GABLES SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

COMMISSION CHAMBERS HYBRID MEETING (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23, 2021 @ 5:00 P.M.

MEETNG MINUTES

MEMBERS	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	APPOINTED BY:
	20	20	20	20	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	
Rita Teutonico	*	P	E	P	P	*	P	P	P	E	E	P	Mayor Lago
Carmen Olazabal	*		P	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	E	P	Commissioner Fors
Jasper Brock	*	P	E	P	P	*	A	P	P	E	E	E	Commissioner Menendez
Greg Hamra	*	P	P	E	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	E	Commissioner Mena
Marlin Ebbert	*	P	P	E	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Anderson
Martin Pinilla	*		P	P	P	*	A	P	P	P	P	P	City Manager Peter Iglesias
VACANT	*	P	P	P	P	*	P	*	*		*	*	City Commission-As-A-Whole
Teddy Lhoutellier	*	P	P	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	U.M. Representative
Monique Selman	*	P	P	E	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	C.G. Chambers of Commerce
Piero Gardinali	*	P	E	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	P	E	F.I.U. Representative

A – Absent
P – Present
E – Excused.
(*) no meeting

STAFF:

Matt Anderson, Senior Sustainability Analyst
Solanch Lopez, Assistant to the City Manager

CALL TO ORDER:

The Chairperson, Marlin Ebbert called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

GUESTS:

Al Zamora, Assistant P.W. Director for Solid Waste
Imelys Sansores, City Clerk’s Office
Karelia, Resident
Gordon Fales, Resident
Jack Thompson, Resident
Maria Cruz, Resident

MOTIONS:

May 26, 2021, meeting minutes – Monique made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, Martin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Martin made a motion to elect Marlin as Chairperson; Monique seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Monique made a motion to elect Rita as Vicechair; Carmen seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Monique made a motion to excuse Greg, Piero, and Jasper; Rita seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

PHYSICAL QUORUM (6): Monique, Marlin, Rita, Martin, Carmen, and Teddy

Imelys from the City Clerk’s office went over a few items pertaining to all the City Boards.

The Board members received their member cards along with a list of things the card can be used for, and they were advised to place the parking pass on their car dashboards when attending the meetings. *Imelys* reminded the board members to complete their financial disclosure forms, which is a Miami Dade County requirement, if they have not done so already. The City has gone back to in-person meetings as of June 14, 2021, therefore when a member cannot attend a meeting; although they may attend via zoom, it will still be considered an absence. The board can motion to excuse those members and can still listen into the meeting but cannot vote on any board items/motions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jack and his wife have been living in Coral Gables since 1981, he said the City has only gotten better and one of the appeals of living in Coral Gables is the extent to which the City picks up trash debris on a substantial basis. The problem is that there is a recycling effort which he applauds yet there are a lot of people that are not adhering to: the requirements that cardboard boxes must be broken down and placed with the recycling materials. Code Enforcement was on Riviera between US1 and Hardee issuing warning notices to residents who had boxes stacked in the swale, yet the next week, residents were placing boxes in the swale again. *Jack* suggests for the City to not pick up debris in the swale and leave the boxes there so when the residents call asking why their debris was not picked up, the response will be that there were boxes in the swale. *Jack* believes that this would highly incentivize the people to adhere to the requirements that boxes must be broken down and placed with recycle items.

Presentation/Discussion on City Recycling:

Al Zamora, Assistant Public Works Director, Solid Waste Division, has worked in the private sector for 24 years. He started working with Waste Management, then the City of Miami Beach as the Sanitation Director, and presently with the City of Coral Gables. Al stated that the Chair

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made a good point, the cardboard legislation has been in place for more than a year going on two. His right of way inspector is constantly going out and issuing warnings, but he is the only one and there is only so much he can do. Al stated since he started with the City in late 2018, the cardboard collection has improved by 632 tons/year. However, he mentioned, it has gotten to the point the City have to start issuing citations.

Marlin has been telling people that the only thing the City can make money on is recycling cardboards. Al said no. Carboard is a business, people that do it are in it to make money and there are four (4) major commodities in the recycling market (fiber, plastics, glass, and metal). When recycling was rolled out 35 years ago, it was encouraged to recycle anything that is fiber. The problem is you must have enough knowledge of the industry to ensure what is in your program, is a useful commodity. When the China phenomena happened, there was so much import coming in with goods, but nothing was going back in the containers. As China's economy become better, they started generating their natural resources themselves. China became our landfills and they stopped it. All the local plants started shutting down. The Chinese are buying these plants that we let go, retrofitting them and start to run them.

Metal is the big money maker, not only is it expensive, but it is cheap to sort out since you do not have to run it through any manpower.

Plastic is a tougher item. It may not go away and they are not going back to glass containers because it is not profitable.

Martin mentioned that in the past you would get money if you took the empty bottles back, but this service is no longer available. Al said that is what we need to go back to and to think about reusing instead of recycling.

Marlin tells people, forget the word recycle and use refuse, because if you do not buy it, then you do not have to worry about what to do with it.

The County has a contract with Waste Management which is the only two MRF (Material Recovery Facility) in Miami-Dade County. What they do is they do not recycle, they sort and then they sell.

Al wants the word to get out about the phenomenal job that is done in Coral Gables, as far as the 8% recycling contamination rate compared to other municipalities. The City did not pay a penny for the 2,632 tons collected in 2020. There are municipalities in the 30 to 40 percent contamination rates, and they are paying \$100 a ton. These municipalities will have to decide to either keep recycling and paying \$100 or go to the landfill and pay \$73. The City was able to incorporate, in their franchise agreement, a deal with Waste Management that if the contamination rate was kept under 15%, they City would not have to pay anything. The City uses open carts which gives the ability to sort out materials at the curb. If Al's employees see something that should not be in the cart, they leave it. Al tried a pilot program in the public right away, where blue recycling bins were placed, some on Miracle Mile, and some on Galiano. As a part of the pilot program, they saw extremely high rates of contamination, which is expected in the public right of way. It is a challenge all around the country.

Monique asked Al if he has any educational tools, other than the current printout. Al said in the contract that was negotiated, which is the franchise agreement to collect with Waste Management, there's a clause where they will go and meet with your condo association board and try to educate people on the "do's" and "don't's" of recycling. 35 years ago, there was a rush to get this recycling program out that no one took the time to properly educate the people. Monique suggested for this to be a requirement, as part of getting a license to supply dumpsters in Coral Gables, that they must recycle whatever is in their dumpster.

Al stated that Miami-Dade County is running out of landfill space and that the City has already started taking some of the trash/garbage to the Okeechobee landfill. He also pointed out that 99% of the solid waste picked up in Coral Gables is taken to the "waste to energy" plant in Doral.

Maria looked at the 17-18 or 18-19 proposed budget book and found that half a million dollars were allocated to buy covered recycle bins, which were never bought because a decision was made that by covering the bins it would increase the contamination rate. Maria's asked why the City is asking residents to pay \$4, if there is a half of million dollars that were allocated and never used, plus the money that the City is saving because the recycling is being done right. Why raise the price again this year? Al said that the half a million dollars that were allocated was for a comprehensive improvement to the sanitation division. Maria stated that the wording in the budget book does not say improvement to sanitation, it says on the line item covered recycled bins. Al said the \$4 dollars she is speaking about is a pass through that the County charges every year, regardless of where you go. Maria would like to know where the money is that the City is saving by recycling correctly. Al will only speak of the savings he has seen since he has been with the City. When he first started, the Solid Waste equipment in the yard was from 2000, 2006, 2007 and 2008 through the years they have invested in Solid Waste garbage trucks and today he is proud to say that every truck in the yard is either from 2017 or 2018.

Marlin said we need to move on, but she wants to go back to the original question about cardboard. When cardboard is in the trash pile, does it go to the landfill? Al said no, it goes to a Waste Management site that was negotiated with the franchise agreement at a cut rate. Marlin stated that the City needs to be educating the residents that if they break down the cardboard and put it in with the recycling, that it benefits them and the City. Marlin said if we are still sending waste bills in August, that would be a good way to educate residents.

Karelia mentioned that she placed the cardboard on the side of her house and Solid Waste workers placed it in the landscape pile. She was not sure if she met the criteria or why they placed it in the landscape pile. If she were educated on what she did wrong, she could fix it for the next time around. Al said the goal is compliance and in the next budget cycle he will be asking for another right of way inspector, currently he only has one for the entire City.

Matt thanked Al for coming today, as a Board we always bring up the recycling conversation in every meeting so to have the resources at hand, was great.

Updates/Recap on City/SAB Initiatives

Great American Cleanup Season:

Program Time Frame: March 20 – June 21

Solo Cleanups:

Program Time Frame: April 5 – June 20, 2021

Final # of online Registrants: 28

Clean Swell App Report:

- 35 Participants Reported through App
- 253.08 pounds of trash collected.
- Most reported item: cigarette butts

Accepting Submissions for *Most Pounds of Litter Collected* Contest

- Winners to be announced at the end of the month. Prizes provided by Community Foundation.

Litter Index Update:

2021 Litter Index Completed

Final Citywide Score of 1 signifying minimal to no litter

Video of segments with individual segment scores will be added to GIS map.

Stantec Event:

Event Date: June 22 at Matheson Hammock Park

9 Stantec Employees Participated

66.9 Pounds of litter collected.

KFB News:

Award winners

2021 Outstanding Recycling Efforts for the HHW Collection Event and Christmas Tree Recycling Program

Battery Recycling Program:

Pilot Program Tentative Start Date: Monday, July 12, 2021

Locations: City Hall, Youth Center, Public Works, Police & Fire Headquarters

County Fertilizer Ordinance:

Matt reminded the Board of the County's Fertilizer Ordinance, the city continues partnering with them to educate the community, landscapers, and HOA. Please log on to www.coralgables.com/fertilizers to view the training that the County recently did. The enforcement does not go into effect until October, this summer is being used to help educate.

Coral Gables Chamber Event: Emergency from COVID Smarter, Stronger and More Sustainable (June 17th)

The City partnered with the Chamber and the Canadian Council to do a sustainability talk, Mayor Lago introduced the Panel and Mark from the Chamber moderated the panel, Matt and Raimundo City IT Director were in attendance as well, they talked about how cities and businesses are emerging from COVID smarter, stronger, and sustainable. Matt will share the link to the recording with the Board.

Matt updated the Board on the Solar CO-OP that is going on throughout Miami-Dade County as well as Coral Gables where you can sign up and take advantage of group pricing from whatever vendor is selected by the CO-OP. They usually only do Solar PV, now they are including in the scope battery storage and electric vehicle charging. Matt will share the marketing materials with the Board and the community as well.

City Commission Agenda Items: Sustainability

An update was provided to the Commission at the June 8th meeting in reference to the marketing for the Fertilizer Ordinance in partnership with the County.

SAB Meeting Logistics (Meeting schedule/time, Chair and Vice Chair, Summer schedule, etc.)

The Board has agreed that the 4th Wednesday of each month and 5 pm, works for them. The July meeting is now moved to Tuesday, July 27, 2021. There are (3) suggested locations for the Board to meet; City Hall Commission Chambers, Adult Activity Center and the PSB, in the meantime the meetings will continue at the Commission Chambers.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Greg - thanked the City of Coral Gables for earlier in the year endorsing The Energy Innovation Act. The CNN Sunday program had a 4-minute segment that mentioned the EIA, Greg will share the link with the Board so they can understand that they had a hand in voting to promote to the Commission which then voted unanimously to pass a resolution supporting the EIA.

Teddy – Linda Lawrence will be at UM next week from 12 pm to 1 pm speaking about Pollinators Haven, issues with pollinators. July 15, 2021, Chris Castro, and Jeff will speak for 1 hour on the Green Regions in the nation

Rita – Suggested moving the Commission Agenda Items to the top of the meeting agenda and discussing updates towards the end of the meetings. One of the Mayors priorities is Sustainability and creating a more sustainable city, she would like the members to link with the mayor's agenda and some specific points they are trying to promote and have the Board strategically align with some of them.

Martin – met with the City Manager before the meeting and in 20 minutes gave him a rundown of the things he is trying to accomplish and most of them had to do with sustainability. Martin thinks it would be great to invite the City Manager to one of the meetings.

Next Meeting – July 27, 2021

Sustainability Advisory Board
June 23, 2021

ADJOURNED: 6:43 pm