

CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

Economic Development Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

Wednesday | September 6, 2023 | 8:00 a.m.
Location: Zoom and Economic Development Department
2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables, FL 33134

EDB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTING ENTITY
	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	
James Kohnstamm, Vice Chair	X	P	P	X	E	E	P	P					Mayor Vince Lago
Timothy Heffernan	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P					Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Derrek Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P					Commissioner Kirk R. Menendez
Nguyen Castilla Cabanilla	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	E					Commissioner Melissa Castro
Scott Shuffield	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P					Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Barbara Perez	X	E	P	X	P	P	P	P					City Manager Peter Iglesias
Thad Adams, Chair	X	P	E	X	P	P	P	P					Chamber of Commerce

A=Absent E=Excused Absence P=Present X=No Meeting Ph=Present by Phone Z=Zoom - =Former Board Member

Staff and Guests:

Belkys Perez, Director, Economic Development Department
Leticia Perez, International Business Development Coordinator, Economic Development Department
Yenisis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department
Paulson Jean, IT Network Analyst II, Innovation & Technology Department

Chairman Mr. Thad Adams brought the meeting to order at 8:11 a.m.

1. Review and approval of August 2, 2023, Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Tim Heffernan made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Ms. Barbara Perez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the minutes.

2. Excuse Board member's absence

Ms. Barbara Perez made a motion to excuse today's absence for Ms. Nguyen Castilla Cabanilla. Mr. Heffernan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the absence.

3. Economic Development Activities

a) Business Tax License

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the city uses Eden to manage business tax licenses. Within the next year, the city will transition to a new system which will provide better data. Currently, at the beginning of every month, the department looks at the business tax licenses of the previous month to determine how many businesses opened in the city. The information is used to better understand the economic landscape of the city.

b) Certificate of Use

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the same system will be used to obtain information on Certificates of Use. This is important as Certificates of Use are given to every brick-and-mortar business.

c) ICF Top7

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the IT department was asked to submit a proposal for a Smart City Award with Intelligent Community Forum (ICF). IT recently became one of the Top21 cities in the world for having smart city technology. They were asked to apply for the Top7 and again the city was selected to advance. The winner will be named at the ICF Global Summit held on October 25-26, 2023, in New York.

d) Downtown Activities

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that with the sunset of the Business Improvement District (BID) many of the activities have fallen on the department. The city is preparing for a new budget year, and the department has asked for funding to cover the cost of several signature events hosted by the former BID and others that have proven impactful. The city is committed to maintaining a vibrant downtown.

Mr. Adams stated that in speaking to Mark Trowbridge, the Chamber of Commerce is ready to do everything to supplement and compliment all the efforts from the City.

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that she spoke to Mr. Trowbridge, and he was supportive.

e) Food Design Night

Ms. Leticia Perez informed the Board that the City partnered with the Italian Consulate and Italian Chamber of Commerce to host Food Design Night. It involves three (3) Italian home design showrooms (Kartell, Arte-Cucine and Scavolini). Every showroom will host at themed food tasting paired with Italian wines and the focus will be particularly on the design, arrangement, and presentation of the dishes. The event will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2023, from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. The city has organized the use of a trolley for transportation between the three (3) showrooms along with parking passes for the VIP guests. Additionally, the city will receive 150 free tickets for Coral Gables residents to attend on a first come first served basis.

f) Downtown Cleanup

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the City engages in quarterly cleanups of the downtown. Maintaining a clean downtown is appealing not only to our businesses, but to visitors as well. The last Downtown Community Cleanup - End of Summer Edition was held on Thursday, August 31, 2023, from 5:00 pm – 6:30 p.m. It had the largest participation to date

with 57 volunteers. More than 360 lbs. of trash were collected. The next event will be held in December.

4. Business Tax License Report

Mrs. Belkys Perez updated the Board on the new and soon to come businesses in Coral Gables.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Yenisis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department.

DRAFT