

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 18, 2021

8:30 AM

Community Meeting Room A

Police & Fire Headquarters, 2151 Salzedo Street

### School Community Relations Committee

*Chairperson Ariel Fernandez*  
*Vice Chairperson Sam Joseph*  
*Board Member Erin Anding*  
*Board Member Winnie Chang*  
*Board Member Sandy Dimitris*  
*Board Member Carmen Manrara Cartaya*  
*Board Member Cecilia D. Slesnick*  
*Board Member Jennifer Ward Sando*  
*Board Member Sharon Watson*

The School Community relations Committee will be holding its Regular Meeting on Friday, June 18, 2021, commencing at 8:30 a.m.

While the Committee is back to live in-person meetings, members of the public may participate in person but are also able to participate via the Zoom platform. Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85469219887>). In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting by dialing: +1 929 205 6099 Meeting ID: 854 6921 9887.

To speak on an Agenda Item, please "Raise your Hand" or send a message to one of the meeting hosts using the Zoom Platform. If you joined the meeting via telephone you can "Raise your Hand" by pressing \*9.

## CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:40 a.m.

## ROLL/QUORUM CALL

**Present:** 5 - Slesnick, Joseph, Fernandez, Anding and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 4 - Watson, Dimitris, Chang and Manrara Cartaya

**Attachments:** [Attendees - In-Person & Virtual.pdf](#)

## A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

School Community Relations Committee Meeting of May 21, 2021.

**Attachments:** [Draft SCRC May 21 Minutes.pdf](#)  
[Cover Memo.docx](#)

**A motion was made by Vice Chair Joseph, seconded by Board Member Anding, that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following vote.**

**Yeas:** 5 - Slesnick, Joseph, Fernandez, Anding and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 4 - Watson, Dimitris, Chang and Manrara Cartaya

## B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

**Estelle Lockhart from Carver Elementary PTA comments:**

- Principal at Ponce Middle being honored as PTA Principal of the Year.
- SCRC expresses interest in asking Mayor to approve proclamation for principal.
- Carver Elementary is working on upgrading Spanish program and is looking for a sponsor to pay for first and second grade programs.
- Mrs. Lockhart mentions that she met with Mayor Lago regarding crosswalk issue and that it would be on the next Commission agenda.

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

**C-1 Miami-Dade County Public Schools Update (Facilitated by Mari Tere Rojas, School Board Member)**

- School year has closed, graduations were hybrid (in-person with virtual).
- There is still space available at MDCPS summer camps & 305 program.
- School Board Member Rojas will be presenting item A-7 during the upcoming June School Board Meeting. This is a Salute & Honor to MDCPS students for being promoted to next grade level. This item is co-sponsored by the entire School Board.
- Item H-8 regarding Mental Health Services will also go before the board to support the hiring of more mental health care providers in schools.
- A proclamation for the principal of Ponce De Leon Middle for being the Principal of the Year will also be presented at the June 23 School Board meeting.
- If trends continue, next year will be completely in-person but parents will be given the opportunity to participate in pre-pandemic online program.
- School Board Member Rojas has been addressing issue of Ponce Middle crosswalk with County officials, Mr. Perez, and Mayor Lago.
- Actively working on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) program for first and second grade. There will be an update at the next meeting.
- School Board Member Rojas thanks the City and SCRC for the Coral Gables Literacy Festival and gives kudos for a wonderful event.
- Side note brought up towards the end of the meeting regarding the possibility of Havana Harry's using 34 parking spaces at Coral Gables Senior High during the Greco parking lot construction. Vice Chair Joseph brought up this item as he heard mention of it by Commissioner Menendez during the June 8 Commission Meeting. As per School Board Member Rojas, if this moves forward, the process for this request is to go through the School Operations division with Raul Perez, Chief Facilities Officer. Mr. Perez would follow up with all parties after initial request is submitted. A contract would be needed if request is approved. This request would be for after hours parking once school lets out.

**Item C-2 Time Certain for 9:30 a.m.**

**C-2 Cavaliers Future Leaders Program (Facilitated by Commissioner Menendez)**

- New name: Cavaliers Future Leaders Fellowship
- Coral Gables Senior High wants to launch in early 2022.
- Summer high-level hands-on experience within city government; five participants who will be juniors and seniors and will be shadowing the commissioners.
- Mark Trowbridge, Coral Gables Chamber president, has also agreed to have students attend a Chamber of Commerce Meeting.
- Students will learn to draft resolutions and ordinances.
- This will not be a 9am-5pm internship but meeting and project based so that the students can also enjoy their summer.
- City will draft them a letter of recommendation signed by the Mayor for them to use on their college applications, along with a certificate of participation.
- At the end of the program, participants will also receive a \$500 scholarship check. The cost of first three years of this scholarship will be covered by a donation from the Menendez Family.
- Resolution makes it so the City Manager can tweak program as needed.
- Want to get applications out by 2022 and identify which students will be selected by February or March, students will need a minimum of a 3.0 GPA, two letters of recommendation from the school, one additional letter from outside the school, and a 1,000-word essay. Candidates do not have to be a Coral Gables resident, just be students at Coral Gables Senior High.
- Board Member Slesnick recommends including a 15-minute interview for top candidates.
- Commissioner Menendez wants a committee with all stakeholders to select the participants. This would include a representative from the SCRC, Friends of Gables, Chamber, Community Foundation, PTSA, Coral Gables Senior High and the City.
- Once participants are selected, five alternates can be asked to attend a Commission Meeting.
- Discussion about scheduling a sunshine workshop to discuss the program with all stakeholders is had.
- A discussion item will be added the next SCRC agenda regarding recommendations for the program.

**Attachments:** [R-2021-137-As Amended.pdf](#)  
[Cavaliers Future Leaders Program Cover Memo.pdf](#)

**C-3 Summer Meeting Schedule**

Discussion on summer schedule takes place. A motion was made by Board Member Slesnick, seconded by Board Member Anding, that the July meeting be canceled and the August meeting be moved back one week to August 27, 2021. The motion passed by the following vote.

**Yeas:** 5 - Joseph, Fernandez, Anding, Slesnick and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 4 - Watson, Dimitris, Chang and Manrara Cartaya

**D. OLD BUSINESS**

**D-1 Election of SCRC Chairperson**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Joseph, seconded by Board Member Slesnick, that this matter be deferred until the August meeting. The motion passed.

**D-2 Election of SCRC Vice Chairperson**

A motion was made by Vice Chair Joseph, seconded by Board Member Slesnick, that this matter be deferred until the August meeting. The motion passed.

**D-3 SIP Committee Member Assignments Review (Facilitated by Ariel Fernandez, Chair)**

Attachments: [SIP Descriptions](#)

Brief discussion regarding the History Tours is had. Field trips have not been reinstated at schools at this time. Work continues to ensure program is budgeted. Vice Chair Joseph will speak to Mary Snow of the Community Foundation regarding bus coverage.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Joseph, seconded by Board Member Slesnick, that this matter be deferred until the August meeting. The motion passed with the following vote.

**Yeas:** 5 - Slesnick, Joseph, Fernandez, Anding and Board Member Ward Sando

**Absent:** 4 - Watson, Dimitris, Chang and Manrara Cartaya

**E. ONGOING BUSINESS**

**E-1 Recap on the Gables Family Literacy Festival (Facilitated by Sam Joseph, Vice Chair & Carolina Vester, Assistant Director of Community Recreation)**

- Gables Family Literacy Festival was successful, and was very well attended (1,200-1,500).
- Residents of the area do not want it to be any bigger.
- Community Recreation would make this a new need in their budget so it can happen annually.
- Moving forward mini book fairs will be a part of summer camp programming.
- Discussion on incorporating civic engagement component for future years.
- Mention that this event would be a good place to honor the Teacher of the Year in the future.
- This item is to be placed in the August agenda for a final recap.

**E-2 General Updates (Facilitated by Naomi Levi Garcia, Staff Liaison & Solanch Lopez, Secretary)**

Update on sidewalks was provided.

**F. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**F-1 Next SCRC Meeting - Friday, July 16, 2021**

Questions/Comments: [scrc@coralgables.com](mailto:scrc@coralgables.com)

Canceled via a motion earlier in meeting. Next meeting will be on August 27th.

**F-2 Keep Florida Beautiful Youth Council Accepting Application through July 1**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 10:58 am.

**NOTE**