

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of September 17, 2009

Members	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	
Leslie Pantin Jr.	x	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	+	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Richard Chimelis	x	A	+	+	P	E	P	P	P	A	*	*	P	Commissioner Maria Anderson
Sam Joseph														
Katherine deBlij	x	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	+	P	*	P	Comm. Ralph Cabrera Jr.
Maria Garcia														
Vivian Moré	x	P	E	E	E	P	E	P	P	P	*	*	E	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
David Stiefel	x	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	*	*	P	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk Jr

* No meetings

x No quorum

+ Membership discontinued

Staff in attendance:

Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon, Public Affairs

Raimundo Rodulfo, IT Department

Catherine Cathers, Economic Sustainability

The meeting came to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the June meeting were circulated for approval.

Motion: Sam Joseph motioned to approve the June meeting minutes.

Maria Garcia seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Higgins Fallon distributed a copy of the letter of resignation from Communications Committee Chairman Leslie Pantin. Mayor Slesnick will appoint a new member to the Communications Committee.

Arts and Culture Specialist Catherine Cathers was introduced. She is the liaison for the Cultural Development Board. Back in March, the Cultural Development Board discussed the stipulation of having all cultural grantees to acknowledge the city's support in their marketing materials. In the past, they've used the City seal but it is difficult to read. The Board talked about having a stronger visual presence. They proposed including the established branding of "Coral Gables, The City Beautiful" on these materials. It is currently being used in coffee mugs, lapel pins, and Farmers Market's material.

David Stiefel inquired about what happened to our branding. Higgins Fallon replied that the branding merchandise was given to the Biltmore Hotel for placing in their store. They sold about \$1,000 worth of merchandise and the rest was returned to the City. These included shirts, hats and decorative tiles.

Cathers clarified that the design is already an established branding. Higgins concurred that this is the Paula Black's design.

Sam Joseph inquired if they will be using a uniform graphics to ensure that fonts will not be substituted. Cathers replied that they will be giving grantees a jpg file to use.

Stiefel said that previously this Committee pushed for a branding development but found resistance from the City. The Committee did an experimental tryout by producing shirts and caps to be sold at the Biltmore Hotel. He agreed that if we own this branding, we should use it.

Cathers said that the Economic Development Board would like to keep the branding as it is, without the addition of the trademark initials. Higgins Fallon requested that she check with the legal department to see if this could be done.

Joseph inquired if there was only one color variation for the branding. Higgins Fallon replied that there were three color combinations. Cathers clarified that the logo will be used in black and white.

With no further issues to discuss, Cathers thanked the Committee and left the meeting.

Information Technology

Raimundo Rodulfo discussed a new tool that the IT Department is using to monitor the City's web. It is a hosting service to improve the site. It automatically checks the more than 1,000 pages that are currently in the City's web, making sure that there are no broken links, no spelling errors and provides accessibility compliance as well.

The IT Department is also working on developing a list server to assist the Public Affairs Office to maintain the database of e-News emails. Higgins Fallon said that this is needed because the list of emails has grown to 5,000 and is currently difficult to maintain.

Rodulfo also discussed a new project that deals with intellectual trademark. With the proliferation of social network, the City is trying to protect its name. Facebook recently approved a change in their policy that allows organizations to have more control of their intellectual property. Right now IT is in the process of reserving 15 names for the City.

Higgins Fallon said that her office is researching social media and analyzing how other cities are using Facebook, Twitter, My Space and You Tube. The City is currently posting videos on You Tube and that is working fine. She asked for input about ways to use social media.

Maria Garcia agreed that it would be a good idea for the City to have its own Facebook page.

Joseph said that Facebook provides automatic updates of events which would be beneficial.

Stiefel said that this is a first step to something new and that it is important to jump into it.

Higgins Fallon talked about the need to consider public records law when creating these sites.

Rodulfo said that a valid concern is that individuals are currently impersonating organizations and government sites which is why the City needs to protect its name.

Joseph suggested pilot testing a Facebook page using this Committee as the first circle of friends before it is sent citywide. Other members agreed. Joseph also commented on the negative usage of Twitter.

Stiefel agreed that Twitter is more for the individual.

With no further issues to discuss, Rodulfo thanked the Committee and left the meeting.

Budget Message

Higgins Fallon distributed copies of *Straight Talk*, a new product that aims at explaining the budget issues and clarifying the facts versus fiction regarding the upcoming budget. This communication was born after several political organizations were confusing readers regarding what the City is trying to do fiscally. The last budget hearing is scheduled for September 22 and the City is going through similar tough financial times as other government entities.

Garcia said that she attended the first budget hearing and she asked people if they've received *Straight Talk*. People acknowledged receiving it and were now getting both sides of the story. She said that *Straight Talk* was a good idea.

Stiefel inquired if we have contacted the legal department about the usage of a city's email list by political groups who use it with the intent of misinformation.

Higgins Fallon said that the e-News is public records information but she is aware that the City Attorney has requested that these groups properly identify themselves as not related to the City.

Emergency Rescue Transportation Fee

Higgins Fallon distributed a copy of outreach plan designed to inform residents regarding the new Emergency Rescue Transportation fee. Her office has developed a Citizen's Guide with easy to understand Q&A to explain the new program. This will be communicated through e-News, the web, and Coral Gables Television.

Because of the backlash experienced by the City of Miami fire fee, Joseph suggested doing a *Straight Talk* on the subject.

H1N1 Outreach

Higgins Fallon distributed copies of information being distributed to residents regarding the H1N1 flu. The City is being proactive in providing information to residents in advent of the new flu season. Her office will continue to communicate updates from the CDC and the Health Department.

Coral Gables Television

Higgins Fallon showed two packages prepared by Coral Gables Television. The first one was a “What’s Happening” on coming back to school, and the second one was “Coral Gables Tell You How” on how to find parking in the City.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.