

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of June 18, 2009

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

* No meetings

x No quorum

+ Membership discontinued

Staff in attendance:

Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon, Public Affairs

Belkys Perez, Public Affairs

Michael Rocha, Coral Gables Television

Raimundo Rodulfo, IT Department

Guests:

Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera Jr.

Katherine deBlij

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

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the May meeting were circulated for approval.

Motion: David Stiefel motioned to approve the May meeting minutes. Maria Garcia seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

New Member

Acting Chairperson Vivian Moré welcomed new Communications Committee member Maria Garcia. She expressed sadness about losing Katherine deBlij as she was a good member of this Committee who voiced a lot of valid concerns to the attention of the Commission.

Commissioner Ralph Cabrera took the opportunity to introduce Maria Garcia as his new appointee to this board and also to thank deBlij for her past service. He said he was very fortunate to have Katherine on the board as she kept him abreast of everything that happened with this committee. deBlij is not living in the city as she will now be his appointee to the Board of Adjustment. He also presented deBlij with a certificate of appreciation. Commissioner Cabrera also provided her with a miniature "key of the city" pin. He thanked members for their attention and left the meeting.

deBlij also said good bye to the committee members. They wished her good luck in her new endeavors. deBlij left the meeting.

Information Technology Update

Raimundo Rodulfo from the IT Department presented a handout regarding improvements made to the city's website. The first page shows the new fonts used from the Verdana and Arial font family. These fonts improve the aesthetics of the website and make it easier to read. A second handout provided updates on the Terrafly page. For the sake of the new member, Rodulfo explained that Terrafly is a project managed by FIU and is funded by NASA and IBM. This is a free service to municipalities and is a geographic information system tool, with interactive and live time maps. There are two new features that have been implemented. The first one displays high resolution photos of the landmarks embedded on the maps and the second one an aerial historic timeline of how Coral Gables looked in 1994 until now.

Rodulfo also reported that they have been working on technical improvements on the configuration of the network for the internet. In the next two months, they will be improving the bandwidth which will facilitate the speed and efficiency of the internet.

Moré inquired about the status on the RFP project to improve the design of the internet. Rodulfo reported that they had to cancel this request due to budget constraints. Moré insisted that the city still look into getting a UM Intern that can provide free internet web design during the summer.

Hurricane Preparation Outreach

Higgins Fallon reported that for the summer season the focus is on hurricane preparedness outreach. This campaign began in June and will continue until November. She listed the things being done to inform the public. Coral Gables Television is airing "Weathering The Storm" which is a special program that details what the city is doing in anticipation of storms. Also, for the June show of Coral Gables Now, Belkys interviewed the Fire Chief regarding the same. Hurricane preparedness information has been posted on the web and has been included on e-News. The employee newsletter also included a message from the City Manager to city employees to be ready for the hurricane season.

Xchange Newsletter

Higgins Fallon also distributed copies of the latest employee newsletter, the Xchange. The newsletter is posted on the intranet and due to budget constraints it will be quarterly beginning October 1.

Coral Gables Television

With the assistance of the IT Department, Higgins Fallon reported that the CGTV page on the city's website has been revamped. Videos are posted on the web with a new, more user friendly format. CGTV also has a new page on YouTube page linked to the city's website, with the idea that more people can find about CGTV through this popular page.

Higgins Fallon also talked about a special project done with the school system to create "Our Gables, Our Schools" video. The mission was to prepare a video of the public school offerings in Coral Gables that will be available to those who are thinking of relocating to Coral Gables and also to realtors. CGTV filmed at each public school in Coral Gables and after a long period of approval

with the school system, the video was completed. It is a very comprehensive look at public schools in Coral Gables showcasing the benefits both to our city and to the school system.

Michael Rocha talked about the latest “On The Scene” show which is city related program but more on the entertainment side. The topic for this show was “Weddings in Coral Gables.” This 30-minute show featured all about wedding dresses, wedding locations, cakes and flowers, and wedding rings. A brief clipping of the show was viewed.

Moré inquired about how we advertise this show. Higgins Fallon replied that there is usually an announcement on e-News and the video is also posted on YouTube for exposure. Moré also wanted to know if there's a way to know how many people tune to CGTV. Rocha replied that approximately 80 percent of residents have access to Comcast in Coral Gables and that cable has no other ratings.

Rocha also informed that we are celebrating our 100th episode for What's Happening in Coral Gables. Incredibly, we have covered 100 events in Coral Gables in the past three years. Moré commended Maria for this was one of her projects when she started. Higgins Fallon replied that she has great support from her team.

Rocha also talked about moving to the next level of production at CGTV and the goal is to be nominated for an Emmy in television. CGTV is currently working on a project that might take us there. Belkys talked about a show focusing on drunk driving and how this is a big issue in Coral Gables, being a cut-through city. A lot of work has gone into this production. The focus of this program is on how the community can come together to make a difference.

Moré congratulated the staff for this very good idea. Higgins Fallon said that this show has a very touching story with a community message behind it.

Summer meetings

Higgins Fallon inquired Committee members if they wanted to meet during July and August. Members agreed to not meet in July and for Higgins Fallon to send an e-mail to see if there was a need to meet in August.

City News Update

Higgins Fallon distributed the latest e-news. She will subscribe Maria Garcia to e-News.

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