

CORAL GABLES MERRICK HOUSE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Meeting Minutes of March 11, 2024, 8:30 a.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	A 23	M 23	J 23	J 23	A 23	S 23	O 23	N 23	D 23	J 24	F 24	M 24	APPOINTED BY
Bonnie Seipp	P	E	N	N	P	E	E	P	N	P	P	P	Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Carmen Cason	P	P	O	O	P	E	P	P	O	P	A	P	Mayor Vince Lago
Mary Beth Burke Vice Chair	P	P	M	M	P	P	E	P	M	P	P	P	Commissioner Kirk R. Menendez
Margaret Groves			E	E		E	E	E	E	P	#	P	Commissioner Melissa Castro
Alexis Ehrenhaft	P	P	E	E	P	E	P	P	E	P	A	E	City Manager Peter Iglesias
Genevieve Orr	*	*	T	T	P	P	P	E	T	P	P	A	Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Joanne Meagher Chairperson	P	P	I	I	P	E	P	P	I	P	P	P	Board-as-a-Whole
			N	N					N				
			G	G					G				

LEGEND: A = Absent; P = Present; E = Excused; * = New Member; ^ = Resigned Member; - = No Meeting; # = Late meeting arrival.

STAFF: Anna Pernas, Historical Resources Director, Kara Kautz, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer; Gay Bondurant, Docent Coordinator, Yvelisse Bonilla, Administrative Assistant.

RECORDING SECRETARY/PREPARATION OF MINUTES: Yvelisse Bonilla, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 8:42 AM by Chair Joanne Meagher. Attendance was stated for the record.

ROLL CALL:

In attendance were Ms. Seipp, Ms. Burke, Ms. Meagher, Ms. Groves, Ms. Cason.

OPENING STATEMENT:

*It could not have been done but for her constant inspiration –
 Through freezes, floods drought, bad markets, sickness,
 And all the vicissitudes of an unknown land.*

-George Merrick on his mother's role in the family' survival

The board was shown a Watercolor of Kitchen in 1903 Addition by Richard Merrick, youngest child of Althea and Solomon and the only Merrick born in Florida.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Merrick House Governing Board Meeting Minutes February 12, 2024.

A motion was made by Ms. Cason, seconded by Ms. Seipp, to approve the minutes with amendments for the meeting on February 12, 2024, which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Merrick House Activity Report February 2024 -
 Ms. Meagher read from the February 2024 House Report. The report was shared with the Board in advance of the meeting and is included as an attachment to the minutes.
2. 100 Voices – Ms. Meagher will be meeting with Mr. William Keen, Renee Barrera's father, he is turning 94 on April 12th. He grew up in Homestead and has lots of stories about this area. The videographer is available on the 7th. Considering Dan Finora for May.

3. Founder's Day – June 3rd. The Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables is interested in celebrating this day jointly. Staff requested a rental application and insurance information for the rental by HPACG.

A motion was made by Ms. Seipp, seconded by Ms. Burke, to waive the rental fee and approve having a joint event for Founder's Day with the Historic Preservation Association of Coral Gables on June 3, 2024. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. June & July Board Meetings -

A motion was made by Ms. Cason, seconded by Ms. Seipp, to suspend board meetings in June and July 2024. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Veteran's Day Concert – Ms. Meagher discussed having a band on Sunday, November 10, 2024, Miami's Top Brass, for \$750. Also, she would like to speak with Troup 7 to do a flag raising. Staff advised the money for this could come out of the departmental budget. Time of event: 2pm.
6. Museum – Ms. Meagher is meeting with the Coral Gables Museum regarding an exhibit about George Merrick.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Ferns – the ferns at the front of the house have been replaced with flowers and look beautiful.
2. Poetry Books – These books were reprinted by the City of Coral Gables. Staff found boxes of them in the garage.
3. Lampshade – Artistic Plus may be able to do the restoration of the lampshade. Ms. Meagher will obtain an estimate.
4. Stag Painting – Staff provided an estimate prepared in 2014 by Art Care Conservation. Using this estimate, Ms. Meagher was able to estimate the new cost would be approximately \$12,439.00.
5. City Staff Tours – Ms. Burke contacted Deena Bell-Llewellyn to confirm a date for the Greenspace Management staff tours. Ms. Bell would like a date in March. Tentative for March 15th or the 22nd.
6. Althea's Garden Brigade – Ms. Meagher presented an idea to allow volunteers to work in the garden. Staff confirmed with the City Attorney's office that a waiver is necessary, and Staff or Merrick House representative would need to be present.
7. Pond – Staff is still working through insurance issues for the Professional Service Agreement (PSA) for replacement of the pump. Staff will contact another vendor for the pump replacement proposal if the insurance issue cannot be resolved. The deep cleaning was completed, and the pond looks good.
8. Dishwasher – Staff will attempt again to obtain the dishwasher for the House.
9. Garden Tea, March 10, 2024 – Ms. Meagher thanked everyone for their contributions to the Garden Tea. Ms. Seipp will be giving Ms. Meagher the photos of the event so that they can be uploaded to the website. 40 people were in attendance. Considering doing a lunch event next year.

DISCUSSION ITEMS: None.

CITY COMMISSION ITEMS: None.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY: None.

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March 11, 2024

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna C. Pernas

Historic Preservation Officer