

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 5, 2020

5:00 PM

The Board meets the first Thursday of each month.
Adult Activity Center, 2 Andalusia Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33134
Senior Citizens Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

at 5:03 pm

ROLL CALL

Present:

Celia Suarez

Edward English

Jane Mass

Jim Berlin

Joan Valdes

Julian Sevillano

Richard Thurer

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes for the February meeting will be approved at the next board meeting set for April 2, 2020.

I PERSONAL APPEARANCES**A. Dr. Thomas Hooton from the University of Miami School of Medicine-Department of Infectious Disease**

The meeting began with Jane Mass introducing the guest speaker, Dr. Thomas Hooton from the University of Miami School of Medicine-Department of Infectious Disease. Dr. Hooton began his lecture with a brief background of his education and career. He then began to discuss the current issue that is affecting the globe, Covid-19 or the Corona virus. He gave a brief backstory to the history of the corona virus and varied strands that included the SARS and MERS viruses.

We have learned that the Corona virus is spread by contaminated droplets when we cough, sneeze, or even talking. We can contract it by being in contact with someone with the virus or these said droplets being left on objects we touch and then touching our faces after. Best practices of prevention currently are to socially distance from one another at least 6 feet and to constantly wash our hands for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water seem to be the best way to clean our hands.

Dr. Hooton is encouraging anyone who think they are sick or experiencing symptoms to stay home and to call their physician. If community members go to the hospital, they will be sent home to self-quarantine unless exhibiting severe symptoms. At the hospital that Dr. Hooton currently works at, the established criteria was created in order to establish isolation or quarantine standards within the hospital. If the patient presents a fever over 100, cough or shortness of breath, respiratory panel has come back negative, and has traveled, the patient will at that time be put in isolation at the hospital or back in their homes until Corona virus test return with results.

Dr. Hooton was interested in what the City is doing to spread public information and encourage self-quarantine.

Dr. Hooton believes that this virus will not produce any worse symptoms than the flu, but because so many people have become infected so quickly, we need to be extra cautious. If you are an older person that happens to have preexisting conditions such as heart disease, lung disease, COPD, congestive heart failure, etc., to be extra careful to avoid crowds or going to events because you will be more susceptible of infectivity. Richard Thurer asked if a non-symptomatic person could spread the virus. And Dr. Hooten's response was yes, but the more symptomatic a person is, the greater the

risk of infectivity to someone else.

Dr. Hooten spoke to the board about the criteria that needs to be met at this time to even be tested for the virus and current locations offering testing. Katherine Anderson asked will getting the FLU shot help boost the immune system against COVID-19. Dr. Hooton said it is inconclusive to help fight against the Corona Virus.

Joan Valdes brought up the question why is Covid-19 worse than the flu and causing such an economic shutdown? Is this expected to pandemic? Dr. Hooton is asking the same question. SARS and H1N1 were far worse than the statistics presented at this time for this virus and is stunned by the magnitude that this has spread across the country.

Jane Mass asked what's the best message to spread to our senior community right now about the virus. Dr. Hooton said the best method to practice source control and to help avoid the spread of the virus would be to cover your mouth when you cough with the crook of your arm, wash your hands after you touch things, avoid touching your face.

Jim Berlin asked if there was a hotline to call to report symptoms. There is nothing available that he knows of at this time but believes there should be one.

Richard Thurer asked Dr. Hooten, what is the status of a vaccine. Dr. Hooton believes a herd immunity will eventually develop. Edward English expressed to the board that the vaccine will still take 6-9 months to approve and produce enough to start fighting the strand of Covid-19.

Jane Mass asked if warm weather affect the virus. His response was that weather has nothing to do with the virus. Warm weather will just cause people to avoid being so close to each other.

Conversations were had about the closures of venues and special events in the City and other events within South Florida amongst the board.

Katherine gave a breakdown of all cleaning and disinfecting procedures the AAC are taking while operational.

The conversation continued with what the City is doing as far as its programming and that we do not have the authority to deny participation to patrons that have traveled. Until policy changes occur departmentally, we are encouraging self-quarantine and emphasizing that if a participant feels ill or believes to be experiencing symptoms, to please stay at home. Any

changes in policy or concerns will be addressed with the Emergency Management Team as things progress into the month. Signage has been posted to educate the public on signs and symptoms.

B. Coral Gables Fire Chief, Marcos De La Rosa

Fire Chief, Marcos De La Rosa spoke to the board on behalf of the City of Coral Gables and the Emergency Management Team. Jim Berlin began the discussion with Chief De La Rosa by asking if the Fire Department has been going to residents' homes that report they might have the virus. His response was that the Fire department and EMS has a standard operating procedure they use for any kind of home visits and they have incorporated the CDC precautionary guidelines. Chief De La Rosa then went on to explain how a call is dispatched to authorities in order to prepare for a home visit and how to proceed once on site.

Chief De La Rosa spoke to the board about recent meetings he had with County officials and the State Department of Health. The State has now established a hotline that will help limit callers to going to the hospital to ask questions about symptoms. The Dade County website and the Coral Gables website have links to the CDC website and FAQ that all have been linked to the Emergency Management website.

Chief De La Rosa passed around flyers printed from the CDC website that he would like to be handed out to patrons of the center.

Chief De La Rosa explained to the board that there have been trainings for his emergency personnel for protecting responders and patients. He's gone over CDC guidelines for special event providers and CDC guidelines for mass gathering with the Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro, information has been sent to the business community for travelers with questions, He then said there are periodical informational updates that have been provided to staff and residents via websites and social media. And continued to explain other precautionary measures the City is taking.

With all efforts the City of Coral Gables is taking, everything is in alignment with what the CDC recommends, and the City is trying to maintain consistent messaging with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

II SUPERVISORS REPORT

Due to time, Adult Activit Center Supervisor Katherine Anderson quickly notified the board about the April 17th Annual Luncheon, the Miami Book fair's March 18th Creative Writing Workshop to help participants to write their story. Signup will be at the AAC. Katherine will send out emails to remind the board of the upcoming events.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

The next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2020 at 5:00 pm

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Jim Berlin and second by Julian Sevillano. Motion passed. Adjournment at 6:24 pm.

NOTE