

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item D-1
April 13, 2010
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Commissioner Maria Anderson
Commissioner Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.
Commissioner Wayne “Chip” Withers

City Staff

City Manager, Patrick Salerno
City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Sarah E. Rogers, American Cancer Society

D-1 [Start: 10:12:58 a.m.]

Presentation by Sarah E. Rogers, Community Representative, American Cancer Society (Deferred from the March 23, 2010 City Commission Meeting)

Mayor Slesnick: We have a personal appearance by Sarah Rogers who is the community representative of the American Cancer Society. She was scheduled to be with us last month, but could not attend, and Sarah it's good to see you up and about and welcome to the City Commission and the American Cancer Society is a very important organization in our community lives here and we are delighted to have you here to tell us a little bit more about what you are doing.

Ms. Rogers: Thank you Mr. Mayor. I appreciate the opportunity to be here, Commissioners thank you for allowing me this time to update you about what we are doing in the city and for your support. As you know the American Cancer Society is the nationwide community based voluntary organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. This year I'm proud to report that we have \$15,033,000 worth of research grants in the State of Florida, of that \$5,094,000 is in Coral Gables at the University of Miami Sylvester Health Center. So we are very proud to be able to support research in Coral Gables, at close to \$6 million dollars. We are increasing our education activities in Coral Gables. We will be focusing quite heavily on corporate health and wellness programs; we have a new platform coming out based on research that has tied exercise and healthy lifestyles to limiting the risk

factors in being diagnosed with cancer. So we will be doing a major push this year talking about healthy lifestyles and we'll be reaching out to the companies in Coral Gables and community organizations to put that platform into place. As well as we will be also increasing our early detection services; as we know colon cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, are three of the cancers that if caught early we have the greatest survival rates. So we will be stepping up our educational messaging on the importance of getting screened and early detection. Last year as you know, we were part of the advocacy effort to pass the dollar cigarette tax, and of that contributed of that \$900 million dollars, \$50 million dollars was earmarked for two research programs in the State of Florida. One was the King Biomedical Research Program, which covers a wide variety of cancers; the other was the Bank-Head Coley Research Program, which focus specifically on tobacco related cancers. This year's efforts right now, those two research programs when they were funded have a sunset clause, they are currently under sunset review, and the latest budget coming out of Tallahassee does not have that \$50 million dollars in it to cover those two research programs. So right now we are reaching out to our citizens to help us contact their legislators and impress upon them the importance of funding that \$50 million dollars worth of research programs for the State of Florida. This year we are also on our service, we have a big push for our "Road to Recovery" program; and road to recovery is one that touches my heart. We have found that a lot of times cancer patients may not be able to make it to doctor's appointments or to treatment because they simply do not have a ride. We have a program called "Road to Recovery" where our volunteers will pick up those cancer patients, drive them their appointments and then drive them home; and right now that is one of the services that we are in most need of help in recruiting volunteers for. So we will be putting out quite a bit of information in the coming months leading up to our annual "Relay for Life" in Coral Gables, about the need for "Road to Recovery" drivers. We also have some very important programs called our "ROCK" programs, that stand for "Reaching Out to Cancer Kids", and we have three very important programs for our cancer children. We have a "ROCK" scholarship, which pays all four years a portion of money for their tuition, if they are attending a college within the State of Florida. We also have our "ROCK" family camp; we know that it's very important that children with cancer do not miss out on the same kinds of activities that children without cancer have, so we take them to a camp for a week and allow them to experience the same kinds of activities enjoyed that other students and children their age have; and the most important, I think, is our "ROCK" family weekend, when a child is diagnosed with cancer that plays a major impact on families that they have never had to deal with. So we take the whole family, mothers, fathers, siblings and our "ROCK", and our cancer children, and we take them out for a weekend where we talk about activities. We have special break-outs for the parents, how as a mother, as a father do you now deal and interact with your child who now has cancer; what kind of support and activities are available to you; and we also talk with the siblings and help them kind of understand the changes that might be happening within their family. I'm sad to report that we were not able to have that in Coral Gables this year because we simply just did not raise the funds to cover that program. So this year as we are gearing up for our Relay for Life, it's more important than ever that we have a successful relay, fifty percent of the money we raise for our activities and services come from our "Relay for Life" program; and this year right now we are working with the Youth Center and we are looking at the weekend of June 19th and I realize that's Father's Day so we are working on the timing so we can get all our fathers out in

time. But I would ask for your continued support in our Relay for Life and I would challenge you to form teams. I've spoken with Commissioner Anderson and Commissioner Anderson has graciously agreed to form a team; and I would challenge each of you to get involved on a personal level, whether it's coming out for Relay for Life, or just volunteering for your local activities. Thank you again for this opportunity to speak to you today.

Mayor Slesnick: Thank you. We appreciate all that the Cancer Society does and all the things that you do for the children and families, adults that are suffering and fighting cancer. Go ahead Maria.

Commissioner Anderson: I'm just hoping for our City Manager, that we could interview Sarah on our cable channel to talk about the Relay for Life and about the programs that the American Cancer Society does for the community, I think that would be really nice and talk about the event, and maybe we can get some teams out there, more teams.

Ms. Rogers: Thank you.

Commissioner Anderson: Thank you, thank you Sarah.

Mayor Slesnick: And you had a great event Saturday night.

Ms. Rogers: Yes...[inaudible – off mike]...

Mayor Slesnick: Jeanette and I enjoyed that very much, the band was a little loud though Sarah, other than that it was very nice.

[End: 10:20:23 a.m.]