

City of Coral Gables

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



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 1, 2022

4:00 PM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86149844627>

Adult Activity Center

Senior Citizens Advisory Board

Chairperson James "Jim" Berlin

Vice Chairperson Celia Suarez

Board Member Jean H. Connelly

Board Member Margaret Groves

Board Member Kelley Schild

Board Member Julian Sevillano

Board Member Richard Thurer

Board Member Hendrick Woods

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting began at 4:07pm

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Chairperson Berlin, Board Member Connelly, Board Member Sevillano, Board Member Thurer and Board Member Woods

Excused: 2 - Vice Mayor Suarez and Board Member Schild

a. Roll Call and Excusal of Absences

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ABSENCE OF RICHARD THURER KELLY SCHILD AND CELIA SUAREZ WAS MADE BY JEAN CONNELLY AND WAS SECONDED BY JULIAN SEVILLANO. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. Public Appearances

Genevieve Orr is introduced informing the board that she is a resident of Coral Gables and has chosen to attend the meeting because of how much their work impacts both herself and her mother.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Approval of November's Meeting Minutes

A MOTION TO APPROVE LAST MEETINGS MINUTES WAS MADE BY HENDRIK WOODS AND WAS SECONDED BY JULIAN SEVILLANO. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

a. General Updates

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson began her report by discussing Spring registration opening for residents on December 5th, which will be for classes from January through May, and in preparation for that the AAC has released their updated Spring calendars. Katherine then informed the board that the updated calendars are available and that she has brought copies for each member to the meeting and will send a rec-connect to all resident members of the AAC to inform them of the registration opening.

Board member Jean Connelly then asked AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson whether Aqua Aerobics would be coming back in the Spring session, to which Katherine responded informing her that we do have an instructor set to teach Aqua Zumba Wednesday's at 3:15pm starting in January. Board Chairperson James "Jim" Berlin then inquired as to whether the new calendar would show the upcoming Saturday schedule as well, to which Katherine responded stating the new schedule is reflected on the new calendar.

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson then went on to layout the Saturday schedule, telling the board that at 9am there will be a Zumba class followed by "Strengthening and Toning" at 10:15am, then there will be two separate pickleball times one at 11:30pm and the other at 1:30pm. She then ended by informing the board that this means the hours of operation for the AAC on Saturday's would be from 9am – 3:30pm.

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson then informed the board that there are still ongoing talks to bring pickleball lessons to the AAC, stating that they are just waiting for further necessary approvals before they can confirm the lesson start date. So while the goal is to begin lessons in January if possible, they will not be listed on the calendar until the Debbie the instructor has been fully cleared. Katherine Anderson then mentioned that the non-resident Spring registration window is set to open on December 19th giving the residents a two-week window to register beforehand.

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson then discussed Holiday Luncheon tickets stating that while only open for Residents so far that week there have already been around 50 tickets sold and that they expect a large surge in ticket sales when tickets become available for non-residents starting the next week. Katherine then reminded the board that they will receive complimentary tickets for the luncheon they just have to email her to reserve those tickets and that any guests they would like to bring would need to pay to purchase tickets. Katherine then discussed that there will be Italian food served at the event along with a DJ, photo booth, and Maria and girls giving a special dance performance.

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson then shared that Eric from Mind and Melody will be stopping by the luncheon to give a performance and spread information regarding his program to hopefully help increase interest in the program moving forward and that Dr. Aldama has been invited to discuss his dental presentations to help garner more interest moving forward. Katherine then informed the board that the AAC will be close on December 26th and January 2nd for the holidays. She then went on to

discuss that Commissioner Kirk Menendez is going to be starting a new season for the afternoon at the cinema set to begin on February 4th to hopefully show "That's Entertainment" followed by a movie on March 4th which is expected to be "Casablanca".

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson then went over staffing at the facility, informing the board that the part-time maintenance position was offered to an individual, however they did turn down the position. She then stated that although we did have interviews to fill the open GSR position no candidates were selected to fill the position. Katherine then stated that the positions are both once again being advertised on by HR and are currently accepting applications.

b. Special Events

c. Administrative Updates

Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro began by discussing the smoking ban for all parks throughout the City of Coral Gables that board member Richard Thurer played a big role in getting accomplished. Director Couceyro then went over how the next step will be to begin posting the necessary signage in all parks and facilities.

Director Couceyro then went on to discuss the upcoming community meetings stating that along with the Granada diner meeting, they will have a meeting to discuss both the Blue Road park and the park on Toledo & Alava. He then went on to talk about Pierce Park stating that they have almost completed the redesign and that they are on track for a ribbon cutting sometime in January that they will make sure to inform the board of as plans become more permanent moving forward.

Director Couceyro then began discussing Cooper parks which are expected to have community meetings regarding the design sometime in Spring, however they may end up getting pushed to Summer if unable to have a full design plan in time. He then went on to discuss the Phillips Park concept plan, stating that the plan has officially been signed off and that they will begin moving forward on neighborhood meetings in order to receive community input.

Director Couceyro then went on to discuss renovations scheduled to take place at the Venetian Pool, discussing how they planning to redo the concessions area and repaint the pool bottom which are planned to take place during the winter closures to have them completed by Spring break.

Board chairperson James "Jim" Berlin then asked Director Couceyro whether the discussions had ended regarding the construction of a "Wawa" on Grand to which he answered that although he believes the conversation regarding that project had concluded he does not have any part in commercial construction or real estate.

Director Couceyro then went on to discuss the ongoing dog park projects throughout the City, stating that they are still working on getting the dog park on Salvador built, the temporary dog park on Catalonia has been built and is currently in use. He then

went on to discuss the construction of a dog park under the underline stating that the County will be taking the lead on the construction there although the City will be paying to construct the park and will operate it ourselves. He then mentioned a meeting to discuss the design of the underline dog park on December 10th at the Coral Gables Museum hosted by the county. He then went on to talk about Matheson West where there has been a movement to create a dog park stating that there was a recent meeting to talk about different ideas stating that there is no determined solution at this time.

Director Couceyro then went on to discuss the prospect of having a water launch area on Riviera under the metro-rail, informing the board that while the land is county land there is the idea of creating a defined canoe launch there.

Board chairperson James "Jim" Berlin then asked Director Couceyro whether there was any new information regarding the parks plan as we head into 2023, Director Couceyro then stated that the department is slowly chipping away and completing projects that made up the parks plan without the use of the referendum. He said that rather than completing all of the projects based off of one big budget, the projects are begin funded over time to accomplish the end goal of the parks plan.

Board member Jean Connelly then inquired as to when the tree lighting is taking place, in which Director Couceyro responded that the event is scheduled for December 5th however VIP tickets have been officially sold out for the event. Director Couceyro then went on to discuss that there will be carnival games for the kids and food vendors just outside the VIP area to offer many different activities for those in attendance.

Administrative Assistant Sarah Espino then went over some of the other upcoming holiday events, beginning with hot chocolate with Santa taking place from 10am – 12pm, along with Santa pictures begin offered from Thursday – Sunday and everyday the week before Christmas. Weekday hours for Santa pictures from 5pm – 10pm and weekends from 12pm – 10pm.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Conceptual Design of Granada Pro Shop Diner

Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro began by going over the plans for the Granada diner redesign community meeting, discussing how they will have it set up to answer questions from both those in person at the meeting and those attending over zoom. Director Couceyro then gave a breakdown of the different redesigns that are being proposed, from the new layout to the new outdoor dining space, to the new impact windows being installed, and the installation of a new ADA restroom.

Board member Jean Connelly then inquired as to whether there would be a change in the square footage of the diner, in which Director Couceyro responded stating that there will be quite a big increase in the square footage of the diner because of the redesign. Director Couceyro shared that Rita had been shown the proposed design and had shared design ideas that she had including a barrier from grease splatter from the grill that should be included in the design. Director Couceyro then mentioned that there has been discussion of possibly including solar panels on the roof of the diner to make the building more energy efficient.

Director Couceyro then discussed the goal of adjusting the diner's schedule to capture the attention of more of the golfers and increase the lunch time crowd. Board member Jean Connelly then went on to inquire as to the final plan for the rooms used for the golf association, in which director Couceyro responded stating that those rooms are set to be used for programming moving forward. Jean then asked whether the lockers would remain in the pro-shop to which director Couceyro responded stating that there will still be lockers in the pro-shop, however the plan is to purchase new lockers for the pro-shop as part of the redesign.

Board chairperson James "Jim" Berlin then inquired as to what sort of feedback director Couceyro expected to receive during the community meeting, in which he responded that he expected the main concern to be confirmation that Rita would still be running the Granada diner following the renovations.

Board member Jean Connelly then asked about the timeline for the whole project, to which director Couceyro stated that the timeline is estimated at around 12 months, however the plan is to line the completion of the two projects up together.

Resident Genevieve Orr then mentioned that one issue she has noticed is the high cost of the Le Parque café at the Coral Gables Country Club stating that the City sets the cost to which director Couceyro responded stating that the City does not set the cost for the food stating that the café itself sets the price. Director Couceyro then went on to state that the café since reopening has had an increase in the quality of the food and a large increase in the cost of the supplies due to inflation, stating that he even expects for Rita to increase the prices for the Granada diner as well just to meet to increasing costs due to inflation.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Sr. Board Exposure at Upcoming Events

Board chairperson James “Jim” Berlin began by inquiring as to the possibility of displaying a board at the annual Board Reception, in which Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro stated that he was told this would not be possible by the legal department. This then led AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson bringing up the possibility of reaching out to Norma regarding the possibility of attending the Farmers Market about once a month.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Art Show Success

Board chairperson James “Jim” Berlin began by praising the AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson and the rest of the AAC staff for their hard work on the very successful Art Show. Katherine then went over some of the improvements that could be incorporated in the next Art Show including possibly expanding the art categories to include watercolors and mixed media. Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro then stated that he believed that we should offer the opportunity to leave the winning artwork hanging for a period of time following the Art Show in order to showcase the winners. Katherine then stated the idea of labeling the winners following the announcements so that they can be easily identified by those attending the Art Show.

AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson then went on to discuss that in future years closure of the facility the entire day before the show for setup is a necessity. Board member Jean Connelly inquired as to the attendance of the Art Show this year as compared to previous years, in which Katherine responded stating that it was a great turnout noting that there even appeared to be a younger crowd compared to previous years. Director Couceyro then brought up the idea of having the Art Show on the first Friday of the month to correspond with the Gallery Night.

Board member Hendrik Woods then brought up the need to reclassify the difference between professional and non-professional artists, to which AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson responded stating that every artist is told if they have sold artwork before they must mark professional. However, Katherine did say that they would look into the possibility of redefining these rules in order to make them more clear for the future.

b. April Election Issues

Board member Richard Thurer then inquired as to when exactly there will be a replacement for Commissioner Fors appointed, in which Director Couceyro responded stating that he would expect the seat to be filled by the next commission meeting stating that there are only about 5 months remaining in the term for that seat.

c. 2023 Board Goals

Board member Jean Connelly then stated how there are still many people who are not aware of the AAC and inquiring how the board could help to spread awareness of the AAC, director Couceyro responded by stating that a good place to start is by word of mouth and having large events such as the Art Show that bring in new foot traffic to the center. Board chairperson James “Jim” Berlin then mentioned that it may be a good idea to begin by spreading information about the center at the farmer’s market.

Board member Richard Thurer then inquired as to the possibility of using the top floor of the parking garage to become a pickleball court in which director Couceyro stated that this garage is owned by The Palace and therefore would not be able to be

usable for those purposes by our facility. Director Couceyro then discussed the rooftop park that is currently being designed and mentioned that pickleball may not be possible on that park due to the necessity of high fencing to prevent balls from flying off the roof onto the public below.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The floor was then opened to public comment. Coral Gables resident Genevieve Orr brought to the attention of the Board that both her and her mother are lifetime residents of the City of Coral Gables and that she is so proud of some of the new programs that have been recently brought to the AAC that she has been able to attend with her mother. Genevieve specifically mentions the Arts Crafts and Conversation class led by volunteer Wendy and the Mind & Melody class. Genevieve then went on to mention that her mother has Alzheimer's, and the Mind & Melody program is one that specifically helps her mother in many ways.

Genevieve Orr then went on to state that she had received the offer to fund the Mind & Melody class for a year, for which the opportunity had been passed over. She then mentioned how there are no other similar programs offered by the City and how proud she was of the City offering the program, however she feels that there were some problems with the implementation of the class beginning with marketing. She stated that she was able to acquire 12 people to register for the first session having the start date delayed twice in which AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson responded stating that there were only 8 people registered for the first session. In response Genevieve Orr stated numbers were limited because she heard participants were turned away once the program had begun.

Genevieve Orr then stated that she spoke to Coral Gables marketing department to help her increase the marketing level using Coral Gables TV. She then shared that they expressed interest in advertising this program because they see the value that this class provides to the community. However, she is now in dismay because she has learned that there are plans to stop providing this program and that she is here to beg the Board to please continue the program.

Community Recreation Director Fred Couceyro then began his response by stating that this is the first he has heard of a sponsor for the Mind & Melody class and AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson asked her to please share this information with her, in which Genevieve Orr responded stating that she had already shared the information with them in September. Katherine stated that she will look through her emails. Katherine does recall Genevieve Orr discussing how she would reach out for sponsorships for the program and that she would never turn down someone willing to sponsor a program.

Director Couceyro then continued by discussing the cost of the program being \$175 an hour and that for a program with costs of that caliber we do not run the program with less than 10 participants, he then stated that it is difficult to pay this rate for the 4 registered participants in the second session when there are other programs that also require payments to run. Director Couceyro then explained that the start date was postponed due to the lack of participants in the program and that the goal was for the postponement to help increase the number of registered participants.

Genevieve Orr then stated that she believes the marketing is what led to the lack of participants and stated that she felt as though she was being setup with the way the

program was advertised. Director Couceyro then stated that it is difficult to devote so much attention to a single program when the Community Recreation department has over 2,000 programs that they are responsible for providing advertisements for. Board Member Jean Connelly then inquired as to whether the target audience for this class is caretakers or for those with conditions such as Alzheimer's, to which director Couceyro stated that the goal is to have a program open to every member of our facility.

Genevieve Orr then stated that she would like to be involved and to help with the marketing strategy for the program, director Couceyro then stated that she can help out and that having people within the community to spread information to those who we cannot reach is the best way one can help out. Genevieve Orr then stated that she never expected a program just to be canceled without any attempts to find more participants to which director Couceyro responded stating that the department uses the strategy of postponing a start date to generate more participants and then trying the program in a different season to see if it can garner more interest, following the failure of both of those strategies tends to be when the City begins to move away from a specific program.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

Next Meeting is set for January 5th at 4:00pm

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:37pm

NOTE