

City of Coral Gables

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



Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 21, 2022

8:30 AM

2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Police and Fire Headquarters, Community Meeting Room

School Community Relations Committee

Chairperson Dr. Winnie Chang
Vice Chairperson Sam Joseph
Board Member Erin Anding
Board Member Sandy Dimitris
Board Member Carmen Manrara Cartaya
Board Member Andrew Nadal
Board Member Cecilia D. Slesnick
Board Member Jennifer Ward Sando
Board Member Sharon Watson

The School Community Relations Committee will be holding its Regular Meeting on Friday, Oct. 21, 2022, commencing at 8:30 a.m. While the Committee is back to live in-person meetings, members of the public may participate in person but are also able to participate via the Zoom platform. Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83893614478>). In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting by dialing: 305-461-6769 Meeting ID: 838 9361 4478.

To speak on an Agenda Item, please "Raise your Hand" or send a message to one of the meeting hosts using the Zoom Platform. If you joined the meeting via telephone, you can "Raise your Hand" by pressing *9.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:34 a.m.

ROLL/QUORUM CALL

Present: 8 - Slesnick, Watson, Dimitris, Joseph, Chang, Anding, Board Member Ward Sando and Nadal

Absent: 1 - Manrara Cartaya

A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

School Community Relations Committee Meeting of September 16, 2022.

Attachments: [Cover Memo](#)
[Draft Minutes-SCRC Sept. Meeting](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Joseph, seconded by Board Member Slesnick, that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following vote.

B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments from Daniel Stankiewicz - Capital Improvement Chair at Carver Elementary PTA.

- A few items have been advancing very well such as the roofing and the fencing. However, there are some projects that have been stalled and not moving ahead as rapidly, an example of this relates to the water fountain issue at the courtyard area; water is not potable and to compensate children are receiving delivered water. This process is at a point where the School Administration needs to submit a PO to move the project forward.
- The other project is related to building numbers. This will allow visibility of each building with a number affixed to it so it can be easily identified.
- An additional project that has been pushed back is related to a shade structure, this project has had a few setbacks.
- Gratitude was expressed to all and to School Board Member Mari Tere Rojas who always has an open ear to their concerns.

C. NEW BUSINESS

- C-1 C-1: Miami-Dade County Public Schools Update (Facilitated by Mari Tere Rojas, School Board Member)

Items proffered at a recent Board Meeting:

- Consequences Aren't Minor Program - It's important students understand the consequences that result from the actions taking place lately, such as a recent incident of a 12-year-old with gun. The School Board Member has been in close contact with Chief of Police and working with Mr. Martinez who is the Public Defender both have joined forces and are reintroducing a safety message across Miami-Dade County Schools since safety and security are paramount.
- Audit Item will be submitted to School Board with a complete review.
- Family Literacy Day: This item is brought on a yearly basis to the board. It's important to emphasize to the children the importance of reading. "Avid readers are active Leaders". Cultivating the desire for reading is key.
- Recognition of Principal Benny Valdes of Miami Senior High School, who is a talented individual.

Board Member Ward Sando stated that prior to arriving in Miami she was a State Attorney. She further indicated that individuals believe juvenile records get sealed and never opened, however, people get scored based on their prior offenses and can be declared career criminals'. It's important that students be aware of the long-term consequences of juvenile crimes.

Chairperson Chang commented – What does success for this program look like? School Board Member Rojas indicated that success is not quantifiable. Regrettably children think that committing crimes is a joke and unfortunately there are copy-cats through social media. It's crucial to ensure the children understand the severity of their actions. Vice Chairperson Joseph echoed the sentiment of long-term consequences of juvenile cases and the importance of literacy. He inquired on the process of nominating a principle. Board Member Rojas detailed the process of recognizing principals and custodians.

Additional updates by the School Board Member:

- Referendum meeting at Coral Gables High had good participation.
- Teacher shortage: Currently, working on recruiting teachers to ensure there are teachers in every class. Also working closely with the teacher's union. Although teacher's starting salary was increased, unfortunately, a lot of students are not going into the education arena because of the salary and compensation benefits.
- Safety and Security: There is a wonderful Police department of almost 500 officers. Statutorily, schools are required to have law enforcement representation in each school or guardians which is a different scenario. The safety and security of the children is of high importance.
 - 15 new certified M-DCPS police officers will be sworn in next month.
 - 15 non-certified police recruits who have joined the Police Academy.
 - See Something Say Something Campaign.
- Need additional part time employees, substitute teachers, tutoring also needed. Simple process to apply.

Board Member Slesnick commented that a social media infographic would be beneficial for hiring advertisements. School Board Member Rojas referred Board Member Slesnick to Vivian Santiesban-Pardo at: 305-995-1334 as a good resource and contact.

Satellite Office dates: Next meeting will be on November 3 and November 17 at City Hall.

School facility updates provided including the fencing and roof at Little Carver,

Sunset Elementary and Ponce Middle school projects.

C-2 Friends of Gables High's Nov. 1 Event (Facilitated by Sam Joseph, Vice Chairperson)

Friends of Gables is a group that looks at advocacy and raising funds on behalf of Coral Gables Senior High School. During the November event they will be highlighting the outstanding job the School Board has done. Vice Chairperson Joseph invites all to come and see what has been done. The Nov. 1 event will be the first public viewing of the new building.

Attachments: [FOGH Nov. 1@GablesHigh](#)

C-3 Discussion of School Board Items (Facilitated by Sam Joseph, Vice Chairperson)

- Recently an announcement was made regarding the award renovation/construction for the high school. This is for \$17 million worth of work. Completion date expected by the centennial anniversary of the city.
- A few items that will be not completed: fencing, the field will not be replaced during this time, the amphitheater, and landscaping.
- National Family Literacy Fest: this has become a popular event; looking at new dates during the week of May 20 or perhaps during November National Literacy Day for the city's Family Literacy Festival.

Attachments: [CGSH Renovation Construction Project Award_F41](#)
[National Family Literacy Day_H11rev_MTR](#)

D. OLD BUSINESS

D-1 Election of SCRC Vice Chairperson

Current Vice Chairperson Joseph nominates Board Member Dimitris for the position of Vice Chairperson. Board Member Ward Sando seconds the nomination, motion passes unanimously.

Yeas: 8 - Slesnick, Watson, Dimitris, Joseph, Chang, Anding, Board Member Ward Sando and Nadal

Absent: 1 - Manrara Cartaya

E. ONGOING BUSINESS

E-1 General Updates

- Board Member Ward Sando was invited to visit the self-contained classroom at Ponce Middle on October 25 and will be happy to report back to the Board.

F. ANNOUNCEMENTS

F-1 Next SCRC Meeting - Friday, November 18, 2022

Questions/Comments: scrc@coralgables.com

F-2 Join a local PTA or subscribe to their newsletters using the following links:

F-3 North Ponce Harvest Market - Oct. 22 - Dec. 17, 2022 | 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

F-4 Bi-Annual Recycling Drive-Thru - Oct. 22, 2022 | 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

F-5 Adventure Day - Oct. 22, 2022 | 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

F-6 Adult Activity Center Halloween Spooktacular - Oct. 28, 2022 | 6 to 9 p.m.

F-7 An Afternoon at the Cinema - Oct. 29, 2022 | 1 to 3 p.m.

F-8 Architectural Walking Tour - Oct. 29, 2022 | 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

F-9 Nightmare at 405 Haunted House - Oct. 31, 2022 | 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

F-10 Mayor Lago's Town Hall Meeting - Nov. 2, 2022 | 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

F-11 School Board Member Rojas' Office Hours - Nov. 3 & 17, 2022 | 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

NOTE