

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

5:00 PM

City Hall, Commission Chambers

### Sustainability Advisory Board

*Chairperson Teddy Lhoutellier*  
*Vice Chairperson Martin Pinilla*  
*Board Member James Brock*  
*Board Member James Covey*  
*Board Member Katrina Erwin*  
*Board Member Nicolas Eterovic*  
*Board Member Joseph A. Fadel*  
*Board Member Dipak Joshi*  
*Board Member Gabriela M. McGrath Moreira*  
*Board Member Anabella Smith*  
*Board Member Tiffany Troxler*

**1. Roll Call / Introductions**

**Present:** 8 - Board Member Smith, Board Member McGrath Moreira, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Board Member Etercovic, Board Member Erwin, Board Member Joshi and Board Member Brock

**Absent:** 1 - Vice Chairperson Pinilla

**Excused:** 2 - Board Member Fadel and Board Member Covey

**2. Public Comment: 2 minutes each guest**

- Resident: Dieter Manstein - junior at Ransom Everglades Upper School - he is part of the Environment & Sustainability Counsel at his school. His is interested in the sustainability initiatives and programs that the Board is proposing.

- Resident: Layda Manstein - Peter's Mother

**3. Approval of January SAB Meeting Minutes**

**Moved by Jasper Brock, seconded by Dipak Joshi**

**Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Smith, Board Member McGrath Moreira, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Board Member Etercovic, Board Member Erwin, Board Member Joshi and Board Member Brock

**Absent:** 1 - Vice Chairperson Pinilla

**Excused:** 2 - Board Member Fadel and Board Member Covey

**4. Keep Coral Gables Beautiful Program Updates (KCGB):****i. Award Presentation:****1. FRB Innovative Award**

- a. KCGB received Florida Recycling Partnership's 2023 Award for Innovative Impact for our Reverse Vending Machine program. The RVM collected 18,258 beverage containers throughout its pilot year. Nominations were judged by students from the Patel College for Global Sustainability and announced the winners on Florida Recycles Day last November (the 18th). There was a webinar on Jan. 26 to showcase the award winners' programs. Solanch presented the RVM pilot program during the webinar as KCGB's representative. The sustainability team was recognized during yesterday's commission meeting once they received the physical award.

**ii. Recent Events:**

1. West Lab Elementary School Cleanup – Friday, February 23
  - a. KCGB held a cleanup in partnership with A Cleaner Planet at West Lab Elementary School. There were 50 volunteers and 50 pounds of debris collected.
2. Post-Valentine's Day Litter Cleanup – Saturday, February 24
  - a. KCGB's first collaboration event was during Matheson Hammock's monthly cleanups with Blue Missions and Miami-Dade Parks. 35 volunteers collected 135 pounds of trash all throughout Matheson Hammock.

**iii. Upcoming Events & Updates:**

1. A Cleaner Planet Cleanup – Friday March 8
  - a. Partnering once again for a cleanup with A Cleaner Planet at the Coral Gables Preparatory Academy and Philips Park. KCGB provides support throughout the event and necessary supplies.
2. Garden Talk at the Farmers Market – Saturday, March 9
  - a. Diego and Nicole will be attending the Farmers Market to present on the City's sustainability initiatives and to promote KCGB's upcoming Earth Month events.
3. Coral Gables Museum Bike Tour – Sunday, March 17
  - a. Matt and Diego will be attending this month's bike tour and will be providing a tour of Coral Gables to all those who attend. The discussions will surround flooding, sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, visiting the FIU buoy that collects water quality data, Ruth Bryan Owens Waterway Park to see the waterway, and the Riviera Outfall.
4. Sustainability Village – Saturday, March 30

- a. KCGB's first sustainability village at the Coral Gables Farmers Market. KCGB will be there to share the City's sustainability initiatives but there will be nine local vendors who are in the sustainability field to share their knowledge and to promote their projects.
  - 5. Downtown Community Cleanup – Monday, April 1
    - a. KCGB and the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce's quarterly downtown cleanup is coming up on the first day of Earth Month. There will be a demonstration of The Water Below Us interactive art installation on Giralda Plaza after the cleanup and a post-cleanup mixer at a local restaurant.
  - 6. Plogging at Matheson – Saturday, April 6
    - a. KCGB's 4th annual plogging event at Matheson Hammock Park to help cleanup the mangrove forests before the rainy season and help kick off Earth Month and the Great American Cleanup season.
  - 7. Baynanza – Saturday, April 13
    - a. The 42nd annual Baynanza cleanup, hosted by Miami-Dade County's DERM, will be held at three Coral Gables locations – Chapman Field Park, Matheson Hammock Park, and R. Hardy Matheson Preserve at Bella Vista Point (for Gables by the Sea residents).
  - 8. Bi-Annual Recycling Drive-Thru – Sat, May 4th
    - a. Early notice for the Recycling Drive-Thru event on May 4. This event will be taking place at City Hall and participants can bring household hazardous waste materials, paper shredding, old electronics, and clothing for Camillus House.
  - 9. Commercial Beautification Awards – March & April
    - a. The Commercial Beautification Awards serve to recognize businesses that have gone above and beyond with the beautification and maintenance of their storefronts and surrounding areas. Nominations are received from the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, Code Enforcement Division, Economic Development Department, and the Coral Gables community at large. Nominees must meet all nomination criteria and winners are selected by the SAB as the acting KCGB Board of Directors.
- iv. Grant Updates
- 1. KAB Great American Cleanup – January 15
    - a. This grant was for a cash grant that would allow KCGB to purchase essential supplies for the upcoming GAC season that will be from March 19 to June 20. The grant

was for \$2,500. If awarded, there would be enough supplies, marketing materials, and native plants for the many events planned throughout Spring.

**2. Florida Beverage Association – January 31**

- a. The FBA grant was the grant that KCGB was awarded in 2022 and was used to purchase the RVM. KCGB applied again for 2024 in the hopes to start a new program using Big Belly recycling bins. These bins would be placed in three of the City's most populated parks, Phillips, Kerdyk, and Jaycee Park. The city does not have recycling in place at any park so this grant would allow the city to implement a recycling program in these parks. The Big Belly bins are Smart bins and have a compactor and are solar powered, they also are connected to a software that notifies when the bins are full or need servicing as well as greenhouse gas emissions. Through this grant, KCGB is hoping to install 4 bins at the aforementioned parks.

**3. KAB Cigarette Litter Prevention Program – February 15**

- a. KCGB applied for this grant to hopefully receive 12 cigarette waste receptacles to place around the Downtown area and Ruth Bryan Owens waterway park (Granada & Bird). This would be to help prevent cigarette litter from entering the waterways and to help educate the community about the damage cigarette butts have on the environment. KAB partners with TerraCycle for this program and all the collected cigarettes will be shipped to them for proper recycling. A \$5,000 cash grant was requested to help with materials, marketing, and media expenses. KCGB is hoping to be rewarded with this grant to start up this program and their long-term goal is to have it expand throughout the city.

**5. Sustainability City Commission****i. The Water Below Us Art Installation**

**a. The City of Coral Gables and BLUE Missions have partnered to install a new public interactive art installation on Giralda Plaza for this World Water Day on Friday, March 22. This art installation is to raise awareness about local water issues in South Florida and is titled, The Water Below Us. This virtual reality art installation will be up from March 22 through all of April. Join the City of Coral Gables, KCGB, and BLUE Missions for a ribbon cutting unveiling The Water Below Us on Mar. 22 at 5:30 p.m. on Giralda Plaza and following the unveiling, attendees are welcome to come to happy hour at Cebada Rooftop.**

**ii. Freebee Contract Extension**

**a. The contract with Freebee is being finalized to convert the existing fleet to Tesla vehicles. This will continue to add to the city's sustainability goals.**

**6. Standing Agenda****i. Sea-Level Rise Update**

**a. Matt attended the quarterly South Florida Water Management resiliency forum to stay updated on water quality throughout the region. The city recently had their second meeting on the Stormwater Master Plan with a consultant to further update the Vulnerability Assessment. Matt plans to request the consultant to present the data gathered on this topic at an upcoming Board meeting.**

**ii. Water Quality Update**

**a. Tiffany Troxler has many projects with FIU to gather water quality data in Coral Gables. They are monitoring many different parameters ranging from nutrients, wastewater tracers, E. coli, etc. The sampling started in June and will end in May, there will be a full report in October. FIU is not sampling microplastics within the city. The reason behind this is to focus primarily on the nutrient levels that enter the city's waterways after coming up with land-based management strategies to reduce nutrients from entering the waterway. There are 13 sampling stations throughout the city.**

**7. Member Comments****A. Teddy:**

- i. Teddy has an update on UM and their preparations for Earth Month as they have many different events set up for April. UM just launched an extension of their composting program at the food court, and they now have composting throughout the campus.

**B. Katrina:**

- i. Katrina is interested in the public reaching out to the Board with any new ways for educational outreach that the city can do. She mentioned that she will be at the Aspen Institute Conference as she is a part of the committee. She will be sharing the information with the Board.

**C. Tiffany:**

- i. Tiffany updated the Board on the city's water quality and the efforts she and FIU are making to collect and research the data that is being collected.

**D. Dipak:**

- i. Dipak is very interested in the Big Belly bins and hopes that KCGB will be awarded the Florida Beverage Association grant so that the program may be implemented.

**E. Gabi:**

- i. Gabi extended the invitation to the KCGB team for a tabling event at Coral Gables Senior High on March 14. There will be many different sustainability teams at the event, and she would like to have more students become aware of the many Earth Month events that will be happening at Coral Gables.

**F. Anabella:**

- i. Anabella suggested that signs and educational material be placed throughout the city's parks so that children can learn more about the importance of recycling and other environmental initiatives. Sustainability has been interested in adding signage indicating the different native species found at each individual park and will be adding recycling material to that signage. Matt will be reaching out to the Parks Department to start this idea.
- ii. Due to Anabella's main focus being Green Business, Matt updated the Board on the Green Business Certification status, the updated version of the certification is almost done. There will be an update during the April meeting.

**G. Jasper:**

- i. Jasper has been receiving input from citizens related to his primary interest which is sea-level rise and septic-to-sewer. Citizens are concerned about the flooding issues within the city

and specifically underground parking garages. How the flooding is being managed is by pumping the water out and sending it through the stormwater and sewer systems. Matt informed Jasper and the Board that he believes that new construction does not allow for underground parking garages. He will have to check with the city's Building Department. Regarding the storm water systems, if flooding is being pumped into the storm drains, then it will need to be reported to Code Enforcement.

**H. Nicolas:**

- i. Nicolas agrees with Anabella's initiative regarding the addition of educational material posted at the city's parks. He is impressed with the updated agenda format for the meetings and mentioned that there is more structure to the meetings. Nicolas is interested in an update on the city's dashboard. Matt mentioned that there will be a meeting on the dashboard the day after this Board meeting.

**I. Matt:**

- i. Shared the informative flyer that Joe had worked on with Vice Mayor Anderson on the harmful effects of pesticides and the type of ecofriendly pesticides that one may use. They both presented this topic at the city's Farmers Market.
- ii. Deena Bell-Llewellyn, the city's Assistant Director of Public Works for Landscape Services, will be coming to a Board meeting soon to discuss the tree canopy in more detail.
- iii. The city's IT department and Greenspace team collaborated to create a Digital Twin, a 3D map of the city, on the tree canopy. The purpose of this is to have easy access to information on the trees found throughout the city. There will be an update on the tree canopy and an update on the Digital Twin.

**City Board Attendance Update**

- i. The city's clerk's office updated the policy on Board attendance. The new policy for excused absences is as follows:
  - a. Illness, jury duty, or travel.
- ii. Any other type of absence will be considered unexcused. There will be no more motions to excuse absent Board members, the staff will make that determination.

**8. Next Meeting: Monday, April 8, 2024 at 5:00 P.M.**

**9. ADJOURNED: 6:20 P.M.**



**For more information on the Sustainability Advisory Board please visit:  
CoralGables.com/SAB**

**Email: [Sustainability@coralgables.com](mailto:Sustainability@coralgables.com)**