

CITY OF CORAL GABLES WATERWAY ADVISORY BOARD
 CORAL GABLES LIBRARY – CONFERENCE ROOM
 WEDNESDAY, November 2, 2016 5:30 P.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	DISTRICT	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY:
		16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
Jeff Hicks	2	P	*	*	A	A	P	*	James C. Cason
Manny Vigil		A	*	*	A	A	A	*	Frank C. Quesada
Juan A. Galan Jr	3	P	*	*	A	A	P	*	Patricia Keon
Manny Chamizo	1	P	*	*	P	P	P	*	Vince Lago
Laura Roberts	2	P	*	*	P	A	P	*	Jeannette Slesnick
Douglas Yoder	7	P	*	*	P	P	P	*	Cathy Swanson- Rivenbark
Vacant									Commission-As-A- Whole
Vacant									Commission-As-A- Whole
Vacant									Board-As-A-Whole

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
(-) – No Appointment
(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

1. John Osgood, Assistant Public Works Director / Board Secretary
2. Jorge Acevedo, Utilities Division Director
3. Dora Sequeira, Clerical Assistant II
4. Randy Hoff, Marine Patrol Sergeant
5. Ray Toledo, Marine Patrol Officer
6. Christopher Challenger, Marine Patrol Officer

GUEST:

None

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Chamizo called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

Mr. Galan moved approval of the June 1, 2016 meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Hicks.
Note: After taking the summer off and two meetings without a quorum, this was the first meeting at which the June minutes could be approved.

MOTIONS:

1. Mr. Galan moved approval of Mr. David Schwedel as Board-as-a-whole appointee for District 4; seconded by Mr. Chamizo – all were in favor.
2. Mr. Galan moved the recommendation of Mr. Buddy Newman for Commission-as-a-whole consideration to represent district 6; seconded by Mr. Hicks – all were in favor.

Discussion of priorities –

Fishing on bridges - Mr. Chamizo initiated this discussion; expressed concerns with fishing off bridges, specifically Ponce de Leon and Blue Road bridges. Staff will ensure the approaches to those bridges are signed appropriately and place additional signage at mid-point of the bridges if allowed. Board members had a general discussion about expanding fishing in certain areas. Mr. Chamizo inquired about the City's plans for the open space at Blue Road and Riviera, where the City parks its barge. Members stated it's "less than a passive park." Staff will research feasibility of opening up that area. Key issues:

- Enhance signage on Ponce de Leon and Blue Road bridges.
- Explore feasibility of expanding fishing at the open space near Blue Road and Riviera.

Water quality – Mr. Galan initiated discussion of the water quality issue – General consensus that water quality of the waterway is one of the most important priorities. Mr. Yoder explained the function of the waterway system as it relates to storm drainage. Mr. Hicks suggested the need to conduct baseline research since no recent water quality studies have been conducted. Members and staff engaged in general discussion of water quality issues and concerns – dredging, discharges into the waterway, water quality analysis in terms of chemicals/minerals in the water; recommendation/inquiry into what studies or analyses have been done or should be done. Key issues:

- Water has to be safe for humans and wildlife.
- Initial benchmarking of water quality, followed by ongoing (annual) testing and monitoring program.
- Introduce new signage at drains indicating that storm water and other matter drains to the waterway.

Beautification/Aesthetics – Members discussed multiple issues related to beautification and code enforcement including condition of some bridges, potential for aesthetic solar/LED lighting under bridges in certain areas, tree trimming, trash and graffiti removal, etc. Mr. Acevedo stated there is a current and ongoing CIP project for painting and maintaining bridges over the waterway. Members requested clarification on what is and is not allowed by the zoning and city code along the waterway – e.g. canopies, decking over boat slips, are they allowed by permit? Key Issues:

- Level of attention, code enforcement, and appearance of property should be the same from the waterway as it is from the street.
- Invite Code Enforcement Director Will Ortiz to the next meeting of the Waterway Advisory Board.

Navigation – Mr. Galan initiated discussion of navigation issues, including mangrove encroachment and standards for navigating on the waterway. Mr. Acevedo stated there are standards and codes and will assess compliance and gaps in compliance. Mr. Yoder and Mr. Acevedo confirmed that mangrove trimming requires a permit from the County and must be done by companies certified to trim mangroves. DERM can assist with guidance on the process if necessary. Mr. Hicks recommended assessing the need for dredging. Key issues:

- Identify/clarify standards for navigable depth and width
- Establish benchmarks and plan for dredging as necessary

Public information brochure/website – Mr. Yoder initiated discussion of a public information piece that includes a map of the waterways showing points of public access. Other elements of the waterway guide could include the history, rules of use, and responsibilities of residents living adjacent to the waterway. Key issues:

- Identify existing city information
- Identify next steps including discussion with City’s communication office

Discussion of board representation

Ms. Roberts initiated discussion of board representation. Members asked for clarification of the process for recommending and appointing board members. As indicated in motions section above, the WAB selected their board-as-a-whole appointee representing waterway district 4; and recommended a candidate for commission-as-a-whole consideration to represent waterway district 6. Staff will follow up with the Clerk’s office on remaining issues and vacancies.

Suggestion to tour the waterway

Mr. Chamizo raised the suggestion to tour the waterway. Ms. Roberts suggested the morning of December 7, 2016 for the tour; board members agreed. Mr. Yoder initiated discussion of the Sunshine Law responsibilities of the board members during the tour – namely not discussing any issues that have or could come before the board; board members acknowledged they could take their own notes during the tour, but not talk about any board related business.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 P.M.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday January 11, 2016 to be held at the *Coral Gables Library*