

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of October 15, 2009

Members	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	
Leslie Pantin Jr. Matt Bokor	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	E	*	*	+	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Richard Chimelis Sam Joseph	A	+	+	P	E	P	P	P	A	*	*	P	A	Commissioner Maria Anderson
Katherine deBlij Maria Garcia	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	+	P	*	*	P	Comm. Ralph Cabrera Jr.
Vivian Moré	P	E	E	E	P	E	P	P	P	*	*	E	A	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
David Stiefel	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	*	*	P	P	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk Jr.

* No meetings

x No quorum

+ Membership discontinued

Staff in attendance:

Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon, Office of Public Affairs
Evelyn Paz, Office of the Mayor

Guests:

Ronald Gardner, US Census Bureau
Janet Morejon, US Census Bureau
Katia Faintfleur, US Census Bureau

The meeting came to order at 9:30 a.m.

New Chair

Newly appointed Communications Committee Chair Matt Bokor was introduced.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the September meeting were circulated for approval.

Motion: David Stiefel motioned to approve the September meeting minutes. Maria Garcia seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Bokor offered congratulations for e-News receiving an Award of Excellence from 3CMA national marketing association.

Annual Report

Higgins Fallon distributed a draft of the Annual Report from the Communications Committee. She requested input and review. This will be presented to the City Commission at their next meeting.

Bokor requested that more information be added regarding the City's website indicating the number of hits and page visits. Higgins Fallon will add.

Motion: David Stiefel motioned to approve the Annual Report with changes indicated. Maria Garcia seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2010 US Census

At the last Commission Meeting, Mayor Slesnick suggested the Communications Committee participate in a public outreach campaign for the upcoming 2010 census. The census organization has asked the City to promote the census and let citizens become aware of the process and make them active participants. The census requested the City to form a Complete Count Committee. Mayor Slesnick suggested giving this outreach responsibility to the Communications Committee instead.

Higgins Fallon informed members that the census takes place April 2010 when citizens will be asked to complete and return a form. At the last census, Coral Gables achieved a 73 percent completion rate and the goal is to improve this rate. Evelyn Paz from the Mayor's Office has been asked to assist in this effort which is why she is present at the meeting.

US Census Partnership Coordinator Katia Faintfleur was introduced and asked for Committee members' introductions. She will train members on the role of the Complete Count Committee and asked why the census is important.

Stiefel replied that an accurate population number will ensure the city will get its share of funding. Faintfleur explained that the census takes place every 10 years and by law everyone is required to participate. The census doesn't ask for people's documentation or legal status. This time no one will get a long form, just a 10 question form that takes 10 minutes to fill out. The information provided is protected and cannot be shared with any other agency.

Census data is used to distribute congressional seats in the state, and to distribute \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal government. The funds allocated to the states are strictly based on population - therefore each location cannot afford not to get a proper count. After the 2000 census, Florida was able to get more congressional seats based on the census. If the population is not as big as 2000, Florida will lose those seats.

In 2000 the census bureau reported 281 million people living in the US and received a mail response of 67 percent. Coral Gables response was 73 percent which was higher than the national average but can still be better. The target for the 2010 census is to improve the response rate by 5 percent.

The core message of the 2010 census is that it's easy, it's important and it's safe. This is the shorter questionnaire in history (it's easy); it directly affects how much of the \$300 million will be allocated (it's important); and the answers are confidential and protected by law (it's safe).

The sole purpose of the Complete Count Committee is to implement a census awareness campaign that results in people mailing back the form in a timely manner. There is a dollar figure for each person that does not return the census form. It's a very expensive project: every household that

does not return the form will have someone knock on the door up to 18 times. The 2010 census is a 100 percent local effort and hires locally. They will not hire someone from another city to become a census taker in Coral Gables. The Complete Count Committee should target certain areas such as the business community by engaging the local Chamber of Commerce; the local media and education by targeting the local schools and principals. Children are the most undercounted and education is the most affected since education funding is allocated through census data. Other groups to target are community and faith based organizations.

Stiefel inquired if on the media side the Communications Committee is only responsible for targeting media unique to Coral Gables. Faintfleur confirmed.

At this time, Committee Member Maria Garcia left the meeting. No quorum was present.

Faintfleur continued with an explanation of hard-to-count communities. Miami-Dade County is a hard-to-count location because of percentage of people living below poverty line and linguistic issues. There are pockets in Coral Gables that are hard-to-count such as secured building and gated communities. In this case, homeowners associations must be informed about the census timeline to allow census takers to do their job. The badge of census takers does not have a photograph and people are going to be skeptical and won't let them into certain communities.

From February through March 2010 the census questionnaires will be mailed or delivered to households. They will be at most homes by March 15. By April 1, 2010, all questionnaires must be mailed back. From April 1 through July 2010, census takers will be visiting households that did not return the questionnaire by mail. By December 2010, the Census Bureau must deliver a population count to the President. By March 2010, census information will be sent to the states.

There are a number of resources that the Census Bureau will provide and the information is available at their website, 2010census.gov. Any of this information can be co-branded and utilized in any City materials and resources.

At the conclusion of the presentation, US Census representatives thanked the Committee for their time.

Stiefel requested the presence of the City Manager Salerno at the next Communications Committee to discuss his concept of branding which he talked about at this morning's Chamber of Commerce breakfast.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.