

# City of Coral Gables

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



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 14, 2024

8:00 AM

<https://coralgables.zoom.us/j/89943974263>

Youth Center - Conference Room

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

## **ROLL CALL**

### **a. Roll Call and Excusal of Absences**

**Present: 8 - Board member Erik Rodriguez, Chair Carlos Hernandez, Board member Maite Halley, Board member Aaron Aizenstat, Board member Jennifer Marquez, Board member Yamilet Rodriguez, Board member Ellen Chasens and Board member Antonio Gonzalez.**

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

### **a. Approval of February Meeting Minutes**

**A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY ANTONIO GONZALEZ AND SECOND BY ELLEN CHASENS. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**a. General Updates**

Deputy Director Carolina Vester began her report by presenting an overview of the beginning of the registration process for members and residents of the youth center, followed by a two-week registration period for individuals who are not residents of Coral Gables.

Board member Antonio Gonzalez stated that he attempted to enroll his daughter in the online program yesterday but was informed that they did not reside in Coral Gables. Deputy Director Carolina explained that an attempt is made to recertify the residency annually. This occasionally necessitates a personal visit to verify that you are still a resident of coral gables.

Deputy Director Carolina Vester extended her gratitude to the board for the park's naming. They were indeed presented to the commission. Tuesday of the previous commission meeting saw the announcement of the four-park naming's. They composed a brief biography for each individual. Our presentation was comparable to the one that was displayed on the board. Furthermore, we informed the commission that every park naming was unanimously endorsed by the board. Additionally, we disclosed that the board significantly contributed to the transformation of Memorial Veterans Park, which was linked to Tiziano Park and Staff Sargent Carl Enis.

Deputy Director Carolina Vester continued her report on Cooper Park. She added that they would be holding a community meeting for that park on Thursday, April 25th. It's the one in the Golden Gate neighborhood, closer to Carver Elementary. Initially, it was a two-part project. It was meant to be Cooper and Nellie B. Moore. We opted to complete at least one project due to the increasing expenses associated with them.

**b. Special Events**

Deputy Director Carolina Vester proceeded to update the board on the forthcoming events for the month of March, including The Coral Gables Farmers Market - Saturday, Mar 16 & 30 at 8 a.m. along with a Pickleball exhibition at 9 a.m., Movies Under the Gables Moonlight - Featuring Mrs. Doubtfire - Mar 15 at 7:30 p.m., Gentle Egg Hunt - Saturday, Mar 23 at 11 a.m., Eggstreme Egg Hunt - Saturday, Mar 30 - Main hunt on the athletic field at 10 a.m., Toddler hunt in the indoor Basketball Gym at 10:30 a.m., along with additional hunts at the Venetian Pool at 9 a.m., Jaycee Park at 10 a.m., and Coral Bay Park at 11 a.m., Glow in the Dark - Sunday, Mar 31 at noon.

Board members were advised by Deputy Director Carolina Vester to let us know if they would like to volunteer at the Bike and BBQ event and to get in touch with Administrative Assistant Susan. She also told the board that the youth advisory board would be informed in case they would like to volunteer at the event if they desired.

**c. CIP Updates**

The parks advisory board was informed by Deputy Director Carolina of the recent

change in the city with a new city manager.

Deputy Director Carolina Vester informed the board that the underground dog park is under construction. They may see it under ponce and US1. Behind the gables station, where merchant Traders Joe's is.

Is there a site plan, Vice-Chair Jennifer Marquez asked? Deputy Director Carolina said we'll send the site plan to the board via email, and we can also bring it back in the next agenda.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Board member Maite Halley asked has the youth center assistant supervisor been hired? The interviews had been conducted, stated Deputy Director Carolina. Before the holidays. The candidate impressed us. Unfortunately, they usually demand higher pay. She lives in Orlando. We couldn't beat them to start here. Katherine Diaz, our office guest service specialist, was another candidate. To assist the supervisor and assistant supervisor.

Vice-Chair Jennifer Marquez brought up complaints over personal trainers at the youth center not being allowed to come in. People have always had someone come and work out with them. She is wondering if there's anything that's being offered to now youth center. She knows that the country club has its own personal trainers. Jennifer asked what is being offered here? Deputy Director Carolina said other members have complained about personal training on equipment being disruptive. The gym is smaller. It's not meant for professional circuit training. I need this because of my condition and rehabilitation, some of those people told us. We went through our ADA accommodation process and accommodated them with their trainers, but only to have a trainer. This gym is not suitable for a professional trainer. Space wise and operation aren't conducive. It's more like a community gym. If the board wants to revisit it, we can but the country has skilled trainers and a separate gym.

Chair Carlos Hernandez informed staff he sees commuters near the pool and Catalonia Park. This may be a new Catalonian Park program or an independent one. A circle of people sits on the ground. Not sure if mommy and me. On Wednesdays, overflow parking is on the sidewalk and street at 5:30 p.m. People walking their dogs on the sidewalk must go around vehicles to cross the street.

Chair Carlos Hernandez said he's had numerous complaints regarding youth center parking, but residents in the area, making it worse. Athletics parking is unavailable due to disruptions. Deputy Director Carolina said Anastasia residents park at least ten cars. She said we've done window stickers before, and we've also done signage. All the lots now have signage intended specifically for users of the youth facility. In addition, there has been a problem with no parking due to pickleball's rise, and people parking on the yellow line.

In order to assist in finding a solution to the parking problem at the youth center, Chair Carlos Hernandez inquired as to whether or not the advisory board itself could take any action. Deputy Director Carolina said they'll work parking and bring it back to the board.

Board member Ellen Chasens brought up the limited number of tennis memberships at Biltmore and Salvador. She mentioned that everything is mostly USDA. She had no idea that the city itself could facilitate a program of that kind. Rather than depending solely on the USDA for everything, that could be a more member-friendly option. Therefore, she is not sure if the city can come up with something. Deputy Director Carolina said all courses talk to contracted and staff. Nothing's private between Robert and the contracted professionals, and we limit private classes to the contracted staff. Don't let it overrun into private coaching classes. She also mentioned that she will speak with Tennis Operations Supervisor Robert Gomez.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY**

Date of the next meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 8:15 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:15 A.M. WAS MADE BY MAITE HALLEY AND WAS SECONDED BY ANTONIO GONZALEZ. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**NOTE**