

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**WATERWAY ADVISORY BOARD**  
 HYBRID MEETING AT CITY HALL/ZOOM  
 WEDNESDAY, May 3, 2023 - 5:30 P.M.  
 MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS	District	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	APPOINTED BY:
		22	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	23	22	
Manny Chamizo	2	*	*	*	P	*	*	P	A	P	A	P	A	Vince Lago
Daniel Tormo	3	*	*	*	P	*	*	P	P	P	A	A	P	Jim Cason
Juan A. Galan Jr	3	*	*	*	A	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	A	Rhonda Anderson
Kevin Ritzenthaler	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	A	A	P	P	Kirk Menendez
Joel Kallan	4	*	*	*	P	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	Michael Mena
Douglas Yoder	CR	*	*	*	P	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	Peter Iglesias
Bertram Goldsmith	7	*	*	*	P	*	*	E	P	P	P	A	P	Commission-As-A-Whole
John Swain	2	*	*	*	P	*	*	P	P	P	P	P	P	Commission-As-A-Whole
Levi Meyer	6								A	P	P	A	A	Board-As-A-Whole

**P – Present**  
**P\*- Present (zoom)**  
**E – Excused Absence**  
**A – Absent**  
**R – Resigned**  
**(-) – No Appointment**  
  
**(\*) – No Meeting**

**STAFF:**

- Jorge Acevedo, Utilities & ROW Division Chief/Board Secretary
- Lorena Garrido, Administrative & Fiscal Affairs Manager
- Yanissey Solivera, Administrative Assistant
- Sergeant Guido Antezana, Marine Patrol

**GUESTS:**

- Catherine McKee Gray, MPS Chief Natural Resources Division, Miami-Dade County – Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources Division Management (DERM)

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. by Mr. Yoder. The roll call was done, and quorum was met.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

*Mr. Swain made the motion to approve the minutes of April 5, 2023, seconded by Dr. Kallan, all were in favor, and adopted unanimously.*

**PRESENTATIONS**

Mr. Yoder presented Catherine McKee Gray, MPS chief Natural Resources Division, Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Recourses Division Management (DERM).

Ms. McKee Gray introduced herself and stated that she will be providing a brief overview of DERM'S permitting process and programs that are available, as it relates to mangrove trimming requirements.

Ms. McKee Gray's presentation is attached.

**DISCUSSIONS:**

Mr. Swain inquired about the governmental exemption and the process that is required should the City take on the responsibility of trimming the mangroves. Ms. McKee Gray said that while there are exemptions outlined in State Law, based on her understanding of what the Board and the City is looking to accomplish, a Class I permit would be required. DERM will evaluate the permit through the Class I permitting process and although the process is relatively straightforward, the potential challenge with the code is that it requires written consent from every riparian owner to issue the permit.

Mr. Yoder asked Ms. McKee Gray if the City established said program and hired a certified arborist to perform the work, can the City under the auspices of their authority, require the property owners to hire a certified arborist to do the work at their own expense. Ms. McKee Gray responded that she wouldn't be able to speak as to what the City could or could not require of the residents; however, for the purpose of trimming a mangrove, any trimming or alteration of a mangrove is required to be done by or overseen by a certified arborist.

***Mr. Yoder made a motion to set forth a resolution reading, be it resolved by the Coral Gables Waterway Advisory Board that the City administration undertake a survey of current vegetation trimming needs to restore safety and navigability to the waterway and its tributaries, estimate the cost of such a program on a continuing basis, recommend an ongoing financing mechanism for such a program, and present recommendations to the City Commission for implementation. Motion was seconded by Mr. Goldsmith, all were in favor.***

Mr. Yoder stated that he was informed by Ms. McKee Gray that there are areas in Cocoplum that were designated as mitigation areas for the loss of mangrove canopy in areas that were developed, and some of those areas were not intended to be open water to navigable channels. These areas were part of the development agreements associated with those developments, therefore, trimming them will not be allowed under any circumstances. He also stated that there are maps from the original development approval that will show those areas and the City will need to include them in any agreement.

Mr. Swain inquired about the annual reports, he stated that he has no recollection of seeing them. Mr. Acevedo said that staff can provide the Board with a copy should they want to see them. Dr. Kallan stated that getting a copy of the most recent reports would be beneficial to have, especially for the new Board members. Mr. Acevedo said that staff will provide the Board with a copy of the most recent reports.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Swain provided a presentation regarding Blue Road Park and requested for the Board to attend to the next meeting which will be held during the summer.

Copy of Mr. Swain's presentation attached.

**MARINE PATROL REPORT:**

Sgt. Antezana stated that this month has been quiet and reported on Two incidents they had in April on the waterway which a boat caught on fire just outside the waterway and it turns out it was the City of Miami. They also assisted the City of Miami with the recovery of a swimmer near Rusty Pelican that drowned.

Mr. Swain asked Sgt Antezana if there is a size limit for a water vessel to be considered an obstruction. Sgt. Antezana said that he doesn't know if there is a limit and that this may be an issue for code enforcement to make the final determination. Mr. Yoder stated that obstructing the waterway is a safety hazard and suggested installing cautionary signage in the canals.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.