

CORAL GABLES SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

March 10, 2009

Coral Gables Police Department
Coral Gables, Florida

J J A S O N D J F M APPOINTED BY:

MEMBERS

	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	APPOINTED BY:
Andrew Yagoda	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Donald Slesnick, Jr.
Joan Reitsma	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	Commissioner Maria Anderson
Victor Shabanah			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	City Manager David Brown
Pat Kiel	P	E	P	P	E	P	E	A	P	P	Crime Watch
Barbra Harley	E	E	P	P	P		E	P	P	P	Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera
Doug Austin						P	E	P	A	E	Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
Anna Rodriguez	P	P	P	P	*				P	P	PMS
Dr. Nestor Diaz	A	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	CGHS
Debbie Korge	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Wayne "Chip" Withers

A =Absent E = Excused P = Present * = Resigned **=no meeting

STAFF: Sgt. M. DeJong, and Recording Secretary Anna Garcia

GUESTS:

Dr. Nestor Diaz, Assistant Principal on behalf of Coral Gables High School
Anna Rodriguez, Principal of Ponce de Leon Middle School

There being *a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.*

Excused Absence: At this meeting no one asked for an excused absence. However, Doug Austin was marked at this time "absent".

New Committee Members: Dr. Nestor Diaz and Ms. Anna Rodriguez were officially welcomed as new members of the committee. All positions in the committee are filled at this time.

Education Compact: Miami Dade School Board and the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce met regarding the compact. A couple of changes were made and once the changes have been reviewed and approved by the Chamber, Chair Korge will bring it before the committee for review and forwarding to the City of Coral Gables Commission.

Minutes: The February 9, 2009 minutes were approved unanimously.

Go Green Initiative: Chairperson Debbie Korge expressed that schools in Florida have a "Go-Green Initiative"; however it was mentioned that the City of Coral Gables is not listed as a "go-green" city. There are many different ways to make a school "green". Teaching the students now to be environmentally conscious at school can do more than help save money for the home and school in the long run. Secretary Garcia expressed that bringing nature indoors, recycling, using natural lighting whenever possible are some of the ways that the school can go "green". Secretary Garcia mentioned that few simple changes to students' and teachers' daily routines plus a little awareness can

have a valuable long-term effect on the environment and the school's budget. Chairperson Korge mentioned that she would research this topic further and bring her findings to the next committee meeting.

FCAT: Both schools are still in FCAT mode! On average, 200 students are showing up on Saturday mornings for tutoring at the Coral Gables High School. The FCAT school grade will be released sometime during the month of June or July which depends on how fast the State of Florida process the tests.

Budget: The final budget has not been presented to the Miami-Dade School Board as of yet. The committee will be notified as information is disseminated. Chairperson Korge asked if there were any updates regarding the transportation issue. Both school representatives mentioned that final information would be released in April.

Florida Power and Light: Discussion ensued regarding the potential route that Florida Power and Light is studying to add transmission lines through the City of Coral Gables. Ms. Sharon Watson brought this information to the committee and she mentioned that it was premature but this could impact greatly the health, safety, and welfare of the City of Coral Gables residents.

Discussion ensued regarding that on the map provided there were other possible route alternatives that would be more suitable. Members acknowledged the importance of health and safety for the children who attend the city's public schools. Members were concerned that if these transmission lines were added it would interfere with the beauty, business, and the community life of the city.

A motion was made Member Andrew Yagoda which he stated that "Acknowledging the importance of our children's health, welfare and safety, in an effort to avoid missed opportunities to discuss and understand the issues related to FPL's Turkey Point 6 & 7 Transmission Improvement Project ("Project") and alternative proposal to place power lines adjacent to the city's public schools, acknowledging the continued debate of whether electro-magnetic forces emanating from power lines causes cancer and other health related issues, a motion is hereby made recommending that the City Commission request the City Attorney to engage FPL in open and preemptive dialogue prior to making a final decision of where and how to place new proposed power lines stemming from FPL's Project. Motion was seconded by Joan Reitsma. Motion passed unanimously.

Members were advised that a website is available regarding the issue.

Coral Gables Police Department: Sgt. Melissa DeJong from the Youth Resource Unit reported that the vandalism on the trolleys' still remained the same. Even though recommendations were made, the implementations have not begun as of yet. The unit is preparing for the Spring Break Camp beginning on April 6 to 10, 2009.

Ponce De Leon Middle School: The school is committed to accept as many students in the Magnet Program as possible.

E-News: A friendly reminder to the school representatives that E-news is a great tool to be used in order to showcase the school and its students.

SAT News: Two students from Coral Gables High School received recognition that they are two students who are considered as a National Merit Scholar Finalist. More information will follow.

Last Day of School: Schools in Miami-Dade County will end classes on June 5, 2009.

Graduation: The graduation commencement for Coral Gables High School will take place on June 5, 2009, at 3 pm at the University of Miami's Bank Atlantic Center. Traffic Unit will be advised about the possible traffic congestion on that date. Also Chairperson Korge expressed that this information should be posted in the E-News notifying the community to expect traffic delays due to graduation commencements taking place at the University of Miami due to the commencements.

New Grading System: The grading system will be changed official by the State effective September 2010. Students will be graded as follows: 50% on the passing of the FCAT, Advance & Certificate Classes,

City Projects Update: None

Next Meeting Dates: The SCRC will meet again on April 21, 2009, at 6 PM at the Youth Center's 2nd floor conference room.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna G. Garcia-Recording Secretary