



**City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
November 9, 2021**

ITEM TITLE: ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS

MEETING DATE: October 6, 2021

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

QUORUM: Reached in Person

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting commenced at 10:07am

Disability Awareness Month Miami Herald Neighbor's Section Article – Ms. Palacio-Pike

Ms. Palacio-Pike advised Board that in the Miami Herald Neighbor's Section of October 17, 2021, GUIDE and My Squad will be featured. Ms. Palacio-Pike advised a press release package which also included Mr. Sando's quote was prepared by city and made available to Miami Herald. Ms. Palacio-Pike advised the Coral Gables Magazine during the month of October will also feature these items as well as the inclusive playground. Ms. Palacio-Pike stated she was not fully aware of other channels city was utilizing to distribute this information and asked if it would be ok to pass it on to others. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated she believed it would not be an issue, would check on this advice.

Ms. Palacio-Pike advised Board regarding taking students from Crystal Academy to City Hall to Trick o' Treat on Friday, October 29, 2021. Ms. Liebl spoke regarding possible participations by others such PTA, schools and Trunk o' Treat by parents. Ms. Palacio-Pike stated the more inclusive the better and she would address this with the city's School Community Relations Committee, member Ms. Jennifer Ward Sando.

Ms. Liebl advised she is now a member of Board of Directors for the Advocacy Network on Disabilities.

Board Goals for FY 2022 – Ms. Palacio-Pike

Ms. Palacio-Pike advised she has requested Dr. Jennifer Durocher, Director of UM-NSU Card to participate in this conversation due to her knowledge of the community's needs, as well as Ms. Liebl.

Mr. Sando stated due to experiences from the past, how fast time passes and how long things take it would perhaps be best to concentrate on one rather than on five or six different things. Mr. Sando utilized Adventure Day for All as example of process.

Ms. Liebl stated her goal in past and continues to be regarding employment for people with disabilities.

Ms. Palacio-Pike stated she would like Board to also keep in mind issues of sidewalks and accessible walkways in areas such as Miracle Mile.

Ms. Palacio-Pike spoke regarding how it would be best to address business via Chamber of Commerce regarding employment for people with disabilities.

Ms. Liebl advised Board of upcoming Chamber of Commerce Impact Webinar being held on October 20, 2021, where she was invited to speak. Ms. Liebl stated this would be a great opportunity to demonstrate to participating business at webinar her success as a person with disabilities and perhaps Ms. Moss could also do the same. Ms.

Liebl stated advised participating companies will be able to address them directly.

Ms. Milne expressed she also believes it would be a great opportunity for local people with disabilities to present themselves and share their success stories.

Ms. Blaire stated perhaps Board could utilize City resources and create short videos focusing on success stories of residents with disabilities which then can be made available. Ms. Blaire suggested perhaps to have employers come in and speak about their experiences, changes they have conducted in the work environment regarding employees with disabilities. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated these types of videos are already in existence via organizations such as De Moya Foundation and Best Buddies. Ms. Milne stated she believes in-person presentations reflecting employment successes of individuals with disabilities are much better.

Dr. Jennifer Durocher stated there are two main things which need to be addressed. Dr. Durocher stated the first layer would be changing mind set, whereas persons with disabilities can be seen as an asset to the workplace as well as successful and the second the practicality of it, which will require more hands-on guides, support, and information. Dr. Durocher stated once the first part is launched it is extremely important to act quickly and build momentum before interest and desire fizzles. There was further discussion regarding functions and availability of life coaches. Ms. Palacio asked if UM-Card had anyone who would be great to have as a participant at upcoming Chamber event. Ms. Liebl stated she has been advised by Chamber to keep it as small as possible, to speak more so regarding strengths and not the barriers. Ms. Liebl stated perhaps at next meeting there could be further presentation. Ms. Liebl spoke regarding Mayor stating there were three interns in his office during the summer and how great it would be for one of those interns to be a person with intellectual disabilities. Ms. Liebl went on to speak regarding further information of upcoming chambers Impact Seminar hosted by Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce and possible participation along with Ms. Moss. Dr. Durocher advised there is currently a board member on UM-Card program who is a person with disabilities and maybe available to participate in the Chambers event as well.

UM-Card Autism Friendly Initiative – Dr. Durocher

Dr. Durocher addressed board regarding UM-Card – Autism Friendly Initiative which does several different things, one is helping businesses become better able to meet the needs of people who want to access that business as either customers or client. Dr. Durocher stated the hope is that those businesses who go through this program would then be open to hiring people with disabilities, in particular those with Autism

Resolution & Proclamation Presentation regarding October Disability Awareness Month

Ms. Raquel Elejabarrieta

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised board in upcoming commission meeting a resolution as well as proclamation will be presented and requested board to suggest who can be present to accept proclamation. Ms. Blaire advised Ms. Milne had suggested to perhaps have Mr. Alan Feldman and Mr. Alexander Milne which both are people with disabilities and are employed by companies within the city. Board agreed this would be the best way to proceed and if perhaps their employers can accompany them as well. Ms. Milne advised she would address the employers as well. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised board resolution had been changed from Awareness to Acceptance.

Update: GUIDE

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised GUIDE is up and will be going live later in the month. Ms. Palacio advised it will also be in the newspaper.

Update: Adventure Day & My Squad – Ms. Ericka Kofkin

Mr. Sando asked regarding vendor count for event. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised she was not sure, however the assistance of board members such as Mr. Sando in reaching out to their contacts, provided for several positive responses. Ms. Kofkin advised there were 29 vendors. Mr. Sando stated he believes it would be best if Ms. Kofkin

can provide an updated list of the vendors which have not responded perhaps board members who are familiar with them can contact them directly. Ms. Kofkin will provide updated list to board members.

My Squad – Ms. Ericka Kofkin

Ms. Palacio provided update regarding Karaoke event which took place. Board members discussed limited tickets and Ms. Kofkin advised that for the upcoming event, the ticket limit will be lifted.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEXT MEETING: November 3, 2021

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting concluded at 11:14am

ATTACHMENT(S):

Minutes of the October 6, 2021 Meeting