

**CORAL GABLES SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2015 – 8:30 A.M.  
CITY HALL  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

MEMBERS	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul. 24	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	APPOINTED BY
Ruth Martinez				P	-	E	E	P					Mayor Cason
Andria Hanley				P	-	A	P	P					Vice Mayor Quesada
Aileen Ortega				P	-	A	P	P					Commissioner Keon
Samuel Joseph				P	-	P	P	P					Commissioner Lago
David Bianchi				P	-	P	P	P					Commissioner Slesnick
Nan Markowitz				P	-	P	P	E					City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark
													Commission-as-a-whole

A = Absent  
E = Excused Absence  
P = Present  
- = No meeting

**STAFF:**

Naomi Levi, Government Affairs Manager

**GUESTS:** Craig Leen, City Attorney

**RECORDING SECRETARY:**

Naomi Levi, Government Affairs Manager

*The following represents a summary of the items discussed during the Committee meeting.*

**- MEETING AGENDA -**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 8:32am

**II. ROLL CALL**

All members were present except Nan Markowitz, who had an excused absence. Andria Hanley left early for personal business.

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. School Improvement Projects**

**On October 16, 2015, the SCRC voted to approve the following School Improvement Projects after extensive consideration. The SCRC respectfully requests approval from the City Commission to pursue these projects to completion. Each committee member will be responsible for at least one project and will work collaboratively with MDCPS staff and other stakeholders on the projects, through the auspices of the City Manager's Office and the Commission.**

**“City Beautiful” Schools Initiative**

A public/private partnership to help renovate and maintain SCRC school's grounds and facilities

- Potential Partners: MDCPS (Central Region, school principals), PTA/PTSA, School Garden Clubs, Coral Gables Garden Club, City of Coral Gables (maintenance dept.), Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce (Realtors Association), Community Foundation of Coral Gables

**“Community Schools” Project**

Project to open SCRC school campuses and/or facilities for public usage/access

- Enforce current compact agreement to open tracks at Coral Gables Senior High School and George Washington Carver Campus
- Auditorium usage at Coral Gables Preparatory Academy and George Washington Carver Middle School
- Potential Partners: MDCPS (Central Region and school principals), City of Coral Gables (Parks & Recreation)

**Financial Literacy Initiative**

Financial literacy project to be implemented at SCRC middle and high schools

- Pilot project SCRC middle schools during 2015-16 SY – Full implementation in 2016-17 SY
- Potential Partners: MDCPS (school principals, curriculum specialists), David Bianchi (book donations)

**Mentorship/Community Service Programs**

Career/“Principal for a Day” Participation – Elementary

Civic/Service Programs – Middle School

Job Shadowing/Internship Programs – High School

- Potential Partners: MDCPS (school principals, counselors and curriculum specialists, student government), City of Coral Gables (Commission, City Manager's office), Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce (B&E Committee)

**Coral Gables History Tours**

Project to reinstitute annual Coral Gables History Tours with SCRC schools

- Pilot project at George Washington Carver and Frances Tucker Elementary Schools with all 4th and 5th grade students during 2015-16 SY
- Full project implementation at all SCRC elementary schools by 2016-17 SY
- Potential Partners: MDCPS (school principals, curriculum specialists), City of Coral Gables (City Manager's office, trolley division, Merrick House), Coral Gables Museum, Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, Coral Gables Community Foundation

**Special Needs Services/Programming Initiative**

A public/private partnership to help bring special needs services and programming to the City of Coral Gables.

- Potential Partners: MDCPS (Central Regional office, special needs dept.), City of Coral Gables, UM CARD, YMCA of South Florida, Coral Gables Community Foundation, The Children's Trust, VSA of Florida

### **Community Education Initiatives**

SCRC will seek out different methods for educating the public on issues related to education.

- Public meetings
- Public Hearing
- Marketing & Communications: Events, Meetings, Website (internal webpage and links on external sites)
- Potential Partners: MDCPS (Public Affairs office, Central Regional office), City of Coral Gables (Communications Committee/department), Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce (B&E Committee), Coral Gables Community Foundation, Miami Herald

### ***B. West Lab Expansion Report***

- Craig discussed legal framework needed for the West Lab deal to come to fruition as contemplated
- A balancing of interest test is needed for changes to the zoning code
- The City can play an important role in facilitating community meetings and public input

### ***C. Crafts Area ABC Process Report***

- Craig informed Committee that the City will be drafting a letter to appeal non-action by ABC Committee, the City's request will be offered at the December 3<sup>rd</sup> ABC Meeting.
- Craig discussed how Dr. Payne has indicated that transfers are readily approved when students meet the transfer criteria and apply to schools that are under enrolled

### ***D. MDCPS Compact Review***

- The Compact is a non-binding document
- Once the Compact is updated it does not go back to School Board for approval
- It is an important vehicle for setting goals and timelines

### ***E. Commission-As-A-Whole Appointment***

The Commission-as-a-whole appointment for the SCRC is vacant. The Committee respectfully asks the Commission to consider appointing Dana Peterson to the Committee.

**Andrea moved to approve the submission of Dana Peterson to the Commission for consideration as the Commission-As-A-Whole appointment, Ruth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

### ***A. Recap of meeting with MDCPS staff***

- Sam and Naomi met with Iraida Mendez-Cartaya and Dr. Albert Payne after the last SCRC Meeting to discuss how to move forward as partners.
- Iraida's office will serve as primary point of contact through Naomi and the City Manager's Office
- MDCPS staff expressed willingness to assist SCRC in coordinating on site meetings or school tours without disrupting school operations or impacting academic environment
- Iraida sees school improvements programs as the bones of a renewed compact

- All of the projects seemed reasonable and doable

#### **B. Proposed Constitutional Amendment**

- Sam discussed proposed Constitutional Amendment SJR 734 and how it might impact school districts and counties if it passed
- committee members were asked to brief their elected officials

### **VII. DISCUSSION**

#### **Special Needs Programs**

- Craig discussed his experience as a parent of an autistic child in a public school system which is unable to meet needs due to lack of time and resources
- For example, his school could not provide child with recommended 20 hours of one-on-one therapy and only offered 15 minutes of therapy per week
- Sam discussed special needs programs such as UM CARD, Children's Trust, and YMCA of South Florida and the possibility of having three pilot sites for special needs after school programs; Carver, West Lab, Ponce Middle
- Also discussed adult programs such as professional development programs for parents and helping adults with autism, affordable housing for teachers and special needs adults
- According to Sam- Tucker Elementary and Carver Elementary combined have more than 100 special needs students; Ponce Middle has more than 150 special needs students
- Ruth said the Coral Gables Women's Club would help in any they could and told Committee about the annual parties they host for Tucker Elementary students
- Andrea discussed "Give Miami Day"

#### **Coral Gables Preparatory Academy Windows**

- Sam discussed how Coral Gables Prep windows will be replaced, boarded and painted and how windows that were previously purchased may be used at West Lab
- Sam will check on the number of windows removed from Coral Gables Prep

### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:31am**

#### **Next Meeting:**

Next meeting will be on December 18th at City Hall.