



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
February 28, 2023

ITEM TITLE: ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS

MEETING DATE: February 1, 2023

SUMMARY OF MEETING:

QUORUM: Quorum was reached.

STAFF:

Raquel Elejabarrieta – Labor Relations & Risk Management Director
Catie Hastings – Parks & Recreation D.E.I (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Coordinator
Vivian Pires – Parks & Recreation P/T D.E.I. Counselor

GUEST:

CITIZEN ADVISORS:

Debbie Dietz
Jennifer Durocher, Director of UM-NSU Card

PUBLIC GUEST:

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order 10:05am

MEETING ABSENCE:

Samantha Duran
Philippa Milne

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

January 18, 2023
Motion by: Blake Sando / 2nd Haley Moss / All approved unanimously

SECRETARY'S REPORT: None

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Autism Flag at City Hall – Ms. Palacio-Pike

Ms. Palacio-Pike addressed regarding having an Autism Flag at City Hall. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised she will research further and advise board. Discussion took place regarding designing of flag. Ms. Dietz spoke regarding the current puzzle piece being used as representation and expressed adults with autism mostly do not feel comfortable with the puzzle piece. Ms. Moss expressed her thoughts as well regarding the use of the puzzle piece as representation of Autism and a better way to bring inclusivity to all.

Ms. Elejabarrieta explained due to upcoming elections, there will not be a commission meeting this year during the

month of April, therefore the autism resolution and proclamation would have to take place during the March 28, 2023, meeting.

Ms. Liebl spoke of creating a brochure which can be distributed to businesses advising how to be more inclusive going forward. Ms. Elejabarrieta expressed concern and procedure regarding utilizing city branding and distribution. Dr. Durocher stated UM Card has the capability of assisting with this project with the assistance of the Board. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated once the wording has been completed, to please make same is made available for review to assure the message is something that the city can approve.

Ms. Elejabarrieta stated the City will also be renewing their contract on March 28, 2023, with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Project Victory.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chamber Breakfast – Ms. Palacio-Pike

Ms. Liebl suggested perhaps to have someone speak at the breakfast regarding the new self-contained classroom at Ponce middle. Dr. Durocher stated perhaps it would be a good idea to highlight Project Victory within the City. Ms. Elejabarrieta suggested perhaps have a representative from the Miami Dade County School District speak regarding Project Victory, Project Search, and other programs they have.

Autism Awareness Month Caravan – April 3, 2023 – Ms. Palacio-Pike

Ms. Palacio-Pike advised the caravan's new date is now April 3, 2023, however, April 6, 2023, is the date the Miami-Dade County Public Schools celebrates Autism Awareness Month. Ms. Palacio-Pike advised she has been in contact with the City of Coral Gable Museum having an event there. Ms. Dietz stated perhaps Coral Gables Police could come in if available. Ms. Palacio-Pike stated it would be at the museum on April 6, 2023, between 9:30am-10:00am. Ms. Palacio-Pike mentioned it would be also nice to obtain a sponsor to donate pizza for all the children present at the museum on that day.

Self-Contained Classroom – Elementary School – Ms. Elejabarrieta

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised city will continue its communication with the Miami-Dade County Public School District regarding the possibility of have a self-contained classroom at an elementary school.

Audible Crosswalks & Granada Golf Course - Ms. Elejabarrieta

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Ms. Melissa DeZayas, Senior Transportation Engineer, had to attend another meeting and was unable to be present today. Ms. Elejabarrieta advises Ms. DeZayas has been invited to attend board's next meeting on March 1, 2023 and will provide update regarding both Audible Crosswalks and Granada Golf Course.

Freebie Route – Ms. Elejabarrieta

Ms. Elejabarrieta provided board with update regarding Freebie route. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Freebie does cross LeJeune at intersections where there are traffic lights. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised of its' primary route, it being the central business district. Ms. Elejabarrieta shared map of route with board. Mr. Sando asked if there was a way to advertise this to the disability community.

Ms. Palacio-Pike advised board the Coral Gables library will be opening in April. Ms. Palacio-Pike advised she has been in communications with Mr. Ray Baker who oversees library system, regarding perhaps doing something alongside UM Card and the Autism community. Dr. Durocher advised libraries was one of their main initiatives with the County and Miami-Dade Commissioner Raquel Regalado.

Ms. Elejabarrieta stated city does track numbers of riders with mobility devices that utilize Freebie. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised the most recent numbers available are from 2021 (Freebee Service Analysis Project June 2, 2022), which was still during COVID19. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised general average monthly riders was approximately 5,700 a month.

Ms. Palacio-Pike stated perhaps conduct follow up regarding status of how GUIDE is doing. Ms. Palacio-Pike stated addressing some of the concerns families expressed they had experience with delay of having officers contact them.

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised board regarding adding to Autism month calendar, Police Chief Hudak to attend Miami-Dade Commissioner Raquel Regalado's radio show.

Mr. Sando asked regarding the publicizing of My Squad. Ms. Liebl spoke regarding the creation of a very easy access app where the community can look up services for individuals with disabilities, apply for GUIDE, and apply for other services. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated the city has an app already available. Ms. Dietz suggested perhaps having a tab added to existing app to facilitate access to research services city has available for individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Sando asked if there was a new city commissioner. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Mr. Cason has been appointed temporary commissioner only until April 2023 and will not be running for the position during upcoming elections. Mr. Sando asked regarding how the upcoming elections may change the make-up of the board. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised board procedure regarding elected officials and board members.

Ms. Palacio advised board that she has reached out to Greater Miami Convention & Visitor's Bureau and is waiting to hear back from Mr. Aedo, CDME, Chief Operating Officer. Ms. Palacio stated she wanted to speak with them regarding how the hospitality industry in Coral Gables can be part of their movement of making Miami-Dade a more attractive place for people with disabilities.

Chamber of Commerce upcoming April Breakfast – Ms. Palacio

Ms. Palacio stated perhaps representation from Miami-Dade School Board can be present to address guest.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEXT MEETING: March 1, 2023

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 11:00am

ATTACHMENT(S):

Minutes of the February 1, 2023