

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**WATERWAY ADVISORY BOARD**  
 HYBRID MEETING AT BUILDING DEPARTMENT/ZOOM  
 WEDNESDAY, March 4, 2026 - 5:30 P.M.

MEMBERS	District	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY:
		26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	
Debbie Swain	2	P	P	P	-									Mayor, Vince C. Lago
Pat Nolan	1	P	A	P	-									Commissioner, Melissa Castro
Manuel Menendez	3	A	E	P	-									Vice-Mayor, Rhonda Anderson
Rodney Barreto	1	P	A	E	-									Commissioner, Richard D. Lara
Manny Portuondo	7	E	E	P	-									Commissioner, Ariel Fernandez
Bertram Goldsmith	7	p	P	P	-									Commission-As-A-Whole
Levi Meyer	6	P	P	P	-									Board-As-A-Whole
Adriana Fernandez	CR	P	P	E	-									City Manager, Peter J. Iglesias
Jennifer Lane		P	P	P	-									University Of Miami

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

**STAFF:**

- Lorena Garrido, Central Division Administrative Manager for Public Works
- Jessie Acebo, Assistant to the Director of Public Works
- Sergeant Guido Antezana, Marine Patrol

**Guest:**

- Sebastian Marmol (via zoom)

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30p.m. by Levi Meyer. Quorum was met.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

Mrs. Swain made the motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 4, 2026, seconded by Mr. Goldsmith, all were in favor, and adopted unanimously.

**MARINE PATROL REPORT:**

Sgt. Antezana provided the Board with the Marine Patrol Report. Marine patrol operations during the past month remained relatively low, with particularly slow activity on the waterways; however, an

increase is anticipated as weather conditions improve. The previously grounded sailboat outside the Gables Waterway was removed by Miami-Dade County (MDC) authorities. Additionally, city officers are assisting MDC with a police diver training course.

The unit also began deploying meridian barriers for use at the City's Farmers market and other special events. Operational activity included (88) area checks, (5) citations issued, (6) land-based traffic stops, (3) water-based stops, and (3) marine/fishery inspections, with no underwater recoveries reported. Additionally, the procurement process for two marine vessels remains ongoing and on schedule.

The Board asked about the trend regarding theft on the water. Sgt. Antezana advised that they are not seeing a specific trend or concentrated area, but rather a tri-county issue in which watercraft are targeted for GPS units, lower units, and similar items. These incidents occur sporadically.

Boar Chair, Levi, suggested using marked or non-operational "decoy" police boats in key areas to deter crime. It was acknowledged that while not all offenders would be deterred, visible presence can influence behavior.

#### Discussion:

- **Riviera Outfall Water Quality Removal Device:** Currently addressing comments from Miami-Dade County DERM. Once the consultant resolves these items, the permit process will move forward. Progress is being made, but the timeline is slow due to the permitting process.
- **Mangrove Permits:** Mangrove pruning efforts are moving forward pending completion of the procurement process, with the City working to secure a qualified vendor or contractor. Discussion highlighted jurisdictional complexities, particularly in areas in Cocoplum, where responsibility for mangrove maintenance may fall on homeowners, or associations depending on location. The Board suggested creating a map to clearly identify areas of responsibility for improved tracking and accountability. Staff noted that, according to the City code, property owners are responsible for maintaining adjacent mangroves. Enforcement is conducted through citations by Code Enforcement with Public Works' assistance; however, compliance may be delayed due to MDC's permit process.
- **Miami-Dade County Underlying Bridge Project:** An update has been requested from Miami-Dade County; however, no response has been received to date. Public Works staff continues to monitor the area and report that there is currently no activity on the bridge itself, aside from some surrounding work.
- **No Fishing Signs at Bridges** Installation is ongoing, with approximately 16 signs installed to date. An estimated eight or more signs remain, after which the project will be complete.
- **Lejeune Bridge Replacement:** Staff will follow up with the City's liaison and with Miami-Dade County to obtain an updated status on the project.

- **Oasis Water Quality Pilot:** Recommendations have been received from Tiffany Troxler of FIU regarding the parameters to be measured. These will be reviewed by Mr. Ricardo prior to moving forward; however, confirmation has not yet been received. The proposed location is the Tarragona area along the G93 Canal, near the outfall by 57th Avenue.
- **Lejeune Bridge / Cocoplum Bridge improvements:** This project remains in the preliminary stages. Survey data is required and must be returned to the department; once received, it will be shared with the City Manager’s Office for direction. The project cannot proceed until this step is completed, and no timeline is currently available.
- **Blue Road Park (David Lawrence Family Park):** The park is a true neighborhood space that provides public access to the waterway, addressing the current lack of accessible waterfront areas for nearby residents. Its design prioritizes ample viewing areas, including a small platform for overlooking the water. The park also features a playground. Phase 2 plans include the addition of a dock to allow access from the waterway for canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards. The official grand opening is scheduled for March 14. The park has been named in honor of David Lawrence and is officially called David Lawrence Family Park.

**New Business:**

- **State of the Waterway:** Chair Meyer requested feedback from the Board, which has been incorporated, including a more specific update on the park and revisions to language in the Oasis water purification pilot study. The language was clarified to emphasize that it is a pilot study at no cost to the city and does not imply city or Board approval as a long-term project, but rather a single pilot that can be analyzed and reviewed to help determine potential next steps. No additional changes were noted. It was also suggested that the Board provide regular reporting to the Commission, at least annually and ideally quarterly, with Board representation present to review past, current, and future initiatives.
- **Ruth Bryan Owen Park:** Vice Chair Swain requested confirmation on whether improvements to the canoe launch will be completed. The Board previously recommended several upgrades, including creating a proper canoe launch, repairing the barbecue area, and adding a water fountain, bike rack, and additional trash cans. Most of these improvements have been completed, with follow-up still needed regarding the canoe launch. Staff advised that they would follow up with the Director of Community Recreation.
- **Bridge Sediment Build-up:** Chair Meyer noted significant sediment accumulation in areas where the waterway narrows and tidal flow funnels in and out, which has reduced navigability over time. Chair Meyer inquired whether dredging and cleanup should be considered. Ms. Garrido indicated that while there was previously a grant, the available funding was insufficient to cover the full scope of the work needed. She also noted the possibility of an existing master plan that identifies areas requiring dredging.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.