

CORAL GABLES SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
 COMMISSION CHAMBERS MEETING (IN-PERSON AND ZOOM)

Wednesday January 25, 2023, 5:00 P.M.

MEETNG MINUTES

MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTED BY:
	23												
Nicholas Eterovic	P												Mayor Lago
Carmen Olazabal	P												Commissioner Fors
Jasper Brock	P												Commissioner Menendez
Greg Hamra	E												Commissioner Mena
Marlin Ebbert	P												Commissioner Anderson
Martin Pinilla	P												City Manager Peter Iglesias
Joe Fadel	P												Sustainability Board-As-A-Whole
Teddy Lhoutellier	P												U.M. Representative
Monique Selman	P												C.G. Chambers of Commerce
Piero Gardinali	E												F.I.U. Representative
Gabriela McGrath	E												Youth Appointment

A – Absent  
 P – Present  
 E – Excused.  
 (\*) no meeting

**STAFF:**

Matt Anderson, City Resiliency and Sustainability Manager  
 Anthonique Jay, Public Works Administrative Assistant  
 Solanch Lopez, Assistant to the City Manager

**Guest:**

George Herrera, Resident

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Meeting called to order at 5:04 by Chairperson Marlin Ebbert.

**MOTIONS:**

**December 14, 2022, Meeting Minutes** – Carmen moved to approve the meeting minutes, Nicholas seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Carmen moved to excuse Greg, Piero, and Gabi from January’s meeting; Monique seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**PHYSICAL QUORUM (7): Marlin, Joe, Carmen, Monique, Teddy, Nicholas, Jasper, Martin**  
Quorum was met at 5:04pm

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**Public Comments**

Mr. Herrera, a resident of Coral Gables, works in the kitchen at Eating House, 128 Giralda Avenue in Coral Gables. He’s concerned over the waste being produced in restaurants and would like to know how this is handled or could be handled on a local scale.

**Member Comments**

1. **Single Use Plastic.** State statute does not allow local municipalities to regulate the use of single use plastic bag or Styrofoam (expanded polystyrene) on retail establishments. The City went through the litigation process a few years ago when it passed the expanded polystyrene ordinance. The case went all the way to the State Supreme Court, who unfortunately did not take up the case. However, the City does prohibit single use plastic bags and expanded polystyrene in City facilities, by City contractors and by anyone that receives a special event permit. The City also encourages no single use plastic bags or expanded polystyrene by any business interested in getting certified under the Coral Gables Green Business Certification program.
2. **Cooking Oil:** Joe inquired if Miami-Dade County compels business to recycle cooking oil and what is done with it. Matt stated that there are companies that provide services to recycle the cooking oil, however what happens with the cooking oil depends on the company. Jasper stated most grease traps behind restaurants have pad locks due to the grease being valuable as a recyclable product and have competing companies trying to sell the grease.
3. **Composting:** A local company has reached out to the City wanting to establish their own small scale composting program. To avoid any conflicts, the City is looking into the existing franchise agreement with Waste Management, especially in commercial areas. There are many local companies in South Florida that are doing door to door services for single family homes and

small commercial business. Residents of Coral Gables are encouraged and allowed to have backyard composting as long it is in a closed bin system. Classes are offered at the IFAS Extension office where they provide a voucher for free backyard and closed composting system. <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP323>

- 4. Plastic Bottles:** For Earth month, Marlin would like to have the use of plastic bottles banned at City Hall. Solanch and Matt stated that, as a Board, they can make this recommendation to the City Commission. If it is in a City facility, for City meetings, this would be more of a policy than a mandate. Matt has discussed with the City Clerk's Office for the Board meetings, to order reusable bottles and a reusable bag to provide to all Boards, for each member to have. There are several water filling stations throughout the City facilities to encourage less plastic bottled water use.
- 5. Recycling Bins For Non-City Sponsored Events:** Marlin was under the impression that when applying for an event permit for a non-City sponsored event, they are required to recycle. Solanch stated that part of the application, it states there is no polystyrene, straws, and no plastic bags allowed, but nothing specific for recycling bins. However, for City events, recycling bins are available for example the Farmers Market, Big Toy Event, etc.
- 6. Resilient Florida:** State funding is available for municipalities to apply to for different resiliency projects. To receive funding the City needs to complete an updated vulnerability assessment. After the City completed the original vulnerability assessment in 2018, the State passed new requirements for vulnerability assessments. The City has applied for State funding to complete an updated vulnerability assessment and are currently waiting to hear back from the State. If selected, the City would receive this fully funded grant. Carmen inquired about the status of the grants that the City has applied for. Matt stated the State is expected to announce the winners by the end of the month or next month. (pls verify if this accurate)
- 7. Coral Gables Art Cinema:** Congratulations to the Coral Gables Art Cinema on achieving Silver Green Business Certification. Marlin, Matt, and Solanch visited the Cinema last week for Green business certification. The Cinema is the 9<sup>th</sup> business to receive an award for the business certification. This will be announced at the March 28<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting.
- 8. Storm Drains:** The City has been working on a storm drain filter system pilot project for 10 storm drains located on Ponce. The storm drain filter system is where water goes in and there is a grate in front blocking debris from getting inside the storm drain.

***Updates/Recap on City/Sab Initiatives***

1. ***Reverse Vending Machine Statistic:*** Within the first month of the unveiling of the vending machine, 1,582 containers were collected with 64 being aluminum cans and 979 plastic bottles, with 188 users and an 80% retention rate. In the second month, there were 1,295 containers collected with 601 being aluminum cans and 694 plastic bottles, with a continued retention rate of 80%.
2. ***Cardboard Recycling Bin:*** from November 25<sup>th</sup> to January 13<sup>th</sup>, through our Solid Waste Division and Waste Management, a cardboard recycling bin was placed at the Youth Center and 3.4 tons of cardboard was collected from over the holidays.

***ii. Upcoming Sustainability Events***

1. ***UM Staff Beautification Event:*** On January 27<sup>th</sup>, KCGB in partnership with UM staff and the City's Greenspace Division, there will be a beautifying event at the entrance of Douglas Road and Alhambra Circle.
2. ***Wild Plant Scavenger Hunt and Cool Bug Safari Event:*** TBD.
3. ***Sustainability Innovations Conference:*** In partnership with the City's IT Department, a conference will be held on February 16<sup>th</sup> at the Public Safety building, on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor focusing on technology and sustainability.

***Next Meeting*** – February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, 5:00 PM.

**ADJOURNED: 6:13 pm.**