

CITY OF CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS  
CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2014, 8:00 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	J 13	A 13	S 13	O 13	N 13	D 13	J 14	F 14	M 14	A 14	M 14	J 14	J 14	A 14	S 14	APPOINTED BY:
Sally Baumgartner	-	-	-	-	P	E	*	P	P	P	P	*	*	P	E	James C. Cason
Patricia Sowers	-	P	P	P	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	*	*	E	P	Patricia Keon
William Beckham	-	E	E	P	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	*	*	E	E	Vince Lago
Bonnie Blaire	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	P	P	P	P	*	*	P	P	William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Richard Whittington	P	P	P	P	P	P	*	P	P	P	E	*	*	P	P	Frank C. Quesada

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

**STAFF:**

Lorena Garrido, Central Division Supervisor

**GUEST:**

1. Lieutenant Barta, Coral Gables Police Department
2. Katie Kreter, Senior Advisory Board
3. Debbie Dietz, Executive Director - Disability Independence Group

**CITIZEN ADVISORS:**

1. Matt Dietz, Disability Independence Group
2. Brenda Lampon MS, Brenda Lampon MS, *Performance Improvement Consultant, Florida Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)*
3. Zenaida Fernandez

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Ms. Blaire called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**MEETING ABSENCE:**

Sally Baumgartner and Bill Beckham were excused.

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:**

- **August 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

Mrs. Sowers moved to approve the August 6, 2014 meeting minutes. Dr. Whittington second the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** None.

**BOARD-RELATED COMMISSION ITEMS:** None.

**CITY UPDATE:** None.

**BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:** None.

**PROGRAM:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Mrs. Blaire discussed the status of Center for Independent Living's (C.I.L.) office at the Youth Center. She said that Zenaida, Pat and Katie are interested in volunteering to staff this office. A training date is being scheduled. We need to determine what equipment and supplies are needed.

Ms. Lampon said she discussed the C.I.L.'s office with the Switchboard of Miami and they are interested in collaborating. They would like to understand "how" they can collaborate.

This office will assist in providing resources to the community. Ms. Lampon suggested linking people to the services they need.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Board members and guests introduced themselves. Lt. Barta stated that people with disabilities are very near and dear to him and shared that his 11 year old son has autism, his father has Alzheimer's and cousin is deaf. He added he hopes that the Police Department does a better job in working with this Board in order to improve services and relationships with the disabled community.

Mrs. Blaire asked that everyone look at the attached Miami Herald article: "Coral Gables police department and disability group create ID cards for people with autism." She added that during the series of programs held last year, one of the topics was Cognitive/Developmental disabilities in which autism was the focus of that meeting. Mr. Dietz attended these meetings and was also a presenter. The concept of an ID card for people with autism was introduced then.

Mrs. Blaire asked Lt. Barta and Mr. Dietz to discuss this ID card program. Mr. Dietz said this was cooperative venture with UMCARD and Lt. Barta. They held a Miranda rights seminar for people at UMCARD in which trains individuals with autism on what to do when they interact with police: how to act, what they do and say. People with autism have trouble with eye contact and police may recognize this as trying to hide something. There are a lot of human interactions issues that people with autism don't understand and on the other hand, police officers do not always recognize the signs of autism. In an effort to help and avoid these situations, an ID card was initially developed and customized with the individuals name, disability and its characteristics. The idea is to provide police officers with this ID along with their driver's license or other identification.

The Disability Independence Group along with UMCARD and the City of Coral Gables Police Department have developed a video about this ID card program.

Lt. Barta provided a little more background about this project. He was approached by Mrs. Dietz, Executive Director - Disability Independence Group, about the Philanthropy Miami competition. He broached the topic with Chief Weiner, Coral Gables Police Department. They received full support to proceed to enter the Philanthropy Miami contest. There were over 80 submissions, they were one of 5 finalists and they won the first prize of \$5,000. With the winnings, they planned to produce a professional training video about individuals with autism. However, they realized the prize money was not enough. The University of Miami matched the \$5,000 and the City of Coral Gables provided \$10,000. This video will help explain the use of the ID card to individuals with autism and training for law enforcement officers.

Lt. Barta is asking for the Board's support and to reach out to City Commission and let them know this project is being supported.

Dr. Whittington asked if there was any thought of putting this information in driver's licenses, instead having a separate card. Lt. Barta said there has been some discussion in Tallahassee to put this type of disability information in driver's licenses, but it's a long process. He added this is why the card was made in the color blue for easy identification inside a wallet.

Mrs. Sowers asked if this card is available to other individuals who are not autistic but may have similar traits.

Mrs. Dietz said they would like to expand this card to anybody who needs help in expressing themselves. The card is prepared specifically for each individual, specific to their disability. Another goal is to create an employment opportunity for someone with a disability who can work on creating these cards.

Mr. Dietz explained these cards are free for anyone who completes a form provided on The Disability Independence Group's website.

Ms. Lampon asked if a formal diagnosis is needed in order to receive a card. Lt. Barta mentioned that in order for a program to be credible and have the support of the community,

there has to be way in which you can vet people. They are still working on a process to avoid fraud.

Mrs. Blaire asked if this information and training video can this be used with retail merchants, restaurants, Chambers and Rotary Clubs, in our own community.

Mr. Dietz said this is a good idea. Lt. Barta added that any way to get publicity is good. Any recommendations, suggestions and ideas are welcomed.

Mr. Dietz asked for the Board's support of this program.

Mrs. Blaire entertained a motion to support this joint program between the Disability Independence Group, UMCARD and the City of Coral Gables for purposes of autism awareness. Dr. Whittington moved this motion and Mrs. Sowers second. The motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Wednesday, October 1, 2014, 8:00 am to be held at the *Coral Gables Youth Center's 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room.*