

City of Coral Gables Waterway Advisory Board

Commission Presentation

July 9, 2019

Honorable Commissioners and Mr. Mayor, my name is Manny Chamizo and I serve as the Coral Gables Waterway Advisory Board chairman. I am here today to report the work done by the board.

Before I begin, I wish to especially thank each one of you for your support of this board. We have seen a renewed effort to maintain this vital resources we call the Coral Gables waterways.

As you may know the WAB was created in June 2017 for the purpose of identifying and recommending improvements to the Coral Gables Waterway. Coral Gables has over 40 miles of public navigable waterways which stretch from the entrance of Coco Plum down to Deering Bay.

**Residents of the waterway such as myself act as guardians of the waterway for future generations and wish to have a positive impact on the sustainability of the waterway and on practices the city should have in place.**

As a reminder to the city manager (when preparing each year's budget) that the Coral Gables waterway property taxes account **for 24.7% of the total revenue of the City's tax base. Please be aware that the waterway needs your financial attention.**

On that note, I want to thank you for assigning **Ron Crumley as the Waterways maintenance coordinator** he has been a great help in getting things done! But Ron has a lot on his plate and I am here on his behalf to ask for your help. Ron is in a constant search of assistance to handle the 40 miles of waterways which include pruning back mangroves and tree branches that impede the waters. There are certain sections of Cocoplum that cannot be accessed by residents unless you go in by a kayak. If you could be so kind as to find a way to assign 1 more person to assist Ron much more could be done.

It is important to create public awareness and safety strategies to maintain property values and enhance quality of life. To that end your board created door hangers to be placed on each waterway property. Only problem is it's been stuck in some department for 4 months. Can someone see about getting these to the residents before the end of summer?

I will leave you with some final thoughts on some of the issues to be addressed:

- **Public Safety:** Fishing off of the bridges remains a public safety hazard. It is an accident waiting to happen. We need to have signs posted that fishing is not allowed on a navigable waterway. A motion was made in Aug 2017 to request install these signs with a phone number to call to report any incident. We do not have the signs.
- **No wake no entry Signage** in restricted areas of the waterway to prevent "canal loitering and theft. . A motion was made Dec 2017 to request the city to install CCTV Camera the entrance of the Coral Entrada Waterway.
- **Code Enforcement:** The City takes so much pride in maintaining the front of properties however there is lax enforcement on the back of waterway properties. We need a maintenance plan to have code enforcement ride with the marine patrol once a quarter to cite those properties that are not in compliance.
- **Dredging and maintenance of the water way.** The city has not dredged the waterway in over 7 years causing many areas to become very difficult to navigate due to sediment build up. This is especially hazardous due to the Hurricane debris. We need a minimum standards plan for maintenance. As motion was made to have Public Works repair their 2 barges and begin to yearly dredging. Think of it as the "waterway pothole plan" where the depth and width of the waterway remains just like it was when George Merrick dredged it.
- **Regular Pruning** back of mangroves and tree branches that impede the waterway.

WAB  
Waterways Board

## Other items dressed by the board

- Water Quality – (Currently being monitored by FIU)
- Public Access to Water way areas- Parks/Ruth Brian Owen Water Park a/k/a Girl Scout Park and the Blue Rd Open Space (Blue Rd and Orduna)
- Capital Improvements to the Waterway-lighting up the bridges, Cocoplum Boardwalk ,open up open areas to the public, regular bridge painting (not just when they look tired)
- Iguana Maintenance
- Waterway activities such as a waterway parade, Gondolas, Electric boat dinner tours and night Stand Up Boards
- Monthly Waterway updates to be included in City Of Coral Gables Magazine letting everyone know that we are taking care of the waterway.

Thank one you for your support for the Coral Gables Waterways Board.

Manuel Chamizo

Chairman WAB

