

City of Coral Gables

*405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

4:00 PM

<https://coralgables.zoom.us/j/82882960727>

Coral Gables Country Club

Coral Gables Golf and Country Club Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

Began at 4:05 pm

A MOTION TO CALL TO ORDER AT 4:05 P.M. WAS MADE BY GEORGE NAVARRO AND SECOND BY PETER IZAGUIRRE. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ROLL CALL

a. Roll Call and Excusal of Absences

Present: 5 - Board member George Navarro, Peter Izaguirre, Board member Don Slesnick III, Board member Ruben Rodriguez and Board member Albert Sanchez

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Approval of November Meeting Minutes

A MOTION TO APPROVE NOVEMBER'S MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY ALBERT SANCHEZ AND SECOND BY RUBEN RODRIGUEZ. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DIRECTORS REPORT

a. General Updates

Country Club Division Director Mitch mentioned that the holiday members mixer, which many of board members attended, was a success. Santa had a good time. The Le Parc café served a seasonal delicacy called Buche de Noel, which we filmed in a beautiful video. Wonderful occasion. There were just a few kids' activities offered. We save them for Cars and Santa. Unfortunately, it began to rain early, but that did not deter the events crowd. I'm thrilled with the attendance of the event. They were all having a good time. We had a terrific time with everyone that came.

Mitch then informed the board members that, due to the event getting rained off, it's an event he'd happily relive. He may alter the music, volume level, and scheduling of the event. However, vehicles and coffee are often associated with Sunday mornings. Our goal is to attract attention to the country club. We opened the interior for guests to walk through. They wanted to go on excursions. We had representatives from both the athletic club and the restaurant on hand, and customers were able to go to the restaurant. We are overjoyed since the restaurant had one of its best days. We had many happy customers, clients, and orders. I suppose this resulted in a few special orders for the holiday.

December is busy at the Country Club, according to Division Director Mitch. On Friday they have a wedding and other corporate holiday parties are coming up.

What number of parties and events did they host? A report was requested for submission by Chair Don Slesnick III at the conclusion of each month or season. He is interested in Country Club facility usage. Director of the Division Mitch replied that the production of a monthly report had begun. At the end of each month, the revenue charts are generated by the staff. It could be examined by the board. It displays the entered information, monthly revenues, and earnings, and more. Chair Don Slesnick III said that he'd want to be informed of the number of users and the way it is being utilized to have a better understanding of the club.

Director Couceyro continued with where they seem to be landing in terms of memberships is an area of emphasis; nevertheless, we must make further efforts to secure additional venues. Our present state is not commensurate with the progress that we hope to have achieved. We acknowledge that these accommodations are considered long-term. 18-month rental agreements are uncommon. We maintain the possibility of attaining a marginally elevated standard. Mitch, the city manager and head of the finance department, and I have worked together. Currently, we are making efforts to assemble with the purpose of formulating a business plan that differs from our initial approach, considering our present stage of establishment. Specific enhancements have been implemented to the degree that we are now obligated to assess facets of our sales strategies. In addition, we intend to solicit the involvement of our communications department in a marketing strategy to initiate the procurement process for a portion of the aforementioned items for the venues. In addition to having accomplished our initial goal of drawing attention to this structure, we have recently been honored with a commendation from the Miami New Times. We

consider ourselves to be the third-best wedding venue in Miami. Consequently, individuals are becoming aware of the location's appeal. However, translation is required currently. Our next step is to get there.

Director of the Country Club Division Mitch apprised the board of the current membership count of 1101. He said we are currently seeking to expand that. Throughout the month of January, we will be actively promoting and selling marketing. We intend to make our presence known at the farmers market in January. We were fortunate that the department of community recreation granted us two opportunities to be active. We decided to attend one of the busiest weekends, the carnival on the mile.

The Country Club Division Director Mitch went on to say that at the athletic club, they've had several new instructors join their staff. Some instructors leave just due to staffing issues or changes in their own schedule. Our new instructor has piqued our interest. As he indicated before, Lewis is doing well, gaining more and more clients, which is beneficial to us. Personal training is one of the goods that we actively offer, so it's excellent, and we want to expand further. We've activated the kids' club. It only happens on Saturdays from eight to noon. It was well received. We haven't really blown it out yet since we're still tinkering and seeing what works. But come January, it'll be four to eight throughout the week and eight to twelve on Saturday for those parents who want to go get a workout in, drop the kids off for a little, and then go have lunch or breakfast or whatever else is going on, or if it's nice, spend time by the pool. So that's what we're after.

According to Vice-Chair Ruben Rodriguez, this is likely the busiest or largest month for sign-ups. He is unsure whether they have made any progress in considering a lead management system to track individuals as they arrive, collect information, or perhaps send out an email blast. Memberships often rise at the start of the year. Carlos has been following up with some of the members that departed at the end of October, according to Mitch, the Country Club Division Director. That was our thought. To find out what we're searching for, we're going to conduct a survey that will be sent to our whole database. However, there has been no lead management that we do not presently have.

Board member Albert Sanchez inquired to reiterate the importance of finding out why folks don't renew. Deputy Director Vester responded that when we lose a member, a distinct survey will be distributed to inquire about the reasons for non-renewal. Additionally, the examination will consist of five pivotal inquiries that are analytical in nature. Following that, a free-form question will be presented for further commentary. The public membership survey will resemble a transactional inquiry. It will suffice, much like a status update. How have we been? How are things proceeding? There will thus be two different types of surveys. One is for those who don't re up and we've lost them, or we're not sure what happened. Additionally, for those who are consistently present. Everything we care about is how we are doing.

Country Club Division Director Mitch continued to disclose operational hours. He

stated that the adjustments were made in consideration of daylight-saving time. We want to extend swim lanes by a few hours, given that leisure swimming no longer entails performing laps and exercising. Therefore, we are trying to help determine this so lap swimmers may get a few more hours at the start or end of the day. It depends on the weather. Some people like warm water, while others prefer cold water.

Albert Sanchez, a member of the board, inquired as to how revenues and non-revenues are mixed. Director of the Country Club Division Mitch replied that he would have to obtain that data in preparation for the subsequent meeting.

Board member George Navarro reported attending dinner recently. There was a large crowd, and he overheard a few individuals discussing a shortage of hot water in the gym, both here and at the Biltmore. They claim that Biltmore has the same issue. They say you have to go in and turn the hot water on for. Mitch, Director of Country Club Division, said that the club switched from a tank system to a tankless system, which is more ecologically friendly. Water flows from the tankless water heater in the basement to the upper level. Heating up takes time, particularly if you're among the first to arrive in the morning. I'm considering adding a booster seat in both restrooms. However, I still have a cost and a project. We are now addressing this with the plumber. As water rises, it will be heated again.

Chair Don Slesnick III acknowledged Joe's public statement. Resident Joe said, "He thinks the team has done an excellent job with the athletic club." Clean, well-kept, and great value. He's not sure how the city feels about more advertising, but he'd support it since it's a good bargain. He also wanted to swim. Saturdays and Sundays, the gym opens at 8 a.m., while the pool opens an hour later. He swims with others as the water warms. Why is the pool open later than the gym? Division Director Mitch said, "Based on previous usage, we discovered that many people were not coming early on Saturdays and Sundays." If usage changes, we may reevaluate. Joseph, a resident, said that his final comment would be about Sunday's event. Three streets away on Soroya, he walks his dog every day. He heard music from home but didn't know what it was. He thought it was his neighbor since she had holiday music, but when he got there, there was a car event. Have you attended the event? Do you have experience?

b. Special Events

The Daddy-Daughter Dance is scheduled to occur on Saturday, February 10, 2024, as announced by Director Couceyro. Each dance participant is required to possess a ticket, which is sold on an individual basis. For more information, please contact us at parks@coralgables.com and The Coral Gables Farmers Market - Saturday, Jan 13 - Mar 30 at 8 a.m.

c. Administrative Updates

Director Couceyro began the report by informing the board about when they last met,

they were working with Bonjour Cafe, which supplied the meals. The front of the house was handled by staff. A 90-day interim contract with a 90-day option was approved by the commission. Six months is a possibility. They finally signed the contract. On November 27, they'll go full stock and barrel without us. The Monday following Thanksgiving. City officials notified him that after six months, they'll start specifying longer-term RFPs to see whether we can compete. If those six months are beyond our wildest dreams, the city administration may request a Bid waiver from the commission in order to negotiate long-term.

Directors Couceyro and the city manager have maintained their collaboration regarding the development of a business plan for the upcoming years. During the initial 18 months, we encountered numerous challenges and growing difficulties while attempting to establish our foundation and solidify certain aspects. It was during this time that we discovered the true nature of this structure. It is my belief that we will develop a business strategy to determine how we can increase venue rentals. Our ultimate objective is for this endeavor to become profitable.

NEW BUSINESS

The subject of discussion was raised by Chair Don Slesnick III, who stated that he was uncertain as to why the pool was closed during specific hours or in the nighttime. "He simply figured, he was like, why can't we go on swim nights?" He believes it would be beneficial to understand that. Director Couceyro responded that an examination would be conducted, and the website would be updated.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Selection of Board Member at Large

Director Couceyro mentioned that the board must select a new Board-as-a-whole member and that they must submit a résumé or a paragraph explaining why they want to serve on the board. Director Couceyro suggested that potential nominees submit their resumes before the next meeting, after which we will disseminate resumes to the whole board, who will then analyze and choose their seventh member. According to Deputy Director Carolina, the City Clerk's office advised applying online and sending applications through the portal, which we would then distribute to the board. Deputy Director Carolina encouraged the board members to share the Boards and Committees link with the possible nominees.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Golf Course Discussion

b. Locker Rental, Shoe Cleaning

Board member Peter Izaguirre inquired about the locker. He'd want to have the lockers ready. Director Couceyro said that it would be arriving. We plan to make them accessible beginning in January, which is what we've been debating. That's why I included it here: whether we sell them yearly or monthly. Board member Peter Izaguirre answered. Perhaps quarterly. not monthly, not daily.

Board member Peter Izaguirre inquired if membership is renewed on a quarterly basis. And whether it remains accessible quarterly. Director Couceyro said that it is accessible quarterly. You may pay quarterly or yearly, depending on your preference. Board member Peter suggested doing the same thing with the locker. He remarked that you cannot place the golf club there. He wants to know what occurred, and who will rent a locker at Granada? Director Couceyro said that everyone wants to rent them, nonetheless. For their shoes, belongings, clothing, service, and cleaning supplies. Board member Peter said that he recognizes that lockers are not designed for golf clubs, which are stored in the back room. We do not have a back room.

Board member Peter Izaguirre inquired as to the approximate number of lockers we have. Director Couceyro responded approximately 40-something. Board member Peter feels we will not have an issue there.

Director Couceyro inquired if they made it accessible. Golf course members come first, followed by the GGA. Are these all-course members? No, they are not. So, do they get it? According to Director Couceyro, the course members if there is any left. Then we may open it up to the two groups: GGA and the women's club. No. If we intend to sell them for a quarter. Board member Peter suggested leaving four or five. He said that we do get some tourists and visitors from out of town. They appear from time to time.

Director Couceyro also asked what we'd charge. Troy provided some figures, but we don't really have a comparison for our kind. Of all, we're not a private course, and many public courses don't sell blockers. Board member Peter Izaguirre inquired as to how much you were charging before. Do you recall? Director Couceyro said he'd forgotten what Troy told him, but he believes it was an annual fee of \$75 or \$80. Board member Peter said it was \$65.

Board member Peter believes 25 a quarter is very wishful. Director Couceyro said that he is okay with it, and they will do so. He also assured that they'd get it done. They'll make an announcement, put up a sign, and place it in the pro shop. We may be able to chat with Ben, acquire our member list, and send it out so they have first right of refusal. They'll most likely be able to receive it during the first two weeks of January. And whether it's inside the first two weeks or by the end of the month, whatever it is, whatever remains, we'll open it up to. You will have the month of January to receive your locker, after which we will offer it up to anybody who is not a

member, whatever is left, and usage.

While reviewing the figures, Director Couceyro noted that the club had played over 50,000 rounds. In recent months, rounds have increased, yet money has not because members are playing more. Members play more. Only the membership fee. Since our course is in great condition, we're receiving more members play. We're unmatched for the course. Maintenance-wise, we compare them to considerably higher-level courses. So, members join and play it. Now memberships are locked. Members may remain if they like. We are not accepting new members since we're full and need revenue rounds, not simply membership rounds. The goal is to link country club membership to golf. Golf course members will remain if they renew. I won't make them do country club. We'll grandfather them in. That's a few years down the line when we take over pro shop operations.

The shoe cleaning topic was brought up by Director Couceyro. Still appearing. Board member Peter Izaguirre repeated, a single individual. Although he understands, Director Couceyro received a petition with 100 signatures. It's been brought up to the mayor again. We've spoken to the board. Our superintendent, golf professional, and players all believe it's unnecessary. He plays golf across Florida, said board member Peter. He saw one but cannot recollect where. Chair Don Slesnick III suggested that if you have a specific request, which he is guessing we do, we can do a report that says, after researching, there are zero, one, or one golf courses in the US. Then it puts things in perspective because otherwise people may think, "Oh, this is all over."

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

Next meeting date January 24, 2023 at 4 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 5:03 P.M. WAS MADE BY GEORGE NAVARRO AND WAS SECONDED BY PETER IZAGUIRRE. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

NOTE