



**City of Coral Gables  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
January 12, 2021**

**ITEM TITLE: ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS**

**MEETING DATE: November 13, 2020**

**SUMMARY OF MEETING:**

Quorum was reached in person  
Meeting was held both in person and virtual via Zoom

**Parks & Recreation upcoming events – Ms. Carolina Vester,**

Ms. Vester advised Board regarding holiday events City is working on such as Tree Lighting, Holiday Park as well as others assuring all will be conducted keeping safety a priority. Ms. Vester stated they are still working out logistics regarding Tree Lighting Event. Ms. Vester advised reference Holiday Park there will be extended hours as well extended until January 2021 and attendance will be limited. Ms. Vester advised set up will be basically the same except for the absence of Santa Clause for picture taking with the children.

Ms. Vester stated another event staff is working is having Santa visit children within the community at their homes, this will be on a first come first serve basis. Ms. Vester stated it will be 3 days, staff will map out City, Santa will arrive and stay in vehicle, picking up Santa letters and leave a small gift for the children. Ms. Vester stated there will also be scheduled Zoom meetings with Santa.

Ms. Vester advised of two movie nights at two different parks within City where families will be provided blankets and set up in pods of four assuring social distance is practiced. Ms. Vester stated City is conducting various events in effort to bring the spirit of the holidays to all and trying to meet everyone's needs.

Ms. Palacio-Pike asked regarding how children who are unable to wear mask will be addressed at the Holiday Park. Ms. Vester advised staff has been trained regarding this and as long as social distancing is practiced there should not be any issues.

Ms. Vester also advised of a Hot Chocolate with Santa event where the park will be closed to the public and where Santa will do a brief appearance from a far and there will be an opportunity for children to take a picture on a green screen where Santa will pop up on the picture. Ms. Vester stated staff may also look into perhaps having same event for children with disabilities or difficulty wearing a mask. Ms. Vester asked Board to please provide input regarding their ideas and suggestions. Mr. Sando stated he was going to address having such an event for participants with disabilities. Ms. Liebl stated she believes having a day just for participants with disabilities would be amazing.

Ms. Liebl stated her concern is regarding parking at Holiday Park where they do not have to cross Coral Way in order to get to park. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised she will be reviewing it and Ms. Vester stated for Tree Lighting event Biltmore Way street will be closed.

Ms. Vester advised since most of these events are going to be first come first serve, focus is directed to resident services. Ms. Vester advised events will be ticketed events which can be obtained at PlayGables.com. Mr. Sando asked if staff would review possibility regarding times and dates for participants with disabilities. Ms. Vester stated staff will review possibility of two earlier in the morning slots to avoid heavier crowds for participants with disabilities to attend and advise Board during December meeting.

Ms. Vester advised Board staff is looking into purchasing additional ADA mats for Holiday Park for loop around Santa's house. Ms. Vester advised there will also be interpreters available during the Tree Lighting Ceremony, which going forth will be made available at larger events.

**In Home Therapy – Ms. Vanessa Liebl**

Ms. Liebl expressed she would like for City of Coral Gables to provide in home therapy for individuals with disabilities which are unable to leave their homes. Ms. Liebl stated she believes requirements for therapist would be daily PCR testing, contract tracing and use of masks. Ms. Liebl stated perhaps there would be a company within the City of Coral Gables or a company the City is already working with which can provide this service. Ms. Liebl stated she feels this is a great way to provide assistance to those in need during the pandemic. Mr. Sando shared how his family personally is addressing the needs of his children in regard to therapy and assistance at home. Ms. Sando advised he is not aware of any company which is providing testing prior to its employees coming into someone's home. Mr. Sando stated he believes companies have protocols in place where if an employee does present symptoms, they are sent to get tested and must provide results to their employer prior to being able to go into home again.

Mr. Sando stated who would receive the services, due to it there would have to be a diagnosis. Ms. Liebl stated she believes the City does not have to be involved, it would just provide the company, those in need could contact them directly and receive the service.

Ms. Elejabarrieta expressed concerns regarding City's ability to provide these types of services at constituent's homes, financial cost, not the role of the City, etc. Mr. Sando advised he understands and would like for Board to identify needs of the community and perhaps take action in the form of an event such as Adventure Day, a Respite Day or an event where families can obtain information of services. Ms. Palacio-Pike stated she feels one of the issues is that the community does not know this Board exists and she would like to improve on that.

**Special Needs Registry – Ms. Elejabarrieta**

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised status of ongoing project and will be going forth with it in approximately one or two months. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised there are pending meetings that are being reviewed by legal (waiver of liability and public records). Ms. Elejabarrieta advised once ready, presentation to Board will be conducted. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised this is very important and it is something Board should be very proud of. Ms. Sando asked once information is submitted, where would it go to. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised it would go to the City's 911 CAD system. Once 911 call is received, operator will be able to advise first responder of any special needs. Ms. Blaire asked regarding registry, would it be possible to work into it a concept such as a waiver, once a person self-disclosed, can person then be removed from the Emergency framework, expanding voluntary enrollment and placed into a voluntary disclosure framework for person to be able to obtain other information. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised she will look into this.

Ms. Blaire stated regarding City providing services being discussed by Board, that Ms. Elejabarrieta is correct in advising City is not in position to offer these services. Ms. Blaire stated as Board, they can commence reaching out, contacting people and making connections with agencies which can provide such services. Ms. Blaire advised Board to commence pulling these agency connections together. Ms. Blaire stated Board should perhaps instead of seeking direct control of services, should commence to brainstorm in terms of what Board can do to direct agencies which provide these services in Coral Gables by inviting them, providing them a platform where they can share information or introduce them to the Chambers of Commerce. Ms. Blaire stated Advisory Board on Disability Affairs can then serve as the touch stone of the many agencies which function within Miami-Dade County, facilitating delivery of services to our citizens. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised Ms. Kofkin has created a list regarding agencies throughout Miami Dade County and services provided.

**NEXT MEETING:** December meeting date to be determined

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**