

CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

Economic Development Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

Wednesday | August 2, 2023 | 8:00 a.m.

Location: Zoom and Economic Development Department
2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables, FL 33134

EDB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTING ENTITY
	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	'23	
James Kohnstamm	X	P	P	X	E	E	X						Mayor Vince Lago
Timothy Heffernan	-	-	-	-	-	-	X						Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Derrek Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	X						Commissioner Kirk R. Menendez
Nguyen Castilla Cabanilla	-	-	-	-	-	-	X						Commissioner Melissa Castro
Scott Shuffield	-	-	-	-	-	-	X						Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Barbara Perez	X	E	P	X	P	P	X						City Manager Peter Iglesias
Thad Adams	X	P	E	X	P	P	X						Chamber of Commerce

A=Absent E=Excused Absence P=Present X=No Meeting Ph=Present by Phone Z=Zoom - =Former Board Member

Staff and Guests:

Belkys Perez, Director, Economic Development Department
 Solanch Lopez, Marketing Manager, Economic Development Department
 Yenis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department
 Paulson Jean, IT Network Analyst II, Innovation & Technology Department
 Jennifer Garcia, City Planner, Development Services Department
 Dr. Ned Murray, AICP, Associate Director, Jorge M. Perez Metropolitan Center, FIU

Mrs. Belkys Perez brought the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mrs. Belkys Perez welcomed new members of the Board, Mr. Heffernan, appointed by Vice Mayor Anderson, Mr. Derrek Space, appointed by Commissioner Menendez, Ms. Nguyen Castilla Cabanilla, appointed by Commissioner Castro, and Mr. Scott Shuffield, appointed by Commissioner Fernandez. All members both existing and new were asked for self-introductions.

2. Economic Development Board Overview

Mrs. Belkys Perez welcomed and thanked the members for their participation on the Board. She provided the Board with a presentation that outlined the role of the Economic Development Department and that of the Economic Development Board. The Department's mission is to position

Coral Gables for sustainable, long-term economic vitality, that enhances the quality of life of residents and strengthens the business environment. The function of the Economic Development Board is to assist the Department in formulating and implementing relevant goals and objectives; makes recommendations to the City Commission regarding development issues; acts in an advisory capacity to promote consultants and assists in identifying markets and developing programs for retaining existing businesses and attracting new businesses and developers. The board meets the first Wednesday of the month from 8:00 to 9:00 am. There is a total of seven board members who serve a 2-year term (June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2025) for a total of 4-term limit (8 years).

3. Selection of a Chair & Vice-Chair

Ms. Castilla Cabanilla made a motion to elect Mr. Thad Adams for the position as Chair. Ms. Barbara Perez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Adams accepted the nomination.

Mr. Adams made a motion to elect Mr. James Kohnstamm as Vice-Chair. Ms. Barbara Perez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Kohnstamm accepted the nomination.

4. Review and approval of June 7, 2023, Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Adams made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Mr. Space seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the minutes.

5. Economic Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Murray provided the Board with an update and presentation of the Economic Development Strategic Plan. He recapped the Competitive Assessment for the Board which included benchmark cities. He emphasized the economic benefit of being a Smart City. The labor force participation rate is 60.9%. Labor market growth for the young professionals group with a college degree (up to 25-35 years old) is 6.5% which is underperforming as compared to other benchmark cities. Most people who work in the city come from other locations with only 3,349 residents employed and living in Coral Gables. This is not uncommon in South Florida. Dr. Murray described how keeping residents working in the city they live in is beneficial from many perspectives including reducing transportation and traffic issues and increasing quality of life.

The Board had several questions that Dr. Murray and Mrs. Belkys Perez addressed.

The board was provided with the competitive assessment.

6. Economic Development Activities

a) Taste the Gables

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the Department launched “Taste the Gables” for the month of July. The program included a concert series on Giralda Plaza every Friday, from 8:00 pm – 10:00 pm in partnership with Miami New Times.

7. Business Tax License Report

Mrs. Belkys Perez updated the Board on the new and coming soon businesses in Coral Gables.

8. Open Discussion

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the City has implemented a paperless system. Therefore, moving forward they will not receive paper copies of the agenda, meeting minutes or any additional documentation. Everything will be attached to the calendar invite for their review.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Yenisis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department.

DRAFT