

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item D-2**  
**May 27, 2014**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Jim Cason**  
**Commissioner Pat Keon**  
**Commissioner Vince Lago**  
**Commissioner Frank Quesada**

**City Staff**

**Interim City Manager, Carmen Olazabal**  
**City Attorney, Craig E. Leen**  
**City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman**  
**Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Mark A. Trowbridge, President & CEO, Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce**

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D-2 [Start: 9:45:00 a.m.]

Mayor Cason: Item D-2 we have Mark Trowbridge, President and CEO of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce to discuss destination Coral Gables. Mark.

Mark Trowbridge: Good morning.

Commissioner Lago: Good morning.

Mark Trowbridge: Mr. Mayor, Commissioner Keon, Commissioner Lago, Commisisoner Quesada, Madame City Attorney, oh no. Mr. City Attorney, Madame City Manager, Mr. Clerk in just a brief moment of privilege I want to thank you all for running in our 5K, the Baptist Health 5K you kept the dream alive Craig and many of your folks ran with us last Saturday, so thanks for doing that and you had an added bonus was that you were pushing both of your children as well.

City Attorney Leen: Yes, some call it a bonus, a 100-pound bonus.

[Laughter]

Mark Trowbridge: It did add to your time, but you did finish, it was great to have you out there again, and I want to thank the City for a team this year. We think it will be even bigger and brighter next year. So, I am Mark Trowbridge I am the President of our Chamber of Commerce here in Coral Gables with me today are many of our communities tourism leaders. I would like to ask them to stand including our new Executive Director of the BID Marina Foglia so if you guys would to stand. They are here supporting our presentation. I am sorry that Bill and team had to leave, but these folks have come out and you see many of them here behind us are hoteliers and our other partners in our efforts. It is my distinct pleasure to appear before you today on behalf of this working group to share some exciting news about our ongoing collaborative tourism efforts in the City Beautiful that are indeed paying dividends as you have already heard from Bill Talbert and Jean Prescott this morning, our partners and good friends at the GMCVB. We continue to work closely together on the many initiatives and efforts throughout the year. We salute them for their outstanding work and for finding ways to further engage with us, partner with us, and support us in our overarching goal to make Coral Gables a premier destination. Recently, I gave a presentation to a group of corporate meeting planners at the Biltmore Hotel, helping sell Coral Gables as a conference destination something I have been doing for the past six years thanks to the GMCVB. There are other collaborative efforts like the ever popular temptation months, like Miami Spice which is upcoming, Miami Museums Month which we are in right now, Attractions Month, Spa Month and others, and from the very beginning our ever popular Burgerlicious event, the GMCVB has been our valued partner and more. We also look forward to the return of International Pow Wow in 2016 and event that brought more than 5,000 professional businesses and travel planners and buyers to Coral Gables back in 2010 for a fascinating dine around. I want to thank Bill, Rolando, Jimmy, Madeleine Janeo, Ali and the entire team at the GMCVB for working with us on an ongoing basis. Not nearly a year ago, we stood before you and shared some exciting news. We have entered into a partnership between the City, the Business Improvement District, the Coral Gables Museum and the Chamber to produce an official destination video for the Welcome Channel that featured the City Beautiful. In addition, we updated our collateral marketing pieces including this beautiful brochure positioning us at the heart of it all. You all might remember this piece. Also in October, the City, the Chamber and the Village of Merrick Park participated in an ad buy in the London Telegraph through the Visit Florida Co-op in their luxury edition insert, which also had an online presence in Brazil with the focus on our destination's assets dining, arts, and architecture and Chris Molho is here from the Village of Merrick Park along with his colleagues. Today I am here to give you some good news, the results of some of the marketing metrics from this investment, the Welcome Channel distribution reached 33 hotels and more than 10,000 hotel rooms some of the viewer stats 1.4 million annually which breaks down to about 117,000 monthly and 27,000 weekly and you heard from Bill Talbert that first time visitors to Coral Gables was up 16 percent. That has a lot to do with people seeing this video marketing over that is happening at our beach hotels. Our Youtube video more than 3,000 views to date through

May of today. The Coral Gables Museum now has a dedicated monitor at the entrance of the Museum and I found out this weekend that people are actually requesting to purchase copies of our 5 minute video. Chris make a note of that. Visitor Center signage out in front of the Museum has now officially added an official Big Bus Tour stop and I think you all asked about the buses we now have and official tour stop right in front of the Museum and where our visitor center will be. GMCVB gave us web stats the Coral Gables Neighborhood page 26,071 visits in the past six months that is a little more than 4,300 visits per month and the visitors centers main landing page 6,839 visits to the main page on which our visitor center is now listed. The point of interest and attractions map 10,000 of these were printed for visitor centers, GMCVB Visitor Center, the Chamber events, hotels, etc. and the Museum visitor data 1,100 visitors up from 900 last year a 22 percent increase and admission of 35,000 which includes their events and programs up from 30,000 a 17 percent increase. Congratulations Chris, other distribution opportunities from the video footage call the b-roll, the Allen Morris Real Estate Company is generating a marketing video from the footage, the University of Miami will be generating a marketing video specifically for recruitment, that will also be shared online internationally, and the BID also produced a video featuring restaurants in their district earlier this year as well. Some planned opportunities for 2014 and beyond include a renewal for our welcome center agreement for one more year with all of the parties back on board and committed. The addition of our video to the GMCVB visitor website and the official launch of our very own Coral Gables Visitor Center to coincide with the GMCVB's Attractions Month this coming October, so stay tuned for more details on that. Thanks for the fine work of Chris Rupp we have also secured two grants for this effort from Visit Florida and County's TDC Fund these collaborations continue to pay off and help us realize an effort has been nearly a decade in the imagining. As always we appreciate the opportunity to share with you the work we are doing to share a spot light on the power of partnership and collaboration and to thank you for your continued support in making Coral Gables the destination in our community. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you Mark.

[applause]

Mayor Cason: Mark do you have any information on the number of people that get off the buses and spend money in the Gables and sort of the demography?- I have been curious I know there are stops, but whether the people actually get off and spend money. I assume some of them would come back even if they didn't.

Mark Trowbridge: Sure, so we met with the folks from the Big Bus, that is the one that is kind of the burgundy color one and that is the one that now has the stop in front of the Museum. We met with them last Friday and we asked them to drill down a little bit more on those metrics. So they are going to get back to us, with what some of those numbers might be. Their feeling obviously as it is ours, is the answer is yes now is that completely empirically stated, no we don't

have that yet. We also know that probably one of the reasons that we are seeing first time visits to the Gables increase so dramatically has a lot to do with the fact that there is a loop in transportation that originates on the beach and in downtown Miami that would bring folks here, so we will get back to you with more detail as we are able to quantify that more.

Mayor Cason: Great.

Mark Trowbridge: So can we do a picture with the plaque and I would like to invite all of our partners to come up. Bill was going to be here for D-1, but he went a little bit earlier on the item, so if you all don't mind and would indulge I would like to invite all of our partners. These are the folks who don't run in the corporate run, these are the most sedentary folks. I am only speaking for myself of course. So, let me introduce them Denise Erwin with Seasons 52. She also tours are travel and tourism effort. You met Marina Foglia our new Executive Director and really just great to have her here really what a breath of fresh air. Chris Rupp who you have known for many years, our wonderful head of our Museum here. Gabe Castrillon who is the General Manager at Hyatt, his new Manager of Sales Adam Leon, Matias Cameron, I know is behind me here so come on up, Michelle should be part of this effort, because Michelle is our go to in the City, along with her great team and led by Cindy Birdsill. So Cindy I hope you will join us as well, let me not forget anybody. Chris Molho from the Village of Merrick Park who I introduced before, Chris and his colleague, Chris worked with us on the Daily Telegraph a buy that we did into the United Kingdom first time opportunity for us through Visit Florida, so that was a real terrific opportunity. So, I didn't forget anybody did I? Don't be shy...alright we are going to do a picture...

Mark Trowbridge: We will take any additional questions, invite us back anytime we are always please to let you known not only of the success that we see when we invest in something, but also the opportunities to be collaborative and I certainly want to thank the City for always being a partner in everyone one of these efforts, so congratulations to you on your good work too. Thank you all very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you Mark.

Commissioner Lago: Mark thank you for everything my friend.