

CORAL GABLES MERRICK HOUSE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2009

Coral Gables Merrick House

907 Coral Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	COMMISSIONERS
Barbara Reese	-	P	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	A	P	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Margaret Steele	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Vice-Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Susan Stanton	-	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	^	E	Comm. Maria Anderson
Michelle Moskowitz	-	E	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	Comm. Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
Laura Yusko	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
Marie Vacca	-	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	Board Appointee
Sondra Space	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	City Manager

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Simone Chin, Historical Resources Department

A = Absent

E = Excused

P = Present

*** = Special Meeting**

- = No Meeting

^ = New Member

+ = Resigned

GUESTS: Commissioner Ralph Cabrera, Olga Baquero-Lima

RECORDING SECRETARY: Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

Chair Yusko called the meeting to order at 8:55 a.m.

Meeting Attendance:

Ms. Steele made a motion to excuse the absence of Susan Stanton. The motion was approved.

Minutes of May 18, 2009 Board Meeting:

Ms. Space made a motion to approve the May 18, 2009 Board meeting minutes as written. The motion passed.

Presentation by Commissioner Cabrera:

Commissioner Cabrera welcomed his new appointee, Michelle Moskowitz, to Board service, and praised outgoing Board member Olga Baquero-Lima for eight years of outstanding service to the City. He presented her with a certificate of appreciation and a key to the City.

Commissioner Cabrera encouraged the Board to pass recommendations to the Commission to facilitate progress on Board initiatives, and committed to bring Board concerns to the Commission during discussion at the end of its July 7 meeting. Prior to the meeting, he will ask the City Manager for a report on all Board pending projects. He assured the Board of his continuing support of their efforts. Ms. Space, Ms. Steele and Ms. Reese will attend the July 7 Commission meeting. Ms. Yusko will provide Commissioner Cabrera with a list of Board priorities, including refurbishment of the interior space, signage, the brochure and repair to the coral rock wall. Floor refinishing, the second story and kitchen are City projects.

An update was given to the Board about the Country Club of Coral Gables project.

Committee Reports:

Holiday Open House: Ms. Reese and Ms. Moskowitz will co-chair the holiday open house, which may, again include The Villagers. The planning book developed by Ms. Baquero-Lima will be a helpful resource, and will be brought to the September meeting.

Ms. Reese made a motion to schedule the Holiday Open House for Saturday, December 12, 2009. The motion was seconded and passed.

100th Anniversary Party: To be addressed at the September meeting.

House Report:

Ms. Chin reported the following May House activities:

- May visitors: 26 adults, 13 senior citizens, 2 youth, 1 child.
- Trust Fund balance as of April 24, 2009: \$45,170.03
- Rental: The Historic Preservation Association rented the House for its annual meeting with no issues.
- Second Floor Renovation: Three bids were received for floor refinishing. The low bid received included a discount in exchange for using photographs of the floor renovation in the company's promotional materials. A decision regarding the contractor has not been made.
- Michelle Reeves is making progress on framing of the Solomon Merrick painting.
- Regarding the issue between Procurement and the Business Interiors/Lucille McKey proposal, Procurement requires three bids for consideration; however, Lucille McKey's expertise is highly specialized and viewed as an exception. A memorandum regarding the issue was sent to the City Attorney for an opinion, still pending. Discussion: Board members want Ms. McKey to work with the Board during summer to select fabrics so the upholstering is completed before the December 12 Open House. Ms. McKey will be invited to the September Board meeting.
- A refrigerator and freezer were purchased and will be delivered the second week of July.

Old Business:

Coral Rock Wall: Plans and elevations of the coral rock wall will be provided to the Rockers Company (contractors) by the end of June to obtain an estimate of costs.

Donation Policy: Revisions to the policy will be forwarded to the Board prior to the September meeting, at which time it will be reviewed. Ms. Chin will ensure the revisions are forwarded.

House Brochure: An original photograph of the House was provided by Ms. Kautz to Goosepen Press. The Board reviewed a draft of the brochure on Ms. Yusko's computer, suggested appropriate photograph captions and agreed that the text needs editing. After revisions are made, the brochure designer will furnish a proof, with a final printer's copy to be ready by September. Board members will submit names of reliable printers who do quality work.

Signage: Only one bid was submitted for the signage project, with two additional bids still needed. Ms. Chin will verify if signage is paid for by the City or the House Trust Fund.

New Business:

House 100th Anniversary Celebration: Ms. Reese and Ms. Space will co-chair the committee. Ms. Reese recommended that the celebration be the opening ball at the Coral Grand/Country Club of Coral Gables facility in November 2010. Ms. Reese will contact Mr. Donato regarding dates and availability.

In addition to the gala, Ms. Vacca suggested a year-long celebration of the anniversary with lectures, open houses and other events, pointing out Ms. Moskowitz' background in event planning, organization and execution. Board members will generate ideas for monthly events beginning February 2010, excluding summer months. Coral Gables Museum Executive Director Chris Rupp will be invited to the October meeting to continue discussion.

Discussion Items:

House Fall Decorating: Ms. Steele will decorate the House for Fall by the first week of October.

Attic Clean-up Project: Attic clean-up will occur after floor refinishing is completed.

Humidifiers: Humidifiers in the House need to be emptied daily.

House Guidelines: After discussion of documentary filming by the Fox Channel at the House that recently occurred, Ms. Vacca suggested that House use guidelines be reviewed. Board members will receive a copy of current guidelines prior to the September meeting to be prepared for discussion.

Meeting Schedule:

Ms. Steele made a motion to change Board meeting dates to the second Monday of the month, with September 14 being the next meeting. The motion passed.

Monday, June 15, 2009

Continued

Board Items:

Board Elections/Appointee: Ms. Vacca discussed Board chair/vice chair elections, stating that the election should be held after her Board replacement is selected. Ms. Steele submitted, and later withdrew, Jon Arthur as a candidate as Board appointment due to general enthusiasm about the candidacy of Joanne Meagher, suggested by Ms. Yusko. Ms. Vacca will attend one more meeting.

A motion was made to approve Joanne Meagher as Board appointee. The motion passed unanimously.

Letter from Goosepen Press: Ms. Yusko read a letter from Nathan Moehlman of Goosepen Press regarding wording use in previous Board minutes that did not clearly state that Goosepen Press' initial effort was to create a brochure concept as a foundation to be revised by Board suggestions. Mr. Moehlman requested that wording regarding this initial assignment be clarified for accuracy.

Ms. Steele made a motion to accept the following wording as an accurate reflection of the meaning of discussion at the previous Board meeting: The Merrick House Advisory Board, having reviewed Nathan Moehlman's (Goosepen Press) second version of the Coral Gables Merrick House brochure, is very pleased with the result, and the initial concept submitted by Goosepen is greatly improved with the new appearance of the brochure. The Board is very satisfied with Goosepen Press' work, and will request a printer's proof, with revisions as discussed earlier this meeting, to be reviewed at the next Board meeting. Mr. Moehlman worked very cooperatively to achieve the updated design of the second draft, with which the Board was also pleased. The motion passed.

Miscellaneous Discussion: The Board's annual report, financial and disclosure forms were discussed. The Board wants to know its budget for the next fiscal year. Ms. Space's presentation to the Commission on July 7 will include the projects and related costs that need to be completed. Approximately \$8,000 is needed for six events during the year-long celebration of the 100th anniversary (may also generate sponsors). Other expenses include the Farmer's Market and Fall/Spring House decorations. It was agreed that \$8,000 for the 100th anniversary celebration would be added to this year's expenses to reach the total of the 2009/2010 Merrick House budget.

Docent Corps: The docent corps needs to be increased, and Jon Arthur was suggested. Ms. Vacca suggested establishing a docent chair, to work in tandem with the Coral Gables Museum.

House Plantings: In preparation of the 100th anniversary, the grounds need special plantings. Resources, such as Fairchild Botanic Garden, would likely help in the effort.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 14, 2009, 8:45 a.m., Merrick House.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Kara N. Kautz
Historic Preservation Officer