

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, November 7, 2012, 8:00 a.m.**  
**1 Alhambra Plaza, Suite 617, Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

MEMBERS	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	COMMISSIONERS
	'11	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	'12	
Mr. Scott Sime	X	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	X	P	A	A	Mayor Jim Cason
Mr. Raymond Zomerfeld (Chair)	X	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	X	P	P	P	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Mr. Jack Thomson (Vice Chair)	X	P	P	E	X	X	P	P	X	P	P	P	Commissioner Maria Anderson
Mr. Emile De Boyrie	X	P	P	P	X	X	P	P	X	E	P	P	Commissioner Rafael Cabrera, Jr.
Mr. Rolando Mora	X	P	P	P	X	X	E	E	X	E	A	A	Commissioner Frank Quesada

A = Absent  
E = Excused Absence  
P = Present  
X = No Meeting

**STAFF AND GUESTS:**

Ms. Cynthia S. Birdsill, Director, Economic Sustainability Department  
Mr. Leonard Roberts, Assistant Director, Economic Sustainability Department  
Ms. Michelle Cash, Marketing Coordinator, Economic Sustainability Department  
Mr. Chase Hamann, Business Development Analyst, Economic Sustainability Department  
Ms. Megan Schmitt, Administrative Assistant, Economic Sustainability Department  
Mr. Thad W. Adams, Vice President, The Allen Morris Company

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**Meeting Motion Summary:**

**Mr. Thomson made a motion to approve the October 3, 2012 minutes. Mr. De Boyrie seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

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Chair Zomerfeld brought the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m.

**1. Approval of October 3, 2012 Board Meeting Minutes.**

**Mr. Thomson made a motion to approve the October 3, 2012 minutes. Mr. De Boyrie seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

**2. Discussion of upcoming year's goals**

Board members began the discussion by reviewing the City's initiatives and the EDB's goals from the previous year. Ms. Birdsill updated them on the status of several of the City's initiatives:

- The Neighborhood Renaissance Program is moving ahead as planned. Many trees have been planted throughout the City, and improvements to many entranceways,

intersections and traffic circles continue. An international call to artists is almost ready to be issued for the creation of new permanent public civic art monument sculptures at the Segovia traffic circles. Phase 1 of the street repaving project is almost complete with Phase 2 to address streets to the south of US 1.

- Streetscape – Conceptual plan was approved by the City Commission; financing mechanism is being developed.
- Senior Center – A few sites have been identified as possible locations for the Senior Center.

Review of EDB goals:

Attracting Class A domestic and international business:

- Ms. Birdsill informed the Board that Brazilian entities are becoming increasingly interested in Coral Gables, with the Brazilian city of Curitiba about to be named one of Coral Gables' newest Sister Cities. The Brazilian Cultural Center has relocated to Aragon Avenue where they now share a space with Societa Dante Alighieri, and Banco do Brasil will be opening up a new branch on Ponce de Leon Boulevard.
- Ms. Birdsill explained that the strategy of working with the consulates and foreign trade offices is an important one because they direct businesses to Coral Gables.
- Mr. Adams noted the success of the Permitting Assistance Program when working with companies that are opening their offices in Coral Gables, saying that in the last 2 ½ years, 5 or 6 projects have been documented that have led to the retention or creation of over 300 jobs and a capital investment of \$27 million.

Strengthening Tourism:

- ESD Marketing Coordinator Michelle Cash has been working with the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, the Coral Gables Museum, and the CVB to create an information center that will be located at the Museum. The CVB is about to launch a new online/ digital marketing campaign focusing on the region's neighborhoods, and Coral Gables will be one of those featured. The CVB's experience marketing information booths will be of particular help once the new one in Coral Gables is ready to launch. It is hoped that a kiosk will employ a touch screen technology that costs approximately \$25,000 - \$30,000 and Ms. Birdsill welcomed any ideas the Board had for funding sources.
- Ms. Birdsill informed the Board that sponsorship opportunities were available for the information center as well as for events including 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Jazz in the Gables, the RedBall project, and a Gallery Night opening reception in February for an exhibit ESD staff is working on with several gallery owners and the Museum. A new webpage will soon be added to the City's website with information on sponsorship opportunities and Ms. Birdsill encouraged Board members to share any ideas they have regarding businesses that may be interested in partnering with the City.

The Board discussed its priority goals for the upcoming year as follows:

- A. Attracting Class A domestic and international businesses by:
  - Continued partnership with the Chamber on the Permitting Assistance Program and Broker Receptions;
- B. Improving economic vitality and the quality of life for the City by:
  - Conducting Business Visitations among businesses, consulates and foreign trade offices;
  - Considering opportunities to partner with Sister Cities;
- C. Strengthening tourism.

**3. Update on Business Visitation initiative**

Ms. Birdsill informed the Board that she and Mr. Hamann had met with Mr. Zomerfeld, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Mark Trowbridge of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce to put together a list of basic questions to ask during the visitations. It was decided that each visit would be attended by a representative of the Board, the ESD staff, and the Chamber, and that a consistent questionnaire and agenda would be used at each meeting. It was agreed that ESD staff would try to set up one or two meetings for after the Thanksgiving holiday and prior to the New Year.

**4. Update on Business Tax Licenses and New Businesses**

The Board reviewed the list of Business Tax Licenses and new businesses. It was decided that Mr. De Boyrie would send a welcome letter to Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza and Chair Zomerfeld would send one to Banco do Brasil.

Chair Zomerfeld asked if email addresses could be collected at the time when new businesses register with the City and Ms. Birdsill said she would reach out to the Finance Department to discuss.

**5. Other City Business**

Ms. Birdsill reminded the Board that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Burgerlicious event would be held on Thursday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. This Chamber-organized event is the annual CVB mixer that brings CVB members to Coral Gables.

**Mr. De Boyrie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Thomson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 a.m.

The next Economic Development Board meeting will be held on December 5, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,  
Megan Cross Schmitt  
Administrative Assistant  
Economic Sustainability Department