

CITY OF CORAL GABLES WATERWAY ADVISORY BOARD
 CORAL GABLES LIBRARY – CONFERENCE ROOM
 WEDNESDAY, January 11, 2017 - 5:30 P.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	DISTRICT	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	APPOINTED BY:
		17	17	17	17	17	17	17	
Jeff Hicks	2	A							James C. Cason
Hector Fortun		P							Frank C. Quesada
Juan A. Galan Jr	3	P							Patricia Keon
Manny Chamizo	1	P							Vince Lago
Laura Roberts	2	P							Jeannette Slesnick
Douglas Yoder	7	P							Cathy Swanson- Rivenbark
Vacant									Commission-As-A- Whole
Vacant									Commission-As-A- Whole
Vacant									Board-As-A-Whole

P – Present
E – Excused Absence
A – Absent
(-) – No Appointment
(*) – No Meeting

STAFF:

1. Jorge Acevedo, Utilities Division Director/Board Secretary
2. John Osgood, Assistant Public Works Director
3. Ray Toledo, Marine Patrol Officer
4. Christopher Challenger, Marine Patrol Officer

GUESTS:

Mr. John Ricasak, Supervisor – Coastal & Wetlands Resources Section – Compliance and Enforcement
 Mr. Will Ortiz, City of Coral Gables Code Enforcement Director
 Mr. Adolfo Garcia, City of Coral Gables Code Enforcement Director

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Chamizo called the meeting to order at 5:40 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

MOTIONS:

1. Mr. Chamizo moved to ratify appointment of Mr. Hector Fortun to the WAB, seconded by Mr. Yoder – approved.
2. Mr. Yoder moved the following items be recommended to the City of Coral Gables for further consideration, seconded by Mr. Chamizo – approved.
 - a. Formalize waterways plan and programs for ongoing maintenance, navigation, water quality management, and safety
 - b. Establish code enforcement standards for the waterway side of properties
 - c. Provide necessary resources for adequate code enforcement and maintenance
3. Mr. Fortun moved to implement a reporting system to measure progress on board and city initiatives related to the waterways, seconded by Mr. Chamizo – approved.

Discussion – Mangroves

Mr. Fortun mentioned his concern about the impact and maintenance of mangroves in his neighborhood; discussion of who is responsible for maintenance of the waterway – individual property owners or the City. Mr. Acevedo mentioned the County (DERM) and City Code Enforcement are present to discuss the issues; initiated discussion of mangrove encroachment.

Mr. John Ricisak indicated individuals or the city can obtain a mangrove permit – only need to obtain the permit once – it can be used multiple times and remains with the property over time. Mr. Chamizo inquired about the possibility of the City obtaining a master permit for mangrove trimming and maintenance that residents could use, or actually doing the maintenance coordination in-house. Mr. Ricisak described certification requirements for mangrove trimmers; mentioned he would research at the County office existing permits issued within the City of Coral Gables (Cocoplum, e.g.); members mentioned scarcity of specialists on County list of certified mangrove trimmers.

Mr. Fortun, Mr. Galan and Mr. Yoder discussed the need to clarify the issues around the private property line, the public waterway line, and who is responsible for maintenance. Regarding mangroves or other encroaching vegetation, Mr. Garcia stated if the vegetation is on private property and grows over the waterway and is causing a health and/or safety concern, the property owner responsible to remove. If in the city right of way, the city is responsible. If the property owner doesn't abate, the city will abate and lien the property. He mentioned code enforcement efforts are reactive based on complaints and are focused on land up to the sea wall.

Code Enforcement and waterway standards

Mr. Galan suggested standards should be developed (if they don't exist) for the width and depth of the waterways. Regarding code enforcement, he suggested the same standard should exist for the waterway side of properties as exists for the front of the property; Mr. Galan initiated discussion of code violations and conditions. Ms. Roberts suggested residents are held to a certain standard for the front and back when building, should be held to the same standard for code enforcement now. Issue of resources for Code enforcement was raised by members. Mr. Ortiz indicated additional resources would be necessary for proactive enforcement of waterways.

City staff needs to clarify existing code and zoning standards/requirements for the dock, seawall and water edge areas in the waterside of properties. Mr. Garcia pointed out that some waterway

associations have their own marine security patrols; they are proactive in monitoring security and code issues in their waterway neighborhoods.

Miscellaneous related to top 5 priorities discussion

Mr. Yoder stated that canals are designed to act as storm water drainage facilities, but that the County discourages direct discharge into waterways; he offered to contact representatives from DERM and FIU to attend future meetings.

Members suggested need for sensible signage – no wake, manatee, and storm water drains etc., city staff will evaluate.

Mr. Yoder suggested that once established, board should request time on Commission agenda to share the key priorities. Ms. Roberts suggested that members should confer with/update their respective commissioners who appointed them. Mr. Osgood suggested within the next 2 meetings implementing a process for finalizing the priorities and developing an action plan – short and long term; mentioned the timing of the upcoming budget process and the potential for discussing waterway priorities in the context of both operating and CIP budget processes.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 P.M.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday February 1, 2017 to be held at the *Coral Gables Library*