

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES**  
**Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 6, 2016, 8:00 a.m.**  
**Pipeline Coral Gables, 95 Merrick Way, 3rd Floor, Coral Gables, Florida 33134**

EDB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	COMMISSIONERS
	'16	'16	'16	'16	'16	'16	'16	'16	'16	'15	'15	'15	
Scott Sime	P									P	P	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Olga Ramudo	P									P	P	P	Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick
Stuart McGregor	P									E	P	E	Commissioner Pat Keon
June Morris Chair	P									P	P	P	Commissioner Vince Lago
Alexander Binelo Vice Chair	P									P	P	P	Commissioner Frank Quesada

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

**STAFF AND GUESTS:**

Javier Betancourt, Director, Economic Development Department  
Leonard Roberts, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department  
Belkys Perez, Marketing Specialist, Economic Development Department  
Mariana Price, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department  
Philippe Houdard, Cofounder, Pipeline Coral Gables

**Meeting Motion Summary:**

**A motion to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2015 meeting passed unanimously.**

**A motion to approve the potential City purchase of Property at 2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd. passed unanimously.**

Mrs. Morris brought the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

**1. Review of the December meeting minutes (Action)**

**Mr. Binelo made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2015 Board meeting. Ms. Ramudo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

## **2. Potential City Purchase of Property at 2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd. (Action)**

Leonard Roberts provided a presentation on the value of the historical property located at 2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd. The property is currently listed at \$2.6 million/valued at \$569/sq.ft. The Letter of Intent (LOI) that the City proposed is a full price offer with no financing contingencies but contingent upon two appraisals. It is currently operated as ten different units, with the combined total space generating approximately \$100,000/year in operating income (OI). The objective of the City is to use it for City space (relocating some departments), a City partner, or other alternatives such as an incubator-type location. The decision has not been made as to what the use would be, but until then the property would continue to pay for itself. This is one of only two buildings in the City that has sustained its interior build and furnishings from its original time.

This property came to the City's attention because it was presented to the historical board (to be gutted out and renovated for restaurant use by another potential buyer), which was when they realized it was a significant and rare occurrence of historical value. The seller, David Dabby, is an appraiser himself. There is no competition with the other buyer because this building would not be allowed to function as a restaurant.

The building originally operated as George H. Fink's original studio and office, and once he retired it was bought by Dr. F.E. Kitchens, health inspector for Coral Gables at the time, who operated it as a medical office until the 1960s. The Dabby Family came in shortly thereafter.

Questions for the ED Board:

- 1) *Is the proposed use in keeping with city goals and objectives?*

Part of the City's goal is to retain its historical significance; purchase of such building will save and assist in retaining the history of the City. The use is in keeping with that goal.

- 2) *What is the economic impact to the city including, i.e., is the proposed use in keeping with a public purpose and community needs, such as expanding the city's revenue base, reducing city costs, creating jobs, creating a significant revenue stream and improving the community's overall quality of life?*

The City will operate City business and/or use the space as an incubator for small businesses. The building will continue to generate revenue and if leased, the tenants will also pay real estate taxes.

- 3) *Are there alternatives available for the proposed disposition, including assembly of adjacent properties and can the project be accomplished under a private ownership assembly?*

The City is seeking to acquire the property and may continue to operate as a tenant occupied building. The ownership structure is appropriate.

All board members agreed with the responses to the questions posed above.

**Mr. Sime made a motion recommending approval of the acquisition of the property at 2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd., and Ms. Ramudo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **3. Entrepreneurship in the Gables (Discussion)**

#### **a. Pipeline Gables Overview (tour of facility following meeting)**

Mr. Houdard provided the board with the history, mission, and objectives of Pipeline. Pipeline started four years ago; the idea was borne out of struggles trying to find interesting office space to work from that included flexibility (where a 3-5 year commitment wasn't necessary). Frustration of working in isolation by themselves and not being around other people inspired their business concept. Also important to them was having access to other people who could help to grow their business. The second location is in Philadelphia (after first office in Brickell). The third location opened in Coral Gables and several other locations are in the works. They are in real estate, but consider themselves in hospitality. They want businesses to benefit from one another, because so many businesses work from home and work in isolation, which is difficult on a personal level, especially as an entrepreneur. Therefore, they try to provide space (both private offices and space out in the open). They host all kinds of companies that are part of the community—architects, lawyers, accounting firms, etc. They imagine themselves in the middle of a spectrum, where on the right there are the traditional executive suites, and on the left there are labs and open spaces (more millennial dominant). They believe that the two groups really need one another. The “young kids” have access to capital and resources, but there's a limitation to how quickly they can grow, whereas those on the traditional side have more experienced businesspeople with the know-how to help them excel.

Pipeline can accommodate 150 people at any one time. There are 50-60 private offices plus open space for another 35-40 people. There are 400 members, because many travel and not everyone needs to use the space at the same time. Pipeline is currently operating at a 60% occupancy rate. They expect to be at 90% occupancy within six weeks due to ambitious trends at the beginning of the year. They gutted the entire office space and made renovations. Before choosing Coral Gables they considered South Beach, Aventura, and South Miami. Soon they will be opening offices in Dorale.

#### **b. Grant Application for “VentureAmericas”**

Mr. Betancourt gave a brief presentation on resources available in the City: Pipeline, University of Miami's Launchpad (entrepreneurship program for UM students and alumni), Kellogg, Endeavor Miami (incubator/accelerator in Miami, funded by Knight Foundation, hosted by Allen Morris), and eMerge Americas, which has headquarters here in the Gables.

The Economic Development Department, together with the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, submitted a grant application to the Knight Foundation, as well as an appropriations request to the State Legislature, for funding after communicating with emerge, Pipeline, and UM. Collectively, they developed a concept for a potential entrepreneurship program that they could launch to bring all those parties together.

**c. Entrepreneurship Workshop for Retired Professionals**

Ms. Perez presented the work Economic Development has been doing with the Adult Community Center working on an Entrepreneurship Workshop that would assist retired professionals in getting back into the business community. The workshop would help with issues of interest to retirees (fixed budgets, what businesses are in need, etc.). They are working with the Small Business Administration (SBA) on the event, to be held on Wednesday, March 2, 2016. The workshop will be hosted at the Coral Gables Museum in the Community Room. A brief networking reception will take place at 5:00 p.m., and the expert panel workshop will be from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Tables will be set up on the perimeter to showcase some partners (i.e., Pipeline). The event is posted on Eventbrite, and the workshop will be free. Mr. McGregor applauded this initiative and said many seniors move from the northeast to Florida even though they are not ready to retire; this initiative serves as a valuable resource.

**d. Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – Satellite Office**

Mr. Betancourt suggested that the Economic Development office could be used as a satellite office for the SBA, SCORE, and/or the SBDC to help the City's entrepreneurs and small businesses.

**4. Reminder: Boards & Committees Appreciation Reception, Jan. 21.**

The Boards & Committees Appreciation Reception will be held at the Country Club on Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**5. Other City Business**

The garage RFP is still in process and therefore under a Cone of Silence. Mr. Betancourt said it has been scheduled for City Commission consideration at the January 26<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting. The next Economic Development Board meeting will be held on February 3, 2016.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mariana Price, Administrative Assistant - Economic Development Department