

CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

Economic Development Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

Wednesday | November 6, 2024 | 8:00 a.m.
Location: Zoom and Economic Development Department
2506 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables, FL 33134

EDB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTING ENTITY
	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	'24	
James Kohnstamm, Vice Chair	P	P	P	A	P	P	PZ	X	P	P	P		Mayor Vince Lago
Timothy Heffernan	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	E		Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Derrek Space	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	X	PZ	P	P		Commissioner Kirk R. Menendez
Nguyen Castilla Cabanilla	P	PZ	E	P	E	P	P	X	P	P	P		Commissioner Melissa Castro
Scott Shuffield	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	X	P	P	E		Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Barbara Perez	P	P	P	P	P	E	P	X	E	P	P		Amos Rojas Jr.
Thad Adams, Chair	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	P	P		Chamber of Commerce

A=Absent E=Excused Absence P=Present X=No Meeting PZ=Present by Zoom Z=Zoom - =Former Board Member

Staff and Guests:

Belkys Perez, Director, Economic Development Department
Solanch Lopez, Marketing Manager, Economic Development Department
Leticia Perez, International Business Development Coordinator, Economic Development Department
Yenisis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department

Chairman Mr. Thad Adams brought the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m.

1. Excuse Board member's absence

Ms. Barbara Perez made a motion to excuse Mr. Heffernan and Mr. Shuffield's absence from today's meeting. Mr. Space seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the absences.

2. Review and approval of September 6, 2024, Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Space made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Ms. Barbara Perez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. There was no discussion regarding the minutes.

3. Economic Development Activities

a) Silver Community of Excellence Award

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the Baldrige Community of Excellence held their annual fall conference this year at the Biltmore Hotel, which is the first time the conference was

held in Florida. Based on the applications submitted and an extensive audit process, awards were given out to the participating communities. As a result, the City of Coral Gables won the Silver Certification award, which is the highest award given to a city at the conference. Coral Gables is currently in the running to win the 2026 Community of Excellence which will be recognized and awarded at the White House.

b) Feria de Sevilla

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that the Feria de Sevilla went to City Commission and was approved to hold their cultural event in the City of Coral Gables on Saturday, March 8, 2025. The Department is working with the Consulate of Spain and individuals directly from Sevilla. The Mayor of Sevilla will attend the event.

c) Downtown Events

Ms. Lopez updated the Board regarding several events recently held in the City of Coral Gables. Trick-or-Treat on the Mile, Drink or Treat, and Day of the Dead - all happened on the same day of Saturday, October 26, 2024.

- Trick-or-Treat on the Mile had a record of 91 participating businesses this year vs. 57 last year. The department distributed close to 1,000 bags of candy to businesses. The event ran from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. There were approximately 7,400 participants this year vs. 6,800 in 2023 which is a 9% increase. Parking also had a 2.73% increase in revenue and a 2.28% increase in vehicle count.
- Drink or Treat had 19 participating businesses. This is the first year the program took place. The businesses provided extended specials on Halloween night which started at 6:00 pm.
- Day of the Dead is a cultural event held by the Consulate of Mexico that falls under the City's International Cultural Event Initiative. It was held at Ponce Circle Park. During their event time of 5:00 pm to 9:30 pm, they had 3,400 visitors vs. 3,300 in 2023 which is a 3% increase.

Additionally, the department received the Voice of the People Award for Excellence in Online Outreach from POLCO which is the online survey system the City uses in partnership with the ICMA (International City County Management Association). The system is used for transactional surveys by different departments in the city. The Economic Development department uses it after events and activities to gauge effectiveness. The Department won the award for its use of the survey in its Holiday Windows Contest. People used the platform to vote for their favorite holiday window display. Thousands of people participated in the activity. The award is a national recognition and celebrates the city's commitment to innovative resident engagement and data-driven decision making. It's the 16th year that they provide these awards, and it's the only national honors recognizing local governments based on resident feedback.

4. Business Tax License Report

Mrs. Belkys Perez updated the Board on the new and soon-to-come businesses in Coral Gables.

5. Open Discussion

Mrs. Belkys Perez informed the Board that on Friday, October 25, the city partnered with Miami-Dade County BizGap to hold the Coral Gables Business Resource Fair. There were 13 participating organizations in attendance which provided help with grants, loans and other information needed to enhance operations. Approximately 35 participants were assisted in the two hours.

Mrs. Belkys Perez updated the Board that she attended a walk-through of Sra. Martinez. They have a tentative opening date of the end of November.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Yenisis Gomez, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department.