

CITY OF CORAL GABLES ADVISORY BOARD ON DISABILITY AFFAIRS
 CORAL GABLES YOUTH CENTER – CONFERENCE ROOM
 WEDNESDAY, February 14, 2018 8:00 A.M.

- MEETING MINUTES -

MEMBERS	F 18	M 18	A 18	M 18	J 18	J 18	A 18	S 18	O 18	N 18	D 18	APPOINTED BY:
Blake Sando	P											Vince Lago
Shedrick Boren	A											Mayor Raul Fauli-Valdes
Patricia Sowers	P											Patricia Keon
Richard Whittington	P											Frank C. Quesada
Marie-Ilene Whitehurst	P											Michael Mena

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

STAFF:

1. Raquel Elejabarrieta, Director of Labor Relations and Risk Management / ADA Coordinator
2. Eglys Hernandez, Labor Relations and Risk Management

GUEST: Carolina Vester, Parks & Rec Asst. Director

CITIZEN ADVISORS:

1. Bonnie Blaire
2. Debbie Dietz

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order at 08:05am

MEETING ABSENCE:

Mr. Shedrick Boren was absent.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

December 6, 2017

Motion by: Dr. Whittington / 2nd Ms. Whitehurst / All approved unanimously

SECRETARY’S REPORT:

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 7, 2018.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS:

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Jonathan's Day – Coming to Coral Gables

Mr. Sando spoke in regards to bringing Jonathan's Day to the City of Coral Gables as an event that can provide the opportunity to have resources, 5K race and/or family fun day in order to celebrate families and those with disabilities; as well as bring education as a signature event for the City during October 2018, Disability Month. Mr. Sando stated that he is a member on the CARD Board along with the mother of the child from Jonathan's Day. Mr. Sando stated he had a conversation with Ms. Melinda (Jonathan's mother) in regards to her seeking a change of location for this event. Mr. Sando stated he also met with Mr. Fred Couceyro, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Coral Gables, regarding possibilities of bringing this type of event to the City.

Mr. Sando stated Mr. Couceyro advised it would be possible to have this type of event in City. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated that there is a difference between "Hosting" and "Sponsoring" this type of event. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated that she feels that the City does not have the resources to "Sponsor" this type of event, but will be able to "Host". Ms. Elejabarrieta stated that the difference between "Host" and "Sponsor" is that by hosting an event the City may provide assistance in areas such as providing venue, setting up of booths, tents, etc. However, logistics, assuring vendors, and sponsorships, along with hard cost of other expenditures would have to be done by other resources such as sponsors or organizations which will need to maintain contact with the corresponding City department. Ms. Vester advised there are companies, which are capable to handle organization of such an event.

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised that it would be best if a meeting be scheduled with Ms. Melinda along with Ms. Carolina Vester in order to obtain more information regarding how they have proceeded with this event in the past. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated she would reach out to Ms. Melinda and schedule either a meeting or conference call. Ms. Elejabarrieta also stated it would be beneficial to invite Ms. Melinda as well as her husband to attend the Board's next meeting scheduled for March 2018.

Ms. Blaire addressed her concern regarding it being geared toward Autism only. Mr. Sando advised that he does not see it an issue of having it expanded into other cognitive disabilities; however does feel that maintaining Jonathan's Day as main is imperative due to the large support provided by CBS.

Ms. Vester stated that she is in agreement that in the role of "Host" there should not be an issue with the City of Coral Gables. Ms. Vester stated it would be imperative there be one person from outside resource who will be the direct contact with the City regarding the needs and developing of such event.

Ms. Sowers asked in regards to how the family would feel about bringing in another entity such as the Epilepsy Foundation which is well organized and has a lot of experience with such events.

Mr. Sando stated their main objective is to highlight their son and Autism, but feels there should not be any problem in bringing attention to other cognitive issues. Mr. Sando stated it would be best to address this directly with the family. Ms. Vester advised there are other entities such as the Junior Orange Bowl Parade committee which have experience with the organizational aspects of such events like races.

Ms. Dietz asked in regards to utilizing funds from the Parking Fines program for such an event. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated that she believes the issue is not the funds, it is the lack of resources due to other commitments the City already has in place to sponsor an event. Ms. Vester stated that the City is not in the business of fundraisers or organizing races, sponsors, etc.

Ms. Blaire suggested that it may be a good idea for the Board to go forth at this time with a resolution regarding this type of event but not strictly for Jonathan's Day, but for an inclusive event. Ms. Whitehurst suggested that the Board proceed at this time with a resolution which will state:

“City of Coral Gables to “Host” a Disability Awareness Event during Disability Month – October 2018.”

Motion by: Ms. Whitehurst / 2nd by: Ms. Sowers / All approved unanimously

Mr. Sando stated that a 2nd Resolution can be drafted at a later time in regards to a specific event.

Ms. Carolina Vester – Parks & Recreation Assistant Director

- 1) Ms. Vester advised that unfortunately no one has registered at this time for the Bocce program. Ms. Vester stated it had to be postponed. Ms. Vester stated that for the fall they will review possible scheduling changes, such as time & day of week for program.
- 2) Ms. Vester advised the Music Program has been received very well and there are currently 7 participants. Ms. Vester stated the reception as well as feedback from participants and their family has been great. Ms. Vester advised that the current participants are also part of other City programs and they have really enjoyed it.
- 3) Ms. Vester also stated that there has been inclusion in other programs such as baseball, gymnastics and drama. Ms. Vester stated they have had almost inclusion in all of the regular programs. Ms. Vester stated that the City's contractors are also interested and researching how to best be inclusive with the services they provide.

Mr. Sando stated that it would be beneficial for the Board to be advised in advance if there is any difficulty with getting participants for a particular program so that the Board can try to assist.

Ms. Vester stated that in case the “Jonathan's Day” does not go forth, there are other ways that the City can host perhaps a resource fair and suggested contacting Coral Gables Cinema.

Ms. Whitehurst stated her concern is these programs are not being advertised properly and therefore a lot of people are unaware of their availability. Ms. Vester advised that they have made information available via various City media, such as in the magazine mailed to all residents; it was also distributed at a monthly meeting held by Mr. Sam Joseph from SNI – *Special Needs Initiative Committee* where there are representatives from various organizations. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated she would reach out to Mr. Joseph to see if he is available to attend the Board's next meeting.

Ms. Sowers asked Ms. Vester in regards to the City having a space available where adults with disabilities between the ages of 21-50 can go to which provides tables and chairs where someone can go just to hang out with others or play board games. Ms. Vester stated that she believes this would be best addressed with the City's Adult Program and that at the senior adult activity center there are tables, chairs games and media library available. Ms. Vester stated she would get with the senior adult activity center staff and advise.

Ms. Sowers mentioned that there was another Supper Club dinner which was very successful at California Pizza Kitchen. Mr. Sando asked Ms. Dietz if they intended to stay at this venue for future events. Ms. Dietz stated that they would be staying at California Pizza Kitchen due to the great service they provide. Ms. Dietz stated that she would like to see California Pizza Kitchen be the recipient of the award recognizing business who service people with disabilities during the month of October 2018 presentation.

Ms. Raquel Elejabarrieta – Director of Labor Relations & Risk Management

Ms. Elejabarrieta advised in regards to CRC Proposal which was presented by Assistant City Attorney Ms. Cristina Suarez along with former City Attorney Mr. Craig Leen during this year's Constitution Review committee which is held every 20 years in order to review proposals to amend the State of Florida Constitution. Ms. Elejabarrieta advised that the State of Florida Constitution has basic rights revision which states that "*No person shall be deprived of any rights because of race, religion, national origin or physical disability*" and that Ms. Suarez and Mr. Leen made a proposal to remove the word "physical" in order to assure that no one can be denied basic rights in front of the Declaration of Rights Committee which was received very well and passed unanimously. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated however that upon the proposal reaching the Education Committee it ran into some trouble of which Ms. Suarez or Mr. Leen were not made aware of and the proposal died. Ms. Elejabarrieta stated she was advised this unfortunately can be only addressed at the next constitution review which will be held 20 years from now.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn: Dr. Richard Whittington / 2nd Ms. Sowers/ All Approved unanimously
Meeting adjourned 09:06 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, March 7, 2018, 8:00am at the *Coral Gables Youth Center's Conference Room* – Board to be advised via email.