

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 17, 2025

5:00 PM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82049614201>

Parking Department Conference Room

Sustainability Advisory Board

*Chairperson Teddy Lhoutellier
Vice Chairperson Dipak Joshi
Board Member James Brock
Board Member Nicolas Eterovic
Board Member Joseph A. Fadel
Board Member Dieter Manstein
Board Member Anabella Smith
Board Member Ruben Rodriguez
Board Member Tiffany Troxler*

STAFF:

Matthew Anderson, Sustainability & Mobility Assistant Director
Diego Cancel, Sustainability & Resiliency Supervisor
Nicole Gautney, Sustainability Coordinator
Thiago Esslinger, Sustainability Intern

GUEST:

Francisco Torres – CEO of Compost For Life & Coral Gables Resident
Wrigley Kordt – UM Student, Filming For a Class Assignment
Isabella Prado – Student & Coral Gables Resident

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 5:06 P.M. by Teddy Lhoutellier.

PHYSICAL QUORUM (8): Teddy, Dipak, Joe, Anabella, Jasper, Ruben, Nelson, and Tiffany.

Quorum was met at 5:10 P.M.

Roll Call / Introductions

Present: 8 - Board Member Fadel, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Smith, Board Member Brock, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Joshi and Board Member Manstein
Excused: 2 - Board Member Etercovic and Board Member Wisniew

2. Public Comment

Isabella Prado is interested in becoming the Board's Youth Appointment. Her and her sister Alexandra are encouraged to continue attending the SAB meetings and can request any assistance from the Board with the environmental projects they are working on.

2. June 26, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Jasper motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Dipak seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Yeas: 8 - Board Member Fadel, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Smith, Board Member Brock, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Joshi and Board Member Manstein
Excused: 2 - Board Member Etercovic and Board Member Wisniew

3. Board Chairperson Vote

Dipak motioned to vote Teddy Lhoutellier as the Board Chairperson; Joe seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Fadel, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Smith, Board Member Brock, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Joshi and Board Member Manstein
- Excused:** 2 - Board Member Etercovic and Board Member Wisniew

4. Vice Chairperson Vote

Joe motioned to vote Dipak Joshi as the Board Chairperson; Anabella seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Fadel, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Smith, Board Member Brock, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Joshi and Board Member Manstein
- Excused:** 2 - Board Member Etercovic and Board Member Wisniew

5. Board-as-a-Whole Appointment Vote

Dipak motioned to vote Joe Fadel as the Board-as-a-Whole Appointment; Jasper seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Fadel, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Smith, Board Member Brock, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Joshi and Board Member Manstein
- Excused:** 2 - Board Member Etercovic and Board Member Wisniew

6. Youth Board Appointment Vote

Joe motioned to vote Nelson Manstein as the Youth Board Appointment; Jasper seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- Yeas:** 8 - Board Member Fadel, Board Member Rodriguez, Board Member Smith, Board Member Brock, Board Member Troxler, Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Joshi and Board Member Manstein
- Excused:** 2 - Board Member Etercovic and Board Member Wisniew

7. Compost For Life Presentation

Francisco Torres, CEO of Compost For Life and Coral Gables resident, gave a presentation on his company, Compost For Life.

- Founded in 2020 to help find a solution to the world's food waste problem.
- With Commissioner Aileen Higgins, Compost For Life drafted the new MDC composting ordinance. It is designed to divert 12,500+ tons of food waste per year per local farm from landfills.
- Today, Compost For Life is collecting more than 100,000 pounds of food waste per week. Since October 2020, more than 7 million pounds of food have been diverted from landfills and 240,500 gallons of gas has been saved with the support of the 488 active customers they now have.
- The City of Coral Gables is beginning to work with the Coral Gables Library to open a community composting drop-off program. More information will come soon as these conversations are in the beginning stages.

8. Commercial Beautification Awards

- i. The Board voted on the nominations for the Commercial Beautification Awards. The nomination period is from March 1 through April 30, and the public is able to nominate local businesses for the award during this time period. The criterion for the award is based on how well a business keeps its storefront and if they do not have any violations. Many businesses were nominated for the 2025 Commercial Beautification Award but only five made it to the voting round. These five were Andromeda District, Giralda Cleaners, Misha's Cupcakes, The Plaza Coral Gables, and Il Duomo Dei Saponi Restaurant. The Board voted with the set criteria in mind and awarded the five locations and were awarded the Commercial Beautification Award. Unfortunately, Il Duomo Dei Saponi closed its doors between being nominated and this SAB meeting. The business owners will be presented with the award individually at upcoming Commission meetings and be recognized by the Commission.
- ii. The board considered recommending future award categories based on business size to ensure fair comparisons and recognition

9. Keep Coral Gables Beautiful Program Updates (KCGB)**i. Recent Events:**

- 1. World Food Day – Feeding Tomorrow Documentary – October 20**
 - a. In collaboration with the University of Miami and the Coral Gables Art Cinema, KCGB held a movie screening showing the informative documentary, Feeding Tomorrow. There were 55 movie-goers and the general reaction to the film was overwhelmingly positive.**
- 2. Baptist Health Business Cleanup – October 21**
 - a. The corporate offices for Baptist Health South Florida reached out to KCGB to host a private cleanup for their employees. They removed 18 pounds of litter in less than 45 minutes around their office building near Kerdyk Park.**
- 3. EWM Realtor Group Presentation – October 29**
 - a. A presentation was made to over 40 employees of EWM Realtor Group and KCGB staff presented on all the sustainability initiatives the city has to offer as well as alternative transportation with the Trolley's Southern Loop having just launched.**
- 4. Keep Florida Beautiful Annual Conference – November 5 – 7**
 - a. The city hosted the Keep Florida Beautiful conference with 100 attendees in November, showcasing Coral Gables' sustainability efforts to a statewide audience**
- 5. Keep Florida Beautiful Group Cleanup – November 7**
 - a. On the last day of the KFB conference, a downtown cleanup event mobilized 32 conference volunteers, who collected 325 pounds of trash in 30 minutes, including removal of an illegal dump site near the city boundary.**
- 6. Adventure Day – November 8**
 - a. This event was a Community Recreations event that attracted 135 visitors, promoting many different partners and local organizations. KCGB attended to educate families on the different opportunities and programs that are available to them throughout the city.**
- 7. Kind Designs Tour – November 10**
 - a. During a recent visit to the Kind Designs headquarters, Vice Mayor Anderson was able to see the work that this local company does to protect our coastlines and integrate nature with man-made structures.**
- 8. Recycling Drive-Thru – November 15**
 - a. The city's bi-annual Recycling Drive-Thru event saw 1,140 participants and 570 cars, marking a successful turnout with smooth logistics despite a minor shredding truck fire incident. Over 31,500 pounds of electronic waste, household hazardous waste, paper, cardboard, plastic film, and clothing were diverted**

from the landfill and were properly recycled and donated.

ii. Upcoming Events:

- 1. Holiday Downtown Community Cleanup – December 1**
 - a. The last Downtown Cleanup of 2025 will take place on Monday, December 1, starting at 5 p.m. Volunteers will collect litter throughout the downtown area, followed by a post-event mixer at Café Grumpy. Prizes will be awarded to groups and individuals who collect the most litter. The event is sponsored by Baptist Health South Florida and the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce.**
- 2. Business Recycling Drive-Thru – December 6**
 - a. The annual Business Recycling Drive-Thru will be on the first Saturday of December and will be open to all local businesses to recycle their electronics, shredding, cardboard, plastic film, and make clothing donations to Suited For Success. Residents are also able to come by to do any shredding they were unable to do in the November Drive-Thru as there was an incident with the shredding truck.**
- 3. Holiday Cardboard Recycling & Christmas Tree Recycling – December – January**
 - a. The city has Christmas tree and cardboard recycling programs throughout the holiday season. The cardboard recycling begins the day after Thanksgiving, while the Christmas tree recycling begins after Christmas. The city's solid waste crew does curb side pickups and youth center drop offs. City contractor, SFM, begins chipping trees into mulch for city parks after January, removing the need to purchase mulch throughout the year.**

10. Sustainability City Commission Items

- i. Presentation of a Proclamation declaring November 15, 2025, as "America Recycles Day" in Coral Gables**
 - 1. Residents have expressed concerns to the Commission about litter accumulating in the medians throughout the downtown area. In response, staff will direct volunteers to focus on cleaning these areas during the next Downtown Community Cleanup event.**
- ii. A Resolution of the City Commission authorizing the acceptance of a State of FDOT Litter Control & Prevention Grant**
 - 1. In the amount of \$15,000 to be put towards the "Keep Coral Gables Beautiful" initiative; authorizing the execution of Grant Agreement No. G3H98; and authorizing an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Annual Budget to recognize the \$15,000 grant as revenue and to appropriate such funds to put toward the cost of the program.**
- iii. An Ordinance of the City Commission amending the City Code to create Chapter 62, "Streets, Sidewalks, and Other Public Places," Article VII "Special Events and Parades," Division I "Generally" Section 62-265 "Prohibition on Use of Plastic Related or Metallized Decorations and Release of Balloons" to amend the City Code to add a prohibition on the use of certain plastic related or metallized decorative material and prohibit the release of balloons by special event permittees in the City; providing for severability, repealer, codification, and providing for an effective date**
 - 1. During the International Coastal Clean up the Vice Mayor and participants noticed excessive amounts of plastics and metallic confetti. The City has already completed the first reading and is working towards passing this ordinance which our Code Enforcement team will enforce. Other cities such as Miami Beach and Boca Raton have already passed similar ordinances. The language from this ordinance will be included in all permits for events in City property.**

11. Standing Agenda**i. Vulnerability Assessment Update**

1. The City is working to have the consultants who developed the Vulnerability Assessment present to the board and will schedule that at an upcoming meeting.

ii. Block by Block Monthly Report

1. The Board reviewed the October Block By Block report and the City expressed they continue to do a great job.
2. The Board reviewed the May monthly report from Block by Block, highlighting the outstanding daily contributions and dedication of the Block by Block employees.

12. Member Comments**i. Joe:**

1. Thanked the City's from the Trolley and Public Works team for putting up the canopy covers at trolley stops. The City shared that they received a grant to add benches and make all stops ADA accessible.

ii. Anabella:

1. Mentioned the Chamber's new appointed President and that she will soon have a meeting with him to talk about many things including her work with the SAB.

iii. Jasper:

1. Mentioned that our NexTrex box at the Youth Center used to be next to the battery recycling and has been moved to the right by the staircase, but is still very visible, easy to use, and accessible. Staff informed them that it was a decision made due to visuals.

iv. Nelson:

1. Updated us on an e-waste event they did at his high school, Ransom Everglades, and that there was good turn out including their IT Department.

v. Tiffany:

1. Mentioned she saw the Coral Gables Foundation at a Cleo Institute event, and they seemed excited to do something in partnership with the SAB. She asked if we could talk about ideas for potential partnerships with them. She mentioned she thinks they found Girl Scouts and it was discussed that they do provide many scholarships, and staff can think of ideas to apply.

13. Next Meeting – Wednesday, January 14, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. at the Parking & Mobility Services Office**14. ADJOURNED: 6:45 p.m.**