

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 17, 2023

8:30 AM

2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables FL

Police and Fire Headquarters, Community Meeting Room

### School Community Relations Committee

*Chairperson Winnie Chang*  
*Vice Chairperson Sandy Dimitris*  
*Board Member Erin Anding*  
*Board Member Joshua Goodman*  
*Board Member Ana Lam*  
*Board Member Andrew Nadal*  
*Board Member Cecilia D. Slesnick*  
*Board Member Sharon Watson*

The School Community Relations Committee will be holding its Regular Meeting on Friday, Nov. 17, 2023, commencing at 8:30 a.m. While the Committee is back to live in-person meetings, members of the public may participate in person but are also able to participate via the Zoom platform. Members of the public may join the meeting via Zoom at (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83893614478>). In addition, a dedicated phone line will be available so that any individual who does not wish (or is unable) to use Zoom may listen to and participate in the meeting by dialing: 305-461-6769 Meeting ID: 838 9361 4478.

To speak on an Agenda Item, please "Raise your Hand" or send a message to one of the meeting hosts using the Zoom Platform. If you joined the meeting via telephone, you can "Raise your Hand" by pressing \*9.

## CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 8:38 a.m.

## ROLL/QUORUM CALL

Board Member Nadal listened in via Zoom.

**Present:** 7 - Board Member Anding, Board Member Lam, Chairperson Chang, Board Member Goodman, Vice Chairperson Dimitris, Board Member Slesnick and Board Member Watson

**Absent:** 1 - Board Member Nadal

## A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A-1 School Community Relations Committee Meeting of September 15, 2023.

**Attachments:** [Cover Memo](#)  
[SCRC Sept. 15 - Draft Minutes](#)

**A motion was made by Board Member Lam, seconded by Board Member Slesnick, that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following vote.**

**Yeas:** 7 - Board Member Anding, Board Member Lam, Chairperson Chang, Board Member Goodman, Vice Chairperson Dimitris, Board Member Slesnick and Board Member Watson

**Absent:** 1 - Board Member Nadal

A-2 The School Community Relations Committee Workshop Summary Minutes of Oct. 13, 2023.

**Attachments:** [Cover Memo](#)  
[Draft SCRC Workshop Minutes - Oct. 13](#)

**A motion was made by Board Member Slesnick, seconded by Vice Chairperson Dimitris, that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following vote.**

**Yeas:** 7 - Board Member Lam, Chairperson Chang, Board Member Goodman, Vice Chairperson Dimitris, Board Member Slesnick, Board Member Anding and Board Member Watson

**Absent:** 1 - Board Member Nadal

## B. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments from the public made.

## C. NEW BUSINESS

C-1 **Miami-Dade County Public Schools Update (Facilitated by Mari Tere Rojas, School Board Chair)**

School Board Chair Rojas was not able to attend due to conflict with her annual Turkey Giveaway event at Ada Merritt K-8 Center.

**C-2 Discussion on the People with Disabilities Planning Group (Facilitated by Winnie Chang, Chairperson)**

Item deferred as former Board Member Ward Sando was not able to attend to speak on this item.

**C-3 Approval of 2024 SCRC Meeting Dates**

2024 SCRC meeting dates were reviewed and discussed. It was decided that the January meeting date be changed to January 12 in order to avoid a conflict with the scheduled Teacher Planning Day.

Attachments: [Draft 2024 Committee Meeting Dates](#)

A motion was made by Board Member Lam, seconded by Board Member Dimitris, that this matter be approved as amended. The motion passed by the following vote.

**Yeas:** 7 - Chairperson Chang, Board Member Goodman, Vice Chairperson Dimitris, Board Member Slesnick, Board Member Anding, Board Member Lam and Board Member Watson

**Absent:** 1 - Board Member Nadal

## D. OLD BUSINESS

### D-1 Discussion on the Coral Gables History Tour (Facilitated by Winnie Chang, Chairperson)

Board Members reviewed the original History Tours Resolution and the new Museum tour offerings via their website.

Sam Joseph reiterated that the original program and resolution was intended to focus on the history of the City of Coral Gables and not focus on the museum itself. He mentioned that History Miami has the staff and resources to possibly take this over from the museum.

April Jones stated that another issue would be that since the current museum offered tours have a 30 student limit, multiple field trips would be needed to cover one school.

Board Member Slesnick states that it should be kept local to Coral Gables and brings up changing the history tours to the Merrick House. Board Member Lam used to sit on the Merrick House Board and states that this might be possible. The use of trolleys is brought up but after discussion it is decided this would not be an option due to several issues including the District not allowing the use of trolleys as they have no seatbelts.

Sam Joseph stated that what is needed is a tour operator. History Miami, Dade Heritage Trust and some other private companies offer these services.

Board Member Slesnick mentioned that even with a scaled down walking version, four staff members would be needed to handle these tours. There are five 4th grade classes at Coral Gables Prep, etc. While the tours are a want, schools have other needs that the current earmarked monies can go towards.

Board Member Lam mentioned the purchasing and use of an app that incorporates QR codes at landmarks. Chairperson Chang asks if Board Member Lam wants to take the lead on this initiative. Board Member Lam will work with Sam on this initiative. Whatever version this takes it needs to continue to be tied to the curriculum.

This item will be revisiting in the Jan. 12, 2024 SCRC meeting.

Attachments: [Reso No. 2019-76 - History Tours](#)

## E. ONGOING BUSINESS

**E-1 Review and discussion on proposed Resolution regarding an education strategic plan survey (Facilitated by Winnie Chang, Chairperson)**

The SCRC reviewed the two different versions of the draft resolution being proposed and additional language in a third draft shared on screen. Board Member Goodman stated that they should ask for more. Vice Chairperson Dimitris mentioned that they should ask in stages.

April Jones stated that it is important to keep in the language about making education part of the city strategic plan. Chairperson Chang agreed on the topic of the strategic plan but would separate the chief education officer request, Board Member Slesnick seconds this thought.

Board Member Slesnick mentioned that there are two different items being discussed, the survey and the initial conversation about funding current programmatic needs. She reiterates the possibility of using the \$20,000 earmarked for the history tours as a starting point for now. Vice Chairperson Dimitris agreed that the resolution needs to be split but agrees with the others on the language relating to the strategic plan.

Sam Joseph mentioned that in his opinion, discretionary funds to the schools would receive a no vote from the Commission. Sam agrees that there should be one staff member focusing on education in the city. Estelle Lockhart stated she attended the Chamber of Commerce presentation from yesterday and that education was not mentioned as a livable pillar from the city.

Vice Chairperson Dimitris stated that it is important to have an educational professional oversee the survey. Board Member Goodman stated that he is okay with dropping the chief officer in this resolution for now.

There is mention of Catherine Raymand, a Coral Gables resident and possible future consultant on this topic.

Vice Chairperson Dimitris motions to request a time certain on the resolution as approved by the SCRC for 10 a.m. at the Dec. 12 Commission Meeting, Board Member Goodman seconded. Motion passed.

Attachments: [DRAFT SCRC Resolution Re-education strategic plan survey \(Drafted by Board M](#)  
[DRAFT SCRC Resolution Re-Education Strategic Plan Survey \(Staff Liaison Sug](#)

A motion was made by Board Member Goodman, seconded by Board Member Watson, that the resolution with the Staff Liaison's edits be approved as amended with the incorporation of the strategic plan request language. The motion passed by the following vote.

**Yeas:** 5 - Chairperson Chang, Board Member Goodman, Vice Chairperson Dimitris, Board Member Slesnick and Board Member Watson

**Absent:** 3 - Board Member Lam, Board Member Nadal and Board Member Anding

**E-2 General Updates (Facilitated by Solanch Lopez, Acting Staff Liaison)**

Economic Development is partnering with the Eagles Nest Fund for the upcoming Holiday Sip & Shop event.

**F. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

F-1 Next SCRC Meeting - Friday, Dec. 15, 2023 | 8:30 a.m.

Questions/Comments: [scrc@coralgables.com](mailto:scrc@coralgables.com)

F-2 Join a local PTA or subscribe to their newsletters using the following links:

F-3 Parks Pollinator Patch Planting - Saturday, Nov. 18, 2023 | 9:30 to 11 a.m.

F-4 Fiesta @ The Park - Saturday, Nov. 17, 2023 | 12 to 9 p.m.

F-5 Gables Bike Tours - Sunday, Nov. 19, 2023 | 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

F-6 Clubhouse Hours at the DEI Clubhouse - Mondays 3 to 7 p.m.

F-7 Giralda Live - Friday, Dec. 1, 2023 | 7 to 11 p.m.

F-8 Gables Gallery Night - Friday, Dec. 1, 2023 | 6 to 10 p.m.

F-9 Downtown Community Cleanup (Holiday Edition) - Monday, Dec. 4, 2023 | 5 to 7 p.m.

F-10 School Board Chair Rojas' Office Hours - Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023 | 12:30 to 3 p.m.

F-11 Carolers in Downtown Coral Gables - Thursday, Friday, & Saturday | 7 to 9 p.m.

F-12 Holiday Sip & Shop - Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023 | 5 to 8 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

**NOTE**