

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of April 16, 2009**

Members	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	
Leslie Pantin Jr.	P	P	P	*	*	×	E	P	P	E	P	P	P	Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Richard Chimelis	P	P	A	*	*	×	A	+	+					Commissioner Maria Anderson
Sam Joseph										P	E	P	P	
Katherine deBlij	E	P	P	*	*	×	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	Comm. Ralph Cabrera Jr.
Vivian More	E	P	P	*	*	×	P	E	E	E	P	E	P	Comm. Wayne "Chip" Withers
David Stiefel	P	P	P	*	*	×	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk Jr.

- * No meetings
- x No quorum
- + Membership discontinued

Staff in attendance:

Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon, Public Affairs
Michael Rocha, Coral Gables Television

The meeting came to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of minutes

The minutes from the March meeting were circulated for approval.

Motion: Katherine deBlij motioned to approve the March meeting minutes. Sam Joseph seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

City Manager's Update

Maria Rosa Higgins Fallon provided an update on the City Manager. Mr. Patrick Salerno started his employment with the City on April 6th and is now on his second week on the job. Higgins Fallon has had the opportunity to briefly meet with him to talk about communications. The new City Manager is now in the process of meeting with each Department Director as he wants to learn about Coral Gables through their eyes. It has been a very busy two weeks. Higgins Fallon did relay the message to him that the Communications Committee would like to invite him to a future meeting to talk about City communications. He did express to Higgins Fallon that during the executive search process that he watched Coral Gables Television through the web and gave compliments on having very good television shows.

Katherine deBlij said to Vivian More that she is on the homepage. Higgins Fallon verified that indeed More is featured in the "Coral Gables: My Home" video which is posted on the City's homepage.

Higgins Fallon also reported that she worked with the City Manager to write a special message coming from him on the latest issue of e-News. She is now reporting directly to him and not through the Assistant City Manager as during the interim period.

Elections Public Education

Higgins Fallon reported on elections, and announced the upcoming Swearing In Ceremony to be held on Friday for the two reelected officials. Her office has been busy working on publicity for the elections. CGTV went live on elections night to report the results beginning at 7 p.m. and going on the air every 30 minutes. Belkys Perez reported the results.

deBlij commented that she would have preferred that those numbers were posted instead of being read on tv. Higgins Fallon replied that her office debated over this and made the decision to only post on graphics the first results which were the absentee ballots because there is usually more time to post the numbers on the graphics, and the end results of the elections. She made a decision to minimize the error of margin and because there were four results to post on the candidates and 10 results to post on the charter amendments, the chances for making errors was too big of a risk. The oncoming information as precincts results were coming in was only read by Belkys to avoid mistakes on posting the wrong numbers on the screen.

Higgins Fallon explained that how the results are announced also depends on the information received from the elections office. As the results came in and were certified, election officials would hand over the information to us. Hopefully, in upcoming elections there won't be so many issues on the ballot that will provide a better opportunity to put in more graphics. The objective this time was to minimize the margin of error since one minor mistake for us could be a major mistake for other people.

Leslie Pantin asked if election officials provide the information electronically. Higgins Fallon replied that they only hand over a piece of paper with the results. The results were not coming in as fast as previous years and the final tally did not come in until around 10 p.m.

Pantin inquired if elections worked out of the Doral office. Higgins Fallon replied that elections had a setup at the Chambers. The operations were handled by the Miami-Dade County Elections office with our City Clerk acting as supervisor of elections that night.

Spring Newsletter

Higgins Fallon distributed a list of prospective stories for the upcoming spring electronic newsletter. She invited comments from the Committee. deBlij replied that she would like to have a story about Cathy Swanson Rivenbark who has announced her departure from the City.

Prescription Drug Discount Program

Higgins Fallon also distributed a prescription drug discount card. She reported that starting on Monday the City will launch this program organized in conjunction with the National League of Cities. It is a discount card that can be used in participating pharmacies. Users will get a discount on prescription medicines, ideal for people that don't have insurance and for those who have insurance but their prescription medicine is not covered. The cards will be available at various points of distribution throughout the city. This program is not costing the city anything and it is a nice benefit especially for seniors and students. Her office is doing public outreach including programs on CGTV, e-News and a forthcoming press release.

Coral Gables Television

Higgins Fallon showed the latest Telly that CGTV has won for its On The Scene show “Gables Goes Green.” Members congratulated CGTV for the award.

Michael Rocha showed the wrap up package produced for elections with Belkys Perez announcing the final results. These elections had a 20 percent voter turnout, with more than 6,000 voters casting ballots.

City News Update

Higgins Fallon distributed the latest e-news.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.