

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item D-1
August 25, 2009
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Donald D. Slesnick, II
Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Commissioner Maria Anderson
Commissioner Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.
Commissioner Wayne “Chip” Withers

City Staff

City Manager, Patrick Salerno
City Attorney, Elizabeth Hernandez
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Marli Lutz, Executive Director of CoralGables@Home Program

D-1 [Start: 10:07:12 a.m.]

Marli Lutz, Executive Director of CoralGables@Home, to present an update on the CoralGables@Home Program.

Mayor Slesnick: Mr. Kerdyk, I think D-1 is yours.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Oh yes, thank you very much Mayor. We have Marli Lutz, Marli you want to come up here. I guess its been about 8-10 months ago, you came here in front of the Commission. You talked about the Coral Gables Home Program through the Coral Gables Foundation, and we recently had breakfast together, and I suggested that you come here and tell us the progress of your interesting program for the seniors of our community. So Marli if you would like to give us a little presentation here, I think that each of us has a packet of information regarding your program in our agendas.

Ms. Lutz: You do. I did have a PowerPoint. I don't know if its...it is up – great. Yes, it was last October that we introduced the program to the City and Vice Mayor Kerdyk does tell me that having a means to keep our residents in our community has long been something that the City has needed, and I'm happy to report that as of February of this year we started providing services at CoralGables@Home for our residents 50 plus, to provide services to them to allow them to stay in their homes. We are the first city in Florida to have a non-profit membership program that helps residents remain in their homes and enjoy their independence. This is a quote from one of our members, and I'm going to read it to you because it really does highlight a lot of the issues about our program. “First I thought I wasn't ready to join CoralGables@Home, but my life got so much easier just in the first month. My prescriptions are being delivered for free, and now I

have an amazing home repair contractor that showed up the same day and finished the jobs in record time. I can see my CoralGables@Home membership is more than going to pay for itself and my life is already more stress-free. I feel like I have a whole team of personal assistants and I know I can count on them to get the job done.” Briefly, let me just go over again some of the benefits of membership; first, you have the opportunity to meet your neighbors with similar interests at monthly programs and socials; there are rides to the airport, doctor’s appointments, and grocery store, and we even deliver groceries during the time of illness. There is access to a reliable, trustworthy home repair and service providers at a discount, and this does include hurricane shutter installation, and we have also obtained discounts at various Coral Gables shops and restaurants. There is free prescription delivery and we have weekly selection of heat and serve meals for delivery. So how do we sustain this program for our community? First, I would encourage you to join; we only have fifty-three (53) spots left for our charter memberships and that is at a special introductory rate, that’s \$50 a month or \$500 a year. What’s better is that at that introductory rate is going to be frozen for those charter members for two years. So we do have 53 spots left; we also would invite you to become a legacy partner. A legacy partner is somebody who supports the program, wants to keep it in our community, keep us sustainable. They do get our newsletter every month and they can attend up to three programs at the member rate per year, and then at any time if they decide that they do want to become a full fledged member they can apply that legacy partnership to the membership; and that’s a \$200 cost, and if they needed a home repair and you understand you do get a discount on the home repairs, and these are vetted vendors, or let’s say they were ill they could upgrade their membership anytime. Lastly another thing that we do need to keep the program in our community is we need volunteer drivers; driving is the number one request we get from our membership. In addition, we could really use the donation of a vehicle, so if anybody has a clunker they haven’t turned in, we’d appreciate that. We are doing our part to keep us sustainable; we do have our first fundraiser coming up January 15th and 16th called, “Dishing it Up Tour of Homes”, and we hope that you will participate in that event, that is something that we are hoping to take a portion of the proceeds of that event and apply it toward the food program that we provide. Are there any questions?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You know, one thing is for sure, there are so many senior citizens and really people that are over the age of 50 that look for these types of home repairs, names that they really don’t know, and people reference of material or service individuals that they can get through your organization; and the Coral Gables Foundation has really tried to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Coral Gables by embarking on this program. Really there is only one other program, I think, that is like this, and that’s in Beacon Hills, Boston, is that correct?

Ms. Lutz: No, Beacon Hill was the founder; they have been providing services in their community for about seven years, they have about 500 members, and these programs are starting to crop up across the country, but I will tell you that it’s a feather in Coral Gables hat to have the first one in Florida. There are about thirty across the country now as a matter of fact, but we are the only one in Florida and so it’s a very exciting opportunity to build this program for our community and we appreciate your support.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: You know, Mr. City Manager since this is such a good program, oh he’s not here, but I’m sure he’s listening, since this is such a great program I’d certainly like to make

sure that we get this on E-NEWS and try to advertise this as much as possible through the City's website and whatsoever.

Ms. Lutz: Thank you Vice Mayor and I do have packets here if anybody is interested.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: And you know what, I'd like to take the time to recognize Jerry Centro who is the President of the Coral Gables Foundation; Jerry, thank you very much for showing up here today. Thank you very much Marli.

Mayor Slesnick: Thank you very much. You know one of the things that I think we can consider doing too to help support the program, is the specific request that was made, Mr. Manager, I don't know if you heard the Vice Mayor, why don't you say it again.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes. We were just talking about the Coral Gables Home Program through the Coral Gables Foundation, and what I'd like to do since this is just a fine program for our senior citizens in the City of Coral Gables, I'd like you to make sure this gets publicized through the E-NEWS program, and also any other vehicles that the City has that can help embellish this program.

City Manager Salerno: Will do.

Mayor Slesnick: I was also adding to that the one request that was made is a need is some type of car, some type of transportation that the volunteers drive; if we have an older car that is surplus that I know we have given them the other programs and so forth, for us to look into the possibility of supplying one of our surplus older vehicles that we will not any longer use to the CoralGables@Home. Thank you very much to the Foundation to all that it does, Jerry and to CoralGables@Home.

[End: 10:14:50 a.m.]