

City of Coral Gables

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

5:00 PM

Public Safety Building, CMR-A

Sustainability Advisory Board

Chairperson Teddy Lhoutellier
Vice Chairperson Martin Pinilla
Board Member James Brock
Board Member James Covey
Board Member Katrina Erwin
Board Member Nicolas Eterovic
Board Member Joseph A. Fadel
Board Member Dipak Joshi
Board Member Gabriela M. McGrath Moreira
Board Member Anabella Smith
Board Member Tiffany Troxler

1. Roll Call / Introductions

STAFF:

Matt Anderson, Assistant Director for Mobility and Sustainability

Nicole Gautney, Sustainability Coordinator

Diego Cancel, Sustainability & Resiliency Supervisor

GUEST:

Deena Bell-Llewellyn – Coral Gables Assistant Director of Public Works for Landscape Services.

Dieter Manstein – Coral Gables resident and is a junior at Ransom Everglades Upper School, he is part of the Environmental Sustainability Council at his school.

Nelson Manstein – Brother of Dieter Manstein, he is also on the Environmental Sustainability Council at Ransom Everglades Upper School.

Dania Mustelier – George W. Carver Middle School; nominated for Environmental Appreciation Award.

Laura Penia – A member of Kids4Oceans & Beyond Club, came to show support for Dania Mustelier.

Andrew Alvarez – Assistant Principal of George W. Carver Middle School, came to show support for Dania Mustelier.

Jenna Easley – Parent of a student at George W. Carver Middle School, came to show support for Dania Mustelier.

Nathan Easley – member of Kids4Oceans & Beyond Club, came to show support for Dania Mustelier.

Troy Easley – Chief of Coral Gables Fire, came to show support for Dania Mustelier, and was the one to reach out to the Board to nominate her for the award.

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 5:05 P.M. by Nicolas Eterovic, Interim Chair.

Present: 7 - Board Member Smith, Board Member McGrath Moreira, Board Member Fadel, Board Member Troxler, Board Member Covey, Board Member Eterovic and Board Member Brock

Absent: 1 - Board Member Erwin

Excused: 3 - Chairperson Lhoutellier, Vice Chairperson Pinilla and Board Member Joshi

2. MOTIONS:

April 8, 2024, Meeting Minutes – Jasper motioned to approve the meeting minutes; Anabella seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

June 26 Meeting – Jasper motioned to cancel the June 26th meeting and meet in July; Joe seconded.

PHYSICAL QUORUM (7): Tiffany, Gabi, Jasper, Anabella, Nicolas, Joe, and James

Quorum was met at 5:05 P.M.

Jasper motioned to approve the April 8th meeting minutes; Anabella seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Jasper motioned to cancel the June 26th meeting and meet in July; Joe seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. Environmental Appreciation Award

- i. Dania Mustelier, Spanish teacher at George W. Carver Middle School, was awarded the Environmental Appreciation Award due to her efforts in starting an environmental club, called the Kids4Oceans & Beyond Club, at the school and a battery recycling program for the students to bring in their used batteries. They have collected and properly recycled 506 pounds of batteries.**

4. Keep Coral Gables Beautiful Program Updates**i. Recent Events**

- 1. Pinewood Cemetery Invasive Plant Removal – Wednesday, April 10th**
 - a. This was the third invasive removal done at the historic Pinewood Cemetery. There were 37 volunteers who removed 3,500 pounds of invasive plants from the northern side of the cemetery.**
- 2. Baynanza – Saturday, April 13th**
 - a. The 42nd annual Baynanza cleanup, hosted by Miami-Dade County’s DERM, will be held at three Coral Gables locations – Chapman Field Park, Matheson Hammock Park, and R. Hardy Matheson Preserve at Bella Vista Point. The location Diego and Nicole were assisting was Bella Vista Point. There were 34 volunteers who collected 1,300 pounds of debris from the mangrove trail.**
- 3. UM Earth Day Fair – Monday, April 22nd**
 - a. During the UM’s 2024 Earth Day Fair, 170 students and interested parties came by to learn about the sustainability initiatives the city has as well as KCGB events and programs.**
- 4. Climate in Crisis Film Screening – Thursday, April 25th**
 - a. For this year’s environmental film, Climate in Crisis was shown to 50 movie-goers educating them on the issues that are rising in South Florida due to climate change and what is being done to combat it.**
- 5. Bi-Annual Recycling Drive-Thru – Saturday, May 4th**
 - a. The Recycling Drive-Thru took place at the City Hall parking lot. There were approximately 970 participants who brought in 23,460 pounds of household hazardous waste materials, 7,653 pounds of paper shredding, 19,712 pounds of electronic waste, and 1,400 pounds of clothing for Camillus House. There was a total of 52,225 pounds of material collected and went to be properly recycled.**
- 6. EcoExpressions: Guided Art Walk – Friday, May 17th**
 - a. 30 people came to the first ever sustainable art walking tour. This event was put together by the KCGB team, Economic Development, and Cultural Arts Department in under a week and a half and was sponsored by ArteVivo Gallery. This event was the last event held before the Water Below Us art installation was removed. There were four art installations that were viewed during the art tour and the tour ended at the new ArteVivo Gallery.**

- 7. Commercial Beautification Awards – March 1st thru April 30th**
 - a. The Commercial Beautification Awards will be presented at the next meeting and voting shall be done at that time.**

ii. Upcoming Events

- 1. My Squad Earth Month – Wednesday, May 29th**
 - a. This event was rescheduled due to the My Squad’s availability in May instead of April. The event will take place at the clubhouse at Ruth Bryan Owens Park. This event is a seedling planting event using reusable materials.**
- 2. NexTrex Program Launch & Unveiling – Friday, May 31st**
 - a. KCGB’s plastic bag and film recycling program is finally launching at the Adult Activity Center at 1 pm. There will be a presentation on the program with detailed information on the recycling process.**
- 3. Ingraham Park Cleanup – Friday, June 7th**
 - a. This event will be a first for KCGB as there has never been a litter cleanup event at this location. This park is right on the waterway, and it is very important that litter does not enter the channel. The event will be from 10 am to noon at 4751 Ingraham Terrace.**
- 4. Fewell Park Native Planting – Friday, June 28th**
 - a. This is a native “pocket” park, the intention is to have a pineland ecosystem type of landscape in Coral Gables. There was an invasive removal event with KCGB in September because there was a large quantity of invasive plants in the park. Today there is a very small number of invasives, and the Greenspace team has been managing the park very well. Now native plants are ready to be introduced and this event is to plant these native species.**

iii. Grant Updates

- 1. KAB Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (CLPP) Grant**
 - a. KCGB was awarded the CLPP grant which awards the program with twelve cigarette receptacles and a cash grant to be used to purchase “no smoking” signs and other essential items for this new program. These receptacles will be placed in the downtown area and two of them will be installed at Ruth Bryan Owens Waterway Park.**
- 2. Green Business Program Update:**
 - a. The Green Business Program is in its final stages and is waiting to be approved by the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce.**

5. **Presentation – Deena Bell- Llewellyn,
Coral Gables Assistant Director of Public Works for Landscape Services**
 - i. **Coral Gables Tree Inventory**
 - a. **There are 42,000 trees throughout the city’s right of way areas, including swales and parks. The city has 400 landscape sites that Greenspace does the landscape and irrigation. Parks and Recreation maintains the larger parks with playgrounds or park infrastructure. There is a division between the different city departments, this being if the park has a big playground or infrastructure, community recreations maintain them. If it is a passive space or right of way, it is maintained by Greenspace.**
 - b. **The tree canopy is the most important aspect for sustainable initiatives. Education is a big part of Greenspace’s goal, and they share information on the importance of allowing trees to grow to the natural capacities of the species instead of pruning the trees when residents request it. This is to cut down on the heat gain by covering the pavement and asphalt with the tree canopy. When trees need to be removed due to age, disease, lightning strikes, etc. they are replaced by lancing new trees to continue creating a sustainable urban forest. The Commission values the city’s tree canopy and always has room to budget for new trees and maintenance. Greenspace has been given an annual succession project budget of \$200,000 per year that is used to conduct large tree plantings. Last year, 111 new trees were planted; this year, 130 trees have been planted due to the annual project budget. Due to tree costs rising, Deena is hoping to increase the budget for next year to \$250,000 to diversify the tree species and get larger trees.**
 - c. **The trees that are removed throughout the year are remade into mulch that is used citywide; the city has not needed to purchase mulch for many years. This is a cyclical process and a fully sustainable process.**
 - d. **The Board is very interested in learning about why the city has not started green waste composting/collection. Deena stated that there is a large issue in separation and space within the city. The city would need to contract out to collect green waste.**

6. Sustainability City Commission

- i. Proclamation declaring April 2024 as "Earth Month" in Coral Gables**
 - a. This annual proclamation was updated with how many events KCGB has done, the many different achievements the program has accomplished, and reiterating the importance of Earth Month.**

- ii. Resolution of the City Commission authorizing the acceptance of a Keep America Beautiful Great American Cleanup Grant**
 - a. This resolution was to approve the Great American Cleanup grant that KCGB received. The resolution was passed by the Commission.**

- iii. Update regarding PACE Green Corridor and Resolution supporting S.B. 770**
 - a. This resolution was sponsored by Vice Mayor Anderson, it is to encourage the Governor to sign a bill that would expand the PACE Program to include septic to sewer and other water upgrades that residents can do. The resolution was passed by the Commission.**

7. Standing Agenda

- i. Sea Level Rise Update**
 - a. The Vulnerability Assessment is being updated by Diego and Matt and the second quarter report, January to March, was submitted to Hazen and Sawyer.**
 - b. Regarding sea-level rise, the South Florida Regional Climate Compact and the State are working together to produce updated sea-level rise projections for South Florida. These projections are used by all of the South Florida cities when planning for any upcoming projects. Once these projections are released, Matt will be sharing them with the Board.**

- ii. Water Quality Update**
 - a. FIU is continuing to collect data and will have a draft report in August or September. Tiffany will present the draft report to the Board when it is ready. There may be state funding for a Phase III; it has not been signed yet but it does look like it will be heading in that direction.**

8. Member Comments**i. Anabella:**

- a. Anabella discussed the Green Business Certification Program and how the Sustainability team met with her and Mark Trowbridge from the Chamber of Commerce; they met to discuss the application and to provide any input. She and Mark are trying to get more businesses to become certified once the application is published. She is wondering how to promote the program; Mark mentioned to her that they send a package to new members which would include the Green Business Certification Program. They discussed having an annual lunch-and-learn, maybe during Earth Month, with the members and the city to discuss sustainability programs that can be applied to the local businesses. The Green Business Certification Program is in the final stage to be launched in the very near future.**

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 24, 2024

ADJOURNED: 7:36 p.m.

**For more information on the Sustainability Advisory Board please visit:
CoralGables.com/SAB**

Email: Sustainability@coralgables.com