

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 3, 2009, 8:00 a.m.
Development Department, 95 Merrick Way, Suite 450, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	#	M	A	M	J	COMMISSIONERS
Bertram "Chico" Goldsmith *										X		P		Mayor Donald D. Slesnick II
Ray Zomerfeld	P	X	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X	P	P		Vice Mayor William Kerdyk, Jr.
John "Jack" Thomson*		X								X		E		Commissioner Maria Anderson
Haydee Polo*		X								X		P		Commissioner Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera, Jr.
James Casey	P	X	P	P	E	P	E	P	P	X	P	P		Commissioner Wayne "Chip" Withers

STAFF:

Jessica Wotherspoon, Business Development Specialist

A = Absent
E = Excused Absence
P = Present
X = No Meeting
= Special Meetings
*** = New Member**

GUESTS: Dr. Al Smith, Commissioner Ralph Cabrera, Lt. Agustin Diaz and Major Masington, Coral Gables Police Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Nancy C. Morgan, Coral Gables Services, Inc.

Meeting Motion Summary:

The minutes of the May 6, 2009 Board meeting were approved.

A motion was unanimously passed in recognition of the outstanding leadership of Cathy Swanson Rivenbark as Development Director and the Board's wish that the City Commission and City Manager be aware of the significance of the position to the Board, the Development Department and the City's continued economic vitality.

The meeting absence of Mr. Thomson was unanimously excused.

Mr. Zomerfeld was elected Board Chair by unanimous approval.

Chair Ray Zomerfeld called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

1. Approval of May 6, 2009 Board Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Casey made a motion to approve the Board meeting minutes of May 6, 2009 as presented. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Discussion of 2009-2011 goals:

For the benefit of new Board members, Mr. Zomerfeld explained the Board's previous approaches to establishing individual and/or group economic impact goals to achieve during a Board's two-year term. He reviewed long-term goals in progress, i.e., downtown wireless internet cloud and education, and individual goals achieved, i.e., downtown trash management and senior housing, and praised the past Board for its successful efforts.

Regarding new goals, consensus was to focus full Board strength on one or two primary goals in addition to shorter-term, individual goals. Ideas to be further explored were summarized as follows:

- Crime prevention in the downtown;
- Annexation;

- Miracle Mile storefronts and streetscape;
- Bicycle racks;
- Adopting a school classroom;
- Signage;
- Affordable housing;
- The livability of urban areas, green space, development of park areas, dog waste receptacles;
- Stores meeting needs of middle-class families as well as upscale shoppers (collaboration with BID).

Mr. Zomerfeld advised that discussion would continue at the July meeting after Board members had an opportunity to meet with their appointing officials to discuss issues of greatest importance.

3. Discussion with Police Department representatives on crime in downtown:

Lt. Diaz and Major Masington were welcomed by Mr. Zomerfeld, who stated that crime in the downtown area impacted the economic environment. On behalf of the Board, he asked how the Board could assist the police with downtown crime issues.

Major Masington reviewed law enforcement focus on improving the overall downtown environment, including the bike patrol, meet and greet program, collaboration with Mari Molina and the BID during events, trespass warning signage in retail stores (notifying the public that the business owner has the right to restrict people from entry), efforts to educate people about locking vehicles and City employees' communication ability to reach the 911 center to report suspicious activity. Discussion topics included specific high-traffic/school areas around the City, potential special taxing districts, video cameras, graffiti management and use of public service aides versus sworn officers.

4. Additional Business:

Board Purpose and Development Director: Board purposes were discussed, with emphasis on past annual reports as a valuable source of information about Board initiatives and focus. New members will be given copies of previous reports to facilitate their contemplation of new goal-setting opportunities. The level of importance of a Development Director to the economic vitality of the City was discussed.

A motion, made by Mr. Casey, and seconded by Ms. Polo, was unanimously passed in recognition of the outstanding leadership of Cathy Swanson Rivenbark as Development Director and the Board's wish that the City Commission and City Manager be aware of the significance of the position to the Board, the Development Department and the City's continued economic vitality.

Meeting Attendance:

Mr. Casey made a motion to excuse the meeting absence of Mr. Thomson. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Wotherspoon will provide Board members with official information related to meeting attendance.

Board Chair:

Mr. Casey made a motion to elect Mr. Zomerfeld as Board Chair. Mr. Goldsmith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. General City Update:

Ms. Wotherspoon reported that the Miami-Dade County tax roll assessment was received and the City's property tax revenue decreased by approximately 6%.

6. Visit by Commission Cabrera:

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Commissioner Cabrera said the purpose of his visit was to welcome Haydee Polo to Board membership, after which he recognized the results she achieved in service on the Parks and Recreation Board. The Commissioner also recognized eight years of exemplary Board service by Dr. Al Smith, praised him for submitting excellent ideas and presented him with a certificate of appreciation.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Next Economic Development Board Meeting: Wednesday, July 1, 2009 at 8:00 a.m., Development Department Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Wotherspoon
Business Development Specialist