



CORAL GABLES MERRICK HOUSE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2024, 8:30 a.m.
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, 2nd Floor, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

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CORAL GABLES
FLORIDA 33134

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MEMBERS	F 23	M 23	A 23	M 23	J 23	J 23	A 23	S 23	O 23	N 23	D 23	J 24	F 24	APPOINTED BY
Bonnie Seipp	P	P	P	E	N	N	P	E	E	P	N	P	P	Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Carmen Cason	E	P	P	P	O	O	P	E	P	P	O	P	A	Mayor Vince Lago
Mary Beth Burke Vice Chair	P	P	P	P	M	M	P	P	E	P	M	P	P	Commissioner Kirk R. Menendez
Margaret Groves					E	E		E	E	E	E	P	#	Commissioner Melissa Castro
Alexis Ehrenhaft	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	E	P	P	E	P	A	City Manager Peter Iglesias
Genevieve Orr	*	*	*	*	I	I	P	P	P	E	I	P	P	Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Joanne Meagher Chairperson	P	P	P	P	N	N	P	E	P	P	N	P	P	Board-as-a-Whole

LEGEND: A = Absent; P = Present; E = Excused; * = New Member; ^ = Resigned Member.
 - = No Meeting; # = Late meeting arrival.

STAFF: Anna Pernas, Historical Resources Director, Kara Kautz, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer; Gay Bondurant, Docent Coordinator, Yvelisse Bonilla, Administrative Assistant.
 RECORDING SECRETARY/PREPARATION OF MINUTES: Yvelisse Bonilla, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 8:42 AM by Chair Joanne Meagher. Attendance was stated for the record.

ROLL CALL:

In attendance were: Ms. Seipp, Ms. Orr, Ms. Burke, and Ms. Meagher. Ms. Groves joined the meeting at 9:32 AM.

OPENING STATEMENT:

On February 5, 1916, George wed Eunice at her parents' home and what was called the Fifth Street Extension. Reverend James Bolton performed the ceremony which was attended only by close family. Mrs. Merrick, the Miami Metropolis reported, is a beautiful young woman of much charm and George Merrick is a young man of forceful character. The article also included a long description of each of the family's accomplishments. Eunice's connection with the Peacock Inn and George with his father Soloman Merrick and the Coral Gables plantation. The newlyweds left in George's new white touring car for a 10-day honeymoon through central Florida. When Mr. and Mrs. Merrick returned from their honeymoon, they moved into their new home, which Eunice named Poinciana Place. It was here with Eunice as his closest confidant that the secret plan for Coral Gables began to materialize.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Merrick House Governing Board Meeting Minutes January 8, 2024.

A motion was made by Ms. Seipp, seconded by Ms. Orr, to approve the minutes with amendments for the meeting on January 8, 2024, which passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Merrick House Activity Report January 2024 -
 Ms. Gay Bondurant read from the January 2024 House Report. The report was shared with the Board in advance of the meeting and is included as an attachment to the minutes.

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2. Porch Ferns – The ferns in planters on the porch, west side, are not doing well. The ferns on the east side are blocking views of porch. Ms. Meagher would like to know if these are appropriate for the period. Staff mentioned that the ferns are accurate for the period but maybe not in planters.
3. Poetry Books – Need to order a reprint of the poetry books. There are no more in stock at the House.
4. Villagers Event – The Villagers are looking for a location to present their scholarship awards to the recipients in late April. Staff suggested they complete a rental application so that the event details can be provided to the Board. They will also need insurance.
5. Lampshade – A visitor to the House pointed out the lampshade on the hallway table may need restoration or replacement and recommended Artistic Plus to restore the lampshade.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Villager Grant / Stag Painting – Staff provided the an estimate prepared in 2014 by Art Care Conservation Using this estimate, Ms. Meagher was able to deduce the new cost would be approximately \$12,439.00.
2. City Staff Tours – Ms. Burke contacted Deena Bell-Llewellyn to confirm a date for the Greenspace Management staff tours. Ms. Bell would like a date in March. Tentative for March 15th or the 22nd.
3. Althea's Garden Brigade – Ms. Meagher presented an idea to allow volunteers to work in the garden. Staff confirmed with the City Attorney's office that a waiver is necessary and Staff or Merrick House representative would need to be present.
4. Constant Contact – We are able to use the Communications Department account for the Merrick House mailings.
5. Pond – Staff is still working through insurance issues for the Professional Service Agreement (PSA). Staff will contact another vendor for the pump replacement proposal, if the insurance issue cannot be resolved. In the meantime, Staff has requested a new quote from Pond Doctors, LLC for monthly maintenance and a proposal for a deep clean.
6. 100 Voices Lecture by Mayor Dorothy Thomson – The Commissioners and Mayor attended this event, along with 48 guests. The talk was well-received.
7. Garden Tea, March 10, 2024 – Ms. Meagher read the new flyer for this year. The price will remain the same at \$65. Board members will meet on Saturday, March 9th to create the flower arrangements for each table. No tours will be given during this event.

DISCUSSION ITEMS: None.

CITY COMMISSION ITEMS: None.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY:

1. Elections for Board-As-A-Whole, Chairperson and Vice chairperson.

A motion was made by Ms. Burke, seconded by Ms. Seipp, to reappoint Joanne Meagher to the Board-As-A-Whole position. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was made by Ms. Seipp, seconded by Ms. Groves, to vote Joanne Meagher as Board Chairperson. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

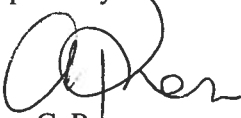
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A motion was made by Ms. Seipp, seconded by Ms. Groves, to vote Mary Beth Burke as Board Vice-Chairperson. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Pernas', written over the text 'Respectfully submitted,'.

Anna C. Pernas
Historic Preservation Officer