

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 5, 2026

4:00 PM

<https://coralgables.zoom.us/j/86149844627>

Adult Activity Center

**Senior Citizens Advisory Board**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m.

## **ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

Judith "Jude" Alexander  
Javier Figueras  
Gerardo Alvarez  
Jean Connelly  
Olga Girod

**Absent:**

Thomas Wells - Excused  
Julian Serviallano - Excused

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER GERARDO ALVAREZ AND SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER JAVIER FIGUERAS. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **MANAGER'S REPORT**

**a. General Updates.**

Manager Walters provided a comprehensive report on current programming, upcoming events, and operational updates at the facility.

The upcoming St. Patrick's Day event, scheduled for Friday, March 13, 2026, was highlighted as a key program. The Manager reported that the event has been heavily promoted through flyers, posters, and outreach efforts, and has reached full capacity. The event is officially sold out, with only complimentary tickets reserved for Board members remaining available. Board members were encouraged to attend and support the event.

Manager Walters also introduced several upcoming programs and initiatives. Two new Italian language classes are being developed, including a beginner-level course and a conversational class modeled after existing language discussion formats. These programs are currently undergoing the volunteer approval process.

Additional programming updates included themed activities such as a St. Patrick's Day-inspired fabric painting class and the planned return of the popular cupcake decorating workshop for Easter, scheduled for April 4, 2026. Manager Walters noted strong participant demand for these creative and social programs.

The Cinema Series was also discussed, with an upcoming showing of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid and a future screening of The Getaway scheduled for May.

Manager Walters provided an update on outreach efforts through the Farmers Market, where staff will host a table on March 21 to promote the facility and its programs. A flash mob performance is planned as part of this outreach effort. Board members were invited to participate and assist in promoting the center during the event.

The upcoming Variety Show, scheduled for April 17, was also discussed. Staff are actively recruiting participants and exploring additional entertainment options to enhance the event.

Manager Walters and Board engaged in a detailed discussion regarding the results of a recently distributed community survey focused on program participation and potential expansion of facility hours.

It was reported that the initial survey yielded a limited sample size of approximately 14 responses, which was acknowledged as insufficient for drawing definitive conclusions. The Board discussed the need to collect additional responses to ensure more reliable and representative data. Plans were made to redistribute the survey during the upcoming Farmers Market outreach on March 21 to increase participation.

The Board also identified opportunities to improve the survey design, noting that the original survey may have been too lengthy and could be streamlined for clarity and

ease of completion. There was consensus that future surveys should be more concise while still capturing meaningful data.

A key concern raised during the discussion was the importance of distinguishing between City residents and non-residents in survey responses. The Board emphasized that programming decisions, particularly those related to expanding hours or services, should be guided primarily by resident input. It was suggested that staff verbally confirm residency status when distributing surveys to ensure more accurate data collection.

Preliminary findings from the survey indicated mixed and sometimes conflicting responses regarding preferred program times. While some participants expressed interest in expanded evening hours, others indicated a preference for daytime programming. The limited sample size made it difficult to determine clear trends.

The discussion also highlighted that lack of awareness of available programs may be a contributing factor to participation levels. Staff acknowledged ongoing efforts to improve marketing and communication, though noted challenges in balancing promotional resources across multiple divisions.

Based on early feedback and operational observations, Saturdays were identified as showing increased participation and potential for program expansion. The Board discussed the possibility of adding additional Saturday programming, particularly fitness classes, while recognizing operational constraints such as staffing and facility capacity.

The Board also discussed logistical challenges related to expanding hours, including staffing limitations and the complexity of opening the facility on additional days, particularly Sundays. It was noted that extending hours on existing operational days may be more feasible than adding entirely new days of operation at this time.

Overall, the Board agreed that additional data collection is necessary before making any decisions regarding program expansion or changes to operating hours.

**b. Special Events and Programs.**

- i. March 7th: A Saturday at the Cinema showing “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid”
- ii. Friday, March 13th: Shamrock Spring Celebration
- iii. Easter themed classes in development; cupcake decorating and fabric painting.
- iv. Italian language classes in development.
- v. Farmers Market ongoing through March 28th
- vi. Carnival on the Mile March 7-8
- vii. Variety Show April 17

**c. Administrative Updates.**

Director Couceyro provided a detailed overview of ongoing departmental initiatives, upcoming Commission items, and broader operational challenges impacting the Community Recreation system.

Director Couceyro informed the Board that several items are scheduled to be presented at an upcoming City Commission meeting, with a primary focus on golf operations and maintenance. He explained that the Granada Golf Course has experienced ongoing maintenance challenges over the past year, including difficulty retaining qualified golf course superintendents and maintaining consistent turf conditions. As a result, staff are recommending transitioning to a contracted maintenance provider, specifically a company with extensive experience managing multiple golf courses and large-scale operations. This approach is intended to improve course conditions, provide access to greater resources, and ensure more consistent and professional maintenance practices moving forward.

The Board was advised that, if approved by the Commission, the new contractor would assume responsibility for golf course maintenance operations, potentially following a transition period in coordination with the current vendor. Director Couceyro noted that this shift would allow the City to move away from reliance on individual personnel and instead utilize a company with established systems, purchasing power, and operational capacity to maintain high-quality conditions.

In conjunction with these operational changes, Director Couceyro discussed the City's five-year fee plan, which is currently under review. As part of this process, staff are evaluating necessary adjustments to fees across various services, including golf. He indicated that increases may be required to support rising maintenance costs and ensure long-term sustainability of operations. It was noted that current golf usage levels significantly exceed recommended capacity for a nine-hole course, with approximately 67,000 rounds played annually compared to an ideal range of approximately 50,000 to 52,000 rounds. This level of use has contributed to wear and tear on the course and reinforces the need for both improved maintenance and strategic fee adjustments to manage demand.

Director Couceyro further explained that these proposed changes are intended not only to improve course conditions but also to align operations with industry standards and available resources. The Board acknowledged that while fee adjustments may generate public feedback, they are necessary to support the level of service expected by users.

Additional updates were provided regarding ongoing and upcoming capital projects throughout the City. The Manager reported that construction activities are progressing at multiple park locations, including improvements at neighborhood parks that will feature enhanced amenities such as new playgrounds, pickleball courts, and upgraded recreational spaces. These projects are part of broader efforts to modernize facilities and expand recreational opportunities for residents.

Director Couceyro also shared updates on recently completed and active facilities,

noting that the Venetian Pool is fully operational with all systems functioning, including pumps and waterfalls, in preparation for increased attendance during the spring season.

An update was also provided regarding a recent park dedication event scheduled to take place at Blue Road Park, renamed in honor of David Lawrence Jr. Director Couceyro noted that a large turnout is anticipated due to community interest and the significance of the dedication.

Director Couceyro additionally addressed ongoing initiatives related to dog park facilities. The Underline Chewy Bark Park has been well received by the community, with consistent use and positive feedback reported. Maintenance efforts, including daily cleaning and upkeep of specialized surfaces, are being conducted to ensure continued quality and user satisfaction.

Regarding the proposed dog park at 520 University Drive, Director Couceyro informed the Board that a community meeting had been held to present the conceptual design and gather public input. Feedback received reflects a mix of support and opposition, particularly from nearby residents. Staff are currently collecting additional public input and will compile a comprehensive report for presentation to the City Commission. The Commission will ultimately determine whether to proceed with the project based on the information provided.

Lastly, Director Couceyro provided updates on facility planning and redevelopment efforts, including the relocation of the historic Gondola Building from the Biltmore Golf Course to the Kerdyk Tennis Center, where it will be re-purposed as both a historical display and functional program space. This project is intended to preserve the structure while enhancing its accessibility and usability for the community.

Overall, he emphasized that the department continues to balance operational demands, capital improvements, and community input while working to enhance services and maintain high-quality recreational facilities throughout the City.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Board Member Jean Connelly updated the Board regarding ongoing planning efforts related to the upcoming art show event. It was reported that the committee met earlier in the day to begin organizing key components of the event, including establishing a working timeline and identifying critical milestones necessary for successful implementation.

The Board was informed that the tentative event date is being coordinated for mid-November, with discussion referencing alignment with prior years' scheduling to ensure consistency and adequate preparation time. As part of the planning process, the committee is working backward from the proposed event date to develop a structured timeline that includes deadlines for artist submissions, review and selection of artwork, and logistical preparations for installation and display.

Additionally, the committee is evaluating opportunities to enhance the format of the event, with consideration given to potential adjustments or improvements compared to previous years. These efforts are intended to strengthen the overall presentation and participant experience while maintaining the event's established purpose and community appeal.

The committee indicated that a detailed schedule outlining all phases of the event, including submission periods, setup timelines, and event coordination activities, will be prepared and shared with staff and Board members for review. Board members will have the opportunity to provide feedback to ensure the planning approach aligns with expectations and goals.

Overall, the Board acknowledged that planning efforts are actively underway.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY**

Next meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 4 p.m.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY BOARD MEMBER OLGA GIROD TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AND WAS SECONDED BY BOARD MEMBER JAVIER FIGUERAS. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 4:42 P.M.**

## **NOTE**