

# City of Coral Gables

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



## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

6:00 PM

City Hall, Commission Chambers

### South Waterways HOA Advisory Board

*Chairperson Gonzalo Sanabria*  
*Vice Chairperson Toni Schrager*  
*Board Member Lance Campbell*  
*Board Member Aimee Davis*  
*Board Member Rick Diaz*  
*Board Member Eileen Higgins Faradji*  
*Board Member David Kutner*  
*Board Member Roberto Martinez*  
*Board Member Alex Quevedo*

## CALL TO ORDER

## ROLL/QUORUM CALL

**Present:** 9 - Chairperson Sanabria, Vice Chairperson Schrager, Board Member Campbell, Board Member Davis, Board Member Diaz, Board Member Higgins Faradji, Board Member Kutner, Chairperson Martinez and Board Member Quevedo

### A. NEW BUSINESS

- A-1 Introduction to the work of Miami Waterkeeper, a not-for-profit organization (<https://www.miamiwaterkeeper.org/>) and its relevance to the residents of Coral Gables (Facilitated by Rachel Silverstein, Ph.D., Executive Director)

Board member Martinez invited marine biologist and CEO of Miami Waterkeeper, Dr. Rachel Silverstein, to the podium to introduce the not-for-profit organization. Dr. Silverstein explained that Miami Waterkeeper's mission is to protect the waterways of Miami Dade and Broward County. They do so in three fundamental categories, which are science, policy and advocacy, and community outreach. With this they test the water, conduct studies, encourage habitat protection, promote septic to sewer conversion, present sea level and climate change proposals, provide educational and volunteer opportunities, spread awareness regarding solutions in the community, and other in-depth work regarding policy directives. They also have a reporting system that connects residents with agencies that have solutions. Dr. Silverstein also discussed her ongoing collaboration with the University of Miami marine biology department to coordinate with federal and state agencies in the utilization of coral reefs for storm surge protection, and to shift the view of coral reefs to coastal protection along with other research projects related to federal grants. Miami Waterkeeper is funded by individual donations, foundation funding, and state and federal funding. Chairperson Sanabria welcomed collaboration with Miami Waterkeeper and encouraged testing the water, if needed.

- A-2 Update regarding guardhouse vehicle inspection procedures (Facilitated by city staff & Aimee Davis, Board Member)

Board member Davis addressed concerns regarding guardhouse vehicle inspection hours of operation (11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.), and possibly altering the procedure by allowing them to ask drivers to roll down their windows and identify themselves to reduce confusion with possible car thefts or other neighborhood crimes that have happened before the hours of inspection. Governmental Affairs Manager Fernando Weiner clarified that with a motion and consensus from the board this change could be recommended to the commission. Vice Chairperson Schrager shared that her neighborhood is implementing a policy that she recommended, which has those not in compliance with the regulation of rolling down their window be followed. Chairperson Sanabria proposed inviting the supervisor of the guardhouses to the next meeting.

**A-3 Update regarding grounding of suspended electrical wires (Facilitated by city staff)**

This item is under the jurisdiction of FPL and is a continuous process that is underway and expected to see action in Northwest Coral Gables in 2025. More information can be found on the City Website by searching Frequently Asked Questions about Undergrounding, where residents can be redirected to the FPL Website and shown where FPL intends to begin construction in 2025 and beyond.

**A-4 Discussion regarding issues and potential remedies related to parking and debris during construction (Facilitated by Aimee Davis, Board Member)**

Board member Davis shared that there is no right of way between sidewalk and property lines in her respective neighborhood, which harms landscaping of resident's yards, due to improper parking because of ongoing construction by private contractors. Methods attempted so far have been the placement of rocks, contacting police, and filing zoning complaints etc. Chairperson Sanabria proposed policy discussion with Code Enforcement, and possibly recommending one to the commission. Mr. Weiner will clarify whether parking on a public road due to construction by a private contractor is permitted and provide an answer to the board by the next meeting.

**A-5 Discussion on whether Coral Gables should ask the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, and any other relevant agency, to place lights on the waterway markers east of the city's coastline (Facilitated by Roberto Martinez, Board Member)**

Board Member Martinez proposed placing lighting on markers east of our coastline that lead to the Gables coastline due to night boating and the increase in boating accidents over the past few years. Board Member Martinez suggested an informational presentation via a map of the current channels presented by someone in the commission or police department familiar with the routes before deciding. Board members Cambell and Diaz recommended collaborating with the Waterway Advisory Board to see their progress with this issue amongst others such as mangroves before moving forward. Mr. Weiner stated that he would communicate with the board to obtain information regarding their progress with these issues.

**A-6 Discussion on whether the board should remove "Waterway" from the board's name  
(Facilitated by Gonzalo Sanabria, Board Member)**

Chairperson Sanabria made a motion to change the name of the board by removing "waterway" from the title to reduce confusion with the other similarly named board. Board member Martinez clarified the need to present a recommendation to the commission via a proposal. Board Member Rick Diaz requested more information regarding the waterway in the name of the coexisting boards, before deciding to remove it from the board name, since it is an essential topic the board discusses. Governmental Affairs manager Fernando Weiner reviewed the ordinance and welcomed Imelys Sansores of the City Clerk's Office, to which she clarified that the Waterway Advisory Board handles all things respective to the health, safety, maintenance, and security of the city waterways, while this board can discuss a variety of concerns from roads to security and waterways amongst other concerns. Board member Rick Diaz reworded his concern regarding the two boards overlapping to which Mr. Weiner offered the solution of providing minutes from the Waterways Advisory Board's meetings to the advisory board and maintaining communication with the liaison to ensure unified decision making and collaboration.

The Board then proposed the following names for recommendation to present before the commission, inclusion of the word Coastal or Waterfront, Coral Gables HOA Community Advisory Board, South Coastal Advisory Board. Vice Chairperson Schrager made a motion recommending that the Board table the discussion until the next meeting; Chairperson Kutner seconded the motion, with the entire board supporting the decision. Chairperson Sanabria requested that representatives of city departments such as Public Works, Police, Finance, and possibly Parks & Recreation be present to address voiced concerns. The board clarified and requested their presence when related to specific agenda items, to be mindful of the employees' schedules and availability.

**A-7 Election of Board Chair & Vice Chair (Facilitated by city staff)**

Governmental Affairs Manager Fernando Weiner introduced the conversation of appointing a chairperson and vice chairperson for the board. Board member Sanabria volunteered himself for the position of chairperson after discussing with the other board members, board member Quevedo seconded his motion. By acclamation to the motion, board member Sanabria is selected as the chairperson and board member Schrager is selected as vice chair of the board for a 1-year term.

**B. SELECTION OF FUTURE MEETING DATE(S)**

The next board meeting will be on Tuesday, May 14th, 2024, at 6:00 pm. The Board agrees to continue the discussion of the meeting schedule next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**NOTE**

Any person who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to the City of Coral Gables Ordinance No. 2006-11, must register with the City Clerk, prior to engaging in lobbying activities before city staff, boards, committees and/or the City Commission. A copy of the Ordinance is available in the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall.

Any person, or persons, wishing to appeal any decision made by the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, will require a verbatim record of the proceeding upon which the appeal is based. Interested persons should, therefore, take the necessary steps to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which contains the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based.

Any person making impertinent or slanderous remarks or who become boisterous while addressing the Commission, shall be barred from further audience before the Commission by the Chair, unless permission to continue or again address the Commission is granted by the majority vote of the Commission Members present. Clapping, applauding, heckling or verbal outbursts or any remarks in support or opposition to a speaker shall be prohibited. Signs or placards shall not be permitted in Commission Chambers.

Any person with a disability requiring communication assistance (such as a sign language interpreter or other auxiliary aide or service) in order to attend or participate in the meeting should contact the City's ADA Coordinator Raquel Elejabarrieta, Esq., Director of Labor Relations and Risk Management (E-mail : [relejabarrieta@coralgables.com](mailto:relejabarrieta@coralgables.com), Telephone: 305-722-8686, TTY/TDD: 305-442-1600), at least three (3) business days before the meeting.