

City of Coral Gables

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



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 1, 2022

4:00 PM

Adult Activity Center

Senior Citizens Advisory Board

Chairperson James "Jim" Berlin

Vice Chairperson Celia Suarez

Board Member Jean H. Connelly

Board Member Margaret Groves

Board Member Kelley Schild

Board Member Julian Sevillano

Board Member Richard Thurer

Board Member Hendrick Woods

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting began at 4:00pm

ROLL CALL

a. Roll Call and Approval of Absences

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ABSENCE OF JEAN CONNELLY AND CELIA SUAREZ WAS MADE BY JULIAN SEVILLANO AND WAS SECONDED BY JIM BERLIN. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Present: 5 - Chairperson Berlin, Board Member Schild, Board Member Sevillano, Board Member Thurer and Board Member Woods

Excused: 2 - Vice Mayor Suarez and Board Member Connelly

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Approval of August Meeting Minutes

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST MEETING MINUTES WAS MADE BY JULIAN SEVILLANO AND WAS SECONDED BY HENDRICK WOODS. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

a. General Updates

AAC Assistant Supervisor Gregory Walters began his report by going over staff vacancies that have now been filled. Danays Silva, the new Guest Service Specialist, has begun working at the facility this week. The part time Guest Service Representative position has also been filled and Julian Rodriguez began about a week prior to the meeting.

Gregory went on to state that the Senior Week events were very successful, mentioning that specifically the end of summer ice cream social and the crime watch presentations seemed to draw in the largest crowds.

Gregory then went on to share some information regarding September programming at the AAC, stating that Arts & Crafts & Conversations will now take place twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays and that baton twirling has come to an end due to lack of participants. He then went on to state that Mahjong will be returning on Mondays at noon in September.

Gregory then discussed new programming that will begin in October, stating that a Ballet class will be held on Tuesdays from 6pm – 7pm, and a program called Mind & Melody will also be starting in October on Tuesdays at 2pm.

Gregory then went on to state that the support group MS Amigos has been moved from the second Thursday of every month to being held on the second Tuesday of every month. He then provided an update on the upcoming technology classes are stating that the details are still be finalized but there is hope that they will begin in October.

The AAC will be closed on Monday September 5th for Labor Day.

b. Special Events

The dates for the AAC's seasonal events have been set, starting with the first annual Halloween Spooktacular Event that will be taking place on October 28th, then the 14th Annual William M. Schiff Art Show that will be held on November 18th, followed by the Annual Holiday Luncheon that will be held on December 16th.

The Afternoon at the Cinema event for this month will be on September 3rd showing "All the President's Men". The movie for October has already been set for October 29th to show "The Omen", and the movie selection for November is going to be "Blazing Saddles".

Administrative Operations Supervisor Mitchell Zuriarrain then quickly ran through some of the upcoming city-wide special events, starting with the member meet-and-greet at the Coral Gables Country Club for members and those who are interested in joining the Country Club taking place on September 15th, then on September 10th we will be having our Parks Pollinator and Palooza and Family Day which will also be at the Country Club. Then for special events in October we will have the Pumpkin patch which will take place on October 15th and has been moved

to the Ponce Circle Park this year, then later that evening there will be the official ribbon cutting for the Lamar Louise Curry Park that will be held in tandem with the Gardening Club.

c. Administrative Updates

Administrative Operations Supervisor Mitchell Zuriarrain began by running through some updates on the Country Club, going over the Le Parc café that has recently opened stating that it does currently have a limited menu but is looking to expand the menu options soon.

He then began going over some of the ongoing capital improvement projects, beginning with the ongoing renovations at Pierce Park, from the playground to redoing the different pathways, and that he hopes to have everything completed by December. He then went over some of the renovations planned for the Venetian Pool, redoing the café area, refinishing the pool bottom, and inspecting the structural integrity of the towers.

Board Chairperson James “Jim” Berlin inquired as to whether there had been a final decision made on the gondola on the Biltmore golf course, in which Mitchell informed him that the plan is to keep the gondola in the same location seeing no viable alternative locations to move it to.

Mitchell then went discussed the ribbon cutting event at Maggiore Park, stating that it was a very successful ceremony and that it should help to compliment the surrounding community. Board Chairperson James “Jim” Berlin then inquired as to whether rumors of the installations of a gazebo were true, Mitchell responded that they are looking for viable alternatives due to cost.

Mitchell then discussed a state grant that was awarded to the department for the purpose of helping to finance the massive Phillips Park renovation. He then discussed a community form that was held in which the community was shown the plans for Phillips Park, noting that the biggest criticism they received was that the community did not want to lose any of the tennis courts at Phillips Park.

Board member Hendrick Woods then inquired as to why there is not a park named after one of Coral gables founding members, Frank Button. Mitchell then informed him that there is a process in order to have a park named, and that the only two routes are either through a large donation or through a community movement, however the department does not decide the names of the parks.

Board member Hendrick Woods then inquired as to when the library project would be completed, in which Mitchell informed the board that it is intended to be completed by Spring and that it is a massive project to bring about some necessary upgrades.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

a. Follow-up on Board's Support for Park's Master Plan

Board Chairperson James "Jim" Berlin discussed a previous motion passed by the board for him to reach out to fellow boards to build support for the parks master plan and how board member Julian Sevillano and himself recently met with City Commissioner Kirk Menendez to discuss their plan of action. Commissioner Menendez informed them that he believed that the timing was going to be too fast and that he would recommend waiting until after the election when the commission may be more friendly to this agenda item.

In response Administrative Operations Supervisor Mitchell Zuriarrain discussed 501 C 3 groups that other cities have created to function as an advocacy group for the community for similar projects and goals to the parks master plan.

Board Chairperson James "Jim" Berlin then opened up to floor for recommendations on new tactics to take to build support within the community for the parks master plan, to which board member Julian Sevillano recommended that it may be best to wait for until the election season ends. Board member Kelly Schild then recommended the idea of having an open forum at the AAC to be able to ask questions and see where the candidates stand on the parks master plan.

A MOTION TO HAVE THE MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD HOST A FORUM FOR THE CANDIDATES OF THE CORAL GABLES APRIL ELECTION AT THE ADULT ACTIVITY CENTER WAS MADE BY KELLY CHILD AND WAS SECONDED BY HENDRICK WOODS. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board member Hendrick Woods then brought up how difficult it can be while being unable to communicate with other boards or really take part in their conversations, leading board chairperson James "Jim" Berlin to bring up the fact that there is an annual boards meeting in which all of the boards meet together at the start of the new fiscal year and that there may be the possibility to have a booth in order to inform other boards about the parks master plan.

A MOTION TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF SETTING UP A BOOTH FOR THE PARKS MASTER PLAN AT THE BOARDS MEETING WAS MADE BY HENDRICK WOODS AND WAS SECONDED BY JULIAN SEVILLANO. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. AAC Senior Week

Board Chairperson James "Jim" Berlin began by calling for the praise of AAC Supervisor Katherine Anderson for her hard work on the very successful Senior Week festivities that took place the prior week.

A MOTION TO GIVE RECOGNITION TO AAC SUPERVISOR KATHERINE ANDERSON AND THE AAC STAFF FOR THE SUCCESSFUL SENIOR WEEK FESTIVITIES WAS MADE BY KELLY SCHILD AND WAS SECOND BY JULIAN SEVILLANO. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Board Chairperson James “Jim” Berlin then asked AAC Assistant Supervisor Gregory Walters for the attendance numbers for the different senior week events, which he stated were approximately 40 people for the end of summer ice cream social, 30 for the crime watch presentation, 20 when SHINE visited, 10 for the Baptist nutritionist presentation “Eat Right Feel Better”, and then the movie brought in about 60.

Board member Hendrick Woods then brought up that the board has not given recognition to Commissioner Menendez for the afternoon at the cinema events that he sponsors leading to a motion to thank the Commissioner.

A MOTION FOR THE SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD TO THANK COMMISSIONER KIRK MENENDEZ FOR SPONSORING THE AFTERNOON AT THE CINEMA EVENT WAS MADE BY HENDRICK WOODS AND WAS SECONDED BY JIM BERLIN. ALL IN FAVOR; PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board member Richard Thurer then brought up the fact that the Florida governor had just passed legislation allowing local governments to restrict smoking at public parks. Administrative Operations Supervisor then responded stating that all they do have smoke free signage at parks, however it is something that would need to be discussed and moved through the City commission.

ITEMS FROM THE SECRETARY

Next Meeting is set for October 6th at 4:00pm

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:03pm

NOTE