

CITY OF CORAL GABLES
Economic Development Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 4, 2015, 8:00 a.m.
1 Alhambra Plaza, Suite 617, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	COMMISSIONERS
	'15	'15	'14	'14	'14	'14	'14	'14	'14	'14	'14	'14	
Scott Sime Chair	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Mayor Jim Cason
Alberto Manrara Vice-Chair	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	E	Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.
Jack PJ Mitchell	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Commissioner Pat Keon
June Morris	P	P	P	P	P	E	E	P	P	E	P	E	Commissioner Vince Lago
Alexander Binelo	E	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	E	E	P	Commissioner Frank Quesada

A = Absent
E = Excused Absence
P = Present
X = No Meeting

STAFF AND GUESTS:

Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark, City Manager

Kevin Kinney, Parking Director

Leonard Roberts, Acting Director, Economic and Cultural Development Department

Jorge Casuso, Business Development Analyst, Economic and Cultural Development Department

Meeting Motion Summary:

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2015 Board meeting passed unanimously.

A motion to table the EDB 2013-14 Annual Report passed unanimously.

Mr. Manrara brought the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

1. Review of the minutes of the January 7, 2015 Board meeting.

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2015 Board meeting. Ms. Morris seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2. Introduction of City Manager Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark

Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark said the EDB's role was very important and that she "fully supports" its efforts and appreciates the Board members' "expertise and insight." Economic development policies that are "strong, robust and appropriate" help fuel many important City initiatives, she said.

3. Review of 2013-14 Annual Report

Ms. Morris requested that the list of the Board's goals include encouraging the replacement of the fence at Coral Gables High School. Ms. Morris said that she and Mr. Sime had visited the high school on separate occasions and that he had spoken to the principal about replacing the current fence, which is dilapidated and "looks bad for our city." Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark told the Board that about 12 years ago the EDB took a "very strong position" on the condition of public schools as it impacted recruitment and explored what the City could do to improve both physical appearance and performance. She said an education consultant was hired and the item was taken to the City Commission. Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark suggested looking up the minutes of the pertinent meetings, and the Board agreed to review them and to further pursue the issue. The Board agreed that the annual report should be amended and that approval of the report should be tabled until the next meeting.

Mr. Manrara made a motion to table the EDB 2013-14 Annual Report. Mr. Mitchell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

4. Presentation by City Parking Director Kevin Kinney

Mr. Kinney informed the Board that one million people park on Miracle Mile every year and that parking spaces there turn over 15 times a day. People are starting to use the garages more, with the number of short-term users tripling, he said, adding that there is still capacity for more. There are efforts underway to clean the garages and paint the interiors. He said the metered street parking rate was a little higher than at the municipal parking garages to encourage use of the garages. Two of the four municipal parking garages Downtown now accept credit cards. Coral Gables also is accepting PayByPhone payments, which represented 45 percent of the monthly transactions. Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, South Miami and UM are among the growing number of cities across the country that have instituted PayByPhone. He said Coral Gables currently pays a monthly service fee of \$55,000, but that the industry is becoming more competitive, which should drive down prices. The City of Miami's is negotiating a new contract for Pay By Phone, which he will review when it is signed likely next month, Mr. Kinney said. He said the Coral Gables plans to replace all meters with pay stations that accept Pay By Phone and is rethinking whether to install credit card equipment in the two older parking garages which are slated to be replaced. The City will eventually switch to "pay by plate," a technology that charges the vehicle automatically when it exits the garage. He said that vehicles built this year will have IPS built in.

Mr. Manrara said that the City of Miami doesn't charge motorists the 35-cent service charge and offers them a 20 percent discount. Mr. Kinney noted that the City of Miami uses City money to pay the fee for residents and that parking rates there are higher, often \$6 per hour, compared to \$1.50 an hour in Coral Gables, and \$20 during an event. Mr. Manrara said offering the discount generated goodwill. Ms. Morris suggested that Coral Gables should offer 20 minutes of free parking to make a quick purchase, as they do in Hollywood. Mr. Roberts said offering free parking in front of a store did not encourage shoppers to walk or park in the garage, which could entice them to make other purchases. Mr. Kinney noted that when the City offers an hour of free parking during the holidays, the spaces are often taken by employees and business owners. He said that he favors developing targeted plans that encourage shoppers and noted that the City needs to do a "transportation demand" plan. Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark said she would take Ms. Morris' suggestion under advisement. Mr. Mitchell said visitors who park on the lots on the 300 block of Aragon Avenue don't know the difference between the private lot and the two adjacent City lots. If they mistakenly park in the private lot they are charged \$4 an hour in what they thought was a City lot. Mr. Kinney agreed that people were confused on a regular basis despite the posted signs and that private lots charged market rates, noting that the Colonnade charged \$6 an hour, compared to the \$1 charged by the City, which sets its own rate. Mr. Manrara suggested that during the late evening, the City should consider not charging at meters in outlying areas where spaces are often empty. Mr. Kinney said that enforcement levels were reduced in the late evening. Mr. Manrara said Surfside offered residents one or two hours of free parking in "off lots," a policy that was popular with residents.

5. Other Business

Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark said the design phase of the Miracle Mile and Giralda Streetscape was underway and a Steering Committee comprised of property owners, merchants, residents and City, Chamber and Business Improvement District officials was appointed to help guide the process. Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark said she meets at least twice a week with staff to monitor the progress of the project and to review goals. She said it was important to get the word out. She said the new streetscape would have a positive impact on economic development.

Mr. Manrara said staff should keep a tally of new businesses that can be compared year to year. Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark said it was not just the number of new businesses that was important, but the number of employees. Mr. Roberts said vacancy rates were also an important indicator, to which Mr. Manrara added the leasing price per square foot.

6. Update on Business Tax Licenses and New Businesses

Mr. Roberts presented an update to the Board on Business Tax Licenses and New Businesses.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 a.m.

The next Economic Development Board meeting will be held on March 4, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Jorge Casuso, Business Development Analyst, Economic & Cultural Development