

# CORAL GABLES

THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

Library Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
 Wednesday | October 10, 2018 | 3:00 p.m.

PAB MEMBERS	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	APPOINTING ENTITY
	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	'18	
Lisa Bennett								P	X	P			Commissioner Frank Quesada
Jane Maranos								P	X	P			Mayor Raúl J. Valdés-Fauli
Samuel Boldrick								P	X	P			Commissioner Michael Mena
Sherry Shu Zhang, Chair								P	X	P			City Commission as a Whole
Myra Silverstein, Vice-Chair								P	X	E			City Manager Peter Iglesias
Charlotte Smiley								P	X	P			Commissioner Patricia Keon
Colette Worm								P	X	P			Vice Mayor Vince Lago

A = Absent    E = Excused Absence    P = Present    X = No Meeting    Ph = Present by Phone    - = Former Board Member

## STAFF AND GUESTS:

Pamela Fuertes, Director, Economic Development Department  
 Leonard Roberts, Assistant Director, Economic Development Department  
 Mariana Price, Administrative Assistant, Economic Development Department  
 Will Runyan, Coral Gables Library

## Meeting Motion Summary:

**A motion to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2018 meeting passed unanimously.**

**A motion that requires any request for memorial or dedication benches to go through Library Advisory Board review, approval, and placement, passed unanimously.**

Ms. Zhang brought the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

### 1. Introduction of new Economic Development Director, Pamela Fuertes

Ms. Price introduced Pamela Fuertes to the board, after which board members took turns introducing themselves to the new director. Ms. Fuertes thanked everyone for their welcome and gave a brief presentation on her previous career experience with the Beacon Council.

### 2. Review of August meeting minutes

Ms. Maranos submitted a correction to the minutes which Ms. Price incorporated into the minutes before the meeting. Mr. Boldrick made a motion to approve the minutes, which Ms. Worm seconded, and which passed unanimously.

### 3. Recognition of Previous Chairs

Chair of the Board Sherry Zhang wanted to recognize former Chair Lisa Bennett who has served the board for eight years, with five years as Chair, and former Vice-Chair Jane

Maranos, who has also served eight years, with five years as Vice-Chair, for all their work and service to the Library Advisory Board, and by extension the City of Coral Gables. They discussed the book Ms. Maranos created which documents the library's inventory. Mr. Roberts asked if the City could have a copy, and the members responded that Ms. Ayliin Hernandez in Public Service already has a copy. Ms. Maranos also requested that Dona Spain, the Historic Preservation Officer, and Amanda Levasser, an archivist, take a look in an old filing cabinet in the library that has some old photographs and items that would be of interest to the City to archive. Ms. Maranos said she would be happy to attend if needed. Mr. Boldrick suggested that the City look into the digitization project in downtown to transfer files into microfilm, which lasts longer than digital files.

#### **4. Memorial Bench for Library Butterfly Garden**

Mr. Roberts said that the Community Foundation has placed a few memorial benches at the library. Ms. Maranos said that there were already three memorial benches from the Coral Gables Community Foundation and that the new benches do not match the existing benches.

Board members told City staff that immediately following the last meeting, they examined the library premises for the benches currently on the property, noting their placement and condition. They reported peeling paint, rusted bench arms, and mismatched benches that defy a clean and uniform aesthetic. Ms. Bennett suggested that the benches be placed on the east side of the building. Board members inquired as to whether there was an existing garden plan. Ms. Smiley announced that the next Garden & Home Tour by the Garden Club will be on March 24, 2019\* and proposed that the benches be tidied up before then so that the Butterfly Garden is presentable. She also recommended that the bronze plaque in the Butterfly Garden be cleaned. \*[The meeting is in fact taking place on March 16, 2019].

Ms. Bennett said that any proposed memorial benches should go through a review by the Library Advisory Board. Ms. Zhang suggested that the board establish parameters for which new benches would be accepted, stating that there should be a connection between the dedication and the library. **Ms. Bennett made a motion for any request for memorial or dedication benches to go through Library Advisory Board review, approval, and placement. Ms. Maranos seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

#### **5. Update from County Meeting on Library Renovations**

Mr. Roberts provided a brief update on the County renovations, noting that the work on the fountain in front of the library had been completed. He said it was an extensive process due to the historical designation of building. The pavers will also be replaced which will take some time because they are being handmade. The County will reimburse the City for the costs attached to these projects. Related to the interior renovations, Mr. Roberts said that the peoples' voices were heard at the public meeting on library renovations, and that the design on the Children's Room will be reconsidered. The City is currently soliciting for designers. The dedicated money for these renovations will not expire, so if it is not spent within this fiscal year it will rollover to next year. Mr. Roberts said he would reach out to the County to get a timeline for the beginning of renovations, and to find out how long after the plans are approved the construction would begin.

## **6. Upcoming Business & Community Events**

Mr. Runyan announced that the Coral Gables Library will now be open seven days a week and also has new hours of operation: Monday-Thursday from 9:30 am – 8:00 pm and Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 9:30 am – 6:00 pm. (The library used to be closed on Thursdays and would open at 10:00 am.) The library hired three additional staff members to accommodate these extended hours. Board members suggested to City staff that this development be sent out in the City's e-newsletter.

Mr. Runyan said that the library would be hosting early voting beginning October 22<sup>nd</sup> through Sunday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, every day from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. After Sunday, the voting booths will be switched out for Election Day and the library will serve as a voting precinct.

While discussing previous yoga offerings at the library hosted by the Youth Center during the summertime, some board members said that yoga was not an appropriate activity for the library. Ms. Bennett said the library should strive for offering educational and cultural activities. Mr. Runyan offered a different perspective and said that by venturing out and hosting unconventional library programming, the library would be reaching an audience that doesn't normally visit (or think to visit) the library. He cited the statistic that only 5% of the County population utilizes the library.

Ms. Zhang asked Mr. Runyan if he thought the meeting space in the library was underutilized. Mr. Runyan said that the library's programs are full. He added that the library once hosted an event that featured a quartet from the Cleveland Symphony, which he said was a terrific and well-received event. He said that the best days and times for performances are Saturdays, and for weekdays they try to begin by 6 pm. Ms. Fuertes asked him if the library has worked with UM's Frost School of Music, to which Mr. Runyan replied that they have worked with them in the past and have had performances from jazz ensembles.

Mr. Runyan added that Sundays would also be a good time for programming. Ms. Bennett said programming in the library should always be free, mentioning that libraries in Washington, D.C. have Saturday events that draw large crowds and their programs are free. Board members discussed the possibility of renting out the space for community events. Mr. Runyan said that refreshments and food offered during programming would need to be packaged or catered.

Mr. Roberts suggested that the board have a liaison for different organizations to talk about the library and to promote its programs and increase attendance and circulation. He gave the example that the Economic Development Board at one time sent a liaison to attend Beacon Council meetings and other events. He also informed the board that the Cultural Advisory Board applies for a grant every year in November to organizations that have events locally with the goal of attracting events to Coral Gables. The Chamber has a Cultural Committee, and perhaps this would be a place of interest for the board to send a liaison. Mr. Roberts said this would be added to the next meeting's agenda.

Ms. Price announced that the City would be hosting its annual Pumpkin Patch at Pittman Park event on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Ms. Maranos said that the historical marker that had been damaged outside of the library at the corner of the intersection has finally been replaced and will be reinstalled. The Historic Preservation Board along with Dona Spain will meet outside tomorrow and decide exactly where it will be placed. The City is also waiting for FPL to fix the historic lamppost that was also damaged at the same time as the historical marker.

## **7. Other City Business**

Board members discussed the whereabouts of the 110 fiberglass stacking chairs, expressing wishes for their return and stating their historic value. Ms. Bennett referenced an email from Dona Spain on 12/29/17 to several City staff members listing items that would be removed temporarily and permanently from the library. The list of things that would be retained by the library, the email said, would include the model ship, large wood table, piano, and the 110 fiberglass chairs. Staff said they would reach out to Ms. Spain and get back to them with an answer as to where the missing chairs are and when they would be returned.

Board members notified staff who took note that the Butterfly Garden link on the Coral Gables website did not work and that the new library hours needed to be put on the library webpage. Also, board members voiced concerns for the protection of the books on the steps outside the library by the parking lot. Mr. Runyan explained that those were books that people “donated” to the library or for other people to take. Board members suggested that a sign be placed there to explain that, to which Mr. Runyan said there was a donation policy on the website and that a lot of the books end up being discarded anyway due to mildew and water damage. The library also does not want to encourage that practice. Mr. Boldrick said that UM’s Richter Library has the same problem.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mariana Price, Administrative Assistant - Economic Development Dept.