

**City of Miami Community Relations Board Meeting  
Minutes from Thursday, October 16, 2008**

**Board Members Present**

Barbara Bisno, Chair  
Roudy Thomas, Vice Chair  
Milton Pizarro  
Anthony Jennings  
Marjorie Weber  
Carlos Morales  
Lyse Cuellar  
Patricia Maldonado

**Board Members Absent**

Mary Coombs, Secretary  
Haydee Wheeler  
Teresa Zorrilla-Clark

**Staff Present**

Ada Rojas, Office of Community Relations Coordinator  
Natasha Colebrook-Williams, Community Relations Outreach Specialist

**Guests**

David Green  
Eddie Thomas

**I. Welcome and Call to Order**

Barbara Bisno, CRB Chair, convened the meeting at 6:06 PM.

**II. Roll Call**

Ada Rojas did roll call of all Board Members.

**III. Items to be approved by the Board**

*A motion was made by Anthony Jennings, and seconded by Milton Pizarro, to approve the September 18, 2008 board minutes with the correction that Carlos Morales was present.*

**Aye:** Barbara Bisno, Roudy Thomas, Milton Pizarro, Anthony Jennings, Marjorie Weber, Carlos Morales, Lysee Cuellar, and Patricia Maldonado

**Nay:** None

*A motion was made by Patricia Maldonado, and seconded by Lyse Cuellar, to accept the City of Miami Community Relations Board's Rules of Procedures.*

**Aye:** Barbara Bisno, Roudy Thomas, Milton Pizarro, Anthony Jennings, Marjorie Weber, Carlos Morales, Lyse Cuellar, and Patricia Maldonado

**Nay:** None

**IV. Committee Reports**

**A. Programs & Community Outreach Committee** – As a representative of the CRB Marjorie Weber will be attending the Housing & Economic Recovery Act Training on October 24<sup>th</sup> co-hosted by

the South Florida CDC Coalition. Ms. Weber informed the board that \$92 million was awarded to Miami-Dade County for loan modification.

CRB member Anthony Jennings and Natasha Colebrook-Williams from the Office of Community Relations attended the Princeton Prize committee meeting. As members of the committee on behalf of the CRB, Mr. Jennings and Mrs. Colebrook will assist with disseminating the applications, contacting schools and community base youth programs, and selecting the recipient of the Princeton Prize. The Princeton Prize is awarded to young people who have made or are making efforts to improve racial harmony.

The CRB Student Participation criteria and application was sent to MAST Academy and Booker T. Washington High School.

CRB Member Patricia Maldonado has been in correspondence with WLRN in reference to the Film Festival. WLRN is willing to provide documentaries to be used for the Film Festival providing that the event is free to the community at large.

The Miami Book Fair final list of book has not been confirmed to date, but the organizers are aware of the CRB's interest in co-sponsoring a book that addresses community relations issues.

The City of Miami Grants and Sustainable Initiatives Department has not yet received a response from Comcast in reference to the proposal that was submitted for the Miami Anti-Bullying Youth Program. On October 1<sup>st</sup> a proposal for the Miami Anti-Bullying Youth Program was also submitted to Laura Jane Musser Fund for one year of funding requesting approximately \$85,000.

Barbara Bisno, Chair of the CRB, requested that board members try to attend MLK Day of Service at the Association for the Development of the Exceptional (ADE) on January 16, 2009. The event will be co-sponsored by the CRB, ADE, and UM Hope, Inc.

All board members were invited to attend the CRB sponsored ADL Hate Comes Home Workshop at Booker T. Washington on Thursday, October 23, 2008 from 9:00AM to 1:00PM.

- A. **Nominating Committee** – It was requested that board members Lyse Cuellar and Carlos Morales speak to Commissioner Angel Gonzalez about potential appointees for a vacant seat on the board. At the last commission meeting Commissioner Joe Sanchez appointed Marlene Sanchez to the Community Relations Board.
- B. **Law Enforcement Meeting** – The next CRB Law Enforcement Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 21, 2008, 6:00pm, at the Miami Riverside Center.

The CRB held a meeting regarding crime and the quality of life in Overtown, which was brought to the board's attention after the fatal shooting of a young man. Since that initial meeting, many of the board members and Ada Rojas have participated in several meetings in an attempt to gather information that would assist the board in a making a sound recommendation as to how we can assist the community.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> the CRB Law Enforcement Committee organized a community tour of Overtown, which included representation from the Office of Community Relations and the

Board, NET, the Overtown Advisory Board and the City of Miami Police Department, as well as concerned community residents. There is an almost daily drug trade in Overtown, in which individuals from all over the county come to buy and sell drugs. It appears that the majority of the major buyers and sellers do not reside in Overtown. It was also expressed that there is a great deal of mistrust of the Police Department by the residents of Overtown.

In part as a result of the tour and the many meetings that have occurred related to Overtown, the Chair of the CRB has requested that the Law Enforcement Committee assess whether to suggest adopting strategies used in other areas such as Coconut Grove, Opa Locka, and Upper Eastside, including the mapping proposal from the Police Department. Ms. Bisno would also like a proposal from the Law Enforcement Committee on how to assist Overtown.

Ms. Bisno and Mr. Jennings also met with Judge Adrien in reference to Overtown. Judge Adrien believes that it would be difficult to implement a mapping system. His recommendation is to start in the elementary schools and expose the young people to successful individuals who had similar backgrounds.

#### **V. Coordinator Report**

The CRB operational budget was adopted during the September 25, 2008 city commission meeting. The total budget is \$192,722. An itemized copy of the budget was included the board package for review. Board members who missed the Ethics training during the board retreat were provided information about how they can attend the required training independently.

The Goodwill Ambassadors were activated to assist with "The Moving Wall," a replica of the Vietnam Memorial. The details of the event will be emailed to the board and members are welcome to participate. If they wish to do so, they should notify the Coordinator, Ada Rojas.

As a follow-up to the Overtown project, a meeting will be held with NET Administrator, Loren Daniel and community resident, Karen Cartwright.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.