



COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD
2011 ANNUAL REPORT
(Pursuant to City Code Section 2-890)

Mission Statement: To foster mutual understanding and tolerance amongst all ethnic groups within the City of Miami.

The City of Miami Community Relations Board (CRB) was established in 1999 by Ordinance (No.11742) and is committed to finding ways to foster mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect among all economic, social, religious, and ethnic groups within the City of Miami.

The CRB serves in an advisory capacity to the City Commission and has the responsibility to recommend and provide educational and social programs, designed to eliminate discrimination in any form and to improve community relations by enlisting the support of civic leaders and citizen. The board consists of 13 members who are representative of the social, racial, religious, linguistic, gender, cultural, and economic characteristics of this city. Administrative support for the CRB is provided by the City Manager's staff and its liaison. The board meets monthly to review and discuss issues affecting our community's ability to work, play, learn, celebrate and engage in governance with good will toward our fellow residents.

Responses to the following questions are as follows:

1. Has the board served the purpose, which it was created?

Yes, the CRB has served the community and has established itself as a significant and recognizable body in the community.

In 2011, the CRB through the sponsorship of New York Life, provided free identification services to over one hundred (100) children through the Child Safety ID Program, has partnered the City of Miami Departments of Police, Neighborhood Enhancement Team, Parks and worked closely with the Honorable Mayor, Commissioners and with the Miami-Dade Community Relations Board.

2. Is the board serving the community needs?

Yes, the CRB has attended meetings throughout different locations in the City of Miami. As a result, we were able to gather information and/or addressed concerns particular to those effected as the issue(s) range from location to location. In addition, the Board served as the liaison between the constituents and the appropriate departments within the City of Miami, the County the State and Federal level such as the US Department of Justice.

Furthermore, the Board partnered with a committee to concentrate on aid for funding and general aid for an exhibition called "Race, Are We the Same?" We plan to bring an exhibition to Miami in 2013. We were part of several meetings focused on the creation of the committee itself and on fundraising efforts in the \$50K range. We will continue to be involved with this effort until it comes into fruition as Miami is poised for a perfect fit due to its diversity and appetite for the arts.

3. Accomplishments for the year 2010:

We participated with District 5's "One Bullet Kills The Party" event held in June. We recommend that it is necessary to continue this awareness program year round and not just for strategic times like 4th of July or New Years.

In addition, we worked closely with the community to address their concerns regarding the police shootings and several injury cases that resulted from several City of Miami Police encounters with District 5 residents, some which may still be investigated and met with retired FBI Agent, Paul Philips, who was hired to investigate and conduct a report for the city.

Our involvement with these town hall meetings created a platform where concerned residents were able to ask questions, give feed-back, and vent their anger and or sorrow.

We set up meetings with the Communications Department in order to up-date our web-site and open our own face book page as well as tweet account for 2012. We strongly believe that having ourselves been accessible through different mediums will be fundamental to the success of the CRB and the effectiveness of our mission as there is an ever growing trend towards social media.

Also, monitored "Occupy Miami" activities in the event it would become a City of Miami Community issue. Until today, we have not had the need to be very involved as the demonstration has been kept contained without major incident. We have board members, including the Chair that has reached out to participants in order to gather information directly from them. The result in Occupy Miami seems to lack organization as that is one of the strategies from what we have been able to corroborate along with police and media.

4. Whether there is any other board, either public or private, which would better serve the functions of the board.

No, this Board is the only one that engages private and public organizations as well as community activist to foster the mutual understanding and tolerance amongst all ethnic groups.

5 Whether the ordinance creating the board should be amended to better enable the board to serve the purpose for which it was created.

Yes, the Board has submitted for City Commission consideration an amendment to Section 2-1152 of the Code of the City of Miami, Florida to change the CRB quorum requirement by reducing the required number of members from seven five (5) members to a majority of members present.

The CRB has recently been unable to conduct board meeting due to a lack of a quorum. It is hoped that the proposed ordinance change will enable the CRB to meet and conduct business on a more regular basis

5. Whether the board's membership requirement should be modified?

No, the Board's membership is adequate and should not be modified.

6. The cost, both direct and indirect, of maintaining the board.

The Board is being operated with "zero" budget and under the Neighborhood Enhancement Team. We have done what we can to work with only the liaison and have paid for our own expenses out of pocket.

We continue to serve with all these challenges as we feel that it is worth it and will continue to find ways to be effective in accomplishing our mission without burdening



Andres Lemos, Chair
City of Miami
Community Relations Board