



**Cocoanut Grove Village Council**

Gary Hecht - Chair  
Martin Zilber - Vice Chair  
David Collins  
Liliana Dones  
Felice Dubin  
Michelle Niemeyer  
Lottie Person  
Alyn Pruett

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**Cocoanut Grove Village Council**  
**Tue June 5, 2007**  
**Meeting Minutes**

On Tue June 5, 2007, a quorum of duly elected Directors of Firm met to discuss and decide issues relevant to the business of the corporation. Council Members Zilber, Dones, Niemeyer, Hecht, Dubin, Pruett, and Person were present and voted. The following discussions took place, including the enactment of resolutions as described herein:

1. Minutes at next meeting.
2. Treasurer's Report same as next meeting.
3. Council Candidates Presentation:

Charles Gibson – Miami Lakes Sr. High. University of Illinois, BA, JD from University of Miami. Family has deep roots in the Grove. (Does he live in the Grove?) Believes in public service; paramount to one Grove. Paramount for our survival as a community to erase the lines. Communication is important. Programs. Sports. Nothing brings people together like winning. Get youth involved. Project to bring kids together. Thinks the candidate chosen should bridge the gaps in the Grove. Goombay Festival, Thelma Gibson Health Initiative., HOATA. Martin knew his grandfather; very active family in the Grove. School on Grand Avenue.

Matthew Ogurick – 2545 South Bayshore. Pro Bono attorney for the Village Council. Obtained tax exempt status a couple of weeks ago. Where do we come from, what are we, where are we going? NE boy; CT, small community; family encouraged getting involved. Hobart College, studied in Geneva. Boston College law school. Worked in NY for 5 years. Miami an opportunity to start over. Took job at Kirkpatrick & Lockhart. Matt is a product of what he grew up believing. Practices securities law. Profession around integrity and honesty. Have to be honest with public stockholders. Serving the town and the people; the people are like stockholders. He would be making a promise to have total honesty and disclosure as his backbone. One strength in professional life is to handle complex transactions; will have accessibility and availability. Hard work ethic. Lack of background in public service not a detriment.

Armando Paz, Jr. – Doesn't like talking about himself. Born at Mercy Hospital; Cuban American descent. Has lived elsewhere, but gravitate back home. A clean fight is what he was born to do. Sports growing up. Law practice in CG Bank building. Business owner and residential owner in Center Grove. Condo owner. VP of association. Crime Watch, Chair of Village West Committee; member of Jaycees. Community involvement not easy, but very rewarding. Meet people, contribute to community, make a difference.

Susan Weintraub – Susan pointed out she is the only woman and non-lawyer. 4<sup>th</sup> Generation Miamian. CG Elementary, Gables High, Carrollton, UM. Great Grandfather was first Jew to settle in Miami and signed Charter; formed Temple Beth David. On Board of Miami Bridge. Black Archives. Guardian ad litem program. Worked with children aging out of foster care. Realized programs have little impact unless people have neighborhoods to come home to. Need to allow families to establish roots, networks of friends and associations. The Grove was a village in the 60's, knows what we've lost. Sees possibility and opportunity to remain a Village. Need to approach threats to the Grove with heart and possibility. Some issues where it is not OK to almost do something. Things like the tree canopy, if not saved, will never come back. Martin has known Susan's family for a long time.

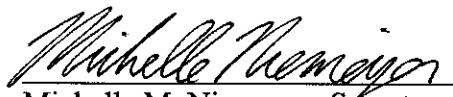
4. State Representative Carlos Lopez Cantera re tax legislation. Lives in the Mutiny in the Grove. Election date will be January 29. Statutory rollback will be in place. From 2000 to 2006, they will look at statewide average to determine tax cuts. Valuation issues; highest and best use. Voluntary deed restriction to current use proposed. Income approach for affordable housing properties proposed. Increased exemptions for low income seniors. Martin asked about funding. Happy to discuss filing a community budget request. Gary asked about rough estimate on the range of savings. Difference between what the Senate and the House were offering. Felice asked about the tiered system. The increase in your locality would be compared to the statewide average. Would homestead exemption be raised? Doubling the homestead exemption doesn't make a difference. They are looking at very large homestead exemptions. Martin mentioned he and Carlos met on a crime panel. System was forcing owners to sell to developers. Tax portability would be found unconstitutional.
5. Commander Martin, Police Report. NRO Carpenter on crime. May we have exciting news. During this month initiated projects: 1) demolition of 3441 Thomas Avenue, police won case through trial. Property set for demolition. Owner no longer lives here. Several complaints. 3451 Charles Ave., arson case in PD, former tenant tried to burn it down. Owner will voluntarily demolish. Business district: several complaints about restaurant/bar situation and noise complaints on Main Hwy. Brought Code Enforcement and Code Compliance. 3135 Grand Avenue had illegal gambling machines at Quick Stop. Went into business district, several inspections regarding hours of operation and licensing. Several misnomers about hours of operation. Added ABT to this project. Working with management of shopping centers and bar owners on the noise issues. Alyn asked how police work with code enforcement when it comes to noise. Police have electronic equipment to enforce the noise ordinance. Code enforcement deals with things like whether there are speakers

outside, etc., and sometimes code enforcement is going on inspections with the officers. Often document warning and if they fail to comply an arrest can be made absolutely. What about motorcycles on South Bayshore? There is a law restricting amount of noise that can come out of motorcycle. Enforceable. Ticket requires the equipment that makes the motorcycle louder to be taken off. Some are fleeing from the police and it is against policy to pursue a traffic offender. If they are able they have aviation division get a tag number. During the past month they had a checkpoint on Bird Ave. at US1 coming into the Grove. Lili suggested the next place for roadblock should be Mary and South Bayshore. Boombox cars also illegal. Trend where some vehicle owners are putting a public address speaker in the front grill of the car. That is illegal. Commander Martin mentioned new Major in the South District, a resident of the City of Miami, past CG Commander, Steve Caceres. Lt. Richard Perez. Lt. Medina will be face of the Grove while Commdr. Martin is at FBI for training. Burglaries in N. Grove and car breakins are under control and being managed. Burglaries in N. Grove have subsided.

6. Gary honored Will Johnson, outgoing HOATA President and Pierre Sands, the incoming one.
7. Robert Loupo has been an unsung hero. Won citizen involvement award. Robert gave CrimeWatch report. Honor and privilege to be part of such a community minded part of our city. This award would not have happened w/o members of community including Yvonne McDonald. Monthly meeting next Wednesday, 7 to 9, in Great Room at St. Stephens Episcopal Church. We have about 50 block captains.
8. Gary mentioned developments in Village West. Presented new project presented by Jihad Rashid. Bimini Place Project. Andy Parish also at meeting. US1 and Douglas Road. Presentation made to primary stakeholders in Village West. 3 phases plus parking plaza. Tower; 100 units affordable rental. Phase 2 is 28 three story townhomes. Phase III Village commons, community service and retail. Managing General Partner is Pinnacle Housing Group. (Ask for Powerpoint for website). Pinnacle exits after two years. Frankie Rolle Center will be rebuilt as part of Phase III. Charles Byrd, Chairman of Board of Coconut Grove Collaborative, discussed board. His background is economic development for the Beacon Council. Board meetings are 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, 12:30 at the Village House, 3628 Grand Avenue. Felice has questions but would like to sit down and truly understand what it incorporates. Alyn asked if the presentation could be provided. Martin asked how this relates to Grand Avenue. Jihad Rashid indicated the Collaborative has taken it upon itself to do comprehensive planning. They approached the developers for Grand Avenue to meet with UM and come up with a development plan that relates to the NCD. Need to craft a plan that will allow new neighbors, investment, and people while retaining the historical residents. Collaborative became a CDE, which allows them to act as a conduit for tax credits. Can get pre-development money, underground parking, etc. Grand Avenue is part of comprehensive plan. Collaborative is a resource open to the entire Grove. Lottie likes the project. People in the Village West like the project, too. She hopes the Village Council will support this project. She will support this. Collaborative is looking for support before the RFP process. Gary decided because Felice earned her stripes on 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue Metrorail she should be the information gatherer on this project.

9. Bob Brennan. Tree Watch Committee presentation on hurricane preparedness. If you are looking at your trees and can't see through them you probably need some help. Contact certified arborist. International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist. [www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com). Will bring powerpoint presentation next month. There are a lot of people coming into our neighborhoods now who come after the code people are gone; working after 5 and on the weekend.
10. Code Enforcement. Irain Gonzalez, Chief of Operations for Code Enforcement Department of City of Miami. Alyn asked him to describe what his department does. They are tasked with improving quality of life through enforcing city code and zoning ordinance. Building projects, trash, etc. Prevalent issues in the Grove in the last year: abandoned vehicles; building maintenance, illegal construction, illegal dumping, businesses operating w/o occupational licenses, illegal tree removals. 4000 complaints in the Grove alone. Inspectors are proactive. Close to 5000 cases have been initiated by inspectors. Working in the central business district task force making sure the businesses are operating as they are licensed. One new task force focuses on construction sites. Construction trucks blocking right of ways, blocking sidewalks, noise ordinance violations. Sediment control article. Drains clogged, water quality affected. Water restrictions. Tree removal big issue in the Grove. With respect to fines, part of zoning inspection which code enforcement does they will check for open cases, and see the running fine. Property owner can go to Code Enforcement board to mitigate the fine. Code Enforcement checks open cases and does not sign off on CO. When CEB hearing is set it is put on website in public notice. Lili mentioned she is asked a lot what to do when a tree comes down. A lot of people who call 311 say nothing happened. 311 is important to management in code enforcement. Calls are put into the system and management knows if the inspector is following up or not. Tree removal is high priority. As soon as a resident calls it is immediately put into the system. NET office also contacted by phone. Alyn asked whether Code Enforcement can do anything about the flyers being left on the sidewalks and on cars. If the business is in the City of Miami they can be cited. A lot of the time it is outside the City and they have no jurisdiction to cite them.
11. Announcements: Workshop on expunging criminal records at Frankie Rolle Center June 6 3:30 to 7:30. Job Fair, June 21, 3672 Grand Ave, 2-6. House Bill 7203 going up for a vote June 12. Proposed bill that dispenses with review of comprehensive plan amendments by Department of Community Affairs. Martin will check on it if Gary e-mails it to him. Civilian Investigation Panel on the 19<sup>th</sup> at City Commission Chambers will meet and address issues relevant to the Grove. Felice reminded everyone that July 4 starts at the Barnacle at 10:30; 4:00 celebration at Peacock Park, band w/ Tom Braga and Officer Carpenter. Big event. No Biltmore celebration this year.
12. Adjourned.

Dated: 7/18/07

  
Michelle M. Niemeyer, Secretary

**COCONUT GROVE VILLAGE COUNCIL  
AGENDA FOR JUNE 5, 2007  
CITY HALL CHAMBERS  
7:00PM to 9:00PM**



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Council**

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1. Call to Order.....Gary Hecht, Chair
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call.....Councilwoman Niemeyer, Sec.
4. Minutes..... Councilwoman Niemeyer, Sec.
5. Treasurer's Report...Councilwoman Dubin, Treas.
  
6. **COUNCIL CANDIDATES PRESENT**
7. **POLICE REPORT** – Cmdr. Jorge Martin
8. **CRIME WATCH** - Robert Loupo

**NEW BUSINESS**

9. **BIMINI PLACE PROJECT** – Jihad Rashad, Coconut Grove Collaborative
10. **Property Tax Update** – State Rep. Carlos Lopez Canterra
11. **Hurricane Preparedness** – Arborist Bob Brennan
12. **Code Enforcement (Q&A)** – Irain Gonzales, Chief of Operations

**OLD BUSINESS**

**13. VILLAGE COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**14. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

**Notes:**

Public Comments are held until the noted agenda item unless specifically authorized by the Chairman. Members of the public are requested to sign in at the meeting, noting the agenda item(s) they wish to address. Please limit comments to 2 minutes. Individuals and organizations desiring to make a community announcement, please inform the Chairman prior to the call to order of the meeting.

The agenda closes and becomes official at noon, FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING. The general public may request to place items on the agenda by written notice or to the Council Chairman by mail or email at [www.CoconutGroveVillageCouncil.com](http://www.CoconutGroveVillageCouncil.com)