



HISTORIC MIRAMAR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2024

6:30 p.m.

A meeting of the Historic Miramar Advisory Board (HMAB) took place at 6:46 p.m. on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, at the Miramar Multi-Service Complex, 6700 Miramar Parkway, Miramar, FL 33025.

I/II. Call To Order/Roll Call

The following Board members were present:

Michelle Hood-Julien
Christopher Jarrett
Marica Mitchell
Ruth Stennett
Ali Sylvestre

The following Board member was absent:

Nari Tomlinson, Chairperson (Excused)
Jackie Michel (Excused)

A quorum was declared.

The following members of staff were present:

Tekisha Jordan, Assistant Dir. Building Planning & Zoning
Candice Cobb, City Attorney
Whitney Taylor, Department Coordinator, BPZ
Alison Adams, Miramar Resident

III. Consideration of Excusal Request for New Board Member, Ms. Jackie Michel

Ms. Stennet made a motion to approve the excused absence of Jackie Michel, seconded by Ms. Hood-Julien, the motion passed unanimously.

**IV. Discussion of Emergency Management Fire Kit Essentials:
Presented by Division Chief Tara Wagner, Miramar Fire Department**

Division Chief Tara Wagner, Miramar Fire Department, gave a presentation on the subject item, as detailed in the backup, highlighting the following:

- Hurricane kits, and guides were distributed to the board members, along with a list with a QR code of supplies recommended for purchase to be better prepared in the event of a hurricane or severe weather event
- Alert Miramar: the City's emergency notification system that could be accessed via the QR code on users' water bills; the notifications included alerts for tornados, tropical storms, flood alerts, etc.
- A more active hurricane season was expected in 2024
- The information from Alert Miramar came from the National Weather Service (NWS); the latter information did not have the sensational skew often included in the reporting by the media
- When hurricanes came off the coastal waters they were at their strongest, so coastal regions were most affected by their initial strength
- Data shown on tropical storms and hurricanes that passed through Miramar from 1933 to date, their strengths, and the reason for the predicted season for 2024
- Hurricane season spanned from June 1 to November 30; the most common times for hurricanes was late August through the end of October, though mostly in September and October
- Hurricane preparedness activities focused on family, food, pets, shelter, and property; stock up on nonperishable food items, bottled drinking water, personal hygiene items, etc. at the beginning of the season, rather than wait until there was a severe weather system approaching
- If purchasing a generator, when setting it up, keep it away from windows, as they gave off carbon monoxide; generators should not be placed on the home's side or front yards, as they could be stolen
- Most Broward cities had small yard space, so most items, such as patio chairs and tables, grills, etc. had to be pulled inside; oftentimes people were hurt in a hurricane from unsecured, flying debris
- Elderly family members and pets: When a severe storm was approaching, it was important to ensure to stock up on extra medications, including calming medications, and other essential supplies, if needed
- During the storm/hurricane, people should remain indoors

- Wear proper footwear when going outside after a storm to prevent injury from downed powerlines, nails, shingles, etc.
- Purchase solar powered battery packs for cell phones, particularly if there was an extended loss of electricity; acquire battery-powered lanterns and lights, radios, and avoid the using open flames indoors; if candles were being used, put them out before going to sleep or leaving the room
- It should always be assumed that downed powerlines were still live
- Hurricane notifications were sent out every four hours around the clock
- The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) encompassed a little first aid, and a little basic firefighting; thus, participants learned basic search and rescue, went through a first aid class on how to help their neighbors, and themselves in the event of an injury or accident; CPR classes were offered by training division staff
- Hurricane guides were available in English, Spanish, and Creole; the pamphlets contained a QR code for the longer version of the hurricane guide, and how to sign up for CERT and CPR training.

Mr. Jarrett wondered about the percentage error in weather predictions on the number of hurricanes in a given year.

Ms. Wagner replied they usually about 75 percent correct. With the improvement of technology, the accuracy of predictions continued to improve; the focus was now more on the hurricane forecast cone rather than the forecast models, as the areas surrounding the center of a hurricane had damaging winds and rain. Realistically, South Florida usually ended up in the cone of approaching hurricanes, regardless of the location of actual landfall.

V. Staff Comments/Updates: Tekisha Jordan, Assistant Director of Building, Planning & Zoning Department

Assistant Director of BPZ Tekisha Jordan mentioned the Teen Advisory Board survey, noting the survey would be discussed at their July meeting to give everyone a chance to be a part of that meeting. The Teen Advisory Board meetings were held on the first Thursday of each month, but for July that was July 4, so their meeting would be rescheduled to another date in July. She said staff hoped members of the HMAB would attend that July meeting; anyone wishing to attend could inform staff. She spoke on the brochure that staff completed some months prior, in which there were pictures of previous board members; she hoped to be able to retake board members' pictures at the next meeting, so the brochure reflected the pictures of current members.

Mr. Jarrett stated Ms. Mitchell would be attending the July Teen Advisory Board meeting.

Ms. Mitchell affirmed she usually dropped her daughter off at the Teen Advisory Board meetings, but for the coming July meeting she would stay to participate in the discussion on the survey, and report on the discussion at the subsequent HMAB meeting. She commented on not knowing if the Teen Advisory Board would be meeting during the summer, as they typically did not meet because of the school calendar; she would confirm if there would be July meeting. They used to meet once a month, but they now met twice a month: the first and third Thursday of each month.

VI. City Attorney Presentation: Sunshine Law Review

City Attorney Candince Cobb mentioned, with the resignation of Ms. Sterlin from the board, the chairperson position was now vacant, so the board needed to fill that position. This would require the nomination of a board member, then a motion and second to appoint the nominated board member, then a vote to approve the nomination; this could be done at any board meeting.

VII. Member Comments

Ms. Stennett noticed Public Works staff working on sidewalks in east Miramar. Specifically, she saw them working on the west side of Island Drive and Miramar Parkway.

Alison Adams, resident, said that work was being done by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), not Miramar's Public Works staff.

Mr. Sylvestre added they were working on the bridge on the south side of the Turnpike overpass, though he was not sure exactly what work was being done.

Ms. Hood-Julien remarked the past Saturday, they created a Little Library in Shirley Branca Park in honor of her father who passed ten years ago; her father was inducted into Miramar's Wall of Honor, and they would hold a formal ceremony in July on a date to be determined.

Mr. Jarrett said the new playground at H.D. Perry Park was apparently open with regular hours of operation. He observed it was important that the City dedicated staff to ensure the park was opened on time, as he went by the park a number of times, and the city staff member was 20 to 30 minutes late. The playground itself was uncovered, which surprised him, despite the numerous previous conversations about the need for playgrounds to be covered; he tried hard to justify the City's not covering the playground by saying the thought was surrounding trees would provide adequate shade. However, at midday, this was

not the case, so he hoped Parks & Recreation Department staff could update the board on this matter. His wife took a walk around the track, and there was a whole track team utilizing the track for practicing, despite no posting, or residents being informed the facilities would be used in this manner. If the park's track facilities were to be used in this way, he wished city staff to inform the residents of the schedule, etc., so area residents could enjoy the use of the park fully. Mr. Jarrett understood the subject matter was likely one for the City's Economic Development staff, but his mother was opening a business in Miramar, and she encountered challenges due to information gaps that delayed her startup time. From a city perspective, he thought there would be a rush to get businesses open, so they could begin paying taxes for locating and running their business in Miramar. His mother was a pretty diligent person, so if there were city staff members assigned to walking new businesses through the process, she would have contacted them; no such person was found, so the City needed to assign staff to prevent unexpected issues that delayed a business's ability to open. He asked staff to research if city staff was assigned to help new businesses; for example, his mother was fined for having an unregistered alarm system, but no one from the City told her she needed to register her alarm system.

Ms. Adams remarked the onus was on the alarm system vendor to tell her to register the alarm.

Mr. Jarrett pointed out there was no way for his mother to know this information. If the City cared that new business owners were not fined in such instances, they should better inform new business owners of what they should be aware of. This included letting them know which service vendors, typically, did not do a good job of informing their customers of various municipal requirements.

Ms. Adams said the City could not make recommendations as to vendors, as this could expose the City to lawsuits. The City's list of approved vendors were only for working directly with the City of Miramar to provide goods and services.

Mr. Jarrett understood, restating the need for the City to designate staff to work with new business owners who were versed in the pitfalls that came with opening a new business, so new owners could navigate, and get their businesses opened as soon as possible. Delays in opening meant owners had to keep paying rent while they sought to overcome unexpected challenges.

Ms. Mitchell mentioned receiving emails from the City's Economic Development Department.

Ms. Adams said within the Economic Development Department, there was program with assigned staff for walking new business owners through the

process of opening their business. There was also the Planning & Zoning Department, as well as staff responsible for business permits, as there were a variety of components for opening a business. If a new business owner contacted city staff in these departments, they were more than willing to walk them through the process right up until the time of opening. She stated the new business owner needed to allow city staff sufficient time to do their due diligence, to ensure the owner was not taken advantage of by the property owner they were renting their space from.

Mr. Jarrett stressed, again, his mother was a very diligent person, and she went to City Hall to speak with staff from the various departments on numerous occasions, so they were all well aware of her plans to open her business. His point was there was a mechanism by which a city staff member was triggered to contact a new business owner opening a business in Miramar, so the owner knew which departments to go to, and who to speak with, whether it was when the space was rented, etc.

Ms. Adams mentioned new business owners locating in an area knew to go to the city of choice, state their wish to open a business, and ask what they needed to do to accomplish this. The City had such resources, so it was a matter of contacting staff for direction.

Ms. Jordan provided a contact number for persons wishing to open new businesses: 954-602-3269, and this information was on the City's website, along with a small business info hub. There was a City guide called "Doing business in the City of Miramar" that walked owners through the process step by step; typically, how a new business owner learned how to proceed was when they contacted staff in the Planning & Zoning Department to apply for a zoning certificate of use, as this was the official notice the owner received to let them know the type of business they sought to open was a permitted use in the particular zone. She said city staff encouraged new business owners to engage in this process prior to opening a business, as many commercial space leases were not contingent on the type of business being a permitted one, and if a lease was signed prior to gaining this knowledge, the new business owner might be exposed to additional costs, such as to modify the rented space to allow their chosen use to occur.

Ms. Mitchell mentioned receiving emails after signing up for a number of city newsletters, and, from time to time, the City offered small business grants, workshops, communications on how to do business in Miramar; she received a number of newsletters regarding grants. She believed in the coming week there would be a small business pitch program at which qualifying small businesses could receive up to \$10,000.00 in grant dollars; the grants could be used to fund

marketing, etc.

Mr. Jarrett pointed out, prior to opening her small business, his mother was not a Miramar resident, so she would not be privy to the City's newsletters, etc. He restated city staff dropped the ball, as his mother went in person to the City's Economic Development & Housing Department office, and no staff member gave her any contact information for persons wishing to open a new business in Miramar. He urged staff to communicate the need to clean up this issue, so the next new business owners could benefit from the information.

Mr. Sylvestre asked if the hours of operation were posted at the new park.

Mr. Jarrett replied that they were posted as 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on weekends; he was unclear as to the weekday hours, which differed when schools were on holiday. The park was located on the adult education facility property, and he wondered if physical education was a part of their curriculum.

Ms. Stennett indicated the school was for students pre-K through 12th grade.

Mr. Sylvestre said the students engaged in track, and other sports; he knew they had a basketball team.

Mr. Jarrett questioned if the students would cross the road to use the park's sports amenities. He asked if it were possible to confirm whether or not students from the adult school facility used the park's sports amenities during daytime hours; if not, could they be left open for public use. The City could look at installing higher fencing to avoid the mixing of populations, etc.

Mr. Sylvestre thought the City could post a park ranger to monitor the park's use; he observed track teams not linked to Miramar using the facilities at the subject park, and at Shirley Branca Park. It was difficult to get a permit, so anywhere such teams saw an opportunity to train free of cost, they tended to take it.

Mr. Jarrett clarified he was not against youth activities, but if teams were using the City's facilities, there should be some form of permitting to prevent the City being exposed to any liability for the use of Miramar's park amenities. This included the possibility of posting some type of schedule to let users know when the park's amenities were not open for public use; this would lessen the likelihood of becoming agitated when they found they could not use the park.

Mr. Sylvestre thought the park was not yet fully developed, as there was empty space to create a football/soccer field, as both sports were popular among youths; Wellman Field was well utilized for soccer.

Mr. Jarrett assumed this would happen eventually when Wellman Field was officially closed; at present, despite that facility being closed, people jumped the fence to play sports. He assumed parking was a concern, and there was a seeming reluctance to line the fields to prevent holding games that would lead families parking throughout the community.

Ms. Adams spoke about her community association, the Miramar Homeowners Group, having issues with the level of service provided by the landscape vendors hired by the City of Miramar; their medians were not being maintained adequately, including the irrigation system, so plants were dying. Some curbs were broken, presenting a safety hazard for pedestrians. Their community had an issue with folks using Embassy Boulevard as a parking lot, which was contributed to by customers of home-based home businesses, causing broken medians under which there were millions of dollars of infrastructure, including the irrigation; the medians had signage stating clearly no parking was allowed at any time. With the trees dying on the medians, and not being replaced, vacant spots were created in which people parked, so their community recommended the City close off the medians and install some public art on them to beautify the area.

Mr. Jarrett wondered if the median areas could be roped off with stakes, and if this would be aesthetically pleasing.

Ms. Adams was unsure, but the liability was real with regard to broken curbs, and medians. She invited everyone to attend their community's National Night Out event on the first Tuesday in August; she would give Ms. Taylor a flyer when it was prepared for dissemination to the board members.

Mr. Jarrett wondered if the issues mentioned by Ms. Adams would be addressed by code enforcement staff, or parks staff with regard to beautification, and repair.

Ms. Jordan replied, with regard to the illegal parking, those incidents would be addressed by code staff, but she would contact various department staff to find out which department was responsible for the median maintenance.

Mr. Jarrett asked Ms. Jordan if she would undertake ensuring the City addressed Ms. Adam's concerns.

Ms. Jordan stated she would follow up on the matters with city staff.

Mr. Jarrett assumed it would not take very long to address these matters, so an update could be given to Ms. Adams and the board at the next meeting.

Mr. Sylvestre mentioned the City's project to install public art throughout the Historic Miramar neighborhoods, wondering about the progress on that initiative.

Mr. Jarrett responded as to hearing about an email/social media campaign for people to make recommendations on a survey. From that point, he knew it would be a lengthy process for purchasing, bidding, etc.; it would be reasonable for staff from the relevant city department to attend a future board meeting to give an update.

Ms. Adams thought it was the Cultural Affairs Department. She asked about the recent heavy rains, and how the drainage in the neighborhoods east of the Turnpike fared.

Mr. Jarrett saw the water levels get high, and ran swiftly on the streets, but they receded in a timely manner.

Ms. Hood-Julien stated she lived in Sunshine and noticed that the water went down quickly.

Ms. Adams indicated she saw traffic backed upon University Drive and Miramar Parkway due to nearby flooding. She was pleased to hear that the City's stormwater drainage system was working well.

Mr. Jarrett asked if there was any update on the Turnpike wall.

Ms. Taylor answered no.

Mr. Jarrett wondered if city staff could inquire as to whether there was an update, rather than not asking, so the people concerned did not assume the residents were no longer concerned.

Ms. Adams recalled city engineer, Salvador Zuniga, provided the last update on that issue.

Mr. Jarrett asked Ms. Taylor to contact Mr. Zuniga for an update. Board members sent Ms. Taylor some suggestions for changes to the HMAB website, asking if these were being done by the IT Department staff.

Ms. Taylor explained that work would be done by the Marketing Department staff, and it would be a work in progress that would take some time.

Mr. Jarrett asked Ms. Taylor to check with Marketing for an update. One of the board's suggestions was for some family engagement initiatives, so the board

wished to know which of the suggestions could take place, and which ones were not possible, or had to wait, etc. He asked for an update on the HMAB shirts.

Ms. Taylor stated this, too, was a work in progress, as staff was working on the funding, and what other city advisory boards were doing in this regard.

Ms. Adams questioned why the HMAB needed shirts, as she saw no other city advisory board receiving shirts.

Mr. Jarrett commented the shirt initiative was one undertaken by former vice chairperson, Ms. Sterlin, and he believed the goal was to use the shirts as a form of marketing to raise community awareness of the HMAB's existence, its purpose, and the work members did for the Historic Miramar community.

Ms. Adams thought the HMAB could accomplish these goals without shirts.

Mr. Jarrett recalled when Mr. Silva was still with the City the request was presented by Ms. Sterlin, and the board was told getting shirts would not be an issue, so the matter went forward. Had the board been told this was not a good use of City funds, the matter would not have proceeded, so if this was no longer the situation, then it would no longer be discussed. He asked Ms. Taylor to find out if the shirts were still a possibility, or there had been no movement on the matter, so the board could make a decision. He reminded board members about Ms. Jordan's request for the board to take new pictures for the brochure at the next board meeting.

Ms. Taylor said Marketing staff mentioned they could keep the previous picture and include a date.

Mr. Jarrett stated he was unclear as to why the board's pictures needed to be in the brochure; he thought the initial pictures were only to be a representation of letting the community know the board existed, met, and did various tasks at monthly meetings. Putting the board members' names in the brochure meant having to change the brochure if member(s) were no longer serving; it was better for the brochure information to be more of a generic nature. He said the purpose of the brochure was to generate awareness in the community, so they could be motivated to attend the HMAB's monthly meetings to voice their concerns, etc.

Ms. Taylor asked if there was any outside engagement by the HMAB.

Mr. Jarrett answered no, other than Ms. Adams attending, and giving the board suggestions, and invitations to participate in her community events; other than that, the board had not been asked to show a presence at any event. Board

members were invited to various city events, and given free tickets, but this had to do more with the perks of being a board member.

Ms. Adams thought the purpose of the HMAB was to disseminate city information to members' respective communities, and to bring area residents' and businesses' concerns for discussion at meeting, so city staff could respond accordingly.

Mr. Jarrett concurred it was a reciprocal responsibility, as the HMAB had a more direct ear to city staff to address community concerns.

Ms. Adams pointed out never seeing a member of the HMAB attend even one of her community's association meeting, wondering why this had yet to happen.

Mr. Jarrett mentioned the area in Historic Miramar in which he lived, and his intention since he began serving on the board was to take information to the residents in his community, and relay their concerns, etc. at HMAB meetings. The board was never tasked with attend community meetings outside their own neighborhood. He believed the reason most persons wished to serve on the HMAB was to represent their area and be the go between for residents and city staff. Members were pretty spread out around the Historic Miramar area, with the exception of the Miramar Park community, as it was located north of Miramar Parkway on the west side of the Turnpike; he lived east of the Turnpike, and south of Miramar Parkway.

Ms. Adams thought it would be useful for a member of the HMAB to attend community events in Historic Miramar, as it would raise awareness of the board's existence, and the service they provided to the community with regard to communicating their concerns to the City.

Mr. Jarrett thought the board's engaging in such activities justified the need for having HMAB shirts. He asked if there was any potential to violate the Sunshine Law if more than one member attended such events, as there would be no board business discussed.

City Attorney Cobb thought there should be no conflict, as board members were also residents of Historic Miramar, as long as no board matters were discussed between attending members.

Ms. Adams mentioned recently their community resource officer was reassigned to an event group with the police department, and though she wished him well, the point of having a community resource officer was so residents could speak to someone they trusted to share information about something happening within


their community. Code officers did not always attend community meetings due to the City's reluctance to pay overtime, yet there was ample police, etc. at city events. This was a major concern, as taxpayers' dollars paid for police and fire services that should not be reserved only for emergencies, and city events; residents' needs should be met.

Mr. Jarrett asked city staff to communicate with the police department to find out how this matter could be resolved. The solution seemed simple, in that on the date of the community meeting, the code officer could have flex hours to prevent the need for overtime; their presence at a community meeting was a legitimate request.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Upcoming meeting - Wednesday, July 31, 2024

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Nafi Tomlinson, Chairperson
NT/cp