

Community Relations Board
April 17, 2013

Chairman Richardson called the meeting to order at 2:12 p.m. He welcomed the members and guests. Thank you for coming to our monthly meeting of the Miami-Dade County Community Relations Board. Today we will be having a discussion with the newest Director of the MDC Police Department. Let us stop for a moment of silent reflection. I would ask today that you remember the people of Boston, especially those who were injured in the Marathon this past Monday. I understand that very recently, investigators have been able to discover a suspect through video surveillance.

Ms. Amy Carswell called the roll.

Chairman Richardson: We have a quorum. We will now go through some housekeeping chores before we resume our conversation. We have today's agenda, and two sets of minutes, one from February and one from March 2013. I'd like to entertain a motion to approve all three of these items.

Rabbi Schiff: Can I make my presentation early, as I have a family commitment?

It was moved by Mr. Tavakoly that the agenda, and the two sets of minutes, from February and March 2013, be adopted, as presented. This motion was seconded by Dr. Capp, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a unanimous vote of those members present.

Chairman Richardson: We will now deal with Item 8, second bullet, on the agenda: the Legislative Pre-Emption of Miami-Dade Responsible Wages Ordinance, because Rabbi Schiff has to leave early.

Rabbi Schiff: I am President of the Inter-Faith Workers' Justice, an organization that has been working for fairness for the workers. There is a legislator that has introduced legislation to do away with all of these benefits for the workers. This legislator happens to be Catholic, so we met with the Archbishop, and we are waiting to hear what action has been taken by the Archdiocese, and I will keep you posted if I have any news.

Chairman Richardson: Is there any action you request from the Board members or is this FYI?

Rabbi Schiff: Just FYI.

Ms. McGill: On the same issue, I wanted to inform the Board that when I was in Tallahassee, I got a chance to speak on the Committee hearing. It is not good for anyone involved for the State to take over legislation that has been approved by the County. I would like for Rabbi Schiff to please keep us posted, and if I get any information I will share it with the Board members.

Chairman Richardson: Typically Ms. Carswell provides me with a biographical sketch of our special guests. Today, I did not receive a biographical sketch of Director J.D. Patterson, so I will speak from my memory. We are very blessed to have with us our newly appointed Director. He is by virtue of his position the Sheriff of Dade County. He is a 30+ year officer of MDC Police Department. He is also a member of the Clergy, as the Associate Pastor at the Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church, and this is where he chose to have his investiture service. We look forward to great things to happen under his leadership. He will address most of our concerns. Let's welcome Director Patterson.

Director Patterson: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, CRB members and all those in attendance. It is an honor to present to you today the MDC Police Department and its employees. I have been blessed to be appointed as the Director, but the men and women who work in this department are among the most hard working people in this community; they display a level of courage daily that is inspiring. They try to provide a level of safety in this community that only a police organization can provide. I salute the people of Boston and the law enforcement community in Boston, because we know what it is like to have to respond to tragic events, and they did a great job. Whoever is responsible for this terrible action in Boston needs to be caught, and they need to feel the weight of American Justice. The MDC Police Department has been around since 1836. I am blessed to be following in the footsteps of James Loftus. We have a tradition of preparing our people for leadership, and I've been tasked to keep the leadership developed in the department. Leadership in our department does not function in a vacuum. It is highly dependent on the relationships developed with the community. My deputy is also here. We have thousands of years of experience in our department. One of our core values is service. No one goes to work without service in mind. Things can change in an instant, and when things change, the people we employ must be able to respond in an instant. I deal with courageous people. Every officer who comes to work has a family. On May 2nd we will have a memorial for those who have given their lives in the service of this community. I appreciate this Board

because dialogue is important, and out of any honest discussion, something positive can come.

Chairman Richardson: Each Board member has been given the list of questions that have been submitted to the Director. We will go around the dais and present these questions to the Director. If there is time, we will entertain other questions.

Ms. Smith-Jackson: How will you improve the perception of the community members about the effectiveness and professionalism of the MDC Police Department in the future?

Director Patterson: I plan on continuing to have on-going dialogues with the community. A couple of nights ago I was at a meeting in the North end of the County where we had a discussion about the services we provide in the South end of MDC. We have a bureau called the Public Information Education Bureau that is in charge of community outreach, information sharing, and media relations. They provide information to the public to avoid people reacting to misinformation. This bureau also runs the Community Affairs Bureau; it is in charge of the Police Athletic League, the Civilian Volunteer Program, and the Citizens' Police Academy. They deal with things that are community oriented. Our training bureau is one of the best. This morning I went to a class where we were training Haitian national police officers through a relationship with the federal government. We tend to have good relations with boards. We make sure our younger officers are trained in how to interact with the public.

Rev. Gervais: What pro-active steps are being taken to improve outreach, community communications and relationships between the MDC Police Department and the residents of low-income and minority communities?

Director Patterson: As I mentioned earlier, we met with some members of the community in North Dade, and we were talking about services we could provide in the southern part of the County to a disadvantaged community. We committed ourselves to providing service as it relates to our neighborhood resource operations in that area. We plan to continue to reach out. It is important that we reach out to young people. It is inspirational to see young people, who are professional and who are trying to help other young people in the community. Our district commanders are encouraged to reach out to the groups that are already in existence to address some of the social, educational, economic problems through pro-active partnerships.

Ms. Lopez: Can I go directly to the question that I had submitted? I am a crimes victims' advocate. I deal with families of murder victims. Every year, I organize a national day to remember victims in Tropical Park, on September 25th. I visit the victims' families personally and I try to get victims' compensation from the Attorney General's Office. The most frequent complaint that I get from family members is that they do not have interaction with the detectives. Would it not be possible to have a protocol that would require the detectives to call the families every six months with an update? Some families have not heard from a detective for over a year.

Director Patterson: We do our best to reach out to the family members of murder victims. Our investigators are some of the best and most compassionate in the nation. We encourage our detectives to maintain contact with victims' families. We have victims' assistance coordinators who reach out to the victims' families. How long do we let a case go before we reach out? The answer is not too long. We are open to receiving calls from the families. We don't want to give people the impression that the victims' families are forgotten. We also have cold case squads, which are groups of detectives who re-open old cases. Though cases are closed, they are never forgotten. Recently, we re-opened a 1947 homicide case. And a couple of years ago, we re-opened a 1966 case that they finally solved because the perpetrator had left fingerprints on the door. Five or ten years ago, we developed a database where we keep all of the fingerprints that are taken. The cold case investigator noticed the fingerprints on the door, submitted the evidence to this database, and the perpetrator's identity was revealed.

Dr. McGuire: How is the MDC Police Department working to prevent unnecessary shootings of civilians by MDC officers?

Director Patterson: Part of the question, the word unnecessary, has an assumption. It implies a conclusion that shootings are unnecessary. Some of these shootings are necessary. Over 100 officers have been killed in this community. But it is an officer's job to use reasonable and necessary force. The officer must be able to articulate why he/she is using force. When we look at shootings, it is a deliberate process; we get statements from everyone involved. We don't just collect the evidence. We are supervised by the State Attorney, and the Medical Examiner's office. So we don't operate independently. We operate in partnership with other criminal justice partners. You have to look at the facts of a case to determine whether the shooting was necessary. We have a process to review our shootings. We implement changes where appropriate. You have our commitment that we will

continue to do what we can to limit the number of officer shootings. If the shooting was unnecessary, the process is equipped to deal with that as well.

Ms. Kennedy: What is the Department's policy with regard to officers placing themselves in harm's way from a fleeing vehicle?

Director Patterson: The Department's policy is that an officer should not place him/herself in the way of a fleeing vehicle, but if they find themselves in front of such a vehicle they should do all they can to get out of the way. We don't encourage officers to shoot at a vehicle, unless it is reasonable and necessary, because that is what the law allows.

Mr. Kabani: What is the status of the investigations of MDC police-involved shootings that have been conducted by the State Attorney? Has the MDC Police Department Professional Compliance Bureau concluded the investigation of any of these shootings?

Director Patterson: Over the last ten years, we have had 153 shootings: 15 per year. 45 cases are currently open. 22 of those are going through the legal process.

Ms. Tapia: How many internal investigation reports, particularly those addressing police-involved shootings, have been made more complete, timely and responsive to the needs of the community?

Director Patterson: We do our best to collect the evidence as quickly as possible, to carry out the investigation as quickly as possible, and to forward the investigative file down to the State Attorney's office as quickly as possible, for them to carry out their investigation. We also try to let the community know what is going on with these cases, and reveal as much as we can.

Ms. York: How long does it take for the MDC Police Department to investigate a case involving police use of deadly force?

Director Patterson: That depends on the facts of the case, the force and whether or not there was contact, because a contact shooting, when a person was actually hurt or killed, takes longer to investigate. Deadly force is anytime an officer uses his weapon, and there is the likelihood of serious or deadly injury to a person. We investigate these incidents very thoroughly. We have to make sure that we don't negatively impact an on-going criminal case. Administratively, we have 120 days internally to deal with these cases.

Chairman Richardson: There was some concern about this issue in the South end of the County, the Baker case, when a man who was mentally unstable was shot, and the investigation took longer than 120 days. Is it reasonable to expect a response from the department in less than a year?

Director Patterson: It depends on the facts of the case. If it is a case involving complex issues, it may take longer. But usually the administrative piece takes 120 days if there are no criminal possibilities. If there are criminal responsibilities, it can take longer.

Dr. Vieux: When deadly force is used what does the Police Department do to try and avoid similar situations in the future? When a confrontation between a police officer and a civilian results in injury to one or both, what does MDC Police Department do to try and avoid similar situations in the future?

Director Patterson: We review all these shootings and we follow up. If we find policy violations, we try to correct things that were done incorrectly. If we need to put out policy revisions we do that as well.

Vice Chairman Valdes: Does the MDC Police Department participate in the Federal Secure Communities Program, and if so how? Do you perceive that the participation of the MDC in this program creates more work for police officers, and promotes abuses of community members, and/or damage relations within the community?

Director Patterson: I appreciate the question, as well as the concerns included in the question. When I received this question, I had to research the Secure Communities Program, because we don't participate in it. Whenever something happens, especially regarding immigrants, we are not the lead agency; we refer them to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Department (ICE). We don't actively participate.

Vice Chairman Valdes: The members of the community say that if the Police Department stops an immigrant for a traffic violation, they might be held, even if they do not have a criminal record. They are sent to ICE, and can be on track for deportation. This is a big concern in the Latino community. It has repercussions for the family, and is very costly for the tax payers. There could be an agreement to stop detentions and deportations of these individuals, and the Police Department could contribute in some way to the resolution of the case.

Director Patterson: We will do our utmost to uphold the law. But immigration issues are beyond the purview of a local police department; that is a federal issue.

Vice Chairman Valdes: I like to hear that this is a federal issue; so the local police should have more time to dedicate to the real criminals in the community.

Chairman Richardson: Mr. Director, you may have heard that there were allegations that in the South end of the County the police was targeting immigrants who may have been lacking IDs, arresting them for minor infractions, and turning them over to ICE.

Director Patterson: I have not heard of that, but in reading the information about Secure Communities, I saw that this was listed as a concern, and it needs to be addressed.

Mr. Tavakoly: What procedure does the Police Department have to discipline officers who have violated department policies?

Director Patterson: We have an early identification system, whereby if an officer has a certain number of complaints against him, his supervisor reviews that, and if the officer is in need of corrective action, the department takes such action. Or if the officer is going through a personal crisis, the department staff counsels him. The system identifies risky behavior that the department addresses as soon as it is revealed. This system has been in place since the 1980s.

Ms. McGill: I live in the City of Miami. I applaud you for taking on such a monumental task. Thank you for your service. How may the MDC Police Department's complaint procedures be more user-friendly for members of the public? Are there plans to enhance the police complaint procedures particularly regarding the complaints about the outcome of an investigation?

Director Patterson: We have good people in the police at the command level who deal with these issues. We want to make sure that any resident, who has a complaint, is able to lodge it via the internet, phone calls, or in person. We try to take the time to do it right. We send closing letters to anyone who has a complaint that has been dealt with, asking them to come to review the outcome.

Mr. Yap: What steps are being taken to ensure diversity in the MDC Police Department workforce in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and what has been done to promote diversity in the command structure?

Director Patterson: A lot of the steps we have taken have been instituted as a result of consent decrees over the years. Since 1980 the department has been open to diversity and has been inclusive as it relates to diversity. We recruit people of all backgrounds. We want to reflect the diversity of our community. We have a succession plan that also includes diversity. As a minority, I am always sensitive to equal representation. One fourth of the police officers are women. We need a broad section of our community to do our job correctly.

Dr. Capp: I have worked in law enforcement for many years, and want to share some comments. I want to commend Mayor Gimenez for his choice for the Head of the Police Department. The CRB has had a close relationship with the MDC Police Department. We go out jointly in the communities when things happen. We appreciate your support of our Goodwill Ambassador Program. The MDC Police Department has internal policies that are tougher than State law when it comes to shootings. The MDC Police Department is the model in the South Eastern United States. You have our full support going forward and we look forward to yours as well.

Mr. Siegal: What is your position regarding the need for civilian oversight of law enforcement?

Director Patterson: I report to Chip Iglesias and the Mayor, and they are not policemen. So there is already an element of civilian oversight in the Police Department. Even when there is a police-involved shooting, the determination is made by the State Attorney's Office. So I don't have a problem with civilian oversight, per se. The question is what kind of oversight. As long as the Board members are objective and experts, and are making decisions that are best for both the community and the Police Department, I don't have a problem with that.

Ms. Lucking: I will combine questions 13 and 14 because they both relate to areas of high crime and the prevalence of high powered weapons. What is being done to direct greater resources towards the high crime areas and to reduce the prevalence of high powered weapons?

Director Patterson: Every month we have a Com Stats at the command level. Every district has statistics every week. Those districts are thus empowered to develop a plan, which may involve having more people on the ground, deploying plain clothes officers, or reaching out to the community. We have a nimble organization that can respond to trends as they occur. We empower our commands to reach out to other commands if they need help to deal with an issue. We also

have a Gun Bounty Program in the County. If you call in with a tip about someone with a gun and we make an arrest, you can get paid \$1000. This program has been successful over the last four years. Lately we have been getting requests to do gun buy-backs. We will consider this.

Rabbi Schiff: I wish you God's blessings in this very responsible position. It is obvious that these questions were put together before the recent bombings in Boston. What is your department doing to prevent something similar in Miami?

Director Patterson: This community is one of the most diverse communities in this country. Our challenge is to build trust in the police department. We lost the community's trust in 1980. The Dade County Police Chiefs Association gathers at least once a month. We maintain relationships. We help each other. If we had a major event in the County, we would help each other. We have a dynamic group of committed officers. Even for private events, if they ask for police assistance we will provide it. If a tragedy such as the one that occurred in Boston were to take place here, you would see the same kind of collaboration that we are seeing in Boston with the national, state and local agencies coming together to try to capture the assailant and resolve the crime.

Mr. Martinez: I have been a victim of profiling many times. A few months ago, I took part in a protest against one for the police stations in South Dade, because every day someone would get caught by the police because they looked Mexican. Thank God things have changed, and we have witnessed good progress. Do you have any plans to stop the racial profiling? We work with the community based organizations, and we would like you to come down to South Dade. It would help change the perception which the community has of the police. Community members don't see the police as their protectors, because we come from countries where the police is our enemy.

Director Patterson: I appreciate your invitation to attend your community meetings. I would be very happy to attend your meetings, because I believe in building bridges and relationships. Once we are aware of problems between the community and the police, we seek to address them.

Chairman Richardson: There are still a number of questions that have not been addressed. Any Board member who sees a question that has not been asked and that they would like to ask, please do so. As Chair, I will take the liberty to ask the Director to address Item 24, the Police Department's response to the Trayvon Martin case, and the upcoming trial.

Director Patterson: We care what happens in this case. Communities survive because of the way they respond to these types of cases. We are concerned about a heated reaction to a case or a trial. That's how the 1980 riots erupted here. We have a group that monitors what is happening in that case. We are in touch with the Sanford Police Department, because we want them to benefit from some of the things we have been through. We want to share lessons learned. We plan to have an on-going dialogue with our youth. We need to hear the youth's concerns and prepare for the worst while hoping for the best. We want people to get the facts.

Mr. Tavakoly: How does the MDC Police Department integrate social media in its daily activities?

Director Patterson: We have to conduct ourselves within the parameters of the Constitution. We are not going to violate any person's rights. Social media outlets are open, and we monitor them. We don't take it as the gospel, however.

Mr. Tavakoly: The last walk-out from the schools was as a result of social media, after a text was sent. Does 911 accept texting?

Director Patterson: It is part of our plan. Our technology has to be refreshed, and it will be included.

Chairman Richardson: Some communities are pursuing this aggressively. It is very useful for the hearing impaired.

Director Patterson: We have technology for the hearing impaired.

Ms. Smith-Jackson: I wanted to find out the current break-down in the Police Department's workforce by gender and race.

Director Patterson: It looks very good. One fourth of our staff is female; that's a good thing. When you separate the sworn component from the non-sworn component, the figure is even higher. The Ethnic breakdown is 60 percent Latino; 15-17 percent Black; 15-17 percent White or other. I think this is because of the events of 1980.

Ms. Smith-Jackson: There is a discussion about background checks to purchase a gun. What is your position on this issue?

Director Patterson: We should be careful about how we distribute guns. I understand the 2nd amendment and the right to bear arms, but we need to be certain about who we sell guns to. The Police Department conducts background checks on everyone that it employs.

Rev. Gervais: With the problems regarding the economy, it seems that crime has increased. What is the MDC Police Department doing to alleviate robberies in the inner-city? Is the sequester prohibiting the County from hiring more police officers?

Director Patterson: A big part of what the MDC Police Department does is to solve crimes that have been committed. When we are informed that a crime has been committed, we investigate it. If we have the opportunity to help someone identify a job opening, we do that. We have our Major's outreaches twice a month in every district, and oftentimes the Major is accompanied by the South Florida Workforce. We work with all our partners to give our youth hope, skills and opportunities. The sequester is not affecting the Police Department. Hiring is slow, but we are still hiring.

Ms. Lopez: As a follow-up to my original question about families of victims of crime, is there a Public Relations Officer who communicates with the families to let them know what is going on to prevent rumors and misinformation?

Director Patterson: It is the lead detective's responsibility. He notifies the family that a homicide has occurred. Unfortunately, it is not possible to prevent rumors. We deal with rumors when they are spread. We also have Victims' Assistance Advocates who can respond to the families' concerns.

Ms. Lopez: I organize a lot of events in the parks, and I always ask Parks and Recreation Department people why they are not armed.

Director Patterson: They are not armed because they are parks security officers. They don't have any arrest authority. They should not be involved in confrontations. When it comes to criminal violations, the police officers have to deal with it.

Dr. McGuire: Does the MDC Police Department have a plan and/or some discussion regarding the prevention of hate crimes, or the enforcement of laws relating to hate crimes?

Director Patterson: The Police Department plans to enforce the laws relating to hate crimes, and such crimes have enhanced penalties.

Dr. McGuire: Would these laws apply to the police officers themselves?

Director Patterson: Yes, they would.

Mr. Kabani: It is better to prevent school shootings in the first place. Can the MDC Police Department work with the School Board to teach students that they should not bring guns to schools to avoid a major punishment?

Director Patterson: The Police Department recently took part in a youth violence prevention plan with the Mayor's office. We worked with a number of community based organizations and with the School Board on strategies to deal with the school shootings. Through information, prevention and enforcement we do all we can to prevent this type of violence.

Chairman Richardson: My goal is to finish this meeting at 4 or 4:15 pm, so we need to conclude this part of the agenda. But if you have one or two more questions, you may ask them.

Ms. York: I was in the Miami Beach Commission meeting this morning, and they were saying that they had a buy-back guns program last month that was so successful that they plan on doing it again in August before school resumes to make the school children safer.

Mr. Tavakoly: What is the MDC Police Department doing to address the recent increase in fatal and non-fatal shootings involving youth? What is the Police Department doing to address growing reports of gang warfare?

Director Patterson: We respond by apprehending the offender. We have worked with the School Board, the Mayor's Office and other partners to develop a strategy to prevent youth violence. The Police Department has a gang unit that is constantly out there. We are good at gathering covert information on gangs.

Chairman Richardson: We have a high regard for you as the leader of the MDC Police Department. We look forward to your continued support, and you can expect our support. We want to put on record how much we value this Police Department. I have been a volunteer employee of this department for 24 years. It is one of the best agencies in the County. Thank you for being here today.

Chairman Richardson: We will now resume our agenda. Dr. Capp has to leave early because he has to attend another meeting. Therefore, I will give him the floor to present Item 7B, bullet two, which is an update on the CRB's 50th anniversary commemoration.

Dr. Capp: Good afternoon everyone. We are publicly announcing the 50th Anniversary of the Community Relations Board. We will have a public relations campaign very soon to inform the community of the golden anniversary of this Board, which was established in 1963 to help steer this community through the civil rights activities. It has had a great impact on the growth and development of this community. We are inviting full participation from all segments of our community, and extending a special invitation to our former Board members and former staff members, as well as municipal community relations board members. The event will be held on May 22nd and 23rd at the Miami-Dade Community College, downtown campus. A package will be available electronically simply by calling our office at (305) 375-1406.

Dr. Capp: On the first day of the event we will have a series of workshops with young people from the MDC public schools, and youth leaders. For the general audience, we will talk about community relations and the criminal justice system, civil rights strategies for the 21st century, strategies to prevent and reduce community tensions. On Thursday, there will be a morning panel that will discuss the future of inter-group relations in Miami-Dade and at 12:30 p.m., there will be a golden anniversary luncheon. There is a registration form. The workshops on Wednesday are free-of-charge. We invite school participation. There is a small fee of \$30 for the luncheon. We will have a Planning Committee meeting tomorrow (04/18). All members are invited. We are still seeking sponsors to help pay for these costs.

Vice Chairman Valdez: These are hard times. Many people may not be able to purchase a table. Several people from the Board have made a commitment to purchase a table. We have a big bill: approximately \$20,000. We need to reach out to our local sponsors.

Dr. Capp: In putting the program together, we wanted to educate the community about our past, but also look to the future. There is still a need for our Board, even though 50 years is a long time. We look forward to great participation.

Chairman Richardson: The Executive Committee of this Board met last week. We made a decision that each Board member would be responsible for \$1000. The

very least you can do is to sponsor a table for \$300. This should be the minimum commitment for each Board member.

Mr. Yap: I will purchase three tables but they should be given to the community.

Chairman Richardson: If you would like to give more than \$1000, please feel free to do so.

Ms. McGill: In addition to the \$1000, should we also contribute \$300 to sponsor a table? I will try to purchase a table.

Ms. Lopez: I will purchase a table.

Chairman Richardson: Thank you Dr. Capp for the update. I will save my report for later. Mr. Shohat is not here, but his co-chair is here, and will present us a report on Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement, which is Item 7, bullet one.

Ms. Smith-Jackson: We had our Youth Summit a couple of weeks ago, and it was highly successful. We are proud of the youth, and proud of the summit. We want to try to continue to reach the goals that we set with regard to criminal justice and law enforcement.

Rev. Gervais: What we saw on television two weeks ago, when a young man was killed and his body was on the sidewalk... Seeing the interaction between the officer and the family members was disturbing.

Chairman Richardson: In the meeting of the Executive Committee we discussed two incidents that could be explosive. One involved an elderly lady extracted from a Metrorail car forcibly. We are monitoring this situation, as well as the situation involving the police officer and family members. We will keep the Board members informed if anything develops that requires our involvement.

Chairman Richardson: The next item is the Nominating Committee, Item 7, bullet three. Ms. Jackson's report will pertain to members of our Board whose terms are expiring. Secondly, at this time of year we give you the opportunity to decide who will be on the Board. Typically our terms run for two years.

Ms. Smith-Jackson: We met and made recommendations for members to be on the Nominating Committee. We wanted to make sure that the Committee represented everyone who is on the Board. The notifications have been sent, and so far Mr.

Ruiz has accepted the nomination. We are awaiting the response of the others who were recommended. We will be meeting in the next month to make recommendations for other positions, and we will present that at the next CRB meeting.

Mr. Kabani: Was I selected to be on the Nominating Committee?

Ms. Smith-Jackson: Yes, we have sent out e-mails to everyone who was selected, and are awaiting their responses: Kennedy, Kabani, Vieux and Jackson.

Ms. McGill: What will they be doing?

Chairman Richardson: One of the standing committees of the CRB is the Nominating Committee, whose members ratify the recommendations of the general Board. There are 30 seats on the Board: 13 members are nominated by commissioners; 13 are appointed by CRB recommendations; and the Chairs of the other four Advisory Boards sit on the CRB. The Nominating Committee can produce a slate of officers. We can also have recommendations from the floor. In the June meeting we will have an election to determine the future leadership of the Board.

Mr. Kabani: Will the Nominating Committee meet soon?

Ms. Smith-Jackson: Within the next month.

Ms. York: The next meeting in May will coincide with a Jewish Holiday, so I will be unable to attend.

Ms. Carswell: I suggest that we not meet in May, because we have a major event the following week, and it would be better to focus everyone's attention on that event.

Dr. Vieux: Even if the full Board does not meet in May, we will still have the meeting of the Nominating Committee.

Chairman Richardson: We will not meet in May, because we have two major events – the celebration of the CRB's 50th Anniversary, and the meeting of the Nominating Council. Now, Mr. Valdez will present a report on Item 7, bullet four, fair immigration.

Vice Chairman Valdez: In our report from the last CRB meeting, there is a reference to the need for the CRB members to lobby on the Fair Immigration Legislation. There will be many amendments to the proposal the legislators have come up with. We will go to Congress because the Senate seems to have finalized its proposal. The House will try to match their upcoming resolutions to the Senate. The Office of Community Advocacy Director proposed that we conduct community fora once a month in different areas – Homestead, Little Havana, Little Haiti, Hialeah. These areas have high concentrations of undocumented immigrants. In proposing these meetings, our Director is trying to get us out into the communities. My recommendation is that we try to conform to that as it is important that we meet with the community. In my recent meetings with community leaders they stressed the dangers of incarcerating immigrants who don't have criminal records. We will be meeting soon again in another two weeks.

Mr. Martinez: The forum in Homestead will give us the opportunity to gather all the organizations working on this issue. The good news is that the Federal government is focusing on immigration issues.

Vice Chairman Valdez: We have been reaching out to other organizations throughout the community to encourage them to participate in these fora.

Ms. York: With regard to the County Mayor's initiative on aging, we are having two free workshops for hiring older workers on April 24, and May 7th. The Sunflower Society is having a fundraiser on May 9th, and the children from the Sunflower Society will decorate the luminary bags. The Relay for Life Committee will be having an event on May 4th and 5th in Miami Beach.

Mr. Yap: In the package which was distributed, we have information about a Japanese-American citizen who was an anchor for CBS Channel 4. Her husband had two businesses, which he lost. They had twin sons and one of their children was born with a heart problem. They have now lost their house to foreclosure. CBS refused to extend her contract. I am appealing on behalf of the Asian community that we contact CBS to ask them to grant her a contract extension.

Chairman Richardson: Has the Asian Affairs Advisory Board considered this matter already?

Mr. Tavakoly: We are writing a letter to CBS.

It was moved by Mr. Valdez that the CRB write a letter asking CBS to extend the lady's contract. This motion was seconded by Dr. Vieux, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a unanimous vote of those members present. This letter will be forwarded to the Asian Affairs Advisory Board to be included in the packet that will be sent to CBS.

Vice Chairman Valdez: A very important organization in this community celebrated today their 100th anniversary. The Salvation Army has been serving Miami-Dade County since 1913. We appreciate their service to the neediest in our community. I congratulate Deacon Dotson.

There being no other business to come before the Community Relations Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

	MEMBERS	PRESENT	LATE	ABSENT
1	<i>Mario Artecona,</i>			x
2	<i>Dr. Larry Capp</i>	x		
3	<i>Lyse Cuellar-Vidal</i>			x
4	<i>Priscilla Dames-Blake</i>			x
5	<i>Valerie Lynn Davis-Bailey</i>			x
6	<i>Michell Dunaj Lucking</i>	x		
7	<i>Ronald Fulton</i>			x
8	<i>Rev. Eddie Gervais</i>	x		
9	<i>Martha Gonzolez-Rovirosa</i>			x
10	<i>Ahmed Kabani</i>		x	x
11	<i>Dr. Faisal Kaleem</i>			x
12	<i>Harlene Kennedy</i>	x		
13	<i>Maritza Lopez</i>	x		
14	<i>Herman Martinez</i>	x		

15	<i>Lovette McGill</i>	X		
16	<i>Dr. Helen Lawrence McGuire</i>	X		
17	<i>Dr. Walter Richardson</i>	X		
18	<i>Wilfredo Ruiz</i>			X
19	<i>Brian Siegal</i>	X		
20	<i>Rabbi Solomon Schiff</i>	X		
21	<i>Edward Shohat</i>			X
22	<i>Vickie M. Smith Jackson</i>		X	
23	<i>Farzana M. Tapia</i>	X		
24	<i>Adam Tavakoly</i>	X		
25	<i>Reinaldo Valdes</i>		X	
26	<i>Dr. Harold A. Vieux</i>	X		
27	<i>L. George Yap</i>	X		
28	<i>Marjorie York</i>	X		