

MINUTES
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
Friday, June 19, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.
111 NW 1st Street, 6th Floor, Miami, Fl. 33128

Members Present

Dr. Antonio Jorge; Dr. Leonardo Rodriguez; Dr. Brian Peterson; Dr. Raul Moncarz; Dr. Elisa Moncarz; Dr. Bernadette West; Jesus Permy; Dr. Maria Espino; Dr. Ken Lipner; Pedro Diaz; Reinaldo Azan; Dr. Jorge Salazar-Carrillo; Dr. German Muñoz.

Members Excused Absence

Dr. Francisco De Varona; Rosendo Castillo; Dr. Gustavo Roig; Dr. Pedro Pellet; Dr. Javier Marques; Dr. Willie Williams.

Members Absent

Dr. Larry Capp.

Miami-Dade County Staff

Dr. Robert Cruz, Robert Hesler and Hardai “Dai” Junor (OEDC); Manual Armada and Bob Schwarzreich (DP&Z); Al Sears (CAA); Carmen Morrina (DHS); Veronica Clark (SBD); Ines Beecher (OCA); Terry Murphy (Commissioner Seijas office).

Call to Order – Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Jorge, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and a quorum was met.

Members of the Council and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Jorge called for the approval of the minutes of the May 15, 2009 meeting. Dr. Leonardo Rodriguez moved a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Eliza Moncarz. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Chairperson’s Report

Dr. Jorge welcomed Pedro Diaz, member appointed to the SEDC on April 7th, 2009. He referred to his email that was sent to the county core departments as a reminder of the Manager’s memo regarding those departments attendance to the SEDC meetings. He thanked those who attended the meetings in the past and those who were present today. Dr. Jorge thanked Commissioner Seijas for her support by sending her staff to this meeting and expressed his appreciation and hopes to have their continued support.

Dr. Cruz stated that it is a requirement for all Board members to fill out a financial disclosure form. He reminded those who have not completed their financial disclosure for the period December, 2008, to do so and submit it to the Elections Department before July 1st, 2009. Dr. Cruz indicated staff would deliver the completed forms to the Elections Department for those members that wished to complete their forms at this meetings He also stated that in the handout package there is an invitation from Dr. Moncarz to attend a free Environmental Justice/Conservation Conference on June 20th.

Presentation by Ms. Shalley Jones-Horn, Director of Community and Economic Development

Dr. Jorge introduced Ms. Shalley Jones-Horn, and thanked her for taking the time to meet with the Council.

Ms. Shalley Jones-Horn gave a brief overview of OCED and some of its priorities for economic development. OCED handles most of the money coming into the county CDBG dollars:

- \$20 Million CDBG: To distribute according to low/moderate income criteria to revitalize the areas.
- \$40 Million in Disaster Relief Initiative Funding
- SHIP - \$8Million in 2009; and \$735,000 in 2010.
- Surtax – expect to receive \$10 Million
- Empowerment Zone - \$3.5 Million to be spent for the year
- G.O. Bonds - \$2Billion initiative: OCED received \$137M to administer and work with each Commissioner that has about \$10.6 M to invest in affordable housing in their district.
- NSP – Administer \$62Million (part of overall Stimulus package) Neighborhood Stabilization Program is to address the foreclosure crisis in our community.
- NSP II – working on the application which has to be filed by July 17th. She has a very short window to put it together, but will do everything possible to bring additional money into Miami-Dade County.

She spoke of some OCED priorities: Her main focus at the moment is reorganizing OCED and ensuring that money coming into the Department is properly spent under the guidance/direction of the BCC, HUD and the State of Florida. She spoke of the impact of the dollars and the effect on the communities; and that many of the communities mostly in need of economic development lacked qualified (non-profit) entities to accomplish their economic initiatives and goals in a cost effective manner. She stressed the need for “capacity building” among the non-governmental organizations that provide social and economic development services in the County.

The Director also spoke about the Enterprise Zones in which businesses that are expanding and creating jobs can get additional form of assistance. The Department is working on establishing City/County partnerships to strengthen mutual efforts to support business creation and development. She stressed that affordable housing needs are extremely important; and also the CDBG dollars investing in economic development activities.

The Council requested documentation from Ms Horn indicating the Goals/Mission of OCED and their evaluation of results. Dr. Jorge thanked Ms Shalley Jones-Horn for her presentation.

Presentation by Mandana Dashtaki, Assistant County Attorney

Ms. Dashtaki was introduced by Dr. Elisa Moncarz, who noted her many academic accomplishments and that Mandana had already distinguished herself as a rising star within Miami's legal community. Ms. Dashtaki gave an overview of the Ordinance creating the SEDC and specifically addressed the issue of term limitations. She stated when the ordinance establishing a County board does not specify a term limit for its members, then the general County ordinance governing all County board applies; and the term limit in that ordinance is eight consecutive years. She said if a member served eight consecutive years and wants to continue serving on the Board, then they can be re-appointed after a two years hiatus. The Clerk of the County Board will let staff know when the term limit is up.

In response to a question, Ms. Dashtaki replied that if a member had stepped down from the board before the maximum eight-year term and were subsequently reappointed by the BCC, the eight-year term limit starts from the date of the reappoint. She also indicated that the Council can request a change of the SEDC Ordinance to allow members to serve longer than eight years.

Dr. Cruz asked if this Board can adopt its own attendance policy that is different from the County Ordinance that governs all Boards; and asked also for a clarification of the definition of Excused Absence.

Ms. Dashtaki explained if an attendance policy is not specified in the ordinance establishing and governing the SEDC, then the Council would have to adhere to the attendance requirements of General Board Ordinance. She explained that nearly any excuse allows for members to miss meetings. She suggested sending a letter to the member letting them know of their many absences; and that pursuant to the Ordinance, the SEDC would like to appoint someone else in their place, subject to the ratification of the BCC. If they do not respond, then there is the question of removal. She said that if the SEDC wants to substitute someone else for the delinquent member, then an item would be submitted to the BCC for ratification

and the Council would be making the BCC aware of the fact. If they approve it, then the member in question would be replaced by the new member.

Dr. Jorge asked who has the responsibility to remove a member; and can the Board by a two thirds vote deem an absent as excused?

Ms. Dashtaki referred to the reasons for “acceptable excuse” as defined in the Ordinance as an absence are: medical reason, business reasons, personal reasons, or any other reason. The Board by its two thirds vote can only take action to excuse an absence under the ‘*any other reason*’ category. The process for removal of members for non-attendance is not clear, however. She promised to get back to them on the question on removal if she was able to find any additional information.

The subject on the appointment of a Vice Chair to the Council was deferred to the next meeting.

Discussion: Ideas for more effective interaction with BCC

Dr. Lipner said that the SEDC was actively engaged in the preparation of the Economic Element of the County’s Comprehensive Development Master Plan, which is the governing plan for the county development. He felt that the county has failed to implement the economic component of the master plan that the SEDC endorsed and ultimately adopted by the BCC and asked the for the attorney’s advice.

Ms. Dashtaki said she would have to look into the legal issues regarding failure to implement the economic element of the CDMP. She indicated that the SEDC is advisory to the BCC and could recommend that the BCC look into the implementation of the Economic Element.

Dr. Lipner said he will defer the discussion pending legal opinion of the Assistant County Attorney. He said the County was remiss in implementing the economic component of the Master Plan. A key goal was reducing economic disparity and that this goal be considered in decisions regarding all aspects of county spending. Secondly, at one point the creation of a broad economic development coordination unit was proposed for the purpose of integrating economic development efforts of various departments: Beacon Council, MMAP, F&E, OCED, SBD, ITC, Enterprise Zones, Transit, Airport and the Seaport. It was discussed that the Administration would coordinate all these economic entities; however, the objective (adopted in the CDMP) has not been done. He suggested re-examining the issue of development coordination.

Dr. Lipner motioned that the SEDC would like to determine if the economic component of the Master Plan is being implemented and monitored by the

appropriate authority. The motion was seconded by Dr. Pedro Diaz. All were in favor and the motion passed.

The question was asked who the motion should be sent to. The SEDC agreed the motion should be sent to the BCC and the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Discussion: Regional Economic Models for Policy Making

Dr. Salazar stated that they had proposed to the BCC last year to conduct a study that would enable them to formulate a strategy on how to efficiently spend the \$10 billion dollar combined yearly Government budget which includes the Board of Education, so that the funding makes the greatest impact to the economy. In order to do that they need to know what kind of leverage they have; and that involves a study that would look at the economic activity of the county to see its maximum potential. The BCC did not respond to the pleas of the SEDC last year, but nevertheless with the help of Dr. Cruz and Manny Armada they began to do the study internally without the support of the BCC. They have looked at the input/output table and now have a general idea of the main sectors that would provide the largest and different types of employment. In the future they would look at a social and economic accounting matrix and try to project what economic avenues would be the best for the county, and at the same time what social impact it has on the families in Miami Dade County. They are at the beginning of the next phase and will try again to get some support from the BCC.

Dr. Jorge added that Dr. Salazar started this initiative six years ago and he hopes that they get the BCC support. This is a tool that is very necessary to rationalize economic and policy making in the county.

Discussion of the Resolution directing County Mayor to identify up \$150,000 to fund the economic study, and the proposal to include it in last year's budget. Dr. Jorge said Commissioner Souto is very willing to make the recommendation, and Dr. Salazar will be working with Commissioner Souto's office.

Dr. Jorge suggested discussing this matter at the next meeting and he would welcome advice on the next best course of action.

Ines Beecher informed the Council that the Commissioners do hear and recognize the efforts of the SEDC, referring to an Agenda Item 11(A)(8) Resolution urging Governor Charlie Crist to veto SB 360 related to growth management.

Education Sub-committee

Dr. Peterson said that a policy paper on Innovative Solutions to Miami-Dade County's pre-K-12 and Adult Education System was submitted to the BCC for their consideration.

Dr. Jorge motion that in a couple of weeks if no response was received from Commissioner Moss, then a reminder letter should be sent to him requesting a meeting with the Chair or his staff to meet with the Education Subcommittee. Motion seconded by Jesus Permy. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Jorge motioned that in addition to the e-mail being sent to members that hard copies of correspondence are also mailed to council members. Dr. Rodriguez seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Discussion of current economic trends

Dr. Cruz briefly discussed the information on key Economic indicators of Miami Dade county i.e. labor force, employment, taxable sales, housing sales, bankruptcies, international trade and tourism. What would be the best form, from an economic point of view, reducing tax rate or preserving the level of government services; and which is more effective in stimulating the economy. At federal level, decisions have already been made. Deficit and spending is what is needed to provide economic stimulus for the economy and that is the question local government is facing.

Dr. Lipner complimented Dr. Cruz and his staff for their work, and asked about international trade. Dr. Cruz said he will add inbound and outbound international cargo to monthly indicators.

Dr. Moncarz asked what is the impact of the stimulus. Dr. Cruz said these are historical figures and the impact is expected to show in the third and fourth quarter.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Dr. Jorge motioned for the meeting to adjourn. Motion seconded by Dr. Raul Moncarz. Motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.