

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CENSUS 2020 TASK FORCE
CLERK'S SUMMARY AND OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 1, 2019

The Miami-Dade County Census 2020 Task Force (the Task Force) convened its first meeting on April 1, 2019, at the Miami-Dade Public Library Auditorium, 101 West Flagler Street, Miami, Florida, at 10:00 a.m. The following Task Force members were present and introduced themselves and their organization: Dr. Jaime Anzalotta, Mr. Ray Baker, Mr. Jerry Bell, Ms. Maryam Borrego, Commissioner Esteban Bovo, Ms. Martine Charles, Mr. Glenn Cooper, Mr. Juan D'Arce, Mr. Francisco Duberli, Ms. Krystina Francois, Ms. Amanda Gorski, Dr. Maria Ilcheva, Ms. Michelle Labagold, Ms. Carmen Layne-Powers, Mr. Donovan Lee-Sin, Ms. Victoria Malette, Ms. Jessica Garrett Modkins, Ms. Lubby Navarro, Ms. Lynn Norman-Teck, Dr. Jean Pierre, Mr. John Quick, Mr. Zachary Rinkins, Ms. Maria Alejandra Rivas, Ms. Suzie Trutie, Ms. Jameka Windham, Mr. Edgar Wright. The following members arrived later during the meeting: Mr. Ruban Roberts, Mr. Maurice Kemp, Mr. Phong Tony Vu, and Ms. Michelle LaPiana.

The following Task Force members: Dr. Steve Gallon III, Ms. Janet Herrera, Mr. Jorge Martinez, Mr. Jack Osterholt, and Ms. Jeannie (Tim) Wong were absent. Barry University seat was Vacant.

In addition to Task Force members, the following staff members were present: Assistant County Attorney Suzanne Villano-Charif; Ms. Lourdes Gomez, Deputy Director, Regulatory and Economic Resources; Ms. Bia Marsellos, Administrator Intergovernmental Affairs, Ms. Larisa Aploks, Strategic Initiatives Manager; Office of the Clerk of the Board, Deputy Clerks Ms. Jovel Shaw and Ms. Tawana Parker.

Ms. Lourdes Gomez welcomed the Task Force members and guests to the first Task Force meeting, followed by a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

OVERVIEW OF FLORIDA'S SUNSHINE LAW, PUBLIC RECORDS LAW AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW

Assistant County Attorney Suzanne Villano-Charif presented an overview of the Florida Sunshine Law Public Meeting requirements and the Public Records Law.

Assistant County Attorney Villano-Charif explained the Government-In-The-Sunshine Law (Section 286.011, Florida Statutes) required government board meetings be open and accessible to the public, with the exception of the State legislature. She commented that no formal action shall be binding unless taken at such meetings; that reasonable notice must be provided to the public; and that meeting minutes were to be recorded promptly and open to inspection. Assistant County Attorney Villano-Charif advised the Sunshine Law applied to any discussion between two or more board members on which foreseeable action may be taken by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), noting no private discussions, phone calls, or emails were allowed between Task Force members about Task Force

business. She further explained meetings must be held at accessible locations; that there were no restrictions impeding public access; and that efforts should be taken to avoid one-on-one private discussions in public view before, during, or after public meetings, even if unrelated to public business. Assistant County Attorney Villano-Charif also described the criminal penalties and non-criminal penalties associated with Sunshine Law violations and discussed the Public Records Law (Chapter 119, Florida Statute), noting all information (emails, letters, texting, social media, etc.) dealing with Task Force business, whether sent or received, was considered public records and must be maintained. She noted an oral request for public records was as binding as a written request and must be provided to the requestor.

Mr. Jose Arrojo, Executive Director, Commission on Ethics & Public Trust (COE), advised the Task Force the COE was an independent county board established pursuant to the county Home Rule Charter. He explained Task Force members were covered parties under the Miami-Dade County (MDC) ethics code found in section 2-11.1 and announced their conduct was addressed under this code. Mr. Arrojo reported the COE conducted board training twice a month at their office and during the training they would reemphasize comments made about the Sunshine Law, public records and application of the ethics code specifically for board members.

Mr. Arrojo briefly discussed gift and financial prohibitions, voting conflicts, and lobbying. He stated Board members were not allowed to solicit or accept gifts from anyone for the performance or non-performance of their official duties and advised a gift, as defined under the ordinance, could be interpreted broadly to include tangible, intangible or gifts of service and was applicable to all elected officials, county employees, and all county boards. He informed the Task Force the ethics code covered lobbying for elected officials, county employees, selection committees, and County Boards. Mr. Arrojo mentioned, as written in the ordinance, no county elected municipal official, board member or employee should use or attempt to use his/her official position to secure a special benefit or privilege for themselves or a third party; reminded the Task force about the series of restrictive financial transactions and prohibitions applicable to county board members; and urged the members to inform the County Attorney's Office or the COE regarding any circumstances they may be engaged in that may have an impact on their personal or business associations.

Mr. Arrojo proceeded to discuss Voting Conflicts and advised the Task Force members not to vote on an item if they had an economic interest in a decision that could personally affect them, their family, their business, their families business, or employer. He instructed the Task Force members to publically disclose the conflict and seek guidance from the County Attorney's Office. Mr. Arrojo also informed the Task Force members the MDC ethics ordinance was more restrictive than the State ethics statute in regards to conflicts.

In response to Commissioner Bovo's question regarding the obligations for Task Force members who were participants in mutual organizations; Assistant County Attorney Villano-Charif advised if any discussion was held between two or more members pertaining to the actions or findings from the 2020 Task Force meetings, then the Sunshine Law should be applied.

Overview of Resolution No. R-72-19 Creating the Census 2020 Task Force

Ms. Gomez explained the functions and responsibilities of the Task Force included, but were not limited to:

- (a) Conducting a comprehensive assessment of individuals likely to be uncouned in Miami-Dade County;
- (b) Identifying best practices, including outreach options, to address and curtail an undercount of hard-to-reach populations;
- (c) Identifying and recommending existing resources, such as federal, state, and local resources to assist in outreach campaigns and outreach events;
- (d) Identifying and recommending potential strategies to utilize internet access to assist hard-to-reach populations with completing the 2020 Census form;
- (e) Identifying and recommending potential strategies to collaborate with Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Miami-Dade County daycare centers to curtail an undercount of children; and
- (f) Compiling information and developing a comprehensive 2020 Census action plan, which shall include community-based and other strategies to ensure an accurate count of the Miami-Dade County population;

~The Task Force shall provide its proposed 2020 Census action plan, setting forth findings and recommendations for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners, within 180 days from the date of the Task Force's initial meeting. This report shall be placed on an agenda of the Board pursuant to Ordinance No. 14-65. The Board may then request such further work of the Task Force as may be in the public interest. Should the Task Force require additional time to finalize the proposed 2020 Census action plan that extends beyond 365 days of the Task Force's initial meeting, the Task Force must request that the Board, by ordinance, extend the existence of the Task Force and time for submission of a proposed amended 2020 Census action plan.

~ The Task Force shall be provided adequate staff and support services by the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee. Staff from Miami-Dade County's Clerk of the Board Division shall maintain and keep records of the Task Force; prepare, in cooperation with the chairperson, the agenda for each meeting; be responsible for the preparation of such reports, minutes, documents, or correspondence as the Task Force may direct, subject to budgetary limitations. The County Mayor or the County Mayor's designee is directed to identify available funding, if necessary, to help staff and support the Task Force and, if no such funding is available, to report back to this Board within 30 days and to place said report on an agenda of the Board pursuant to Ordinance No. 14-65. The Board, in its discretion, may provide the Task Force with specialized consulting expertise as necessary.

~ The Task Force shall sunset and stand dissolved on the 365th day from the effective date of this resolution unless the Board approves an ordinance extending the life of the Task Force as set forth herein.

Selection of Task Force Chair and Vice-Chair

There being no objections, the Task Force by motion duly made, seconded and carried, selected Commissioner Bovo as Chairman of the Miami-Dade County Census 2020 Task Force.

A subsequent motion was made by Mr. Juan D'Arce to nominate Ms. Lubby Navarro as Vice-Chair for the Task Force. This motion was seconded by Mr. John Quick and upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Bovo stated the mission of the Task Force was to prepare recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and noted the Task Force would transform into a committee to ensure the necessary recommendations were being implemented. He advised monthly Task Force meetings would be held and may become more frequent as the April 1, 2020 deadline approaches. Chairman Bovo announced the initial meetings were scheduled to take place in County locations, but noted future meetings would be held in other locations to garner community engagement. He commented the Task Force members were chosen to reach out to the residents in their respective communities and organizations.

Reasonable Opportunity to be Heard

Chairman Bovo opened the floor for a reasonable opportunity to be heard. Seeing no one appear Chairman Bovo closed the floor.

Ms. Gomez advised the next two monthly meetings were scheduled for May 13 and June 10, 2019.

A motion was made by Mr. Quick that the next two scheduled meetings be held on May 13 and June 10, 2019 at 10 a.m. This motion was seconded by Ms. Michelle LaPiana and upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Gomez stated the next two scheduled meetings would be held in the Stephen P. Clark Center on the 19th Floor and members would be notified of the specific meeting location.

Census Bureau Representative Presentation

Ms. Gomez introduced Mr. Manuel Landivar, Assistant Regional Census Manager, United States (US) Census Bureau.

Mr. Landivar discussed the challenges associated with the 2020 Census and indicated the ultimate success of the Census depended on public cooperation and assistance from the trusted voices of the community. He provided an overview of how individuals and households would be counted and also mentioned how the census count would impact the community as a whole.

Mr. Landivar noted the Census embodied Representation, Resources and Respect:

~Representation - Determined the number of representatives in Congress.

~Resources - Assignment of funds received from the Federal Government based on the census count and characteristic of the population.

~Respect- Residents should not disregard themselves and the community by not being counted and to also help MDC gain recognition as one of the largest minority communities in the United States.

Mr. Landivar opined this message should be carried to every individual in MDC in an effort to obtain a complete and accurate census count.

Chairman Bovo recapped the Ethics and Sunshine laws and reminded the Task Force members not to discuss Census matters amongst themselves.

Live Stream- National Press Club, Washington, DC

Chairman Bovo advised the Task Force would be watching a live stream from the Census Day 2020 press briefing in Washington, DC.

Census Bureau Director Dr. Steven Dillingham and Census Bureau leadership briefed the public on the status of the operations and provided updates on the success of the integrated partnership and communication campaign.

Comments /Discussion by Task Force Members

Vice-Chair Navarro thanked Chairman Bovo for his leadership on this subject. She mentioned the knowledge gathered from the 2010 Census revealed a mass undercounting of children within the community, which ten years later resulted in a lack of funding in programs for children. Vice-Chair Navarro pointed out that each Task Force member represented an agency and noted this was the most important exercise that should be done as a community, due to the potential significant loss of funding

for MDC. She stressed the importance of an accurate census count to ensure an ample amount of federally funded programs were available for the residents of MDC.

Ms. Gomez encouraged the Task Force members to ask the census officials questions.

Dr. Jaime Anzalotta inquired about the type of education provided to the community during the 2010 Census to eliminate the fear and stigma associated with being counted.

In response to Dr. Anzalotta's question, Mr. Landivar said this issue was addressed by employing the Census Bureau's Partnership program which specifically hired people from individual areas with similar cultural backgrounds. He also mentioned the opening of forty-two (42) field offices throughout the region which included: Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. Mr. Landivar announced field offices were already open in North Miami and other offices would be opening in South Dade and the Fort Lauderdale areas. He indicated efforts would be made to hire individuals from the local neighborhood who were familiar with the needs of the community.

Mr. Landivar expressed difficulty with filling the current available positions and urged the Task Force members to refer people to 2020census.gov/jobs. He advised all levels of staff were needed and the jobs offered competitive pay rates, health benefits and leave time, but noted the temporary jobs would conclude in the summer of 2020.

In response to Mr. Donovan Lee-Sin's question regarding the status of the citizenship question, Chairman Bovo commented the Supreme Court would opine on that issue in June and declared the Task Force would move forward regardless of the outcome. He cited the importance of the Task Force engaging the community and relaying the message that it was safe and necessary to participate in the census.

Mr. John Quick inquired if a directive would be received from the Census Bureau regarding the completeness of the questionnaire in order to be counted.

Mr. Landivar announced everyone would be counted regardless of the amount or accuracy of the information provided on the questionnaire.

Mr. Ruban Roberts asked if the Task Force members would be able to see the census questionnaire and provide recommendations to assist the field officers.

Ms. Juanita Alvarez Mainster, Partnership Coordinator, United States Census Bureau, reported the numeration listed necessitated self-identification and she advised field officers were trained to collect data and ask the questions as stated on the form. Ms. Mainster also advised the questionnaire would not be released until June.

Chairman Bovo commented the Task Force could consider recommendations or best practices to provide to the BCC in regards to ethnicity and gender issues.

Mr. Juan D'Arce expressed concern with the possibility of under-reporting to which Mr. Landivar explained a major factor of census undercounting came from under-reporting which should be emphasized to the community. He clarified the Census Bureau counted one home, not the individual, and stated once the package was received from a specific household it was considered a completed questionnaire. Mr. Landivar further explained social media would also be used as a tool to reach everyone.

Deputy Mayor Kemp asked if all of the Task Force recommendations would be presented to the Board and subsequently to the US Census Bureau, to which Chairman Bovo clarified the recommendations from the Task Force would be forwarded to the BCC and shared with the Census Bureau; but noted the efforts of the Task Force were geared towards publicity and public awareness, to create best practices that were most beneficial for the community.

Mr. Francisco Duberli asked if there was a question regarding sexual orientation and gender identity and if there was a specific system geared toward reaching illiterate individuals.

Ms. Mainster reiterated the questionnaire would not be available until June and therefore she was unable to answer specific questions related to the questionnaire. She advised outreach was being conducted in the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community and noted the various options available to complete the census included a call center, paper form, and the internet.

Ms. Carmen Layne-Powers expressed concern with counting homeless veterans.

Mr. Landivar stated the census did not define homelessness, but noted they would visit shelters and other locations where homeless people congregated; and use service providers such as soup kitchens to reach the homeless population.

Ms. Victoria Mallette, Executive Director Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust announced the agency was very interested in partnering with the Census Bureau to ensure both the sheltered and under sheltered population was counted.

Ms. Michelle LaPiana suggested reaching out to the community of realtors to assist in confronting the efficiency issue to obtain a complete count.

Chairman Bovo stated each Task Force member has a network to assist with delivering this message to the constituents in their specific areas of the community. He provided a snapshot of the future objectives of the Task Force which included:

~Creating a list of every major and sub-major event occurring in MDC to have a Census Task Force presence at those events.

~Integration with all school systems in MDC.

Chairman Bovo advised an agenda for the next meeting would be emailed to determine what type of sub-committees should be created to address critical issues. He opined there would always be an undercount, but commented the goal for MDC was to procure a count of 80% or higher, and encouraged every city in MDC to create their own complete count committee.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Task Force meeting adjourned 11:59 a.m.