

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(12)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: January 20, 2021

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
Successor County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution directing the County Mayor to enter into an agreement or agreements with the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for a Countywide autism and neurodiverse inclusion program at no cost to Miami-Dade County; and requiring a report

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado.



Gerri Bonzon-Keenan
Successor County Attorney


GBK/uw



MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

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Successor County Attorney

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Please note any items checked.

- "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- Budget required
- Statement of fiscal impact required
- Statement of social equity required
- Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- No committee review
- Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present ____, 2/3 membership ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, or CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c)(2) ____) to approve
- Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(12)
1-20-21

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT OR AGREEMENTS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI-NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR AUTISM AND RELATED DISABILITIES FOR A COUNTYWIDE AUTISM AND NEURODIVERSE INCLUSION PROGRAM AT NO COST TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY; AND REQUIRING A REPORT

WHEREAS, in 2020, the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention announced that the prevalence rate for autism spectrum disorder ("ASD") is currently 1:54 for 8-year-old children; and

WHEREAS, according to the advocacy organization, Autism Speaks, more than 500,000 young adults with autism will age out of guaranteed services in the next decade; and

WHEREAS, there are 7,500 individuals with autism registered with the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities ("CARD"), and CARD estimates that there may be as many as 50,000 individuals with ASD in Miami-Dade County; and

WHEREAS, CARD provides services throughout the County for children and adults who have ASD, in addition to other disorders that may co-exist with autism; and

WHEREAS, CARD's primary services include client and family support services, programmatic technical assistance and consultation, and public education and awareness activities; and

WHEREAS, CARD has expressed an interest in collaborating with the County to establish a Countywide program focused on ASD and neurodiverse inclusion; and

WHEREAS, a collaboration between the County and CARD should include a training program for County staff that interact with the public such as librarians, park staff, police officers, firefighters and transit staff, including but not limited to special transportation service drivers, so that staff has a greater understanding of the special needs of individuals with ASD; and

WHEREAS, there are many County departments that could benefit from an inclusion program, including the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department, the Miami-Dade County Library System, Miami-Dade Transit and Public Works, Miami-Dade Police, and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue; and

WHEREAS, CARD can develop social stories, a social learning tool that assists individuals with ASD to understand their environment and helps in reducing anxiety in new places and interactions; and

WHEREAS, these social stories can be provided to caregivers prior to visiting public spaces; and

WHEREAS, CARD has expertise related to ASD and what resources are available to individuals with ASD and their families, including resources by age group, resources for educators, information for the general public, information related to mental health challenges and ASD, and the importance of healthful living including exercise and nutrition; and

WHEREAS, continuity in signage indicating that certain spaces are sensory friendly or correspond to signage in social stories can assist individuals with ASD in navigating civic spaces and reduce anxiety; and

WHEREAS, autism friendly spaces are those spaces that provide a welcoming, compassionate and nonjudgmental environment for individuals with ASD; and

WHEREAS, CARD can assist the County in ensuring that the County is open, accessible, and friendly to individuals with ASD and their families through training of staff and consultation regarding sensory-friendly activities and autism friendly spaces; and

WHEREAS, a collaboration between the County and CARD will not result in the County expending any funds; and

WHEREAS, April is Autism Awareness Month, and this Board desires that the collaboration between the County and CARD be launched during April; and

WHEREAS, this Board is committed to including all individuals in civic spaces throughout the County,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Directs the County Mayor or the County Mayor’s designee to enter into an agreement or agreements with the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disorders to develop a Countywide ASD and neurodiverse inclusion program. Such agreement or agreements shall not result in any funds being expended by the County and shall include at minimum the following in the scope of services: (i) providing opportunities for training of County staff; (ii) the development of social stories for County spaces including but not limited to parks, libraries, and transit; (iii) age-specific programming for individuals with ASD; and (iv) the development of autism-friendly spaces.

Section 2. This Board directs the County Mayor or County Mayor’s designee to submit a written report to this Board within 45 days of the effective date of this resolution, which shall be placed on an agenda of the Board pursuant to Ordinance No. 14-65, providing this Board with the agreement or agreements entered into between the County and the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disorders as outlined in section 1.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado. It was offered by Commissioner _____, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Chairman	
Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Vice-Chairman	
Sen. René García	Keon Hardemon
Sally A. Heyman	Danielle Cohen Higgins
Eileen Higgins	Joe A. Martinez
Kionne L. McGhee	Jean Monestime
Raquel A. Regalado	Rebeca Sosa
Sen. Javier D. Souto	

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 20th day of January, 2021. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

mjs

Melanie J. Spencer