

**CLERK'S SUMMARY AND OFFICIAL MINUTES
COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD
February 19, 2025**

The Miami-Dade County Community Relations Board (CRB) convened its General Board meeting on February 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center, Conference Room 18-4, 111 NW 1st Street, Miami, Florida 33128.

Community Relations Board (CRB) Chairman Rene Diaz called the meeting to order at 2:13 p.m.

The following CRB members were present: Ms. Egglis Cepero, Ms. Yuleisy Mena, Mr. Gabriel Paez, Ms. Jenni Person, Ms. Marjorie York, Vice Chairman Eddy Gervais and Chairman Rene Diaz (Ms. Juliette Fabien, Mr. Ervens Ford, Mr. Benjamin Greenberg, Ms. Marie Jean-Pharuns, Ms. Giselle Ortiz-Velazquez, Mr. Joseph Salzverg, and Mr. Joshua Sayles were absent).

The following staff members were present:

Ms. Shirley Plantin, CRB Director, and Ms. Judy Marsh, Deputy Clerk, Miami-Dade Clerk of the Board.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Diaz opened the public hearing, and seeing no one come forward to speak, the public hearing was closed.

APPROVE CURRENT MEETING AGENDA

It was moved by Ms. York to approve today's (2/19) CRB meeting agenda, as presented. This motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gervais, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 7-0 (Ms. Fabien, Mr. Ford, Mr. Greenberg, Ms. Jean-Pharuns, Ms. Ortiz-Velazquez, Mr. Salzverg, and Mr. Sayles were absent).

Chairman Diaz relinquished the chair to Vice Chairman Gervais for the remainder of the meeting.

CRB COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND DATES

Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement Committee (CJLE) - Wednesday, February 26, 2025,
Miami Gardens Police Department

Ms. Shirley Plantin noted that the February 26, 2025 CJLE meeting would be held in partnership with the City of Miami Gardens Police Department at Rolling Oaks Park in the City of Miami Gardens (Miami Gardens). She mentioned that the January 29, 2025 CJLE meeting was held in

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partnership with the North Miami Police Department, which was attended by the City of North Miami (North Miami) Mayor Alix Desulme. Ms. Plantin also pointed out that a representative from the Homeland Security Bureau (HSB) of the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office (MDSO) was in attendance.

Ms. Plantin reported that the meeting's primary focus was immigration from a law enforcement perspective. She noted that multiple municipalities within the County sought clarification on MDSO Rosie Cordero-Stutz's stance and responsibilities concerning immigration matters.

Ms. Plantin commented on the viral video which had been circulated online showing a raid at a North Miami residence conducted by U.S. Department of Homeland Security agents using MDSO vehicles, despite the MDSO's claimed non-involvement in the operation. She noted that during the meeting, Mayor Desulme expressed concerns about the raid and requested a meeting with Sheriff Cordero-Stutz, who was unable to attend the CJLE session. Ms. Plantin informed the CRB that Sheriff Cordero-Stutz was scheduled to attend the February 26 CJLE meeting to address the situation.

OLD BUSINESS

1. CRB's Nova Exhibit

Ms. Shirley Plantin noted that CRB members had attended the Nova Music Festival Exhibition. She explained that the exhibition was held in remembrance of the massacre of Israeli citizens at the Nova Music Festival on October 7, 2023, and thanked Ms. Person and Mr. Sayles for facilitating CRB member attendance.

Discussion ensued among various Board members regarding the immersive nature of the exhibit.

Ms. Person expressed gratitude to the CRB and law enforcement personnel for their attendance and commented about the cultural importance of musical events, the impact of the massacre, and anti-Semitism.

Ms. Plantin invited Ms. Person to attend the Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement Committee (CJLE) meeting on February 26, 2025, noting that one of the topics on the agenda was related to security for cultural events.

Ms. Person indicated she had a scheduling conflict but would try to rearrange her schedule to attend the CJLE meeting.

Chairman Diaz concurred that security at cultural events was important.

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2. Introduction of New Command Staff in Homeland Security Bureau (HSB)

Ms. Plantin reported that the Homeland Security Bureau's (HSB) command staff who had previously collaborated with the CRB were no longer with the organization. She emphasized the CRB's commitment to establishing the same collaborative relationship with the HSB's new command staff that had existed with their predecessors.

Ms. Plantin indicated that she had met with Major Rita Rodriguez of the HSB, and both parties agreed to maintain the inter-agency relationship. She also reported meeting with Miami-Dade County Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz, who confirmed that the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office (MDSO) would continue working with the CRB and that the HSB partnership would remain unchanged. Ms. Plantin outlined the various HSB divisions that would collaborate with the CRB and noted that the Memorandum of Understanding previously established with the former Miami-Dade Police Department was being revised for the MDSO.

DISCUSSION AND DETERMINATIONS

1. Miami-Dade Tax Collector and FHP Partnership

Ms. Plantin discussed the partnership between the Miami-Dade County Office of the Tax Collector (Tax Collector) and Florida Highway Patrol (FHP). She explained that while the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) was under the purview of the State of Florida, motor vehicle driver's licenses was managed by the Tax Collector's. She reported that the Tax Collector had been visiting local FLHSMV offices to address operational concerns and chose to partner with FHP rather than local law enforcement to handle criminal activities at these locations.

Ms. Plantin indicated that FHP worked with the CRB and would have officers stationed at local FLHSMV offices.

In response to Vice Chairman Gervais' question about the partnership's immigration implications, Ms. Plantin explained that FHP officers had been deputized by the Florida governor to work with United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). She noted that the local community expressed concerns about the FHP arrangement with ICE because undocumented residents visiting FLHSMV offices would feel threatened by the FHP presence.

Chairman Diaz mentioned that FHP officers possessed the authority to request proof of United States citizenship from any driver they encountered on state roads. He also reported that a representative from the Miami-Dade Public Defender's Office had informed him that ICE officers would be present at courts, putting undocumented residents at risk of arrest if they

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attended court proceedings. He observed that many people failed to appear in court due to the ICE presence, resulting in numerous pending cases.

Vice Chairman Gervais expressed concerns about this development, noting that any law enforcement officer could exercise authority at will toward individuals.

In response to Ms. Person's question about FHP staffing at FLHSMV offices, Ms. Plantin noted that at least one officer would be posted at each office due to FHP staffing vacancies.

2. Local Concerns Regarding President Trump's Executive Orders (Immigration, Dept. of Education, Funding Freezes, Sensitive Locations)

Ms. Plantin reported that local attorneys had expressed concerns about their clients' reluctance to appear in court due to the presence of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, with many clients also ceasing communication with their legal representatives and advocates. She indicated that public defenders had informed her of ICE officers being stationed inside courtrooms to apprehend undocumented individuals.

Ms. Plantin outlined widespread concerns from various groups regarding federal changes to the United States Department of Education. She reported that students and teachers expressed apprehension over the cancellation of federal education grants, which had impacted educational programs.

Concerning the federal government's funding freeze, Ms. Plantin highlighted that numerous non-profit organizations focused on victim advocacy, youth violence prevention, and immigration services had experienced suspended funding. She noted that these organizations were unable to operate and provide essential services without financial support, and that many had not received funding even after the suspension was lifted.

Ms. Plantin reported that churches and community groups throughout the County had expressed concerns about potential ICE raids in places of worship. She reported that many individuals were avoiding religious services despite 27 faith-based leaders filing a lawsuit against the federal government. Ms. Plantin ended her remarks by announcing that the CRB would maintain regular briefings on problematic areas, with the February 2025 session dedicated to examining Department of Education matters and locations requiring special attention.

Responding to Vice Chairman Gervais' inquiry if there were concerns related to job losses, Ms. Plantin stated there were reports of agricultural labor shortages in the south. She added that the greatest fears undocumented residents had were about job loss, their children being apprehended by ICE in schools and being apprehended at their jobs, which led to absenteeism.

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Ms. Plantin informed the CRB that many residents, including children, were now carrying their American passports to prove their United States citizenships. She cautioned that if people were unwilling to go to work out of fear of being detained by ICE this would raise the level of crime in the County.

Chairman Diaz opined that many state and federal politicians had failed to respond to the local community's immigration and ICE-related issues, and were instead creating division within the community. He further noted that many undocumented individuals living in the County were law-abiding residents, making it unreasonable to halt funding for educational programs and community services.

Vice Chairman Gervais voiced concerns about how recent developments had affected students, educators, and the educational system. He indicated his desire to convene with County Commissioners to discuss the matter, noting that the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Board was facing legal challenges concerning funding issues. He also warned that these circumstances could result in the departure of teaching staff and administrative personnel.

Ms. Plantin pointed out that the Department of Education funded programs for special needs students and Title 1 schools in the County's urban areas and less affluent communities. She stressed that the CRB should consider who would be impacted and the long-term educational impact on the community by these funding changes.

Vice Chairman Gervais remarked that criminal activity would likely rise as a result of reduced access to educational and job opportunities. He also observed that the County had insufficient police personnel and had terminated numerous judicial positions, creating a cascading impact that would contribute to higher crime rates.

Mr. Paez opined that many County residents voted for the politicians that enacted the current policies about immigration, and in a sense approved of this situation. He added that many residents did not want to know about the negative impact of how the government addressed immigration.

Ms. Susan Khoury, a public attendee, remarked that there would be more protests throughout the County because of the new immigration policies. She also pointed out that requirement changes to driver's licenses would impede travel throughout the country.

Mr. Paez noted there had been a pro-immigrant protest held on February 17, 2025 in Tropical Park.

Ms. Plantin informed the CRB that Florida would not provide tuition assistance to undocumented residents and had allocated \$300 million for immigration enforcement. She mentioned that modifications to driver's license requirements would create challenges, as motorists would

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struggle to meet the new criteria. Ms. Plantin also warned the CRB about escalating community tensions surrounding the implementation and enforcement of new immigration measures.

Discussion ensued among the CRB members about potential actions the board could take to address immigration and education challenges.

Chairman Diaz acknowledged Mr. Paez's point that elected officials were implementing voter mandates but maintained that the CRB bore responsibility for helping to resolve the crisis. He stressed the importance of finding community leaders capable of effectively communicating information about the circumstances to local residents. Chairman Diaz noted that the County's Hispanic residents needed effective representation, given that the community was divided and susceptible to being taken advantage of by those seeking political office.

Following Ms. Person's inquiry about the CRB's legal authority to intervene, Vice Chairman Gervais proposed arranging meetings with County Commissioners to understand their strategies and determine how the CRB might assist in implementation.

Chairman Diaz reminded Vice Chairman Gervais that the CRB must operate within County policy constraints.

Ms. Plantin clarified that the immigration and education policy modifications originated from federal authorities rather than the County's Board of County Commissioners (BCC). She noted that the BCC lacked jurisdiction over the School Board and its policies.

Ms. Plantin explained that according to legislation, the CRB's function was limited to monitoring and reducing community tensions. While the CRB could organize public meetings, it operated with constrained resources and possessed no enforcement authority.

Chairman Diaz and Ms. Person voiced frustration regarding the CRB's restricted ability to ease local community tensions.

Chairman Diaz pointed out that the BCC encountered comparable constraints due to state oversight of County law enforcement operations. He stressed that the CRB should maintain its efforts to ease tensions among different community segments.

Vice Chairman Gervais suggested the CRB engage with the BCC to provide support while demonstrating understanding for community concerns.

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3. Monitoring Upticks in Miami Protests

Ms. Plantin reported a rise in demonstrations throughout the County.

An unidentified public attendee discussed the case of 11-year-old Jocelyn Rojo Carranza, who took her own life on February 3, 2025 in Gainesville, TX following harassment at school related to her family's immigration circumstances.

Ms. Plantin emphasized that many undocumented individuals in the County were experiencing heightened stress and hostility from other residents concerning their legal standing. She stated that understanding the root causes of these community tensions was essential for the CRB to effectively address them. Ms. Plantin highlighted that public forums represented an appropriate method for fostering communication and reducing conflict.

4. Introductory Meeting with Chairman Rodriguez

Ms. Plantin emphasized the value of the CRB establishing connections with newly elected Chairpersons or County Commissioners upon taking office to foster collaborative relationships.

Chairman Diaz announced he was scheduled to meet with the newly elected Board of County Commissioners' Chairman Anthony Rodriguez on February 25, 2025 to outline the CRB's function and requested input from his colleagues regarding topics to address during his meeting.

Vice Chairman Gervais recommended that Chairman Diaz address recent federal policy modifications concerning education, immigration, and funding suspensions with the BCC Chairman Rodriguez.

5. Spring Break 2025 Messaging – CRB Activation and Goodwill Ambassadors Deployment

Ms. Plantin reported that the Miami-Dade County Goodwill Ambassadors Program had been launched with 80 volunteers scheduled for deployment during the 2025 spring break period in Miami Beach, beginning March 7, 2025, with peak activity expected on March 21, 2025. She noted her plan to attend second-week festivities to collect information about the events.

Ms. Plantin raised concerns about the spring break marketing approach, which continued to promote a young adult party environment in Miami Beach similar to 2024 messaging. She also expressed apprehension regarding the governor's decision to deploy Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) officers to support the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission during the event. She explained that many young visitors remained unaware of Miami Beach ordinances and might inadvertently violate them, potentially

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resulting in confrontations with FHP and MBPD personnel. Ms. Plantin emphasized that Goodwill Ambassadors served as intermediaries for law enforcement by providing guidance and warnings to visitors about their conduct.

In response to Ms. Mena's inquiry about the effectiveness of 2024 spring break messaging in reducing criminal activity, Ms. Plantin stated the impact remained uncertain and expressed skepticism about its potential success for the current year.

Mr. Yvans Morisseau, Community Advocacy Liaison for Goodwill Ambassadors, addressed the program's operations in Miami Beach. He reported that while volunteer numbers had declined, the quality of participants had improved through enhanced training in crowd management, diversity awareness, and de-escalation methods. He confirmed the program's readiness to assist during 2025 spring break, with volunteers wearing County uniforms, and clarified distinctions between County Goodwill Ambassadors and Miami Beach personnel.

Following Mr. Morisseau's explanation of deployment plans, Chairman Diaz asked whether he participated in spring break event planning.

Mr. Morisseau responded that he was not involved in planning but would join a virtual meeting scheduled for February 20, 2025, with MBPD Detective Chris Mitchell and the Goodwill Ambassadors.

6. Passing of Art Martineau

Ms. Plantin acknowledged the passing of Mr. Art Martineau, Executive Director of the Miami Beach Police Athletic League on January 27, 2025. She noted his vital role in the Miami-Dade County Goodwill Ambassadors Program (Goodwill Ambassadors). Ms. Plantin provided details about Mr. Martineau's funeral service, which was held on January 30, 2025 which she attended along with representatives from the Goodwill Ambassadors on behalf of the County.

7. Miami Gardens Community Meeting with Constitutional Officers

Ms. Plantin briefed the CRB about a February 3, 2025 town hall meeting organized by Miami Gardens Councilman Reggie Leon, which drew strong attendance from County constitutional officers and local residents. She reported that numerous residents expressed concerns regarding federal immigration policy changes, the upcoming FIFA World Cup 2026, and municipal matters. Ms. Plantin observed that while not all constitutional officers participated, the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office provided a representative.

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Ms. Plantin also announced her intention to attend similar meetings in North Miami and Sunny Isles Beach to gain deeper insight into residents' concerns.

8. Miami-Dade Sheriff Office—Intracoastal District Meeting & Roll Calls

Ms. Plantin noted that the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office (MDSO) Intracoastal District Meeting was scheduled to be held on February 21, 2025 at the Intracoastal District Station.

Ms. Plantin advised she was invited by Major Evans Gabriel, MDSO, to perform the roll call for the meeting.

Next CRB Board Meeting – Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Vice Chairman Gervais announced that the next CRB meeting would be held on Wednesday, March 19, 2025.

Hotspots

1. Monitoring the Shooting on Miami Beach

Ms. Shirley Plantin reported on a February 15, 2025 shooting incident in Miami Beach involving two Jewish men who were targeted after being mistaken for Palestinians.

Ms. Plantin indicated that the CRB would continue monitoring the case as the County's Jewish community sought hate crime classification for the incident, while other communities harbored similar concerns about hate crimes. She noted increased protest activity throughout the County and warned that certain groups may be targeted during the upcoming spring break period. Ms. Plantin emphasized the importance of CRB partnerships with community organizations to effectively respond to such incidents.

Discussion ensued among the CRB members regarding hate speech and escalating intolerance.

Mr. Paez, contended that the City of Miami Beach mayor and officials had contributed to heightened tensions in the area and argued that hate-related rhetoric carried consequences that would impact local tourism.

Ms. Person characterized the shooting as part of a global conflict with local consequences and voiced concerns that some visitors might commit hate crimes believing such behavior would be tolerated. Ms. Person warned that CRB members and Miami-Dade Goodwill Ambassadors Program volunteers could become hate crime targets.

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Mr. Paez concurred with Ms. Person, noting that spring break visitors preferred interacting with Goodwill Ambassadors over law enforcement when violating laws, but volunteers remained vulnerable to those intent on committing hate crimes.

Ms. Cepero proposed that the CRB distribute information about local laws and regulations to visitors at Miami Beach establishments.

Ms. Susan Khoury, a public attendee, inquired whether deputized Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) officers would be present at Miami Beach during spring break to support law enforcement.

After Chairman Diaz confirmed FHP would provide law enforcement assistance, Ms. Khoury cautioned that this could result in incidents related to immigration policy enforcement.

Announcements

1. COSMOS Community Dinner

Ms. Shirley Plantin announced that the Coalition of South Florida Muslim Organizations (COSMOS) Annual Community Appreciation Dinner 2025 was scheduled for February 22, 2025 at the Hilton Miami Airport hotel. She noted that COSMOS maintained a partnership with the CRB and their representatives participated in Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement (CJLE) meetings. Ms. Plantin confirmed her attendance at the dinner.

Ms. Person indicated her inability to attend the dinner.

Ms. York reported that the Anti-Defamation League would host a “No Place For Hate” event in Miami Beach on February 28, 2025. She also mentioned that the Miami Beach Fienberg-Fisher K-8 Center had scheduled a Career Day event for February 21, 2025.

Ms. York announced that the Miami Beach Commission for Women would inaugurate the 2025 Exemplary Women portrait exhibit with a ceremony at Lummus Park on March 4, 2025 at 12:30 p.m. She also reported that the County would hold the “Honoring Our Heroes: Women Veterans of Miami-Dade” event at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center (SPCC) on March 19, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.

Mr. Paez announced that the Black Affairs Advisory Board, the Office of the Mayor, and the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust would host the Black History Month Food Truck and Vendor Fair at SPCC on February 21, 2025 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in honor of Black History Month.

Ms. Plantin invited all attendees of today’s (2/19) meeting to participate in the next CJLE meeting at the Miami Gardens Police Department on February 26, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

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Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Community Relations Board (CRB), the meeting was adjourned at 3:46 p.m.