

CLERK'S SUMMARY OF MINUTES
MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD (CRB)
JUNE 18, 2025

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

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

The following staff members were present: Dr. Shirley Plantin, Executive Director, CRB; and Deputy Clerk Judy Marsh.

WELCOME

In Chairman Diaz's absence, First Vice Chairwoman Gizelle M. Ortiz-Velazquez called the CRB meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING (2 MINUTES PER PERSON)

First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez opened the public hearing and closed it after no one appeared to speak.

APPROVE CURRENT MEETING AGENDA

Mr. Joseph R. Salzverg moved to approve today's CRB meeting agenda, as presented. This motion was seconded by Ms. Juliette Fabien, and upon being put to a vote, passed 10-0 (Chairman Rene Diaz and Vice Chairman Mr. Eddy Gervais were absent).

CRB Committee Meetings and Date

1. Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement, Wednesday, June 25, 2025

First Vice Chairwoman Gizelle Ortiz-Velazquez stated that the Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement (CJLE) Committee would be holding a meeting on Wednesday, June 25, 2025.

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Dr. Shirley Plantin noted that the CJLE meeting would be held at Old Grove Park, 690 NE 159th Street, Miami, Florida. She informed the CRB about the previous CJLE meeting that was held in Barry University.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Update: Attended Interfaith Board meeting to address community Fears due to Presidential Executive Orders (Places of Worship)

Dr. Shirley Plantin noted there were changes at the Interfaith Advisory Board (IAB), which included a new director, Dale Scott. At the last IAB meeting that Dr. Plantin attended, she made the IAB aware of the local community's fears because people tended to first express their concerns to faith leaders before going to local government. Dr. Plantin reminded the IAB to be mindful of the information they provided to the community in order to allay their concerns and to provide as much information as possible.

Dr. Plantin pointed out that the community was very concerned with the raids officials from the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted at places of worship. She added that these concerns were particularly felt by members of Haitian churches. Dr. Plantin stressed the need to continue public relations with the community in order to address the concerns. She noted that to date there have not been any raids by ICE at local places of worship but she acknowledged the threats of these raids were real which impacted large events held by places of worships.

DISCUSSIONS AND DETERMINATIONS

1. Recent Rallies & Protests in Miami-Dade County

Dr. Shirley Plantin commented that the recent rallies held throughout the County and nearby areas would be part of the norm for the next three and a half years. She expressed her concerns with these rallies, previous County policy that did not consider changes with the new Constitutional Offices, and that communication from the Office of the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff's Office) was not clear regarding law enforcement policies with the rallies. Dr. Plantin stressed the need for clear communication and coordination in law enforcement to prevent the rallies from getting out of control.

In response to Mr. Joseph R. Salzverg's question as to who was the liaison with the Sheriff's Office, Dr. Plantin stated that it was always the United States Department of Homeland Security and that the CRB had regular communication with Miami-Dade County Sheriff Rosie Cordero-Stutz.

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Dr. Plantin pointed out that the CRB's role was to proactively mitigate situations with the community before they became severe. She also mentioned that the CRB worked for the County not the Sheriff's Office.

First Vice Chairwoman Gizelle Ortiz-Velazquez inquired what was being done by Dr. Plantin to address these concerns.

Dr. Plantin replied that she was in contact with the Office of the Mayor and expressed the concerns to the Administration. She remarked that although the CRB did not have law enforcement authority, it had resources and avenues that could be utilized to address concerns related to rallies.

The possibility of the CRB making a motion was raised by an unidentified member and Dr. Plantin noted that although the CRB could make a motion it would have to go to higher authorities.

Dr. Plantin explained to First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez the process of how the CRB made motions and what would occur afterwards. Dr. Plantin pointed out that she also spoke to Miami-Dade County Chief of Public Safety James Reyes about the rallies situation.

First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez confirmed with Dr. Plantin her recent interactions with the Administration and the Sheriff's Office regarding concerns with how the Sheriff's Office would respond to incidents related to rallies.

Dr. Plantin clarified what the motion would be if it was made by the CRB.

Mr. Salzverg made a motion to direct Dr. Plantin, CRB Director, to continue coordinating conversations between the Office of the Mayor, the Sheriff's Office and the Office of the Chair, to preemptively coordinating operations ahead of potentially high-risk situations. This motion was seconded, and upon being put to a vote, passed 10-0 (Chairman Rene Diaz and Vice Chairman Mr. Eddy Gervais were absent).

2. Continued Concerns about Potential Community Unrest & Law Enforcement Response

First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez noted that the subject of potential community unrest and law enforcement response had just been addressed by Dr. Plantin and the CRB.

3. City of Miami 287 (g) Agreement

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Dr. Plantin informed the CRB that the City of Miami's (Miami) 287(g) Agreement with the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was controversial for many local residents. She added that Miami deferred the item with the agreement until the June 17, 2025 City of Miami Commission meeting after the No Kings protests throughout the County and the country concluded.

Dr. Plantin reported that during the June 17 meeting, the item passed by a vote of 3-2, even though many members of the public attended the meeting to voice their opposition to the item.

Dr. Plantin opined the agreement would create chaos in the community and that Miami was the residence of many undocumented people.

In response to First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez's question about funding issues with the agreement, Dr. Plantin provided details about the 287(g) Agreement, in which Miami would assist ICE with immigration enforcement. Regarding the funding issues, Dr. Plantin said she did not have much information because it was undecided, but noted that significant funds would go to training for immigration enforcement.

4. Concerns about Upticks in Raids

Dr. Plantin indicated there were many concerns from farm and hotel workers, as well as those who attended places of worship about raids from the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in local communities. She added that many non-profit organizations had lost funding and people were absent from their jobs while children were not appearing for local programs due to fears of being arrested by ICE. Dr. Plantin noted that employers, teachers and places of worship were also expressing concerns about the ICE raids.

Following Ms. Stephanie MacIntosh's inquiry whether the County would address gun violence, First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez indicated the public hearing was closed and the subject was not pertinent to the current discussion.

5. Local Community Concerns with Travel Bans (affecting Venezuela, Cuba and Haiti)

Dr. Plantin indicated that the travel bans on immigrants from Venezuela, Cuba and Haiti were related to many of the issues discussed in today's meeting. She noted that she had attended several community meetings and many attendees were trying to determine resources and budget reductions to community assistance programs. She cautioned that the immigration situation and enforcement efforts would eventually create more unrest in the community.

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6. Community Discontent with Defacement of Historic Mural in Dorsey Park (I continued from here)

Dr. Plantin said the defacement of the Historic Mural in Dorsey Park occurred approximately two weeks ago, and the Black community was in an uproar and expressed their concern regarding the lack of outrage by other communities. She explained that a 7-year old child saw the defacement of Jackie Robinson and asked his mother what it meant. Dr. Plantin noted representatives from the Circle of Brotherhood, the Peacemakers, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), leaders of Overtown and leaders of the Dorsey Park area came out and this created chaos. She advised resentment and sentiments were expressed towards many leaders regarding comments that were made towards global issues but none towards regarding racism and local issues. Dr. Plantin said she spoke to Ms. Daniella Pierre, President, NAACP North; and she was aware that Ms. Pierre and Mr. Harold Ford, President, NAACP South, disseminated a statement which was shared with the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office. She reiterated the community's displeasure at the silence of the community leaders and noted several follow-up meetings would be held to discuss how to address this issue appropriately. Dr. Plantin indicated that she offered the CRB's assistance to its partners and would apprise the CRB of what was needed.

First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez inquired if the areas of the murals that were defaced had been covered, and Dr. Plantin advised that the murals had been painted, and the police was working on leads. She noted the artists had committed that they were not going to let hate win and stood by their commitment.

In response to Ms. Mena's inquiry regarding how a statement could be disseminated opposing the defacement of the historic mural, Ms. Plantin suggested contacting the NAACP and they could provide guidance.

In response to Ms. Stephanie McIntosh's request to speak, First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez advised the public hearing portion was closed; however, she would provide her an opportunity to briefly address the board.

Ms. McIntosh commented that the African American community was being discriminated and disrespected.

7. Local Impact of Israel and Iran war

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Dr. Plantin said she wanted to ensure space was created for everyone, and ensuring the CRB was not being provided with information from only one source, and trying to be completely equitable with the information. She advised the Board that as the Israel and Iran war escalated, she would seek guidance from the partners who were better suited to educate the CRB. Dr. Plantin noted the sentiment in the Black community was that the CRB paid a lot of attention to what was occurring in the Jewish community but the same attention was not provided in the Black community.

Ms. Person opined that as a member of the Jewish community the equity issue was important. She noted her organization contacted the Black community after the murals were destroyed to determine how the organization could be more involved.

Regarding Israel, Ms. Person said a solidarity walk was held a week and a half ago in solidarity for individuals who were attacked at the walk in Boulder. She noted these walks occurred once weekly nationally, and a weekly walk was held in Aventura in solidarity with the remaining hostages in Gaza, and was promoted as solidarity for the rising antisemitism and Jewish identity. Ms. Person mentioned that over 500 people participated in the walk and she thanked various law enforcement agencies for being present in large numbers. She noted the motion that was made earlier to create a process to be prepared for rallies and protests, should mirror a safe experience, tightly locked with law enforcement and a high awareness. Ms. Person expressed appreciation to law enforcement and expressed her hope that this could be equitable for the entire community. She stated that information regarding the walks would be available on Jewishmiami.org and Jewishmiami on Instagram; and individuals could sign up for emails. Ms. Person noted both she and Mr. Joshua Sayles were members of the Jewish Community Relations Council which had a social media presence, JCRC Miami.

First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez announced the next CRB meeting would be held on Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at 2:00 p.m., and the next Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday, June 25, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Oak Grove Park, North Miami Beach.

Hotspots

Dr. Plantin commented that an uptick in gun violence was occurring and the concern was raised at the Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement Committee that this was not only because it was summer but also because of the stress level. She expressed concern regarding the community's stress level.

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Ms. Stephanie MacIntosh commented on the hotspots, noting she lost a child and was familiar with hotspots. She noted the County needed to repair the Shot Spotters.

Announcements

1. Financial Disclosure Forms by July 1, 2025

Dr. Plantin asked the CRB members to provide her with copies of their financial disclosure forms.

First Vice Chairwoman Ortiz-Velazquez said she had not received any emails from the County regarding the forms to be filled out.

Dr. Plantin offered to send the link for the financial disclosure forms to the Board members and reminded them the forms must be signed manually.

Dr. Plantin reminded the Board members to complete the mandatory online Sexual Harassment Training as failure to do so would result in removal from the Board. She asked that a copy of any County requirement that was completed by the members be emailed to her at Shirley.Plantin@miamidade.gov; or Shirleyyp@miamidade.gov.

Ms. Marjorie York announced that free summer art classes began two weeks ago at the Botanical garden and all Miami-Dade County children were welcome to attend every Tuesday for ten weeks, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Ms. Susan Khoury suggested the Board initiate a hotline where people could leave messages related to issues.

Dr. Plantin said the CRB could only convey the messages to law enforcement. She noted the CRB was charged with mitigating community tension from a preventative standpoint and occasionally, from a reactionary standpoint. Dr. Plantin commented that the CRB was an advisory board and did not have any powers to hold law enforcement or anyone else accountable. She mentioned that every police department had another number separate from 911.

In response to Ms. Stephanie MacIntosh's question as to whether any of the CRB members worked for the County Commission, Dr. Plantin advised that none of the members worked for Commissioners as the CRB was comprised of volunteer members.

Ms. MacIntosh asked that the African-American community be treated equally; and objected to County employees working from home.

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Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the CRB, the meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.