



Miami-Dade County Office of Community Advocacy

Location – Stephen P. Clark Center – 111 NW 1st St. Miami, FL 33128 – Room 18-04

MARCH 12, 2026 MEETING

MINUTES

1. Call to Order at 2:11 PM

2. Roll Call

Present

Rev. Dr. Kay Williams-Dawson (Chair) [Presided over the meeting]
Rabbi Robyn Fisher
Harold Foster
Pastor Conrad Molleda
Father Patrick O’Neil
Lieutenant Alex Trinchet
Dr. Kendall Turcios

Excused

Rabbi Mark Rosenberg (Chair)
Pastor Stephen Alessi
Dr. Juan Barek
Rabbi Avrohom Brashevitzky
Phillip Davis Jr.
Pastor Eddy Gervais
Father Elvis Gonzalez
Emmanuel Jimmy Loiseau
Pastor Marc Mortensen
Rev. Evelio Vilches

Resigned from the Board

Pastor Donald Clarke Jr.
Mrs. Olga Hernandez

Guests

N/A

Guests Speakers

N/A

3. Invocation

- Chair Reverend Dr. Williams-Dawson call the meeting to order at 2:11 PM and asked who among the Members wanted to do the invocation.
- Pastor Molleda volunteered for the invocation : *"Father, we come before your presence, asking for your guidance, your direction and Lord and your wisdom as we endeavor Lord in this calling of serving you through this board that we all do Your will and not ours. Lord and bless our community that we serve. We pray this in Your name."*

4. Reasonable opportunity for the public to be heard

Michelle Johson, Faith and Community leadership Manager at the Office of Mayor Cava:

"So the first one is a partnership that we have with the Alliance for aging. One of the things that they came to the mayor's office about was that there are certain popular zip codes in Miami, Dade County, that really aren't utilizing the services and resources of the Alliance. So we wanted to connect with faith leaders in the community to do a virtual workshop, information session with the Chair of the Alliance for aging and their staff, and they're just it's virtual. It's hopefully easy to pop on, and so I sent an invitation out to all of you and to Alex as well. So that's the information session with the Alliance for aging that's going to be March 20, from 11am to 12:30 and it's on Zoom. The second one is the zero waste master plan. We have a working with Catalyst Miami wanted to do a focus group, and we wanted to focus on faith leaders, and they've done about 20 so far, but we wanted to do one with faith leaders. I've invited this board, along with the African American Council of Christian clergy, with the Haitian pastors Association, just as many associations as I can get, and that's going to be in person here on the mayor's floor".

"It's going to be Thursday, March 19, from 10am to 11am next week, cool. So also, that invitation has also been sent out. The other thing I wanted to talk about really quickly is America's 250 so we are doing a lot of initiatives and events. We have one coming up on the 21st and that's for Women's History Month. And we were going to be at the Women's Park, which is a very underutilized Park, which is fantastic, and that's going to be on the 21st at 3:00, and I think a flyer will be coming out on that shortly. But the one other thing is the upcoming National Day of Prayer. So that will be That's May 7, and so I have reached out and asked if there is some support that we can probably partner and do something together. So I just wanted to put that out there as well. Talked, and that's it. Thank you".

- Mr. Harold Foster: *"before you go, yes, this coming Monday, but not in this building. It's two blocks over, upstairs across the library at what's called the CPO office, is the mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel. Are you aware of that? They're meeting on Monday. It's the third meeting of its sort. And it's really kind of kicking off Memorial Day weekend at the Freedom Tower. And then there's a series of events. I just want you to be aware of that particular meeting that's open to the public, but not many people know about it's a makeshift of one individual from the BCC, the mayor, the Chief Operating Officer, the greater Miami visitor convention. The city of Miami has somebody on there, the president Miami Dade College, and there's two or three more, but it's might be something you want to look into to see how they can pull you in, because there they have resources allocated to it that should also all term it should be available to your organization, or you should at least be getting invites."*
- Pastor Modella: *"Are there any other future meetings?"*

- Michelle Johnson: *"we continue to have them and also share it out. Okay, if there's if you can't be there and somebody else can, and if you have other people in your congregation that you think this would benefit, you know, one of the things that really one of the reasons why I'm such an advocate for this is because I'm also a caregiver for my parents, my grandmother, who's 103 years old, and so whenever it's the navigation is hard. And imagine, if you don't have access, how do you even navigate a system that's kind of complicated, and even if you have access, it's complicated. So please share to your congregation. You don't it doesn't have to just be for you, but you know, if you can't be there, please give it to someone who can join. Just share it out. All right, thank you."*

5. Opening

- Chair Reverend Dr. Williams-Dawson to Rabbi Fisher : *"I want to formally say, Hello, it's good to see you. We miss you for a little bit."*
- Rabbi Fisher: *"It's good to be back"*
- Chair Williams-Dawson: *"So we don't have quorum so we'll just go forward with the agenda with the agenda as printed. We can't approve the November 2025 minutes, nor the January, 8 meeting minutes as of yet, I did see a couple of things, and I'll give that to you, Alex for for changes".*
- Program Director Nicolas Alex Jospitre: *"Next item would be the discussion and adoption of the 2026 interfere Advisory Board meeting calendar. I know we have to vote on that. I don't know if you want to have the discussions, because so far, the only date, actually, not the only date, one of the date that was actually put up to house problem is April 9, because it falls on the Jewish Passover holiday. So we talked about it the last time. We want to push it a little bit, maybe for the following week."*
- Harold Foster: *"So Wednesday, the first is the first night of Passover, and those of us, myself included, I don't have a beer or gray hair, that's a joke we observed the last two days. So that would be on a Thursday then. Passover ends around 7:15 on Thursday the ninth is we the two evenings before or the last two Seders. But unlike the first two, it's just a regular meal, But we observe the rules without driving or using the phone or electricity, unless first responder "*
- Program Director Jospitre: *"Anyway we have to meet on a Thursday, I don't know if we want to keep April 16 in mind instead of the ninth."*
- Chair: *"I don't know if we want to keep that, and we could vote on it if everybody agrees on April 16 instead but I'm not available because the third, fourth and fifth Thursdays of the month, I have a radio show at two o'clock, I'm once person and I'm fine with it. I think that because we discussed this before with other members of the board that we would not meet on that night, but we just haven't been able to vote because of lack of quorum. And I would say, if we don't reach core where we can vote, we know sure we're not going to have quorum. On that day, I would send out a notice from the office that we won't have quorum. Thus we need to move the meeting to the following Thursday and make that announcement. The vote will be for the whole calendar, definitely we know for April the ninth, even if we just, if we don't bother the other dates for now, until we definitely get a quorum, but we know on the ninth we won't have quorum. "*
- Program Director Jospitre: *there's a question mark on July 9, because last year we skipped that. We skipped July because of summer plans, but the year before, we actually skipped August. So it's up to you to decide which month will be better to skip this year for summer plans, because I know most of the time we have a lot of people. So it's up to you to decide*

- which month will be better to skip this year for summer plans, because I know most of the time we have a lot of people traveling, especially school is over and it's summertime. So we're talking about July or August again. Last year we took July and were here working on August, but the year before, or years before, we skipped August; so we can ask everybody."*
- Dr. Turcios: *"I know, I know for me, I'm going to be out in August."*
 - Mr. Foster: *"because I work for Senator Garcia, he likes everybody to take their vacations in the month of August. As far as family vacations, I don't have any definitive plans yet."*
 - Pastor Molleda: *"I don't have any convenience."*
 - Rabbi Fisher: *"I'm not really sure, but I would say that August is better than July to be present."*
 - Chair Williams-Dawson: *"I'm available for both"*
 - Father O'Neil: *"traditional religious leadership groups like mosaic MCCJ. We never met during the summertime, and we should learn a lesson, and we're struggling to get a quorum. Should we be meeting every month? For what reason? A lot of information can be sent in the mail to install the technology today, very soon, I said, ai 99 Father Pat, very anxious to be active here, but also not because the rabbis are here. I'm going to observe the High Holy Days. I'm Catholic priest, but I've always observed dinners on Wednesday. In a week or so, I feel very strong about that. The less agenda items we have, they're critical, the less and less participation you'll have we don't need to come to get information."*
 - Rabbi Fisher: *"It's in our bylaws. So we would have to make a proposal and vote. I don't think it's the right time."*
 - Program Director Jospitre: *"I don't think it's the right time to bring that up because I don't know if you heard, the Interfaith Advisory Board shouldn't be concerned about it, but there's a lot that supposed to go to the desk of the Governor right now that supposed to ban any board that would be deemed to be DEI. That would not concern the Interfaith Advisory Board but at this time to ask to change the bylaws in order to stay home for the meetings, I don't know how that would play, especially now that we have the City of Miami which is copying on us and is having its new Interfaith Advisory Council and it's not going to be virtual"*
 - Lieutenant Trinchet: *"I'm open for anything, I'll be here for both days."*
 - Program Director Jospitre: *"As we get closer to July, we'll go ahead and make another round. Because things change, plans change. So we'll see. As we get closer to July, we'll decide which of the months we'll keep. The last month on our list is December. We always skipped December all the previous years because everybody agrees that during the holidays It's kind of hard to meet."*
 - Father O'Neil: *"So you say by our bylaws we have to keep meeting monthly, what if you keep on CCing us to tell us that because of quorum a meeting is cancelled?"*
 - Program Director Jospitre: *"About the meetings they don't have to be canceled just because you don't have quorum. The chair can decide not to hold a meeting because we don't have quorum. We had our first meeting of the year and we didn't quorum. We only have to vote on the minutes and that can take place anytime, The only thing, of course, we have to vote on the agenda, but we can still have a meeting without quorum."*
 - Father O'Neil: *"I've always been asking you, if you don't have a quorum, I don't want to spend an hour plus just getting down here for you know,"*
 - Program Director Jospitre: *"I remember you called me especially for that. Yesterday I sent a text to everybody and we were good to go. But it's not me, Pastor Loiseau just told be his son is sick, Father Gonzalez, I tried to call him, no answer, I tried to call the Rabbi, no answer... I'm here doing everything that I can, at the end, I can do so much. What I do as everybody knows, I send a text to ask everybody if they will be available, they say yes. And two days before the meeting, I*

- sent another text to ask for confirmation, they say yes. So I'm sorry, you did call me and ask me, I'm like, hey, it's looking good because everybody said a big solid Yes"*
- Chair : *"And let me say I'm not for canceling just because there's no quorum. We can meet; we can still discuss. We can hear public sentiments and what people want to share with us, or what we need to share , and then vote whenever we do have a quorum on whatever information we have to move from the agenda, and I just don't think we should penalize or I. It, or just disregard those that are willing, not even willing, but have opportunity to come and to share what we're here for. Let's do it as often as we can, because there will be those days when you can't like last in February, there it was almost like nobody. So now we're not coming for two people. I know you're aggravated Father."*
"So we're thinking of December as a holiday for everybody"
 Program Director: *"yes, okay. So what we can do, we can go over discussions we had today, and if we have a meeting next month then we'll vote. Then at this point, I'll be able to send the final calendar to everybody."*

6. Old Business updates

- Muslim group announces lawsuit after Governor Desantis labels it a "terrorist organization"
 Program Director Alex Jospitre explained : *"the governor issued an executive order on December 8, designating two Muslim groups care, which is a Council on American Islamic Relations and Muslim Brotherhood as Foreign Terrorist Organizations, pointing to alleged connections to foreign extremist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. As a result of that, Florida agencies, including the Florida Department of law enforcement and the Florida Highway Patrol were directed to undertake all lawful measures to prevent unlawful activities by this organization, including denying privileges and resources to anyone providing particular support. So care responded to the order announcing the group's plan to file a lawsuit against the governor after calling the executive order deferment. So I have an update. Care has been supported in this litigation by the Southern Poverty Law Center, SPLC and the Muslim legal Fund of America, MLFA. The governor has welcomed the lawsuit, stating that it provides an opportunity to access cares internal financial records through the legal discovery process. Before any lawsuit proceeds with discovery process, it must survive any motion to dismiss. However, the two parties may compare each other to hand over relevant internal documents. I have to tell you, this was on the agenda for the last meeting. Any questions, discussions."*
Miami-Dade County Human Trafficking Coalition (MDCHTC) 2026 Annual Conference on January 24, 2026 & State of the County.
- Chair Williams-Dawson : *"And then I was able to attend the human trafficking annual conference, which was an amazing event. And I do believe that they plan to come and do a presentation here. They want to get on our schedule, and I also had opportunity to represent at the State of the County that was held by our mayor at Florida Memorial."*
"And I also had the opportunity to represent at the State of the County that was held by the Mayor"
- Program Officer Jospitre : *"If I may interrupt, you were praised for your invocation by a lot of County Employees from different departments... I received a lot of compliments for you all day long."*
- Chair: *" it was a great event, well attended, and I still believe the County is in good hands; so it was good to just be with the faith community and represent this particular board. So Great time we had that night. Do you want to talk about the faith leaders raising concerns over Florida bill? Faith Leaders raise concerns over Florida bill about religious freedom in schools"*

- Program Officer Jospitre : *"religious leaders and interfaith advocates from across the state are sounding the alarm on a bill aim at protecting religious freedom and expression in Florida public schools, arguing that it could lead to special protection for the dominant religious groups such as Christianity, and weakened Reliance between church and state. Is the bill called protection of religious expression in public school. Would amend Florida's constitution to add language protecting students and staff from facing discrimination for expressing their religious belief in public schools, specifically in student, school, work, clothing, prayer, moment of silence, prayer, moments of prayer, moments of silence and high school review, which was discussed at a house Education and Development Committee, committee meeting allows, also allows students to organize prayer groups, religious clubs and other religious gathering the same groups function. If the bill gets approved by the legislature, Florida voters will see on the ballot in the next general election. Faith leaders opposing the bill argued that the bill could risk privileging certain religious or ideological few notes over orders. They also warned that the bill could allow students of our teachers to embed religious or political ideology into classrooms under the guise of free expression and expose schools to litigation."*
- Chair : *"And so is it still in committee or it's moved out of committee?"*
- Program Officer : *"I think it moved out I can send you an update."*
- Rabbi Fisher : *"I think it is HJR 583, HJR 111"*
- Program Officer Jospitre : *"The bill is HJR 5383 and the Compagnon bill is HB835SB1006"*
- Dr. Turcios : *"If, if, you know, if I could just, you know, ask that the either the bill or the contents of it be, you know, sent to us so that we could speak about it in an informed way, you know, because it sounds like I'm hearing a summary from, you know, you know, from someone who's summarizing it for us."*
- Rabbi Fisher: *"it also says, in case everybody was interested, if passed by three fifths of the votes in the legislature, it will appear on the November 3 2026 ballot requires 60% voter approval"*
- Chair: *but it's Faith leaders that are actually that are opposing this*
- Program Officer Jospitre : *"we have a lot of people opposing. They gave some examples like if you're at a game and somebody wants to make a remark before the game starts, or everybody wants to make a remark, how is it going to play? Because now, like each religion could want to be represented before the game even starts. So how do you choose which one actually prioritizing? There could be a situation where each religion wants to be represented before the game even starts, so how do you choose which one to prioritize over the others?"*
- Pastor Molleda: *"My concern is that this is being moved by some faith Leaders by not all Faith Leaders. This is an issue that needs to be addressed and taken care of. Because I think, you know, the creator and school system delays are a priority, my personal opinion."*
- Chair: *"So I think we should read it and talk about it in our next meeting"*
- Program Officer : *"I don't know if after reading it, it you'd like to Board to address it or make a statement about it?"*
- Doctor Turcios : *"I don't have an opinion on it because, like, you know, I'm grateful that you're giving me a summary of somebody else's opinion on it"*
- Program Director Jospitre : *"It's not an opinion, it's the situation: the bill is out there, some people are for it and some people are against it."*
- Doctor Turcios: *"no problem. Forgive me. Forgive me for interjecting that my perception of what you read was that I'm receiving somebody else who vetted it, versus me being able to vet it. but I appreciate it. Don't let me put words in your mouth."*
- Rabbi Fisher : *"So historically, whenever there is an encroachment of state and religious boundaries, it's not a good thing for minorities including Muslims, Jewish people... It just places*

the majority in control of and the dominant faith, putting people at risk and making people feel uncomfortable, allowing one to be favored over the other. So it's never, it's never a good thing for minorities, and I can tell you that as a minority, so I don't know what our power is here. I've always questioned that. What is our role? I mean as an interfaith board, if we all decided that no this shouldn't pass, that it's crossing religious boundaries, then do we make a statement? Can we make a statement?"

- Program Officer : *"Well to the Board of County Commissioners, because this is our role, we're an advisory Board, we can only voice what the Interfaith Community is thinking. We're not decision makers; we cannot make decisions and can only suggest. "*
- Rabbi Fisher: *"At least it would be doing something instead of sitting here discussing what events are happening. You know, if we could make a statement... We don't have a quorum now, but maybe in anticipation of next time, we could put together a statement that we could circulate ahead of time and then vote on next time, God willing, there's a quorum. I don't know what the timing is of this vote, but it would be nice to have hopefully be able to do that before that happens."*
- Chair Williams-Dawson: *"So why don't we have everyone saying what your position is, or your or send your thoughts around this bill? Once we receive the bill, then we can respond back in email, and if you send it to me, I can draft up something for the next time and or how, if that's appropriate, I don't want to break it. I'm happy to do so as well, yeah, and then we can bring it back before the board and let everybody read it and say, This is what we've compiled as a collaborative effort. And we can then tweak it from there and then send it to the commissioners."*
- Father O'Neil: *"The session will be over by then, and this will either get voted up or down without any influence from us. I'm having dinner one, just two of us, the governor a couple nights. I'll represent this if he kills it. He owes me a few favors that'll end it. But I appreciate especially the rabbi, the discussion right on target. But you know, our voice says nowhere we got to find people, personal context. It's who you know, always in all the statements of the world. Want to nobody attention. But to be honest with you, I've lived in this state for 40 years, in a university president, so concert visitor, tell us he knew who I am, and that's how you move things. Doesn't get moved any other way. Nobody owes me anything, and practically He owes me something. So I'm not afraid to carry this. It would be the strongest voice to get him to think about it. And if God finds out I'm raising my voice, you heard me raise my voice, I'm not going to back down."*
- Rabbi Fisher: *"Well, you know, it's even less about favors, and it is about the influence precisely right that you have over people that we all have in different realms. And when you have it, you should use it."*
- Father O'Neil: *"It's fine saying, but never against the process of drafting the resolution list. But looked at this for the last four years with MCCJ and I was like, never went anywhere, nowhere. You know, we're always too late. You know, we're on the phone at 5 o'clock in the morning trying to agree over two or three words by the time we got something out, was not only watered down, it didn't have any influence at all. I'm 87 I'm tired of wasting time on things that I know there's a better way to do them, relationships. Consider a ton. The Reverend."*
- Rabbi Fisher: *"Relationships. So it just makes you question, like, what are we doing here?"*
- Father O'Neil: *"Well, no, we need you here for the community. I've been very anxious for a long time, since I've been involved in been not only a board member, but for the longest city clergy dialog in the entire, entire United States only five years. I believe when we've only had a big voice, early 70s, early 80s, Cuban exiles being dumped here. I had 1000 of them at the university during the summer of 19/81. Haitian influx the burning. Ella Chapin called me on Christmas Day*

1981 and they were burning downtown Miami. Got to get back here from Christmas when I was in Orlando. Now that's when we seem to have some influence over what's going on. Now. We don't have a bully pulpit, that's for sure. And I know things have changed, but you know, as I sit here, you know agonizing about what's going on in the world, and I know that's on the agenda here. I don't know how, how it can be relevant and not say something about what's going on and find, find backing and comfort a position with one another. There was not a single voice crying in the wilderness. But our people are suffering. Why do we sit here? Millions of people out of ethnic cleansing, out of hatred, out of wars that are unjustified. It's overwhelming to me. You know, many times I wish I would just go to see the Lord take me home. Maybe I'm standing in somebody's way to get a better position."

- Chair: "I've been quiet on some of that because I'm, like, is this where we should be speaking? Because I'm speaking in other areas, but I want to be appropriate here and not be offensive and/or whatever the case may be, but I'm like you. How can we be of a source of comfort to each other and then to our congregants and to this community when so much trauma is happening?"
- Rabbi Fisher: "I don't know how long our terms are, since we've been on doing this for a while, that if we make recommendations about where we think it could be going based on what we weren't able to do for the next group of leaders that come in, because otherwise they're going to sit here and be frustrated as you are. You know about not being able to move the needle or convene and discuss issues. I mean, I've tried in the past with regard to different issues that came up, and I was, as you know, I was shut down a lot. I know, It's like we represent people different religions in this community, and they are looking to us, or the mayor is looking to us to use our voices and our influence to make a difference. And I don't know, I want to know what we're doing. You know, not to put any pressure on you, but you're just, you know, the latest leader to sit there and I think we're all guilty of it. It's not because you know you're sitting in higher seat, but we all have sat here month after month"
- Chair : "And we have sent statements and things of that nature. But if, for me from what I'm hearing is, is there someone that's reading them? Do they consider we've had feedback before? On certain things, but I think we can we do we're doing what we can with what we can. If we want to do more, I think we have the opportunity to say, Let's do more. What is that? One is at dinner. I'm going to raise my voice wherever I have influence that I'm going to speak wherever I can attend various events and represent this board. I think all of us should do that if you have opportunity, because that is being in the space, that is being accountable to community, and that is saying what needs to be said in those spaces, but as a board, we can do more. And so that's what I'm saying. What else do we want to do?"
- Dr. Turcios: "I was just going to say thank you for your words on, you know, minorities and the importance of minorities. I'm well aware of that. I'm not sure you know, being a Seventh Day Adventist Christian, how much I appreciate being a minority, and the fact that, you know, I'm here at a table with all of you, I counted a privilege to be able to, you know, have a good dialog. And so, you know, wiser people than me have said, you know, the church is not the master or the servant of the state. We're to be the conscience of the state. I like that phrase, and so I'm also reminded that consensus is the lowest form of leadership. If you're ever in a room and they're ordering pizza, you're probably going to end up with cheese if you're looking for consensus, because it's the lowest common denominator where people are not going to, you know, you know, reject it or buck out. You know, I haven't read the bill. I'm looking at this bill here, and I'm thinking, you know, have, has, has this has our society ceded so much ground in regards to faith in our public schools and in our school systems, that the secular, demonic forces have not had any problem overrunning our values in the public school, having said that, having said that, I am

also sensitive to the reality of what you know. Rabbi Fisher, sorry, has described that whenever there are, you know, religious moral, moral dictates that the state brings down, there's the minorities are trampled. And so I don't have, you know, I don't have any answers right now. I would just, I would just appreciate being able to read through the bill, and even if this committee doesn't agree with my personal, you know, opinion on it, we can still be friends. You can still come in my house, actually serve you, post you in my home, like I That's the beautiful thing about, you know, just my spirit and the spirit with which we serve here, we don't have to agree theologically, philosophically, I'm in West Kendall. I'm pretty sure that people at Wynwood have a different philosophical understanding of West Kendall people. And more likely, you know, Liberty City versus Coconut Grove, like we're from a city that's diverse, and yet we're facing in our nation today, a tremendous erosion of morality. How to address that? You know, again, that's right. We can't legislate it and so, and I think we agree on that, yeah, and yet, and yet, I think that I'd like to be able to read this, yeah, to be able to really opine on it, and to say, you know, there's, it's a, it's complex, but, but for such a time as this, we're here."

- Harold Foster: "One last thing I just want we already mentioned it, but you were absolutely spectacular yourself last month, so hopefully we'll be able to hear you on the radio show in the soon time."
- Chair: "It's WMBM 1490 AM"
- Harold Foster: "Can I ask one thing? Maybe you would know? Because if the if the dates not adjustable, that's fine. I can only speak for myself. And I think Rabbi Hadar maybe Rabbi same way will there be, I think last year there was a Saturday morning prayer breakfast. I could be mistaken. Does this board have anything of such going on for this year? We were invited, but it wasn't from this board. Yeah. That's something that I'd like for myself. I would have loved to have come to it."
- Program Director Jospitre: "We were invited to a breakfast event; I tried to find out if our invitation was complimentary but never got any answers, nothing."
- Chair: "one of the things though, that I would like for all of us to think about, because we've been asked, is for the National Day of Prayer on May the seventh, to think about how we would like to represent. I don't know how many participated before at the National Day of Prayer that the mayor has had before, but they want us to have to pull that together, where we want it, how we want it, you know, how we want to be a part of that, represented in terms of all of our faith and undergirded with prayer. So that's definitely something we can do and can definitely be powerful."
- Program Officer Jospitre: "or if the Board would like to have an event also whether at a church, whether here whether at one of your places of worship, that would be great for the National Day of Prayer. That would be in addition to what the Mayor is organizing."
- Harold Foster: "Do we know how many attends on a yearly basis in the last four or five years? Obviously, the covid years don't count"
- Chair: "I've attended, at least two. And it was a pretty good number of people. I'm going to say at least over 200."
- Program Officer Jospitre: "Asides from the Mayor's Office event the Board could organize something and invite congregates to participate."
- Lieutenant Trinchet: "before we move on To the next one. I know everyone's voiced their opinion on this specific item, a I kind of see from other aspects, also one looking at it the children. What aspects of faith are they where they're going to be able to have right now? As it relates to children and school, the only options that they have is to go to a religious school. So do they necessarily have the opportunity to have faith, regardless of what perspective it comes from, you

know? So that's one aspect of it. Second aspect of it is, if nothing is there, a void will come in, also as relates to schools, is this only elementary schools, is middle schools, is high schools, is this colleges as well, you know? So I'm not sure about that little personal story. When I got out of the military, I got in 1994 and not a religious leader and all that, but a person of faith that really, pretty much was struck with faith in 1996 maintaining Miami Dade Community College. And I'm in a speech class, in which you have the opportunity to speak, because it's a speech class. So I spoke about faith that was important to me, and I got pretty much discriminated on and all that. And my comment was, it's interesting that here I am talking about faith and the importance of values and character and integrity and all that. But I just came down and there's people passing club cars with half naked women pretty much on those club cards. So that's tolerated in a school system, but a person talking about faith is not so that and that was 1996 we're in 2026 so whether this bill talks about schools, what type of schools, and all, I think you know, looking a little bit farther to giving the children at least an opportunity to explore matters of faith, you know, you. No matter where we're coming from speaking from a minority. Myself, my father was in World War Two, you know, he served. He was Cuban. I was the first Hispanic, you know, firefighter, you know, in my first fire department. So again, coming from a minority, you know, aspects of it, I see the value of faith is very important, especially coming from police, fire, military, because at the end of the day, my hope is for every places of worship to be strong, so people who get out of the military or in the military can go to these places of worship and their families are able to be integrated, whether it's in a synagogue, a mosque, you know, a church or whatnot. So again, as it relates to some of these things, it weakens the lines between church and state. I think we need to strengthen the lines of church and state. Interesting enough, this is a church meeting. This church meeting is in the state building. So I think we need to strengthen, you know, some of those aspects of it. Because at the end of the day, when, when the state is in an emergency, who do you think they reach out to?"

- Rabbi Fisher: "You have to be careful. What Church are you talking about? Church implies of the Christian theology."
- Lieutenant Trinchet: "So when I say Church I mean, I'm sorry, Mosques, Temples..."
- Rabbi Fisher: "but faith can be translated in different ways. Faith for you, might be certain Christian rituals that are your faith. For me, it could be something else. For another. It could just be my ability to give to somebody else and have faith in humankind. But when you start introducing religion in schools that where other people do not subscribe to that, whether they have no religion or another religion, then you get into danger. And it doesn't mean we can't talk about faith in terms of our faith in humanity, the ability to lift each other up and tolerate, at a minimum, other people, to love our neighbor. Those are ones that we can all agree on. But when we go into faith as articulated through ritual and through in the name of God, even or religion, then we get into."
- Lieutenant Trinchet: "I 100% concur and agree. And that's why I kind of see as allowing that space and allowing them to be able to choose whether it's to go to the young Christian club, the young Jewish club, the young Muslim club, whatever it is according to what faith is important to them, allowing that opportunity, because right now that already exists, that exists in the military and the police and The fire and all the other areas as well. You know, just allowing, allowing them that same opportunity, because at the end of the day, they're going to be allowed that opportunity for Saturday at the opposite end. I remember, before this Board was created, it was an interfaith Committee, and the head of corrections, the director corrections pleaded with the interfaith clergy of home to Dade County to come into juvenile corrections to be able to talk

about matters of faith in juvenile jail. So why? Why go into the at the tail end when to be able to provide them in the front end?"

- Chair: *"So definitely, and thanks Alex for that. Once we get this bill, we can really read it and sequence for the next meeting."*
- Program Officer Jospitre: *"Definitely yes I'll be sending the bill to all of you"*
- Pastor Molleda: *"Can we have more clarity on this? Because we only have one paragraph here. No, before next meeting, I'm going to send you. I'm going to make resources, because I agree with Fisher. I think we need more information, and we do need to have a voice in this, and we need to make an opinion, because not doing anything like little tenant said, it's going to open the door for somebody else who's not from the religious faith, to introduce something that our children would not need invited."*
- Father O'Neil: *"In light of these comments, but just kind of a postscript, the Pew Foundation, which is one of the wealthiest in the United States, they spend hundreds of millions of dollars every year only studying prediction religious traditions, what's going on the impact they now have documented a 10 year study showing a radical decline in people, Americans, millions that they have surveyed that believe in any religion. They don't want to be identified as religious. 81% no longer identified with any religious tradition. I understand the rabbi is very, very sharp, and it's. Choice of other ways of expressing the spirituality journey, but that's, that's a that's a sobering reality for us. We're in an uphill battle, uphill, especially in my tradition, where we know, when I'm concerned about people that are really cool, inadequately in church. You know, most of the priest was saying they left the church, you know, because the Spanish are by tradition, Belize, El Salvador, wherever Cuba traditionally Catholic. So they come to us, and we spend a lot of energy and resources to incorporate them and lead them into the society and the local community and everybody, not just schools and hospitals and old age homes and challenged children and Marion Center for the Disabled, but it's an uphill battle. And it's not about numbers. It's about, you know, we're living in a generation where many things are changing and they're going against us."*
- Dr Turcios: *"Dr K a recommendation, potentially, if, if there, if there could be a calendar created of relevant legis legislation that we could proactively study and be prepared to just, you know, share our voice and vote here, you know, come what have you at least it would be less reactionary, and it would allow us to, you know, preemptively say, hey, we understand that this goes in the in the house. We have, we have this, you know, opinion. And to be honest with you, we may not agree here, but it is what it is, but at least to have a working timeline that's helpful, potentially"*

Haitian immigrants facing new challenges despite Court blocking DHS attempts to terminate TPS.

- Doctor Shirley Plantin (invited by Program Officer Jospitre to give some insights on this topic): *"Good afternoon. Good afternoon. Well, I, for those that don't know, I'm the executive director for the Miami Dade Community Relations Board, and with all the support of the county, so we feel that all things that have to do with racial tensions, community tensions, gun violence, hate speech, antisemitism and police involved shooting in the Miami Dade that we live in right now, that seems To be an everyday job all day in time. The TPS issue, specifically for the Haitian community, has been an issue that we've been monitoring as it has gone through the court system. We've been, actually been monitoring the one for our Honduras, Venezuela, all of the other countries that have had it as well, right? And the Haitian one has been a bit difficult and different, because this wasn't just a question of what was happening here, but a lot about what was happening in the case itself. There is a report before DHS gets to determine whether to*

terminate TPS for a country suffering detective status. There's a report that has to be given that actually looks at the makeup of this country. Is this country prepared to receive its, you know, its diaspora, for lack of better terms, looking at the schools, looking at the infrastructure, the public safety, the whole nine yards that being said, said report had not been done for Haiti. And when the Secretary, the Secretary Noah, made the decision, that decision was actually made off of a 45-minute decision and a one liner that said, yes, the country is ready to receive them. That is the reason the case has been moved the circuit beat. The circuit court judge said, but Well, based on this technicality, we kind of have to clear this up, because the rules and the procedures were not followed up until Friday. Friday, Alex, I believe the appellate court also upheld what was initially decided the end. The reason that we're having this discussion right now, and why is it a concern when the initial court made a decision February 3. That was a notice what is often known as the federal registry. It usually goes out to either extend the TPS status, which will tell everyone here is, you know, how long we're extending it for, whether it's a year, six months. Here is the extension date, so employers actually know what to do, what to put in in the federal you know, verify that had not been done number one and number two, what no one seemed to have taken into consideration was majority of the 150 to 200,000 folks with TPS here in Miami. Dade County, their licenses also expired. Driver's License also expired. So that means yes, they were able to say while the process was moving through the courts. However, we did not take into account how they were going to move about how they were going to get to work, get their children to school, children taking the bus, you know, all this other stuff. And it really took a lot of work. We want to give a state. We want to give the tax collector barrio Fernandez a lot of kudos. Who at the, you know, the very last hours, kind of figured out, how do we, together with Commissioner Bastien, how do we figure out how to get licenses into people's hands through this extension? And an extension was given until March 15. So here we are. When is March 15? Sunday? Sunday is March 15, and there has been absolutely nothing. So that means all of these people are right back in the same place that they were three and a half weeks ago. Going to have to take time off, going to have to lose a day of work. And to the defense, I guess I'll say very lightly, kids are not being able to go to school. We know that. Lastly, we know yesterday, Miami Dade County, not Miami Dade, but Broward County, announced that almost 40,000 students not going to school. So schools are about to get shut down. Schools are closing. They're merging phones together, Miami Dade County, at some point, Miami, Dade specifically accounted for about 13,000 kids not attending schools, right? So the attendance and all of that matter as well as you all were having this conversation. No, it's amazing. A lot of students that have gone off to whether it be charter schools Detroit, yes, of course. Immigration is part of the problem; the fear people aren't sending their children to school. So it really is a mixture. And the number, I want to cushion the number that Broward put out that this was within the past 10 years. I think Miami Dade number is a bit more accurate than 13,000, it's a lot more recent. So the reason that I actually just came to say my hellos to the rabbis and everyone, but it was really more so we want to say that the churches tend to be the places that the churches, the synagogues, the sanctuaries, places of worship, tend to be places that many of the Haitians and the Venezuelans, the different communities that are impacted trust the information that's coming from the pulpit, right? They will go there before they go anywhere else, they feel a place of safety and security. So what we have seen in the community is the minute that the safe spaces designation were removed from places of worship and schools and hospitals that that fear is augmented even more right and the information and because that's why, when you all were talking about having a voice, it's ultra important for the churches and the safe spaces to have a voice, because you all are the people that they trust the most. So we know that one of the places that actually did a

mobile driver's license really trying to get them back into the hands of folks was Tabernacle of glory, one of the largest Haitian churches. And today, in fact, I'm having conversation with many people saying, so after Sunday, what do I do? So they just paid for this. They just took a day off. They just stood in lines, you know, for hours trying to get their papers, literally, three weeks ago. And here we are doing it again, and I guarantee that it will not be the last time, unless, and what we were told was by the tax collector, they can't tell us when and where because they're waiting for the state to tell them, and the state couldn't tell us because they were waiting for DHS to tell them, and ultimately, the people that suffer the most end up being the people in the community. So I think it's imperative to have these conversations, because children are also to your point, the children often face the bulk of the issues that adults deal with, and that is no different when it comes to immigration as well. The schools are going to see the problems business owners. So yes, this does impact. It is not just a Haitian issue. It is a cultural issue. It is a Miami Dade issue. It is a national issue, because you're talking about Venezuelans, you're talking about Hondurans, you're talking about Nicolas and Cubans, for that matter. So I'm happy to answer any questions. Thank you, Alex for the opportunity. CRB, we meet third Wednesday of every month, and we stand with whatever it is that we can to partner with the interfaith board, however it is that we can. "

- Rabbi Fisher: "It doesn't affect me as much in my synagogue, but I'm wondering if there's a Tear Sheet of information that we can distribute to other churches and houses of worship that might be able to use that information from the pulpit through the chip"
- Doctor Plantin: "I think what we're facing right now is the fact that information is so scarce number one and number two, changing a lot the change. Is right. So what comes out today, by the time you're putting it to the pulpit, may be something totally different, and that way, we are fearful of putting something in the hands of our members, even at the CRP, that may turn around and put you in a really bad position, which is one of the reasons that the county attorneys have always said to us, if the members find the information on their own and they want to share it. That's not a problem, but we have to be very careful so people don't say, well, that information came from the County. What came from the county today? You know, it's what we can only speak to today. Tomorrow morning, we wake up, as we see with the Iran war and everything. Went to sleep in peace and woke up at war. The reality of these things tends to be so fluid that it's kind of hard to keep up with, particularly around the immigration issues, because what is impacting one country today may tomorrow, is a different nature for Haiti, it's a different nature for Nicaragua. So trying to keep up with all of the countries itself becomes a bit complicated.

7. Ongoing Business / Follow up

Doctor Plantin: "There was also an attack today."

- Lieutenant Trinchet: "In Michigan, Broomfield Township. Can I say something real quick about that? Yeah, so when Rabbi Harter brought it up and about this topic, it just stadium or heart in my mind, since, um, from the fire department's perspective, it's very sad the day and age we that we live in now that we've had to do training on how to deal with active shooters scenarios where our own firefighters are wearing a bulletproof vest and pretty much special helmet. we have scenarios in line. We have medics that are, are SWAT medic trained, that are going to SWAT intervention, you know, stuff like that. So it's, it's 2026, in the day and age. Um, I personally was the mental health coordinator who went to Parkland for the Parkland shooting. So when he brought this topic up, it just resonated a lot, you know, in love for me as it relates to individual harassment places of worship. So according to the FBI, hate crimes, anti-Jewish hate crimes 69%

anti-Islamic 8.7%, anti-Sikh 4.9%, anti-Catholic and Protestant 4.4%. Last month, there was a situation that happened in the church up in Minnesota that got national news, and now someone just brought that up. I totally agree on Robert harder that something should be said. Because again, when one place of worship is pretty much, you know, affected, all of us are affected. You know, no matter if it comes from Christian, Catholic this and the other, when one place is affected all of all of us, all of us are affected. And then it's also the ripple effect. It affects the children. It affects, you know, secondary and way secondary. It affects the police and fire, who are there, pretty much dealing with the aftermath and all that. So again, I truly believe that from our perspective, we should say something about this, because again, you know, we have to create that safe space, whether it's in a fire station or a place of worship, you know, or the back of an ambulance or back of a rescue and whether we're providing medical attention and they feel safe or we're providing Spiritual attention and people feel safe."

- Harold Foster: "Coming out of curiosity, I'm just kind of out of curiosity, because we all live in various parts of the county. I only know from my own experience. I'm in an area across the causeway on Miami Beach, like is, if you're going to like the font of blue, you keep going straight. So on Saturday mornings, we have an unusual amount of the regular city watching with the cars, but most congregations have a private security guard like as I walk in, out of respect, I always say, Please, can we check my bag? Heaven forbids somebody would drop something in, right? I just ask the rest of the people here. Do you all have security at your houses of worship in them, whether the morning, afternoons or on your main day of services? Because I don't know what the law is. They are the congregations I know of. They like to know who is carrying a weapon, although it's not announced. It's an unfortunate thing, but it, it's, I guess rather you'd be safe than sorry sort of situation. I'm just curious. We have a side, but I can tell you people that just congregate and carry as well. Yeah, okay. I was just told that usually either the head of the con, the head clergy, like yourself, for example, or the president, somebody likes to know who's carrying and who's not. I happen to know a few because they related me, whatnot. "
- Lieutenant Trinchet: "It's it's come even farther than that, that Miami Dade Police Department, Miami the sheriff's office, has a special individual that goes into places of worship to be able to provide training. And also, Fire Department goes inside places of worship to provide, you know, medical training, just in case something does, does happen, and all that. I know, I've showed, shared that flyer before, and all that, but that's where, kind of like, you know, we're 2026 and we're in that state now that on the police side and the fire side, we're providing training to the church side to be able to navigate the security side and navigate the medical side, in case you know something happens and all of that."
- Pastor Molleda: "through the chair. We don't, we don't check bags or anything, but we do have trained person that are on just that specifically."
- Doctor Plantin: "in regard to the open carry that we have in the state of Florida, one of the fears that we've heard from many of the churches is the fact, like you just said, Madam Chair, that a lot of people are killed. Churches may know who their people are, but our greatest fear that we've heard from congregants is someone walks in and other people that we didn't even know, that the church didn't even know, pulls out a gun. Something happened. What does that liability look like? That has become the question that we have received quite a bit, is the church liable because it happened on the church ground? And no one has been able to answer that question. So just something for again, just a conversation that's been had that I've heard from multiple faith leaders, whether it be the synagogues. I've heard it from some moms, but I can tell you, I've heard it from many pastors, yeah, particularly some of the largest black churches, that has been a concern that they've had that in the event that something does happen, we know who our

people are, and you know we have insurance and liability and stuff, but other people we don't know that they're caring, and if they decide to pull in, the worst case scenario happens, someone wants to sue. Are they suing the individual? Are they suing the church? And it just becomes a really, really complicated matter. But to your point, it is. These are the 22 these are the days we're living in. And this the idea that people are walking into churches now, walking straight up to the pulpit and handling business, is a real fear that a lot of black churches are experiencing right now, because we've seen it happen in Texas. We've seen it happen in other places and at some of the largest black churches, and that is a concern that we hear throughout that we will be addressing it. Justice and Law Enforcement"

- Pastor Molleda: "Through the chair. That's a great point, because how do you, how do you stop it? How do you, how do you control it, right? I mean, you can't say, well, you're not part of our security. You can't come hard, because the law specifies different so now that opens the door to other incidents, and there's nothing you can do"
- Lieutenant Trinchet: "I think because it's private property, you have the ability to say no"
- Chair: "perfect and I think it's good to have the trainings right with the police department to talk so everybody going to hear the same thing about protocols"

8. New Business

RE : Engage Interfaith Lunch and Learn : March 4,2026

- Program Director Alex Jospitre : "So we see the invitation I went to RE: Engage interfaith Lunch and Learn on March 4. So the discussions focus mainly on the protective access to HIV care in Florida that has been severely affected by recent emergency action taken by the Florida Department of Health, which have initiated a significant hold back of the states and AIDS drug assistance programs. So I'm not going to go any further. I know my colleague here can share extensively on this topic."
- Program Office Gabriel Paez : "So hi. How are you good afternoon? Gabriel piles, LGBTQ Program Director. The Senate did work together, and they did pass the \$31 million gap that gets us through June, so funding is restored. But you know, then what happens after June? Versus June, 30 of July 1 is the problem now, but at least for now, we have the gap that BCC did make a recommendation and pass a resolution that they would pay for the gap that Miami Dade County had, but now there's no need for that, just last night, so people be able to now still get their meds They'll get their meds, but not their insurance. 31 million yes and yes, thank you."

Mobile Holocaust Exhibit ; March 6 2026

- Program Officer Jospitre: "so very quickly I, you know, you received the invitation. I went there. I visited the place. It was a small one, but it was still heart wrenching, especially, you know, prisoner clothes, but especially the wagon, which they call the box car. And what is it? It's, it's really camel scarf that was meant for livestock, but they use it to, you know, take human beings to execution or concentration. So I had to, you know, they made you actually experience it. I couldn't do that. I just checked it out but you could actually sit in it. They would make a lot of people sit in it. And just to give you an idea how, you know, humans were treated."

Mobile Holocaust Exhibit ; March 6 2026

- Program Director Jospitre: "Going to go already really fast. It's a proposed interfaith advisory council that could be created that could create a new bridge between Miami's religious, spiritual and secular communities in city official and city officials, giving them informal voice in shaping

policies that intersect with public life. So during the meeting, they consider the creation of this council through legislation, and that is sponsored by Commissioner Ralph Rosaldo, and it's established it would give residents, of all believe, a direct way to communicate with city leaders, collaborated on public project, and work together to strengthen exclusivity, inclusivity, I mean, across mine."

9. Announcements / Reminders

Members updates : Former IAB Members Ms. Olga Hernandez and Pastor Donald Clark and Pastor Alessi

- Program Director Alex Jospitre : *"You remember, there was a problem with Mrs. Hernandez and Pastor Clark. So the way the assistant county attorney told me to proceed is to send them a letter, you know, and if there was no reaction to that letter, it would confirm their resignation. Because when you resign, you're supposed to send a letter right, not really to me, but to the office of the court. For those who were not there, Pastor Donald Clark didn't want to leave, but he moved to Broward and it was impossible for him to continue on the Board. Then, I also received the resignation letter of Pastor Alessi which came from nowhere and his resignation was effective January 13 2026..."*

2nd Vice-Chair Daniel Hadar situation

- Program Director Jospitre : *"he's still with us, but he was kind of removed form the Board for a little bit due to failure to submit his financial disclosure form. So it seems like there was confusion. Instead of sending it through email, like I advised everybody, he said that he instead sent a physical mail which seemed to have been lost. He said he spoke to his Commissioner's office and everything is being fixed, and it will be reinstated. So I told him he could join the meeting today, but he couldn't unfortunately make it."*
"The list of Board Members. As you can see, I had to remove his name for now. But whenever he's back, I'll send an updated list. And also, at the bottom of the list, you can see the vacancies. So if you have friends living in those districts, please let them know about the vacancies and all they need to do is contact their commissioners, and also bear in mind that it's not uncommon for commissioners to appoint somebody that doesn't live in their district by signing a waiver for the candidate "

Program Director Jospitre is now staffing a second Board : Military Affairs Board.

- Program Director Jospitre: *"to finish, as I announced the possibility last time, I'm in charge of a second Board on top of this one, the Military Affairs Board which is one of the most important ones. The only change you will see is mainly the way I present the minutes. Before I was kind of fixing the minutes where the conversations would not make sense, but now it's going to be like quotes and quotes. I'm just going to make sure that the transcript doesn't change a word or two and but that's the way I'm going to have to make it because it's going to be a lot of work from now on."*
- Pastor Molleda: *"Hopefully you're making more money"*
- Program Director Jospitre: *"I was hoping so. But I'm doing this now our of respect for the Service Members and the Veterans and out of professionalism; I'm not receiving a dollar more and I'm replacing a guy that was making a lot of money."*

10. Adjournment

- Chair Williams-Dawson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting
- Moved by Rabbi Robin Fisher
- No second needed according to the Chair
- Adjournment voted and approved unanimously at 3:36 PM