



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ADVOCACY
LGBTQIA+ ADVISORY BOARD GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 3:00 P.M. – 5:30 P.M.
Stephen P. Clark Center (SPCC)
111 N.W. 1st Street 18th Floor Room 18-3 Miami, Florida 33128**

Minutes

- I. Call to Order at 3:13PM.
Chairman Trueba announced the resignations of Board Member Liebe Gadinsky of District 4 and the former Vice-Chair Orlando Gonzales, who served as one of the two mayoral appointees. Chairman Trueba thanked them for their service, as they were original board appointees, and wished them well in their new endeavors.

II. Roll Call

Members Present

Bobby Joe Bracy
Briana Benz
Ariel Trueba
Kevin Correa
Darrell Burks
Harold Marrero
Orlando Lopez
Christos Constantidinis
Grace Lopez

Members Absent

Patricia Hernandez
Jennifer Stephenson

Vacant Seats

District 2
District 4
District 10
Mayoral #2

Guest(s)

Cindy Brown
Dan Rios
Vanessa Azzam

Chairman Trueba welcomed two recently approved board member and one future board member. The newly approved members are Bobby Joe Bracy for District 3 and Kevin Correa of District 7. The future member is Cindy Brown for District 4. All three had an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Director Paez introduced Vanessa Azzam. Vanessa comes to the Office of Community Advocacy from the Office of District 3 Commissioner Hardemon where she was responsible for community engagement. She will be providing support to multiple advisory boards, including the Miami-Dade LGBTQIA+ Advisory Board.

- III. Reasonable Opportunity to Be Heard
No one from the public present

- IV. Approval of Agenda
Motion to approve agenda by Harold Marrero
Seconded by Bobby Joe Bracy
Motion passed unanimously.

- V. Approval of Minutes (Actionable Item)
December 2023, Meeting Minutes
Motion to approve minutes by Vice Chairman Darrell Burks
Seconded by Harold Marrero
Motion passed unanimously.

- VI. Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau Update (GMCVB)- Dan Rios
Dan Rios is the LGBTQ+ Tourism and Marketing Director at the GMCVB. Mr. Rios gave an update on LGBTQ+ Tourism for 2023 such as "Rainbow Springs" which was a booking program run jointly with Expedia. This program ran between March and June 2023. Rainbow Springs generated over 19K Miami inbound airline tickets and over 27k room nights for a economic impact of over 14 million dollars. This reiterated the importance of having a healthy message of welcoming to our community in Miami-Dade County.

For 2024, Rainbow Springs will be expanded Internationally to Miami-Dade's top LGBTQ international markets which are Sao Paulo, Brazil, Mexico City, Mexico, London, England and Toronto, Canada. The economic impact should be higher as international visitors tend to spend more money when traveling.
Mr. Rios also covered Jan/Feb tourism figures.

Mr. Rios made himself available to the members should they have any questions or concerns. Chairman Trueba thanked Mr. Rios for his service and for reporting to the board and welcomed him to return and update the board.

- VII. Committee Discussion
Committees continue to have quorum issues, but because of new members coming on board Chairman Trueba encourage all members to attend the committees they are assigned to and any other they wish to attend.

Chairman Trueba assigned Board member (BM) Bobby Joe Bracy to the Governmental & Legislative Affairs (GALA) Committee. BM Harold Marrero to the Communications (CC) and BM Kevin Correa to the Quality-of-Life (QOL) Committee. Per BM Briana Benz' email communications Chairman Trueba assigned Briana to QOL given it had been her first committee choice. BM Marrero requested to be added to the QOL Committee as well.

Sanctuary County request brought before the board last year by BM Patricia Hernandez had been deferred to the January general board meeting. It was not on the February Agenda because ultimately Chairman Trueba felt it was best to send it to the GALA Committee for review. The reason behind his decision to send it to committee was because it would require lengthy discussion. The Committee requested further clarification of the term "SANCTUARY" and its implications, wanted legal guidance, and possibly looking at its implementation.

Director Paez updated the board with regards to what was discussed at the City of Miami Beach's LGBTQ Advisory Committee. The committee was faced with the same issues and concerns the MDC LGBTQIA+ faced during their previous discussion. The Committee also decided to forward it to committee so all the issues and concerns could be ironed out. Director further elaborated on his discussion with Lake Worth Beach Mayor, Mayor Resch. Mayor Resch commented that the resolution was drafted based on the advice of the Lake Worth Beach Human Rights Committee and was mainly ceremonial.

After further discussion, a motion to send this item to the GALA Committee was made by Orlando Lopez
Seconded by Harold Marrero
Motion passed 7-2. GALA Committee to entertain the item at their next meeting.

- a. Governmental & Legislative Affairs (GALA)
Committee did not meet for February. Lack of Quorum.
- b. Communications Committee (CC)
CC is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 5PM in the SPCC 10th Floor Room 1004.
- c. Quality of Life (QOL)
QOL is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 5PM in the SPCC 10th Floor Room 1004.

Several board members requested if committee meeting could be held virtually. Request will be forwarded to Legal Counsel, Terrence Smith, for clarification.

VIII. Old Business

- a. 2024 Meeting Dates and Times

Given that the February, May, July, and September meetings need to be held on the second Wednesday of the month.

Motion to move the Miami-Dade County LGBTQIA+ Advisory General Board Meetings to the second Wednesday of the month, starting March 2024.

Motioned by Harold Marrero

Seconded by Vice-Chairman Darrell Burks

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting invites will be sent by Director Paez for the remainder of the year.

IX. New Business

- a. Florida Legislature Update

Chairman Trueba shared that this was more of an open discussion and reiterated that all board members are free to send Director Paez items they would like to place on the agenda.

Chairman Trueba further stated that several bills that being heard in Tallahassee may be detrimental to our community. One of them **HB 1299** Gender markers on state ID's. Another billed discussed was **HB 1** which requires social media platforms to prohibit minors from creating new accounts, terminate accounts & provide additional options for termination of such accounts.

- b. 2024 Potential Forum(s) on the State of the Community and Domestic Violence Awareness in the LGBTQ+ Community.

QOL Committee should partner with the Greater Miami LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce Forum on the State of the Community as they are the leaders on this topic. The "Domestic Violence Awareness in the LGBTQ+ Community" should also be forwarded to the QOL Committee and be held as separate events. This event should include community partners.

Chairman Trueba tasked himself to work with the Chamber regarding the State of the Community. Motion to defer the Mental Health and Domestic Violence Awareness forums to the QOL Committee.

Motioned by Christos Costandinides,

Seconded by Orlando Lopez

Motion passed unanimously.

- X. Chairman's Report
Busy working in the community. Attended the Miami Beach LGBTQ+ Committee meeting for February. Chairman introduced himself and looked at ways to partner together. Also attended the City of Miami LGBTQ Advisory Committee. Chairman works with United Health Partnership. His intention is to bring in their 5 year plan.
- XI. Director's Report
For January Director Paez took Bereavement Leave and some personal days off because of his mom passing away. Attended the Miami Beach LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee meeting on February 13, 2024. Also had a personal meeting with Miami Beach Mayor, Steven Meiner. Asked the mayor to continue working for all Miami Beach residents.
Also worked on the resignations and new appointees to the board. Reached out to the commissioners that currently have vacancies. Encouraged new board members to participate in the Sexual Harassment and Ethics trainings that are required of all new members. Also worked with Vanessa Azzam to get her ramped up and ready to work as a team. Vanessa will also be attending committee meetings. Looking forward to working together with each board member and requesting that board members use Office Community Advocacy staff as they are here for our community. Asked if board members see or hear of anyone in need to please let him know. Last but not least, welcomed all the new board members and informed them that each new board member was given a copy of the book titled "Killing You Softly. A guide to understanding domestic violence and abuse" which were graciously donated by the author Evin M. Daly.
- XII. Announcements
- a. Next general board meeting
Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 3PM
Stephen P. Clark Center
111 N.W. 1st Street 18th Floor Room 18-2
Miami, Florida 33128
 - b. City of Miami LGBTQ Advisory Board partnered with the Outshine Film Festival to bring the community screening event of "Queen Tut" at the Little Haiti Cultural Center on Saturday, February 24, 2024.
 - c. Chairman Trueba reported the attack on two lesbian couples and a Transgender Female in the Wynwood neighborhood of the City of Miami back in November of 2023. Chairman Trueba tried putting out a statement on behalf of the board however it was not approved. BM Lopez shared her request before the City of Miami's Advisory Board meeting that in the future she hopes the City will come out and make a statement indicating their support for the Community and condemn the violence.
 - d. BM Lopez shared that she is the founder of an organization called "Woman for Paws" which help pet owners who are victims of domestic violence. If you know any community members in need of funding to house their pets during their transition to safety "Women for Paws" is here to help.
- XIII. Adjournment called at 4:41PM.

Chairman Ariel Trueba
Vice Chair Darrell Burks