

**VILLAGE OF PALMETTO BAY  
EDUCATIONAL COMPACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
Wednesday, October 7, 2015  
9705 E. Hibiscus Street  
Palmetto Bay, Florida 33157**

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Attendance: Committee Liaison – Mayor Eugene Flinn; Committee Members – Orestes Mayo, Chairperson, Diane Quick, Pam Tabor, Erica Watts-Sosa; Councilmember – Karyn Cunningham; Village Employees – Ed Silva, Village Manager; Members of the Public – Nancy Lawther, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of Advocacy and Legislation, Miami-Dade County Council for PTA and PTSA, Ellen J. Book, Branch Manager, Pinecrest and Country Walk branches, Miami-Dade County Public Library System; Boy Scout Troop 270 (Paul Mauerman, interim Scout Master, Abel Palma, Scout Leader, Tanisha Jarrett, parent and godmother to troop members, and seven members of troop 270).

1. Call to Order
  - a. Meeting was called to order by Mr. Mayo at 6:44 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Motion to approve the minutes from the September 2, 2015 meeting by Ms. Quick and seconded by Ms. Tabor. Minutes approved.
3. Public Comments
  - a. Introduction of Members of the Public
  - b. Ellen J. Book, Branch Manager, Pinecrest and Country Walk branches, Miami-Dade County Public Library System
    - i. Presented on online resources available on the mdpls.com website. Increased budget has resulted in better hours of operation, more staff and extensive resources.
    - ii. Children’s resources for homework and general learning connect students directly to sites geared towards children. This includes free accounts for sites that otherwise have usage fees. To access all sites, all that is needed is a library card.
      1. Ms. Book provided overview of the following resources: online tutoring (live tutoring offered from 3-11pm), science experiments, magazine subscriptions, virtual storybook reading, encyclopedia, practice tests, software courses, testing resource center, scholarship search, career tools, teen resources and language instruction.
    - iii. The library competes with paid apps including Hulu, Netflix, Rosetta Stone and iTunes.
    - iv. For adults, resources include business and investment site links (ex: Morningstar website is free), streaming digital books, music and magazines.

- v. Ms. Book's presentation is part of the Committee's effort to connect the Library to the Village residents and falls under the following portion of Education Compact: Student Achievement (#2 on page 2).
- vi. What can Village do to better promote resources of the library?
  - 1. Mayor Flinn states that he wants to create a seamless cooperation between schools, library and parks.
  - 2. Mr. Mayo states that he would like to add key components of the library services on the Village's website under the "education" tab, and falls under the following portion of Education Compact: Communications (#2 on page 6)
  - 3. Ms. Cunningham asks who is the community outreach person for the library system? She would like to connect that person to Mr. Mayo.
- c. Million Orchid Project
  - i. Mr. Mayo is announcing Village of Palmetto Bay partnership with Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FTBG) and BioTech High School. Purpose is to increase the survival of orchid seeds to produce more orchid plants. Long term project is to repopulate the area with native orchids. The lab at BioTech High School is producing the orchids which will be added to local trees by FTBG. City of Coral Gables also entered into a partnership with Million Orchid Project.
  - ii. Mr. Mayo provided Troop 270 with an explanation of the project, including photos of creating the best environment through which the orchids can grow.
  - iii. Mr. Mayo discussed other projects being conducted at BioTech High School. Graduate students from area universities are taking part in projects and the school continues to use a \$10 million dollar grant to purchase high tech equipment. Applications are accepted in October of a student's 8<sup>th</sup> grade year.
    - 1. Mayor Flinn suggests connecting the proposed Village internship program with BioTech High School.
- d. Nancy Lawther (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of Advocacy and Legislation, Miami-Dade County Council for PTA and PTSA)
  - i. County PTA is concerned about the recent resignations of members of Congress on the passage of the rewrite of the No Child Left Behind Act. Encouraging Florida Senators to include in the Senate version of the bill rewrite the proposal by Representative Curbelo regarding the test scores of non native English speakers. PTA is supporting Curbelo amendment adopted by the House that is not currently in the Senate bill. District supports this as well.
  - ii. County PTA also is concerned about the funding levels of the State of Florida. Supporting position of the District to ask for an increase of 5% per year in education funding for K-12 until such time as Florida meets or exceeds the nationwide per pupil average. Florida is in 42<sup>nd</sup> place nationwide for amount of funds given per pupil.
    - 1. Ms. Book asked why funds connected to a charter school student do not port back to the public school if a student transfers to public school.

Ms. Lawther noted that there is language in proposed legislation to have the money port with the student.

- iii. County PTA is concerned about constitutional change to class size amendment. Mr. Mayo asks to table this until New Business (#5)
- iv. County PTA partnered with several organizations to call on Governor Scott to issue an executive order suspending the application of the 2015 results to the accountability system and to pause the accountability system as it is currently written until it has undergone an extensive, transparent review. Asking for a pause to gain common sense to this process. School grades this year, if released, will be based solely on test scores and teacher evaluations. Student gains will not be factored into the grades.

#### 4. Pending Items/Updates

- a. Continue to work with District on the Matrix
  - i. Mr. Mayo provided a summary of the matrix to the members of the public. Provides as an example the upcoming park clean up on November 7, 2015 from 8am-11am at Coral Reef Park. Community service hours will be given to high school students. A flyer will be distributed by the Village; any interested student is invited to show up to participate. No need to register ahead of time.
    - 1. Mayor Flinn asked Mr. Mayo to provide information for inclusion in the State of the Village.

#### 5. New Business

- a. Discuss Dade Partners with BioTech High School
  - i. Mr. Mayo says that the school will be approaching the Village with a proposal for partnership.
- b. Appoint individual school liaison positions amongst the Committee members
  - i. Coral Reef Elementary - Ms. Watts; Palmetto High – Diane Quick; Perrine Elementary – Ms. Tabor; Southwood Middle – pending; Howard Drive Elementary - pending
- c. Review school information form
  - i. Viability of items in the form
    - 1. Committee will create a form to ensure that schools provide important information that should be distributed to the Committee and Village. Will allow all to coordinate events.
    - 2. Mr. Mayo will draft the form that will be shared with Committee members for suggestions and edits.
  - ii. Protocol for contacting schools before and after Committee meetings
    - 1. Establish a contact person at each school who knows to expect outreach from the Committee. Set a timeframe for reaching out before the meeting and after the meeting to thank them for attending. Should include this protocol in the formation of the form.

- iii. Mr. Mauerman asked whether remote access to Committee meetings is available.
- d. Discussion/suggestions re: encouraging schools to use Park facilities (i.e. drama at the library, dance/hop at Thalatta or Coral Reef)
  - i. Mr. Ed Silva, Village Manager, is working with Palmetto High School on potentially performing drama productions at Village locations (stage at Ludovici Park).
  - ii. Mayor Flinn states that the purpose is to provide schools with a venue and bring people to Village facilities.
  - iii. Mr. Silva stated that the Village is in conversation again with Perrine Elementary School about hosting another art exhibit at Thalatta.
  - iv. Ms. Watt stated that Coral Reef Elementary students are interested in an art program. Can it be added to the aftercare program? Mayor Flinn says it is a question of facilities. Mr. Silva and Ms. Watts will discuss.
  - v. Mr. Mayo proposed a rotating exhibit at Village Hall featuring different schools each month. Idea was proposed earlier this year and will be brought up again once new school form has been created.
  - vi. Mayor Flinn recommends having Council member Larissa Siegal Lara to speak about teen events at Thalatta.
- e. Class Size Amendment – Palmetto Bay’s position and influence
  - i. Class size limits: 18 for elementary school, 22 for middle school, 25 for high school. Class size averages are viewed at a school-wide level. Ms. Lawther notes that many loopholes exist through which schools may circumvent class size limits. This includes blended classrooms, schools of choice (over 50% of public schools are schools of choice) and magnet schools. As a result, schools are not being penalized under the class size amendment. Mr. Mayo notes that schools built since the amendment passed were built to fit class size limits; as a result, classrooms are overcrowded.
  - ii. In 2017, the Constitutional Revision Commission will review the class size amendment. Legislators will attempt to work on this issue as part of a proposed constitutional amendment which would be on the 2018 ballot.
  - iii. Ms. Lawther sits on the Family and Community Involvement Council Budget Subcommittee, which provides recommendations from parent/community perspective on what the budget should look like. Principals have a similar committee and the two come together at the end of the process. Class sizes are a major issue addressed by the committee. Committee meets monthly; meetings are open to the public and dates are posted on the Dade County website.
  - iv. Class size will be a topic in the legislature and bills are currently in draft and will assess the penalty for school wide class size average.

- v. Palmetto Bay position and influence: Mayor Flinn suggests picking three or four legislative issues to propose that the Council supports. Bring it to the Council in November.
  - 1. Class size amendment – honor what voters voted for. Apply it to all classes / remove loopholes
  - 2. School funding and reconsider bringing back cost differential
  - 3. Recreate community schools / all schools with all electives
- vi. Mayor Flinn suggests adding to a spring agenda what the Village should ask of the School Board’s legislative agenda
- f. Possible Veteran’s monument and input from Committee
  - i. Mayor Flinn would like to put together a committee comprised of individuals from various current committees and the American Legion to create a plan to determine the ideal memorial and location. Would like to have the Education Advisory Committee involved. Public meetings – all residents will have a voice.
- g. Upcoming Village events and Committee involvement:
  - i. State of the Village (10/14/15)
  - ii. Bike By the Bay (10/17/15)
  - iii. Halloween Movie Night (10/30/15)
  - iv. Mayor Flinn suggests that the Committee create a teen event (e.g. a movie night, a teen dance, father/daughter dance). Purpose is to get local teens and kids involved locally.

6. Future Meeting Date

- a. Tuesday, November 3, 2015
- b. Wednesday, December 2, 2015
- c. Wednesday, January 6, 2016

7. Adjourn

- a. Motion to adjourn by Ms. Quick, second by Ms. Watts. Meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_