

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMUNITY RELATIONS BOARD
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

March 21, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

**Stephen P. Clark Government Center, 111 NW 1st Street, Miami, FL 33128
Conference Room 18-4**

Attendance

Members Present

Larry Capp
Valerie Davis-Bailey
Ronald Fulton
Vicki Smith Jackson
Ahmed Kabani
Lovette McGill
Brian Siegal
Walter Richardson
George L. Yap
Wilfredo Ruiz
Solomon Schiff
Farzana M. Tapia
Reinaldo Valdes
Marjorie York
Sofian Zakkout
Wilfredo Ruiz
Adam Tavakoly

Members Absent

Mario Artecona
Priscilla Dames-Blake
Maritza Lopez
Harlene Silvern Kennedy
Helen McGuire
Grace O'Donnell
Lester Rosenberg
Edward Shohat
Harold Vieux

Staff present

Amy Carswell
Yvans Morisseau
Edward Harris

The CRB General Membership Meeting was called to order by the chair, Dr. Walter T. Richardson.

The Roll Call was conducted and a quorum was affirmed. A motion was made to approve the meeting agenda. The motion was adopted.

Dr. Richardson reported that the approval of the Minutes of the February CRB General Membership Meeting will be delayed as the minutes were provided verbatim by the Clerk's Office and are not in a format that members' are accustomed and will need to be edited to focus on major action items and discussion.

CRB Chair's Report:

- Condolences were expressed to the family of CRB Executive Committee member Ronald Fulton upon the tragic death of his nephew 17-year-old nephew Trayvon Martin in Sanford Florida on February 26. The young man's death has caught the attention of local, state-wide, national and international communities. People are questioning the killing of an African-American youth during an unexplained altercation with a 28-year-old white male and self-described crime watch captain. The Department of Justice Community

Relations Service is monitoring community tensions and communicating regularly with the CRB staff.

- Miami-Dade County Commission Chairman Joe Martinez has submitted his mandatory resignation to the Clerk of the Courts and the Supervisor of Elections. Mr. Martinez has announced his candidacy for the Office of Miami-Dade Mayor. His resignation will be effective November 20, 2012.
- The CRB prepared a letter to Florida Legislators encouraging them to protect the successful Miami-Dade Wage Theft Ordinance. The letter was forwarded to key members of the Florida Senate this past week. Fortunately, the bill was not heard by the Senate and was not adopted. A press release about the CRB's efforts generated some media coverage. Mario Artecona was interviewed live on Spanish language radio and newspaper articles about the CRB's efforts appeared in Diario las Americas and in the Florida Independent.
- Miami-Dade Corrections Director Tim Ryan has agreed to meet with the CRB at the April 18 General Membership Meeting.
- The RACE Exhibit Fundraising Committee has met its goals for bringing the exhibit to our community in March or April 2014. A total of \$16,000 has been collected. Congratulations to Reinaldo Valdes and other CRB members and supporters who have participated in this initiative.
- CRB member Maritza Lopez represented the CRB at a planning committee meeting for the Gideon at 50 Celebration. The Miami-Dade Public Defender is organizing activities in our community.
- The Commission for Women is co-hosting the In the Company of Women event which is this evening, 6 – 9 p.m. at the Biltmore Hotel.
- A copy of the CRB Member Roster will be passed to each member during the meeting. Members were asked to update the contact information so that the information may be submitted to the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners and on to the Elections Department which will soon mail the required financial disclosure forms for all county advisory board members who served any time during calendar year 2011.

Conversation with Penelope Townsley, Miami-Dade County Supervisor of Elections

Discussion: MS. TOWNSLEY STATED THAT: THE DAY OF BLOOPERS IS OVER. BE ASSURED THAT ELECTIONS WILL CONTINUE TO BE CONDUCTED WITH INTEGRITY AND ACCURACY. MS. TOWNSLEY INTRODUCED CHRISTINA WHITE, DEPUTY SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND IN-HOUSE EXPERT ON ELECTION LAWS. ELECTION LAW CHANGES FROM 2011 INCLUDE: EARLY VOTING IS AVAILABLE FOR 8 CONSECUTIVE DAYS, 7AM TO 7PM, ENDING ON SATURDAY PRIOR TO ELECTION; 3RD PARTY VOTER REGISTRATION

ORGANIZATION MUST REGISTER WITH STATE PRIOR TO ENGAGING IN VOTER REGISTRATION ACTIVITIES; INDIVIDUALS MAY ONLY PROVIDE INFORMATION TO POTENTIAL VOTERS REGARDING HOW TO OBTAIN VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION; IF A VOTER MOVES FROM ONE COUNTY TO ANOTHER, AND CHANGES THEIR ADDRESS ON ELECTION DAY, THE VOTER MUST VOTE A PROVISIONAL BALLOT; ACTIVE VOTERS MAY WEAR CAMPAIGN PARAPHENALIA IN THE POLLING PLACE AS LONG AS THEY ARE VOTING, BUT CANNOT SOLICIT UNLESS OUTSIDE AND BEYOND 100 FT NON SOLICITATION ZONE; A POLLING ROOM MAY BE INSIDE A POLLING PLACE OR THE POLLING PLACE MAY BE THE POLLING ROOM. THE 100 FT SOLICITATION ZONE IS FROM THE ENTERANCE TO THE BUILDING; STATUTE REQUIRES ALL PROVISIONAL BALLOTS SHALL COUNT UNLESS THE CANVASSING BOARD FINDS BY PERPONDERENCE OF EVIDENCE THAT THE PERSON IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO VOTE; INELIGLE PERSONS ARE NOT REGISTERED OR ARE ATTEMPTING TO VOTE IN THE WRONG PRECIENT; A VOTER MAY CHOOSE ANY INDIVIDUAL TO ASSIST THEM; THE PERSON PROVIDING ASSTANCE MUST COMPLETE A DECLARATION; THE DECLARED INDIVIDUAL MAY ASSIST THE VOTER AT THE BOOTH; THE TYPE AND DEGREE OF ASSISTANCE IS BETWEEN THE VOTER AND THE PERSON PROVIDING THE ASSISTANCE; A VOTER MAY ASK FOR THE ASSISTANCE OF AN ELECTION OFFICIAL.

MS. TOWNSLEY ALSO RESPONDED TO CRB MEMBER QUESTIONS AS FOLLOWS:

- FLORIDA REQUIRES VOTERS TO PRESENT ID WITH A PHOTO AND A SIGNATURE. DOES NOT PROHIBIT VOTER FROM VOTING WITHOUT BUT THE PERSON MUST VOTE PROVISIONALLY.
- THE ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO CONDUCT VOTER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES BUT IS NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE SERVICES AFTER NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS.
- INDIVIDUALS MAY ONLY PROVIDE INFORMATION TO OTHERS ON HOW TO ACCESS VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS OR MAY PROVIDE UNSOLICITED APPLICATIONS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TO COMPLETE AND SUBMIT FOR THEM.
- VOTER ASSISTANCE PAPERWORK IS COMPLETED AT THE VOTING PLACE.
- VOTER STATUS INFORMATION IS RECEIVED FROM THE STATE AND THERE COULD BE A MATTER OF TIME BETWEEN REGISTRATION AND THE ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT RECEIVING UPDATED INFO.
- RESOURCES ARE NOT AVAILABLE TO BE AS AGRESSIVE TO PROVIDE VOTER EDUCATION AND OUTREACH. WE TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND WITH INDIVIDUALS TO STEER US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION
- EVERYTHING WE DO IN ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT IS BASED ON REDUNDANCY, CONTINGENCY AND BACKUP.
- THE GREATEST CHALLENGE IS GETTING PEOPLE TO VOTE

- PROVISIONAL VOTERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TO THE ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT WITHIN 2 DAYS AND PROVE THEIR IDENTITY.
- WE SEND REMINDERS TO VOTERS TO UPDATE SIGNATURES SINCE SIGNATURES CHANGE OVER TIME.
- EMPLOYEES ARE TRAINED IN HANDWRITING ANALYSIS. IT IS OUR GOAL TO ENSURE THAT EVERY VOTE COUNTS.
- VOTING ABSENTEE IS ONE OF THE SAFEST AND MOST CONVENIENT WAYS TO VOTE. WE CANNOT CONTROL THE ABUSES OF OTHER PEOPLE FROM THE TIME THE BALLOT LEAVES OUR OFFICE UNTIL IT RETURNS. RECENT LEGISLATION HAS MADE MISHANDLING ABSENTEE BALLOTS A MISDEMEANOR. WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTED LIVING. REQUIRES FACILITY ADMINISTRATORS COMPLETE VOTER EDUCATION AS PART OF THEIR LICENSING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS WILL BE GIVEN TOWARD LICENSE RENEWAL.
- IF THE RELOCATION IS A PERMANENT RESIDENCE, THEY MUST CHANGE THEIR VOTER REGISTRATION. IF A TEMPORARY MOVE, YOU CAN HAVE THAT AS A MAILING ADDRESS WITHOUT CHANGING THE REGISTRATION COUNTY.
- PURGING OF VOTER REGISTRATION LISTS IS NOT AUTOMATIC. NOTIFICATION IS SENT TO THE VOTER ON SEVERAL OCCASSIONS INFORMING HIM OF THE INTENT TO DROP FROM THE ROLLS.
- .THE CANVASING BOARD IS THE ONLY BODY THAT CAN REJECT OR ACCEPT A QUESTIONABLE BALLOT.
- PEOPLE CAN DO A SIGNATURE UPDATE.
- THERE IS A SEPERATE PROVISION IN THE LAW THAT SAYS WHO IS ALLOWED IN THE POLLING PLACE AND WHO WAS NOT, AND IF YOU WERE A CANDIDATE ON THE BALLOT THEN YOU WOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED.
- CHRISTINA WHITE IS THE CONTACT PERSON FOR THE CRB STAFF AT THE ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT.

Committee Reports

50th Anniversary Commemoration Planning:

Discussion: Dr. Larry Capp and Mr. Reinaldo Valdes, Co-Chairs, presented an overview of the committee's report. Dr. Capp reported the following:

WE ARE GETTING GOOD RESPONSE WITH MORE FORMER CHAIRS AND CURENT BOARD MEMBERS INVOLVEMENT. WE ARE MOVING FORWARD WITH ESTABLISHING A 501C3 AND WILL OBTAIN PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE DECIDED TO WORK WITH TWO PARTNERS; THE FIRST BEING THE MIAMI DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. DR. BRADFORD BROWN, PAST CRB CHAIR, WILL MEET WITH PAST CRB CHAIR AND SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, DR. WILBERT HOLLOWAY, TO ASK FOR THEIR PARTNERSHIP AND TO DEVELOP A CURRICULUM ACTIVITY, RESOURCE

MATERIALS AND AN EXHIBIT TO LEARN ABOUT THE WORK OF THE CRB AND THE PROGRESS OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS. THE OTHER PARTNER IS THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI. CRB MEMBER MARIO ARTECONA HAS PROVIDED THE NAME OF A PROFESSOR WHO COULD BE INSTRUMENTAL IN BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP. UM HOLDS THE ARCHIVES OF FORMER CRB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BOB SIMMS AND IT WILL BE HELPFULL TO COMBINE ALL OUR FORCES.

Hate Crimes Legislation and Resources Forum Planning:

Discussion: Amy Carswell, CRB Program Officer, stated that a report has not yet been completed for the committee meeting conducted on March 15, 2012. Ms. Carswell reported that: DR. BRAD BROWN CHAIRED THE COMMITTEE MEETING. REPRESENTATIVES OF FLORIDA CITY, HIALEAH AND DORAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER CRB MEMBERS ATTENDED. THE GROUP BRAINSTORMED ABOUT THE CHALLENGES AND WAYS TO IMPROVE THE ENFORCEMENT AND COUNTING OF HATE CRIMES IN MIAMI-DADE. THE INFORMATION GATHERED WILL BE SHARED WITH STAFF FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE AND THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE A PROPOSAL FOR AN EFFECTIVE EVENT WILL BE DEVELOPED AND BROUGHT BACK TO THE PLANNING GROUP AT IT'S NEXT MTG. DR. RICHARDSON ASKED STAFF TO PROVIDE AN INTERIM REPORT AND SENT IT TO ALL BOARD MEMBERS.

Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement:

Discussion: Vickie Smith Jackson, Committee Co-chair, presented an overview of the committee meeting as follows: THE COMMITTEE HEARD A DETAILED REPORT FROM WAYNE RAWLINS, CONSULTANT ON MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S ANTI GANG STRATEGY. HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED: THERE ARE COST CONSTRAINTS BUT LOOKING FOR WAYS TO KEEP ACTIVITIES GOING. HOT SPOTS READING PROGRAM INVOLVED VOLUNTEERS GOING INTO JUVENILE FACILITIES, TO SPEAK WITH AND READ TO YOUNGSTERS. ONE STOP WALKING TOURS INVOLVED AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES AND VOLUNTEERS GOING DOOR TO DOOR IN AREAS WHERE GANG ACTIVITY OCCURS TO FIND OUT WHAT HELP IS NEEDED. MR RAWLINS RECOMMENDED THE CHICAGO CEASE FIRE PROGRAM MODEL BE ADOPTED HERE WHEREINE. OUTREACH WORKERS GO INTO PLACES CONDUCIVE TO GANG ACTIVITY TO PREVENT, INTERVENE, SURPRESS AND ACCOMODATE REENTRY OF GANG MEMBERS INTO SOCIETY.

The CRB Chair recommended that Mr. Rawlins or the associated group should appear before the Board of County Commissioners and that the CRB will support their efforts by being present, forwarding a resolution or whatever other action is appropriate.

The CRB voted to prepare a letter that strongly recommends that the Board of County Commissioners take all necessary steps to continue implementation

of the Anti-Gang Strategy and in particular, those components of the strategy that seek to foster a coordinated and pro-active community response toward prevention, intervention, suppression and reentry, as described in the Progress Report #3 (July 15, 2010-December 15, 2011).

Ms. Smith Jackson also reported that the committee is awaiting a response to a request submitted to the State Attorney regarding Dispositional Reports on Fatal Policed-Involved Shootings. The status report anticipated from the State Attorney's office has not been forthcoming. CRB staff was advised by the SAO communications director to submit a public records request, which has been done. A response is anticipated soon.

CRB Member Activity Reports

Princeton Prize for Race Relations:

AMY CARSWELL ANNOUNCED THAT 3 HONOREES WERE SELECTED. AND THEIR NAMES WILL BE ANNOUNCED WHEN THEIR QUALIFICATIONS HAVE BEEN VETTED. HONOREES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND CRB MEMBERS WILL BE NOTIFIED OF THE EVENT DETAILS.

Commemoration of Right to Council in Criminal Cases

AMY CARSWELL REPORTED THAT THE PUBLIC DEFENDERS' OFFICE IS SPEARHEADING LOCAL EFFORT TO COMMEMORATE GIDDEON VS WAINRIGHT; A SUPREME COURT DECISION PROVIDING RIGHT TO COUNCIL IN CRIMINAL CASES. MARITZA LOPEZ REPRESENTED THE CRB AT THE RECENT PLANNING MEETING. MS. CARSWELL ALSO ATTENDED. EACH GROUP WAS ASKED TO CONSIDER ACTIVITIES IT WILL CONDUCT. CRB STAFF WILL WORK WITH CRB MEMBERS TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CRB'S FUTURE CONSIDERATION.

Discussions and Determinations

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE TENSIONS OVER KILLING OF TRAYVON MARTIN:

Discussion: THERE IS NOT A HIGH LEVEL OF TENSIONS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY AT THIS TIME. THERE IS A HIGH LEVEL OF CONCERN ABOUT WHAT LESSONS COULD BE LEARNED. THERE IS A NEED TO FOCUS ON A PERSON WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE PART OF VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION CARRYING A WEAPON, AGAINST ALL FEDERAL AND NATIONAL PUBLISHED RULES FOR CRIME WATCH ORGANIZATIONS. WE NEED REASSURANCE FROM OUR POLICE CHIEF OR COUNCIL OF POLICE CHIEFS THAT THIS IS NOT HAPPENING HERE. THE BLAME SHOULD NOT BE PLACED ON CRIME WATCH. CRIME WATCH VOLUNTEERS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ENGAGE IN PROFILING OR VIOLENCE.

A MOTION WAS MADE THAT THE CRB ISSUE A LETTER URGING LOCAL CRIME WATCH ORGANIZATIONS TO FOLLOW ALL APPROPRIATE GUIDELINES. THE MOTION WAS ADOPTED.

DR. RICHARDSON ASKED STAFF TO PREPARE A LETTER W/ DR CAPP'S ASSISTANCE.

- THERE IS A NEED TO EDUCATE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP, NOT ONLY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, BUT OTHER COMMUNITY LEADERS OR OPINION MAKERS.
- PROPOSALS ON WHAT THE CRB MAY DO TO RELIEVE TENSIONS ARE WELCOME. WE HAVE HAD REQUESTS FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS FOR THE CRB TO DO CERTAIN THINGS.
- SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WILL MEET WITH THE CRB TOMMORROW TO TALK ABOUT THE "STAND YOUR GROUND LAW" AND IT'S IMPLICATIONS. SAO STAFFERS HAVE SHARED CONCERNS ABOUT THAT LAW, AS RELATED TO THIS AND OTHER POTENTIAL CASES. THE CRB COULD BE INSTRUMENTAL IN BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE.
- THE US DEPT. OF JUSTICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE HAS VERBALLY REQUESTED THAT CRB STAFF GO TO SANFORD. PEOPLE THERE ARE AFRAID MIAMI-DADE PEOPLE WILL COME TO SANFORD AND DO SOMETHING VIOLENT.
- RONALD FULTON HAS SAID THAT YOUTH AT MICHAEL KROP SENIOR HIGH WHO BELIEVE FAIRNESS SHOULD PREVAIL WERE UPSET. HE WANTS TO HELP CHANNEL THEIR ENERGIES AND ASKED THAT A YOUTH EVENT BE ORGANIZED. CRB STAFF HAS REACHED OUT TO THE NAACP'S YOUTH ORGANIZATION BUT HAS NOT YET CONNECTED.
- A COMMUNITY MEETING IS NEEDED POSSIBLY SPONSORED BY THE CRB; ONE SOUTH & ONE NORTH TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE STAND YOUR GROUND LAW SO THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THE LAW, ITS PROPER APPICATION AND HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS.
- SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR TEACHING MOMMENTS FOR THE COMMUNITY AND ITS YOUTH AROUND THE ISSUES OF STREET LAW, AND KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.
- LESSON ABOUT SOCIAL ACTIVISM ARE IMPORTANT AS RECOMMENDED BY MR. FULTON.
- WE GREW UP IN AN AGE OF SOCIAL ACTION. WE UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS. THIS NEW GENERATION OF KIDS DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE PRICE AND THE RISKS UNDERTAKEN TO GET THE FREEDOMS WE HAVE TODAY.
- WE DONT WANT TO LEAVE OUT THE SCHOOL SYSTEM, WHERE THE KIDS ARE.

Questions for Miami-Dade Corrections Director:

DR. RICHARDSON ASKED THAT QUESTIONS BE SUBMITTED FOR TIM RYAN, CORRECTIONS DIRECTOR. SOME QUESTIONS MAY NOT BE ANSWERED DUE TO THE ONGOING DOJ INVESTIGATION.

CRB Members' Retreat:

THE RETREAT PREVIOUSLY SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 18, CONFLICTS WITH THE PRESENTATION BY THE CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR. THE MAY CRB MEETING DATE IS NOT AN OPTION SINCE THE CRB CHAIR AND OTHER MEMBERS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE. DR. RICHARDSON ASKED THAT A SURVEY OF MEMBERS BE CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE BEST DATE. THE RETREAT IS A BI-ANNUAL EVENT CONDUCTED AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH NEW CHAIRPERSON'S TENURE FOR CRB MEMBERS TO GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER AND TO TALK ABOUT VISION AND MISSION FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS. SIMILAR TO A GOALS CONFERENCE. MS. MCGILL HAS BEEN HELPFULL IN HELPING TO IDENTIFY AND OBTAIN AN APPROPRIATE VENUE AT THE PORT OF MIAMI.

Issues Roundtable: Critical and Pressing Community Relations Concerns

NEW MIAMI BEACH POLICE CHIEF RAY MARTINEZ HAS BEEN SELECTED AS THE NEW MIAMI BEACH POLICE CHIEF. IT WAS ASKED THAT THE CRB BOARD TO SEND LETTER OF CONGRATULATIONS TO CHIEF MARTINEZ AND AN INVITATION FOR HIM TO VISIT THE CRB AT ITS MAY MEETING TO DISCUSS MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND ACTIVITIES, RESOURCES AND CROWD RELATED ISSUES. IT WAS NOTED THAT MR. MARTINEZ ATTENDED THE CRB EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING TWO MONTHS AGO.

Other Business

RABBI SCHIFF HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE COSMOS ORGANIZATION FOR HIS WORK ON BEHALF OF IMPROVING INTERFAITH RELATIONS. CRB BOARD MEMBER VICKY SMITH JACKSON WAS FEATURED IN 2012-13 AFRO AMERICAN HISTORY CALENDAR AS MS. OCTOBER.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.