



MINUTES OF THE CITY OF MIRAMAR COMMISSION WORKSHOP

September 8, 2021

4:00 P.M.

A workshop of the Miramar City Commission to discuss Sister Cities was called to order by Mayor Messam at 4:09 p.m. on September 8, 2021, in the City Commission Chambers, Town Center, 2300 Civic Center Place, Miramar, Florida.

Upon call of the roll, the following members of the City Commission were present:

Mayor Wayne M. Messam
Vice Mayor Yvette Colbourne
Commissioner Maxwell B. Chambers
Commissioner Alexandra P. Davis

Upon call of the roll, the following member of the City Commission was present:

Commissioner Winston F. Barnes

Members of staff were present in the Commission Chambers:

Deputy City Manager Whittingham Gordon
Economic Development Assistant Director Richard Hughes
City Clerk Denise A. Gibbs

DEPUTY CITY MANAGER GORDON: This is the workshop that's requested back in January 16, 2019, as a continuation, so that in order for us to have a second reading on Temp. Resolution 1717, so our Economic Development team are here, and Mr. Rick Hughes is going to be the presenter.

Economic Development Department Assistant Director Richard Hughes gave a presentation on sister cities, as detailed in the backup, highlighting the following:

- There was a chronology of meetings regarding the sister cities initiative in the City of Miramar dating back to 2013
- A workshop was held in 2013 where representatives from other cities, such as Coral Gables, Lauderhill, and Delray Beach spoke of their experience with sister

cities programs, and staff was directed by the Commission to provide information on the program structure of existing programs

- Staff subsequently met internally to work on gathering the information, including examining sister cities agreements from other cities, and looking at how they handled budgeting for their program
- In 2017, a workshop was held at which representatives from Doral and Fort Lauderdale spoke about their sister cities programs and experiences; there was discussion on what the City's sister cities program could be; that is, the type of relationship Miramar could have with cities regarding culture, trade, education, etc.
- The City began engaging with Sister Cities International, the umbrella group for sister cities programs nationally and internationally
- At a City Commission meeting on August 17, 2017, Resolution No. 17-197 directed staff to develop a sister cities program; an exploration committee was created and met between late 2017 to about mid 2018
- In early 2019, City staff presented the exploration committee's work to the City Commission, and there was Commission consensus directing staff to schedule a workshop in the interim before the second reading of an ordinance that passed first reading
- The exploration committee met six times over a one-year period; they looked at various factors, such as creating a community profile the City would put out on Sister Cities International; the structure of an actual board and its bylaws was created, along with what a program model could look like; a mission statement; set a profile of Miramar; attributes of an effective board member; additional research was done at this time
- The City's sister cities mission statement would be: To promote international collaboration, facilitate mutual economic, cultural, and educational exchanges based on respect and goodwill
- Staff developed a profile for program as part of the City's profile on the Sister Cities International website; it gave a snapshot of who Miramar was as a city
- Eight possible attributes staff thought made for effective board members, including: the need to be committed to the cause; have a passion for the aim of the program; some service experience; and a willingness to be an active member of the board
- The proposed structure of the board of directors: Seven voting member appointed by the City Commission; there would be five directors, and two at-large directors, one representing the local business community, and one from the Local education community; directors would serve for a term of four years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms, and a one year off the board to be eligible for another appointment; board members would select officers (president and vice president) from among their group, as with other City boards, and the length of holding those posts could be two years
- Staff suggested appointing nonvoting, ex officio members, such as a Miramar/ Pembroke Pines Chamber of Commerce representative, someone from the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, a member of Miramar staff
- The board could create groups and subcommittees as needed

- Agency partnerships outside Miramar, such as the Chamber and the Alliance, and any other chambers that aligned with sister cities
- Regarding the level of autonomy of the City's sister cities program, staff suggested, for the first two years, establishing a working advisory board to allow the program to develop into a 501(c)(3); appoint a liaison from City staff; the program and its advisory board would become a semi-autonomous group by year three
- The exploration committee would research cities of various countries as potential sister cities, for example, cities in Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad & Tobago, Belize, etc.
- City Commission action: The Commission approved Temporary Ordinance No. 17-17 on first reading in January 2019, with a Commission consensus to hold a workshop for further discussion prior to second reading
- City staff action: City staff and a consultant were working to finalize an overall global strategy for Miramar; the consultant believed the City of Miramar was ready to launch its sister cities program; staff met with and received positive feedback from the Sister Cities International Florida Representative Donna Scantlebury; staff spoke with Broward County staff Paolo Baraya
- City Commission consensus was being sought to move the ordinance toward second reading, which was tentatively placed on the agenda for the September 29, 2021, Commission Meeting agenda.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you for the presentation. If you can indicate by -- members of the Commission, just select your request to speak, and I will bring you up and recognize -- Commissioner Davis, you're recognized.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: (Unintelligible 10:59 - 11:25).

MR. HUGHES: As currently proposed, it would be -- for the educational, it would have to be somebody that's from an educational institution based in Miramar, so the person wouldn't have to live in Miramar, but the institution would have to be here. Same thing with the business. But, to answer your questions about other members, right now the intent would be that they would be City residents, but that can be changed.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: All right. So I guess my question is, on the business side, if somebody has experience with sister cities, another organization, or they've done it elsewhere, would they qualify under the business?

MR. HUGHES: If they're outside the City?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Yeah, yeah.

MR. HUGHES: Yeah. It would depend on if you want to change the proposed bylaws or not. Currently, as proposed, you're selecting City residents.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Well, could we look at the model that's used for the Education Board?

MR. HUGHES: I'm sorry. I couldn't hear you.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Could we look at the model that is used for the Education Board?

MR. HUGHES: Sure.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Okay. Because not everybody lives in the City, so you might want to look at expertise as well, so that -- I mean, for example, I know somebody that is not in the City, for example, but they've been sister city involvement in, say, Haiti, where -- wherever else, as an option. I'd like to be able to have that in there.

MR. HUGHES: Okay.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Whether you use it or not -- but I mean to have that, I think, would be helpful, especially when you're starting from scratch with this kind of board. I guess my second one would be the involvement of the -- the Broward County department. I know you mentioned Paola; would they be as a -- maybe like a consultant type of -- because I know she does a lot of -- when you go and visit other countries, what do you call that again --

MR. HUGHES: Ex officio?

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Trade -- trade -- trade expos.

MR. HUGHES: Yes.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I think that's -- would be a helpful component, especially for businesses who want to go on trade missions, and, possibly -- I know part of its success here -- some of it is cultural, some of it is trade, I believe, or different types of focus that you'll have for the sister cities. So if trade is in there, it would be nice to work with her group, and also -- I believe it's the department of -- the Florida Department -- I don't remember the name of that department, but they also deal with a lot of import/export, in terms of trade missions and stuff. I know you've listed nonvoting members as the Chamber, the Florida Alliance, staff liaison; and maybe they could be in a different category, you know, as also folks that we can lean on for support, especially when it comes to trade missions.

MR. HUGHES: Okay.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: And I guess, then, the only other thing is, I know you have different cities here, and different countries; were these the ones that you -- the group came up with, or --

MR. HUGHES: They were just s a sampling that the exploration committee discussed; we're trying to find some common ground with Miramar, and some (unintelligible 15:24) but --

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I mean I'd love to add Ghana, Accra, to the list. When I was on the last trade mission that I went to, the first and last, the mayor of Accra was actually interested in doing a sister city with the City, so, you know, that could be added as a place to explore, in terms of sister city relation; I'd appreciate that as well.

MR. HUGHES: One -- one of the things I'll just mention is, and it relates to this -- is that one of the things that the exploration committee did is they developed a list of criteria that would be recommended that the board, if -- if created, would use as a guide to make recommendations to you as a Commission for potential partnerships. The Commission would have the ultimate say with that, so the board would just be bringing stuff forward, but it would be based on criteria; that's our recommendation. So it wouldn't be an arbitrary type of thing, such as cultural, such as education, such as political system, and taking a look at those things, and maybe even weighting them, in terms of scoring them out. So we even proposed some of those things in -- in the backup when we did the ordinance. So while you have this, you know, list of possible cities, it's just a sampling, you know, a for instance type of thing. But they would be based on harder criteria for sure. That would be the way to go for the board.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Right. So if you have, maybe, a list of say ten or so, then you could use that, and then guide from there. So I just -- so I just wanted to add Ghana, Accra to that list that you have to look at.

MR. HUGHES: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Thanks.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thanks, Commissioner. Vice Mayor Colbourne, you're recognized.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Thank you. Couple of things. Starting on the first page, you say there -- a Commission meeting on August 22nd, 2017, we passed a resolution. Was that a resolution or a ordinance, because we're -- you're saying that this is a second reading that we're now going before -- we're now doing the workshop before the second reading?

MR. HUGHES: Yes.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: So when was the first reading?

MR. HUGHES: The first reading -- that ordinance --

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: I mean a resolution does not require two readings, so I'm assuming you're -- you're talking about an ordinance. Was that an ordinance or a -- or a resolution that was passed?

MR. HUGHES: The ordinance done at first reading was -- that ordinance would create the board, just as you've created a bunch of other boards for the City: Educational Advisory, Economic Development Advisory; this would be yet another board, so it would actually go in the Code of Ordinances.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: I'm sorry, Hugh --

MR. HUGHES: You have to do it by ordinance.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Hugh -- I can't hear you. Can you put the mic a little closer to you?

MR. HUGHES: Sure. What I was just saying was that that ordinance is to create another board, similar to all the other boards that the City has, which is done through ordinance, and would be put into the Code of Ordinances. So that's done through an ordinance. So the first reading was to do that.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: When was the first reading is my question, Hugh.

MR. HUGHES: I have that here. January 16th, 2019.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: January 16, 2019. Okay, so that Commission meeting was the first reading?

MR. HUGHES: Correct.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Okay. If I can get a copy of that, because that wasn't included in the package for tonight, to refresh my mind, because it's been two years, to see -- exactly what is it that we will be approving on second reading, because I --

MR. HUGHES: Yes.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: I don't recall what the -- exactly what first reading was. It's been two years on that. Questions -- I do want to -- I definitely want to extend my thank you to -- to staff and -- and -- and to the -- the committee that was put together to go through and -- and come up with these recommendations. So I definitely say thank you for that. On the -- on the structure of the board, you have two at-large, and you have business and education. Are those -- are those areas the expertise that's needed? Why bus -- why business, and why education? I -- I see business, but why -- when you say education, how does that -- how does that fit into -- to the focus areas? The focus areas are economic development, education, and culture, but in terms of asking for expertise

for the at large, we're looking for business and education, so I was just wondering what -
- what's the thought with that?

MR. HUGHES: When -- when we looked at other programs, sister cities programs, it seemed that education tended to be one of the emphasis points for those programs. So either they had some sort of association with an -- an educational institution, or they had someone on their board, somehow, otherwise involved in the program, representing the educational side of things. So that if there was an exchange with another city somewhere, that that would be some common ground you may have with that other -- that other city; there's an educational component to it. So we're recommending that that would be a valuable thing to have.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: I'm sorry? You're recommending that the -- I didn't hear the last thing you said.

MR. HUGHES: Oh, I just said that we would recommend that that be a component of the board, that you have somebody representing an educational institution; it's an asset to have.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Okay. Okay. As we we're looking at this being an advisory board, so with our advisory boards, we don't usually do president, vice president; we do chairs, or vice chairs, or something like that. I would recommend that we just kind of stay in line with the other -- the other boards, as closely as possible, you know.

MR. HUGHES: Okay.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: We can change as needed, but in terms of the structure. Recommended nonvoting members, you have the Chamber; I presume that you're referring to -- which chambers are you referring to? Let me not presume.

MR. HUGHES: Yeah, the local chamber, the Miramar/Pembroke Pines --

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Was there one -- okay. Is that the only chamber?

MR. HUGHES: No.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Because there are other business chambers, and I think we should -- we need to be inclusive, and -- and give other chambers opportunities to be part of this.

MR. HUGHES: It -- it could. The -- the thinking was to naturally go with the -- the one that represents the City, but it could include, you know, others, instead of having an association with a particular country.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Right.

MR. HUGHES: It's -- you can be flexible with this. This is just --

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: All right. So I definitely would like to -- to -- to make sure that we -- we're aware of the other chambers that are operating in the area that may have some ties into what we're doing, and be open towards that. When you said the -- when you say alliance, what was that in reference to?

MR. HUGHES: The Greater -- The Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance. Okay.

MR. HUGHES: Yeah, I think -- you know, as I'm looking at this again, is that -- as we're talking about the nonvoting members that that's -- those are examples, so it's not -- what you see there is not the limit. So with respect to -- to chambers, the board could have multiple chambers represented in this.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Right.

MR. HUGHES: So that's open.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Okay. Developing a 501(c), the structure that you have now, that would be for the advisory board, so the structure for the 201(c), that would be - - that would be different?

MR. HUGHES: Yeah, what -- what we're considering with that is that it would transition into a 501(c)(3) at about the third year, so with the suggest there is that they meet, as a group and advisory, and then basically get organized, and get some momentum as a group, and then by year three, the expectation would be to formalize it as a 501(c)(3), and go through that process. So the same group would stay intact; they would just become a 501(c)(3); that would -- that's the thinking.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: I would -- I -- I would want to see -- I would want to see the -- the -- the advisory committee operating first, you know, and -- and truly getting something in place, and see how it actually works. I don't know that two years is enough time for them to actually work, and perform duties, you know, truly work towards making the sister city program, putting a sister city program together, and at the same time trying to put the 501(c) together. So I just think that it may need more time. I would be comfortable approving the advisory board at this time, knowing that, maybe, after their -- after the four-year term, you know, by that time, we -- we will be considering the 501(c), you know, the ultimate goal. But I would really like to see them devote the time to really -- putting a good sister program together versus trying to develop a 501(c).

MR. HUGHES: Yeah.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: That's it from me now. Thank you.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you, Vice Mayor. Commissioner Chambers, do you have any comments or questions?

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: I just have some -- one question. I know, previously, we had a workshop, and there was a financial impact; I don't see a number here. Do we -- in terms of the potential cost?

MR. HUGHES: There is -- there's nothing in this particular presentation that will tell you about cost. We -- it -- it varies widely. I know the presentations in past meetings from some of the other representatives from other cities, it's been some -- some small amounts, you know, made available through budgeting for such a thing as membership, and the Sister Cities International. Some have had small budgets to do some fundraising activities, others have gotten no money at all, and they've been having to just raise money through sponsorships and things like that. So that's an area that would just have to be investigated by the board if it's created. They would need to find their way in that respect. I mean, probably, the first couple of years it would probably be helpful, obviously, to be a member of the Sister Cities International, so we have access to their resources, and that's about \$1,000.00 to be a member. Beyond that, the work of the committee is all volunteer, so there wouldn't be, at least initially, any need to budget any funds for any -- you know, activities beyond just normal meetings with staff as a liaison. I don't know if that answers your question, but --

COMMISSIONER CHAMBERS: It's clear, thank you.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you, Commissioner. I'd like to thank staff for the update and the presentation, and the work that has been done to date; I know this has been going on for some time. I think my recollection of the various workshops and meetings that has brought us up to this point were driven by the sister cities organization. I think we also had some guidance from the Greater Fort Lauderdale Sister Cities organization. I think if I recall as well, City of Doral, I think, also gave some insights, in terms of what has worked for them; if they had to do it over again, what -- what lessons learned that they would offer to us as a city, as we embark upon this. One of the things that stuck for me during the feedback, and what appeared to be a -- a consistent theme for the success for sister cities, that they highly encouraged us, and even urged us to ensure that we set up a structure that would facilitate -- that would facilitate a organic relationship between the -- the board that would ultimately be formed. The -- the -- the organic interest would facilitate the interactions that would be needed based on the focus of the -- of the board, which could be many, whether it's trade; there would be a group of individuals that would -- would interact in regards to trade, whether it was cultural exchange with -- with the -- excuse me, -- Commissioner Chambers. Yeah, could you -- yeah, we can hear the conversation. Whether it's education, whether it's religious organizations, they all would be interacting based on their mutual -- their mutual attraction, mutual goals between the twinning. Every twinning would be different; some may be the same, but the twinning may, perhaps, focus on one particular area, and why we as a commission may agree to twin with a particular city, because of the interaction or the interest from our community

to want to interact with a -- a twinning sister city from that standpoint. In terms of the structure, they also noted that, eventually, you -- you -- you want this autonomy to be established, and that's why it's -- it would, ultimately, morph or transition into a -- a not-for-profit organization that is supported by the City. The appointments of the board of directors, obviously, can be structured in a way where it's appointed by the City elected officials, as well as -- however we would structure the eligibility for -- for board members. But the -- the whole nature is to not necessarily make it a political organization, one that would truly be responsive to the respective interactions based on the focus of what's natural to us in -- in -- in the City of Miramar. Some examples of interactions. We -- we -- we have some informal relationships already, right now with cities like Kingston, Jamaica, Mayor Williams, Delroy Williams, has, in his -- his staff and his parish council has taken an interest in the City of Miramar. In fact, their parish engineers, and emergency response professionals actually took a mission trip here to Miramar and received a presentation from our emergency response department that was led by our police department, our fire rescue department at our Police Headquarters in our Emergency Operating Center, where we shared some of our best practices. Because they had an interest in how we prepared for hurricanes, so that they could reduce their response demands after an event. They found themselves being very reactive after storm events, and they wanted to get information on how we were preparing to reduce that risk. So we're able to actually give them a copy of our Emergency Response Plan that worked for us. And they also had an interest in regards to modernizing their permitting process, and I know that there had been some inquiries to our Community Development Department. So that's just one example on how government to government can interact. But I'm sure that there are many opportunities, as it relates to trade to trade, our students to -- to -- students for, let's say an exchange program; that's why education is important. Higher ed, if we're looking to collaborate to attract certain industries or sectors; that can all come out of the -- the -- the working efforts of the, I guess initially, the advisory board and the directors. I think what has been proposed is something that is workable. Obviously, there's some nuances that we can tweak as a commission, that we would like to see be better if we feel that the advisory group -- determining how long it would be, that are setup some metrics. I do think that we should preserve some -- some guide, in terms of who the City twins with, so it's not arbitrary that we have -- you know, what is our interests? What type of international relations we want to have? And then see how -- if it's six boxes to be checked, and if -- you know, we can have a minimum number of boxes that should be checked, in terms of what we would like to see in a twinning opportunity, you know, so that it's just not arbitrarily on who we are partnering with. So that at least it would -- it would meet the goals of what we would layout as a -- you know, as a city. So those are some of my initial responses. Obviously, I've always supported this since it's inception, and when it was proposed, and I think it's a lot of potential and opportunity, given the fact that we live in such a diverse community with so many diasporas. So -- I think everyone has had an opportunity to give some comments. Staff is seeking consensus from the Commission to bring forward a second reading, obviously, between now and the second reading, if we have any questions, or want to meet with staff, that can take place between now and then, and then we can have the -- the second reading,

and moving forward. So are there any objections in moving forward? I see a speaker. Commissioner Davis.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: I had thought we were going to have somebody here from one of the other sister cities. Are there going to be in attendance for the second reading? I mean, again, as Commissioner -- in fact, I wasn't even here back in January 2019. Commissioner Colbourne mentioned that -- it's been two years, so I know you have all this, but is there anybody that already had a program that is willing to speak, because I thought they would, at least, be here, even if it's by Webex, this evening.

MAYOR MESSAM: Could we reach back out to the --

MR. HUGHES: We -- Donna Scantlebury, if she's on the line, could speak to your point. Donna, are you there?

MAYOR MESSAM: I saw someone who was attending. If IT can unmute the mic. What -- what is the -- the gentle lady's name?

MR. HUGHES: Her name is Donna Scant -- Scantlebury.

MAYOR MESSAM: Can you hear us? Are you here?

MS. SCANTLEBURY: Yes, I'm here.

MAYOR MESSAM: Good afternoon. Can you just state your name for the record, and what organization you represent?

MS. SCANTLEBURY: Okay. My name is Donna Scantlebury, and I represent Sister Cities International in Washington.

MAYOR MESSAM: Commissioner Davis, were there any specific questions?

MS. SCANTLEBURY: I'm the representative for the State of Florida for Sister Cities.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Thank you for being on. I'm assuming you were hearing the discussions earlier; you know the presentation?

MS. SCANTLEBURY: Yes, I did, yeah. I just stepped off for like two minutes, and you called my -- and I came running.

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Is there anything that you could add to the discussion this evening?

MS. SCANTLEBURY: Yeah. I -- I don't remember who asked the question regarding education and business. And one of the -- the platforms that we have within the State of

Florida as a state representative of Sister Cities, economic development and education. Why education? Because when you strive to have economic development, you have to be educated, whether it's technology, agriculture, or a new way of doing business altogether, and that's why education and business go hand in hand. Four years -- additionally, Vice Mayor Colbourne spoke about four years in setting up and transitioning into a 501(c)(3), and I think that -- that's good enough time, but also I think like in the last year, like the transitioning should begin kind of like in the fourth year to a -- a full-blown 501(c)(3) sister city. Most sister cities operate in two different manners; some cities keep it under the umbrella forever, and some of them transition on as 501(c)(3). I kind of like the 501(c)(3) model, because it gives the entity a little bit independence when it comes to fundraising, and also doing other types of activities within sister cities that -- in some cities, it would be restricted. I don't know all the ordinances in the City of Miramar, but I'm just saying that I think that's a good way to go, and start in the City, because it's important for the City, especially as it relates to economic development, and transitioning to a 501(c)(3).

COMMISSIONER DAVIS: Perfect, thank you for being here this evening.

MS. SCANTLEBURY: You're welcome.

MAYOR MESSAM: Vice Mayor Colbourne, you're recognized.

VICE MAYOR COLBOURNE: Yes, thank you. **(Unintelligible 41:03)** -- yeah. In ref -- in ref -- in reference to my question on education, I kind of overlooked -- I think I said it, but I overlooked it, that it is a focus area, which would absolutely make sense that you would have that there as a requirement, in terms of -- of knowledge, you would want someone in that. But the clarification was helpful, in terms of what type of educations afford. How -- how would that -- you know, how -- how would that be integrated. It's not that you're looking, necessarily, for a teacher, for instance, to fill that capacity. You may be looking for -- for something more specific than that, in terms of qualifications.

MAYOR MESSAM: Okay. So seeing no other comments, are there any objections -- are there any objections in directing staff to move forward to bring the second reading to the Commission for consideration and approval? No? Okay. Hearing and seeing none, you have your consensus.

MR. HUGHES: Thank you very much.

MAYOR MESSAM: Thank you all for your participation. Thanks everyone for participating online and in -- or in person.

ADJOURNMENT

MAYOR MESSAM: At this time, the workshop is adjourned. Have a good evening.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Denise A. Gibbs, CMC
City Clerk
DG/cp