

TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES | SPECIAL NEEDS ADVISORY BOARD

REPORT TO COUNCIL | FEBRUARY 2024

Mission Statement: The mission of the Special Needs Advisory Board is to create a model town for inclusion, by identifying specific Miami Lakes families with an interest in matters pertaining to individuals with special needs; connecting them to existing programs, services, and events; and serving the Town Council in an advisory capacity to identify unmet needs and assist with the discovery of possible solutions.

Membership Roster:

Name	Position	Appointed by
John Rogger	Chair	Ray Garcia
Vivian Levy	Vice Chair	Carlos Alvarez
	Position Open	Luis Collazo
Jesenia Orellana	Member	Marilyn Ruano
Madelin Santana	Member	Josh Dieguez
Francisco Tollinche	Secretary	Tony Fernandez
Clarimar Zeledon	Member	Manny Cid

FY 2023-24 Budget: All funds are donated from Annual Mayor’s Gala

Activity	Amount
Community Awareness <i>(Board Marketing & Materials)</i>	\$9,367.84
Community Programs <i>(Arts for Autism/Dojo Classes/Etc)</i>	\$24,600.00
Social & Recreation <i>(Committee & Town Events)</i>	\$24,929.62
Trainings & Workshops <i>(Trainings for Residents & More)</i>	\$9,585.32
Grants & Aids <i>(Donations to Non-Profits in our Community)</i>	\$12,302.60
Total Budget	\$80,785.38

Initiatives & Events:

Town Workshops – SNSP, Goodwill Presentation & More
Start of the DOJO Program and upcoming open house
Painting With A Twist – Valentine’s Day
Hope For Autism Gala
Grants & Donations – Ongoing help for non-profits in our community

Future Project/Considerations:

Special Needs Safety Program Presentations To Other Committees
Partnership with NIC For Autism Bike Ride in April
Start of the Animation Classes
Sensory Friendly Playground Concept
TOML Sensory Friendly Summer Movie

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To the Town Council,

We were excited to start off 2024 by presenting to the town residents & area leaders, our Special Needs Safety Program workshop that was held on January 25th at the Town Hall. We had one of our best attendance records yet. Thank you to Deputy Attorney Lorenzo Cobiella, Town Officer Robin Amador, Councilwoman Marilyn Ruano and Councilman Josh Dieguez who all participated in the forum. It gave us a chance to really showcase the program and how it can help keep families in the Town of Miami Lakes safe, and better connect our residents with the Miami Dade Police Department.

We are looking forward to numerous new and ongoing programs getting kicked off for the year, including our upcoming DOJO Program that will offer non-contact training at the Miami Lakes Youth Center, with an Open House set for Monday February 26th at 4:30PM and classes start on March 11th (Every Monday) at 4:30PM for a period of 10 weeks.

In addition to that, our events are ramping up with the Valentine's Day Painting with a Twist program, which this year we've rented out the whole facility to be able to open it to our younger and older adults with special needs, as well as members of the general public in an effort to be more inclusive. We have space for a total of 50 participants.

We also anticipate getting started with other programs you approved in our previous presentation back in November, including a sensory friendly movie during summer break, participation in various existing holiday events across the town (4th of July, etc) as well as the return of our annual program of spectrum dance classes hosted by Arts for Autism. These are in the works and are being pushed into subcommittees as we speak.

Finally, we were able to accept the previous Mayor's Gala funds into our budget, which our board elected to send \$5,000 to community awareness, \$10,000 into community programs, \$10,000 into social and recreational, \$5,000 into training and \$2,302.60 into grants and aids, which equals the total amount donated from the Gala of \$32,302.60.

This year's Mayor's Gala date is set for September 28th, 6:30 to 11PM and we aiming at working with the Graham Companies in an effort to bring the Gala to the Miami Lakes Hotel.

There's a lot to be done so be looking for SNAB to be out and about all year.

Thank you again,

John Rogger
SNAB Chairman