



## MEETING MINUTES

Re: 1<sup>st</sup> District 35N Meeting of Lions of Florida, Bahamas, Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao Date: Saturday, August 24, 2024

Venue: Miami Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired Time

Period: 10AM - 12:40PM

---

### **Attendance**

67 members attended this meeting, of which 44 Lions attended in person and 23 Lions attended via Zoom.

### **Call to Order**

The District Governor Jane Colona called the meeting to order at 10AM.

### **Invocation**

District Chaplain Ruth Davis gave the invocation.

### **Pledges of Allegiance to the flags**

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the respective flags as follows:

**USA** – RC1 Marlene Cepero

**The Bahamas** – Cabinet Secretary Vessna Laing

**Aruba** – LCIF Junior Arends **Bonaire** - ZC

Marlon Bermudez **Curaçao** – Leo Chair

Andy Curiel

God Bless America Song was led by PID Stacey Jones, and Lions Toast was led by DG Jane Colona.

### **Introduction of the Cabinet and Guests**

As the protocol was being established, District Governor Jane Colona introduced the past International Director, past Council Chairs, past District Governors, District, Region, and Zone Chairs, Cabinet Members, and Guests.

### **Greetings from Past International Director**

PID Stacey Jones expressed greetings from our Int'l President Fabricio Oliviera to the district, further congratulated and encouraged DG Jane for doing a remarkable job thus far, and thoroughly appreciated her efforts. She also advised that PID Jeffrey Wade is presently hospitalized and to keep him uplifted in prayer for a full recovery.

### **Greetings from MD Council Chair**

CC Adita Vazquez brought brief greetings and encouraging words to the 1<sup>st</sup> DG meeting of the Lionistic year.

### **Greetings from Miami Lighthouse**

VP Cameron Sisser advised that their committee could pack 8 weeks of grocery items for 45 kids in the program. Chanel 10, a local news station, covered the event, which is scheduled to be aired on September 13<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM.



## REPORTS

### District Governor

DG Jane Colona thanked everyone for attending her first DG meeting and highlighted her Action Plans, Goals & Objectives, Areas of Focus, and LCIF Mission 1.5 for the district. Her main priorities for each quarter are as follows: **1<sup>st</sup> Qtr. -Membership;** **2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. -Vision;** **3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr. -Hunger & 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr. -LCIF**

### District Secretary

Lion Vessna Laing reminded all members in attendance to sign in on the register sheet for record keeping. Instructed all presenters to adhere to the allotted time limits indicated for completing their presentations during the meeting.

The fourth District Meeting was held on April 27, 2024, at Miami Springs Lions Club, led by PDG Ivan Croes. The meeting minutes were presented on June 21, 2024. A motion was presented to accept and approve these minutes as presented, with no corrections reported. Accepted by Elbio Gimenez and seconded by PID Stacey Jones.

### Treasurer

PDG Jim Campbell reported on the Lions Foundation & Administrative Accounts.

**Foundation A/c - B/F Balance** as of **July 1, 2024, \$46,255.04. Received \$1,000** (from Hunger Relief Project), and **Disbursed (\$2,871.67)** to date. **Closing Balance** as of **August 24, 2024** is **\$44,383.37.**

**Administration A/c - B/F Balance** as of **July 1, 2024, \$1,550; Received \$10,071.45** (23.98% of the budget of \$42,000); **Disbursed (\$30.00)** (0.07% of the \$42,000) to date. **Closing Balance** as of **August 24, 2024** is **\$11,591.45**

The **Combined Administration and Foundation Account Balances** are **\$ 55,974.82** on August 24, 2024.

Clubs still need to pay their District and International Dues. The request goes to the clubs to comply with the obligations.

### Region Chair 1

Marlene Cepero reported on the membership movement of Zones 1 to 5 and the services performed by each Zone. Many of the clubs' services in each Zone were highlighted and presented.

### Region Chair 2

Junior Arends reported on the membership movement of Zones 6 to 11 and the services performed by each Zone. Many of the clubs' services in each Zone were highlighted and presented.

### Global MT /GET

Elbio Gimenez reiterated the Mission of 1.5 million goals for the district and the much-needed growth in creating fruitful clubs that would remain within the district for longevity and, most importantly, paying district and international dues on time. In the District, we presently have 62 clubs, 1,162 members & 11 Leo Clubs. 2 additional clubs to come on steam soon. District 35N welcomes newly inducted member Rita Torrez to the Miami Five Star Lions Club.

### GLT

PDG Eduardo Barrera confirmed that his committee provided training workshops via Zoom in the district for all Zone Chairs in the various languages (English -FVDG Elizabeth, Spanish -SVDG Gaston, and Papiamento -Lion Andy Curiel). A total of 31 lions were in attendance for all training sessions combined.



(English-15, Spanish-9; Papiamento-7). Comments from Lions attending the session were all positive and complimentary. The GLT expresses its appreciation to PCC Juan Tejera, who accepted the position of our “Instructor Master” and provided training material he developed in the last Logistic term.

**GST**

PDG Tony Montes stated that 80% of clubs are reporting membership & service activities to date. The goal is to reach 87%. Last year, we reflected 57%, so we’re moving in the right direction. The reports submitted to date for the various platforms were provided. He will provide a monthly updated report on the clubs that haven’t been reporting as required to assist and resolve any issues they face.

**Report of LCIF**

Lion Junior Arends energetically stated that the district reached the goal of 128%, raising \$64,000 for LCIF. Let’s continue the efforts to achieve our CA goal of \$50,135 for this Logistic year 2024-25. Encouraged all Lions, clubs, and leaders to commit their LCIF donations monthly and annually to reach our goals.

**LCIF Area Leader PCC Diana Castillo**

PCC Dianna Castillo advised that both she & Lion Junior traveled to San Antonio, TX, last weekend and received updates and new developments and the conclusion of the Sky First Program, being allotted some \$190 million. LCIF was awarding additional Vision Grants to provide major vision medical equipment for hospitals; Emergency Disaster Relief Preparedness Grant increased to \$15,000; Major grants increased to \$150,000; Sight for Kids Johnson & Johnson grants extended to Georgia. Worldwide, we have a goal of \$80 million; \$30 million is expected from our Area. We can visit all clubs to make presentations on behalf of LCIF.

The total Worldwide donation last year to date is \$75 million. Our CA-1 raised over \$9 million in donations, surpassing our goal by 127%. Congratulations, **Multiple District 35 raised \$148,837**, placing our district in the top 4 of our Area. Placing number 1 in the Multiple District is **N**, raising **\$64,297**, surpassing our goal by 119%. Other districts raised the following: **L -\$14,265; I -\$29,511; and O -\$40,764**. LCIF presented presidential medals to all the districts.

The Club Excellence Award is designated for all clubs who encourage each member to donate a minimum of \$10pp. In addition to the 2-member increase in Mission 1.5, we will continue with the Melvin Jones Friendship Program, which requires the member to donate \$10 monthly to the MJ Foundation. Lion Esperanza was presented with the MJ Friendship Award last year. A short video presentation from LCIF was shared.

**Report Disaster/Hunger Relief**

PID Stacey Jones presented in the absence of FVDG Elizabeth, who is presently in Michigan, representing our district at Leader Dogs for the Blind Conference, learning about the advanced training and services rendered by the dogs. As Chairman of the Hunger Relief Committee, we have packaged at the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind Club 2,880 weekend meals for 45 kids for 8 weeks, concluding mid-October. The packages included 2 breakfasts, 2 lunch, 2 dinners & 2 snack options. We have also partnered with Publics Grocery to donate food. Channel-10 News will provide news coverage to be aired in September on their network, highlighting our efforts to be broadcast within the greater community. The upcoming drive-thru is scheduled for September 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is encouraged to come out.



### **ABC Lions Hunger Program**

Lion Marlon Bermudez gave an update from the various clubs. **Aruba Lions** will commence their hunger relief project next week. **Aruba One Happy Island Lions Club** plans to distribute 500 lunch boxes to those in need within the community. **Bonaire Lions Club** plans to distribute Christmas packages to less fortunate children in December. **Curaçao Lions Club** provides hot breakfast for children every year, funded by fundraisers and third-party donations. The total project cost for the school year 2023-24 was \$86,000, feeding 1,331 children within the program. They held a fundraiser in June, which sold 500 tickets, raising some \$28,500 towards the program. Per their last kick-off meeting held August 19<sup>th</sup>, they anticipate 36 schools/1,400 kids involved in the feeding project, estimating some \$90,000 in costs.

### **Report Peace Poster**

Lion Myra Montes stated that the grand prize winner of the Peace Poster “Dare to Dream” 2023-2024 was Fanjin Si, an 11-year-old from China. The Peace Essay was won by Yetka Yagiz Demirtas, a 12- 12-year-old from Turkey. The winners were awarded \$5,000. The final winner for all Multiple District 35 was Maria Travismo, 13 years old from District I, sponsored by Bonita Springs Lions Club. She was selected as one of 23 Worldwide Award winners and was given \$500. The new theme for the next Peace Poster and Essay Contest is ‘**Peace Without Limits**’. The contest will occur on November 16, 2024, at Western Regional Library in Miami. More information will follow in the next District meeting. Lion Myra also confirmed a \$500 donation from Key Biscayne Lions Club towards the Peace Poster Fund.

### **Leo Clubs Report**

Lion Andy Curiel advised that, as of July 30<sup>th</sup>, there are 11 Leo Clubs in the district, 5 of them from the various islands. He encouraged the Lions to do their part in increasing the number of Leo clubs throughout the district.

### **Historian**

Lion Alan Campbell presented to Lions in attendance Lion Dr. Robert ‘Bob’ Peacon, Veteran.

### **Lions Quest Report**

Lion Allen Abelson stated that four clubs (Miami Cuban; Miami Kendall West; Miami World United & Miami Pan-American) are currently involved in Lion Quest. He intends to host two Zoom meetings this Lionistic year to promote Lions Quest and encourage other clubs to get involved. They also received a \$1,500 grant to promote Lions Quest. He has committed to attending a seminar scheduled for October 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **Report Diabetes Awareness**

Lion Robert Gentilini, President, stated the foundation started with 8 children; however, with the assistance of the Nikolaos Hospital co-sponsor, a total of 24 diabetic children attended the summer camp at Barnes Park, Miami, and visited various attraction parks in fellowship in which they enjoyed and met new friends creating many memories. The goal is to purchase a portable vision evaluation eye unit to assist those children in excelling and living a fulfilled life. They plan to continue the vision and glucose screening program throughout the community in the South Florida area. Encourage more Lions to get certified in screening to assist this effort and reach more children in the community.

### **Beauty of Sight (formerly Florida Lions Eye Bank)**

PDG Tony Montes, Immed. Past Pres. stated that the foundation had awarded over 1,000 sight-saving operations for the last fiscal year 2023-24. Since its inception, they have awarded over \$75,000 in



ocular graph cornea transplant surgeries. Key Biscayne Lions Club and Miami Springs Lions Club were presented with certificates as model clubs for their donations of at least \$100.

### **Marketing /Communications**

Lion Andre displayed the new district website where Lions can have their services activities, messages etc. once sent to Lion Andre for posting. Lions can also contact him to assist in creating their marketing webpage for their clubs.

### **District Treasurer's Report on Donations**

The District Treasurer reports on the donations. The total club donations received at the 1st District meeting were **\$6,075**; of which \$50 was donated to District Projects and \$6,025 to various District Entities inclusive of Beauty of Sight, LCIF, Leader Dogs, Diabetes and others not mentioned. The treasurer urges the members to donate to projects as they're vitally important to the district's success.

### **District 35N Club International Relations**

The report below was submitted by Lion Felisa, who was not present at the meeting but submitted it to be shared within the district.

#### **Lions Club of Delray Beach - May 2024**

- May 20, 2024 -The recycling headquarters of Miami Springs Lions Club received 3,995 pairs of donated eyeglasses to ship to Bernardino, Caballero M2Lions in Paraguay.
- May 24, 2024: 189 schoolchildren in the countryside of Caazapá, Paraguay, were screened for vision, and 15 referrals resulted.
- May 27-30, 2024 - Medical Mission Trip to Paraguay with Project C.U.R.E., Fundación Panambi Inc., Bernardino Caballero Lions, and Delray Beach Lions served 1,282 needy patients, including 382 children vision screening-35 referrals: detection and treatment of cervical cancer and First Aid Clinic.

#### **Miami Dade InterAmerican - May, June & July 2024**

- In Pasacaballos, Colombia, we donated a photocopy machine to the school and helped 100 people. Our total expenses were \$166.
- **Hunger Relief**—In Masaya, Nicaragua, we helped a 3-year-old boy with exceptional food, medicine, and a gastric feeding tube. The total expenses were \$300.
- **Diabetes** -Assisted a Diabetic 59-year-old male patient with an umbilical hernia. Donated a surgical Mesh to repair his hernia. Total expenses: \$1,000
- **Childhood Cancer**- CONANCA is an organization to help children with cancer. We donated 55 bags with clothing and shoes, totaling 220 items. Donations helped 55 children—total Expenses: \$400. Also donated 2 Port Catheters to 2 children with cancer. Total expenses \$900
- Miami Five Stars Lions Club -Shipped 550 pairs of donated eyeglasses to Cameroon, Africa.

### **District Announcements**

- MD35 Fall Conference is scheduled for October 31-November at the Florida Hotel, Orlando. Registration is \$20.
- Zone-1 Clubs combined will be hosting a Shred/Food Drive on November 16 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Miami Five Star Club and other clubs will be hosting several upcoming events, which will be posted to the website for district-wide notification on the calendar of events. All clubs are encouraged to send the information to Lion Andre for posting.



### **Closing remarks**

The District Governor gave her closing remarks. She thanked the Miami Springs Lions Club for hosting the meeting. Mrs. Laurie Sheehan, wife of our international President Brian, will attend our next District Meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup> at 9am, hosted by Port St. Lucie West. A full breakfast is available for \$10pp.

### **Tail Twister Fines**

Lion Andy Curiel did a great job collecting fines.

### **Benediction**

District Chaplain Lion Ruth Davis gave the benediction.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM.

*Jane Colona*

District Governor Jane Colona

*Vessna D. Laing*

District Secretary Vessna Laing

Attachments:

Treasurers' Reports