



Peggy R. Bell  
Mayor

## MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Town Council

From: Mayor Peggy R. Bell

Date: February 15, 2017

Re: Supporting the principles of inclusion for individuals with autism and other special needs.

### REQUEST

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSION, FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED BY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES; AND URGING ACTION BY NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESSES, AND RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES CONSISTENT WITH THESE PRINCIPLES; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

### BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that an alarming one (1) in sixty-eight (68) children have an Autism spectrum disorder, and approximately one (1) in five (5) individuals have a disability according to the 2010 U.S. Census. People with disabilities are the nation's largest minority group, and the only one that anyone can join at any time.

Cities such as the Coral Gables, Miami Beach, and others have adopted Resolutions urging National, State and Local governments, businesses and residential communities to declare principles of inclusion for individuals with Autism and other special needs, which were established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Adopting a Resolution supporting these principles, is aligned with the Town's mission to make Cutler Bay an excellent place to live, work and play.

The Town is working diligently to implement programs and improve our infrastructure to allow all residents regardless of age or ability to live independently and feel included in all Town sponsored activities. Some of our efforts include, but are not limited to:





- Conducting an Americans With Disabilities (ADA) Compliance Self-Assessment in all departments and implement any recommended actions to the greatest extent possible;
- The Town has become a leader in Miami-Dade County for implementing Complete Streets Projects. The Town is currently developing a “Cutler Bay Complete Streets Corridor Analysis” that will guide all major arterial roadway improvements. The Complete Streets Analysis will include guidance on ensuring ADA Accessibility and connectivity;
- The Town’s Parks & Recreation Department will ensure that all new facility installations and improvements will follow the principles of universal accessibility. For example, the Lakes-by-the-Bay Park will receive an ADA Accessibly Canoe/Kayak Launch with paved walkways, all planned playground upgrades will include accessible equipment, and parks receiving outdoor fitness equipment will include pieces that are ADA accessible;
- The Town’s After-School Program was recognized by the Advocacy Network on Disabilities’ All Children Together” Project for completing Step Two (2) of Five (5) on the Inclusion Readiness Tool (IRT). The IRT is used to help organizations determine their readiness to provide quality services to children with disabilities. In order to reach Step 2 in the IRT, the Town’s staff was required to complete trainings and adopt policies and procedures in order to meet the needs of youth with disabilities as well as the needs of their parents. The Town is now close to reaching Step Three (3) and is well on the way to achieving Step Four (4). This will require staff to review the current New Hire Training Plan and implement agency-wide policies and procedures to effectively work with people with disabilities; and
- The Building & Code Compliance Department will implement a curbside service in which residents with disabilities that are homebound may request Town Staff to come to their home to file for permits or other building related needs.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Town Council adopt the attached Resolution, supporting these principles of inclusion for individuals with Autism and other special needs and urging action by national, state, and local governments, businesses and residential communities.

