

FROM PAGE 19A

ESPINO

the crowded board room. After thanking DeSantis, Lt. Gov. Jeanette Nuñez and Florida Education Commissioner Manny Diaz, Espino thanked God and said he “takes up this position on the school board with the same purpose of clarity and same care as I dedicate to being a parent.”

Espino, the father to four sons, argued that parents are “our children’s first and life-long educators.”

His swift appointment to board member leaves the public with little information about how he will serve and what issues he will prioritize. But his brief remarks on Tuesday, a 2012 unsuccessful School Board run and campaign finance records offer a glimpse into his priorities.

Here, then, are five things to know — for now — about Espino.

Espino donated to DeSantis and two political action committees this year, according to Florida campaign contribution records.

He donated \$250 to

DeSantis’ reelection campaign, \$500 to the Next Generation Leaders PAC, an active PAC whose chairperson is Christi Fraga, whom Espino replaced on the board after she resigned Monday due to running in the Dec. 13 mayoral runoff election in Doral. He also gave another \$500 to the Protecting Freedom of Speech PAC, which is listed as closed and whose chairperson is Lauren Pardo, who works for the Miami-Dade County Commission.

In April, Espino hosted DeSantis at Beat Culture, a Miami-based brewery he co-owns with his brother. He praised the governor for “keeping our business open” during the pandemic and thanked him for “being a fighter up there in Tallahassee, fighting for Florida’s families [...] because it’s time to stop pandering to special interests at [the] risk of our children.”

After his brief remarks, he introduced DeSantis as “the governor Florida needed, that Florida wanted and that other states wished they had.”

Like Roberto Alonso and Monica Colucci, the two board newcomers whom DeSantis endorsed in the Aug. 23 primary



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Daniel Espino is sworn in as a new Miami-Dade School Board member on Nov. 22.

election, Espino supports more parental involvement in schools. On Tuesday, he said, there’s “never been a more critical time for parents to play a central role in education and I’m proud to contribute my voice to that.”

Parental rights has been a key talking point for DeSantis and other conservatives in the state.

“The recent election cycle has raised the debate about education,” he said Tuesday. “Parents are activated. Let’s use that engagement to fuel our resolve.”

During his speech Tues-

day, he said schools “need to focus on fundamentals,” striking a similar tone to others who believe only the core subjects, such as reading, math and civics, should be taught in schools. He said society is “keen to influence, to expose our children to more and more adult pressures, shrinking their childhoods.”

(Last week, during an unofficial swearing-in ceremony, Colucci evoked a similar message, saying she would “never settle for being politically correct, but rather morally correct. When it comes to

kids, I pledge to protect their minds, hearts and spirits and in turn, protect their innocence.”)

Following his swearing-in, Espino told reporters that certain topics or conversations surrounding sexuality should be left out of the classroom. He declined to comment on the board’s July decision to adopt a comprehensive sexual health textbook after first banning the book.

In 2012, when he unsuccessfully ran for a school board seat, he received campaign donations from United Teachers of Dade’s political action committee, according to Espino’s financial reports from the District 5 race in that election. He was defeated by Susie Castillo, who won more than 60% of the vote at the time.

After his appointment Monday, Karla Hernandez-Mats, the union’s president who recently ran for lieutenant governor as Charlie Crist’s running mate and lost to DeSantis and Nuñez, congratulated Espino on his appointment.

In a statement, she said, “As a fellow Miami Springs resident, where Mr. Espino served as a

councilman, I know that he appreciates the responsibility of public service for a common good.”

Espino was elected to the Miami Springs Council in 2009 and resigned in 2012 to run for the School Board seat.

Hernandez-Mats joined the union’s leadership team in 2013 and three years later became president.

LEGAL CAREER

During his legal career, Espino has been recognized by a slew of local and statewide organizations.

In 2022, the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce recognized him with the Legal Award, and in 2018, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce named him the Sunshine Lawyer of the Year.

According to The Florida Bar, Espino’s legal areas of expertise include business, corporate, government administration and regulation, government and public policy, government contracts, real estate/land development and zoning, planning and land use issues.

Sommer Brugal: @smbrugal

FROM PAGE 19A

RUNOFF

weren’t clear.”

One of the failed ballot questions would have allowed Miami Dolphins owner and billionaire developer Stephen Ross to build a larger hotel tower and condo at the former Deauville site by providing the developer increased floor-area ratio for its design. Another series of questions asked voters to approve 99-year land leases to let developers build office space near Lincoln Road on multiple properties.

Cohen, a disability-rights advocate who received 31% of votes in the five-person primary, said the results suggest residents “were just overwhelmed with the thought of too much happening too quickly.”

Despite her support for the referendums, Cohen said she would seek a “happy medium” if she’s elected and consider backing away from certain development projects that residents aren’t ready to embrace.

“I think we just need a better balance,” she said. “I want to see more unity and harmony with these big decisions.”

The two candidates moved to a runoff because neither received more than 50% of votes. The winner will serve until November 2025, when Samuelian’s term would have ended. Samuelian died in June of an illness at 58 years old.

While Dominguez points

to the ballot questions, Cohen’s campaign is emphasizing differences with Dominguez on the issue of moving last call for alcohol sales on Ocean Drive from 5 a.m. to 2 a.m. — a hot-button topic in Miami Beach for years and one the City Commission is expected to take up soon after the Dec. 6 election.

Cohen says she supports a 2 a.m. last call on Ocean Drive, something Mayor Dan Gelber — who is endorsing Cohen — and other officials have sought as part of their efforts to change the area’s reputation as a late-night party destination.

Dominguez has said she supports a 2 a.m. alcohol cutoff in residential neighborhoods, but doesn’t support the same “blanket” change in other parts of the city.

She declined to say specifically how she would handle last call on Ocean Drive and other nightlife hot spots, saying she would first need to consult the city attorney on the legalities. But she noted there are many “good operators” in the city that have been in business for decades.

“I’m very sensitive to not hurting our businesses,” Dominguez said.

Last year, a Miami-Dade Circuit Court judge struck down the city’s attempt to impose a 2 a.m. last call at dozens of clubs in South Beach, saying the city’s vote to approve it wasn’t properly executed.

Later in 2021, a majority of voters supported a non-binding referendum on a 2 a.m. last call that envisioned the possibility of exceptions. Gelber said he would be open to letting large hotels with their own security and indoor queuing serve booze until 5 a.m., but debate on the issue centered on the fate of Ocean Drive.

The owners of Mango’s Tropical Cafe and the Cleveland hotel, two longstanding Ocean Drive party spots, bankrolled a campaign against the ballot question.

Still, action by the City Commission has been stalled since the judge’s ruling last year, which held that the city’s 2 a.m. proposal was improperly presented as an ordinance requiring a simple-majority vote when it should have been a land-development regulation requiring five-sevenths support.

That means the results of the runoff could potentially determine whether the commission has the five votes necessary to move forward with 2 a.m. last call in some form.

The commission approved multiple conflicting proposals on first reading in April, vowing to seek consensus on the matter at a later date. The options included a blanket 2 a.m. last call supported by Samuelian; a proposal to “grandfather” in businesses with existing 5 a.m. licenses proposed by Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez; and a system with exceptions for large hotels proposed by Gelber.

“I think residents have a

right to have their vote vindicated,” Gelber told the Miami Herald last week, referring to the November 2021 referendum. “It’s unfortunate that Laura and Sabrina disagree on this issue.”

Dominguez’s campaign held an event at Mango’s last weekend, fueling speculation that the venue’s influential owners may be supporting her. Dominguez said her campaign paid for the event, and Joshua Wallack, the chief operating officer of Mango’s, said he and his father, David, aren’t endorsing in the race.

Entities connected to the venue have donated to both candidates.

“It really doesn’t matter who becomes the commissioner here. They have to follow the law,” Joshua Wallack said.

Dominguez said the Cohen campaign’s focus on last call is an attempt at “deflection” from the fact that Cohen supported high-profile ballot measures that failed.

Dominguez and Cohen have plenty in common, too. Both have emphasized public safety and increased police presence as priorities and say they agree with Gelber’s goal of tamping down the city’s party atmosphere.

Dominguez is a registered Democrat, while Cohen is a former Democrat who now has no party affiliation, a switch she said she made in part because of the non-partisan nature of her disability-rights nonprofit, the Sabrina Cohen Foundation. Miami Beach City Commission seats are

non-partisan.

But the two candidates have fallen on opposing sides of some of Miami Beach’s most heated political rivalries. While Cohen has the backing of Gelber and Commissioners Ricky Arriola and David Richardson, Dominguez is endorsed by Rosen Gonzalez — who spearheaded campaigns against the Deauville and Lincoln

Road ballot questions — and Commissioner Alex Fernandez.

Cohen, a Realtor, runs a nonprofit that has partnered with the city and local leaders to improve accessibility in Miami Beach and is looking to build a recreation facility for people with mobility challenges. She suffered a

SEE RUNOFF, 22A

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC COMMENT REVIEW PERIOD DRAFT PY 2021 CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)

NOTICE is given that a draft of the PY 2021 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the City of Miami Gardens has been completed and will be available for the public to review for a period of 15 days. Notice is also given that the City will hold a public hearing to review and discuss the draft CAPER.

The CAPER reports on accomplishments and expenditures for the City’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In PY 2021, the City was awarded \$1,127,585 for the CDBG program and funded activities such as affordable housing programs, public services and public infrastructure and facility improvements which were intended for low- to moderate-income persons. PY 2021 ran from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: The draft PY 2021 CAPER will be available to review for a period of 15 days starting from December 1, 2022 to December 15, 2022, and can be downloaded from the City’s Community Development Department website at www.miamigardens-fl.gov/189/documents-forms.

Public comment regarding the draft PY 2021 CAPER can be submitted in the following ways:

By Mail: City of Miami Gardens
 Community Development Department
 18605 NW 27 Avenue, Suite 151 Miami Gardens, FL 33056

Via E-Mail: hudcomment@miamigardens-fl.gov

PUBLIC HEARING: A public hearing will be held to review and discuss the draft PY 2021 CAPER. The public hearing will be held December 13, 2022 at 2:30PM at City Hall in the Community Room, 18605 NW 27th Avenue, Miami Gardens, FL 33056. The City encourages public participation by attending the hearing.

For further information, please contact the Community Development Department, at 305-622-8041.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, all persons who are disabled and who need special accommodations to participate or are non-English speaking should contact **Mario Bataille, City Clerk (305) 914-9129, TDD number 1-800-955-8771 (Ad#19-0004)**



TOWN OF CUTLER BAY NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Town of Cutler Bay (the “Town”) will hold a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, December 7, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.**, or as soon thereafter as possible, virtually via ZOOM and in person at the Town Hall Council Chambers, 10720 Caribbean Boulevard, Cutler Bay, Florida. Any person wishing to address the Town Council on the Public Hearing item listed below can also call (786)573-5529. Zoom Meeting ID: 872 0887 9981 prior to the item being heard:

APPROVE CHANGES TO THE EXISTING MUNICIPAL CIRCULATOR BUS SERVICE TO PROVIDE A 30-MINUTE HEADWAY MONDAY TO SATURDAY ON EXISTING ROUTE 200, WHICH SERVES THE RESIDENTS OF CUTLER BAY, TO BE IMPLEMENTED ON OR ABOUT MARCH 20, 2023.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to provide interested parties the opportunity for comments regarding the Town’s proposal to improve the Municipal Circulator Bus Service from a 60-minute to a 30-minute headway, Monday to Saturday.

Since 2012, the Town has contracted with Miami-Dade County’s Department of Transportation and Public Works to provide Municipal Circulator Bus services for residents as a reliable and inexpensive way to commute within the Town. The Municipal Circulator Bus runs seven (7) days a week (Monday through Sunday) stopping at all existing bus stops, benches, shelters, and the South-Dade Transitway along its route.

For more information regarding the Municipal Circulator Bus Service, please visit <https://www.cutlerbay-fl.gov/> or call (305) 234-4262.

Funding for the proposed second Municipal Circulator Bus Service is being provided through a Florida Department of Transportation Grant and the Town’s People’s Transportation Plan Municipal Allocation.

Any and all interested parties may appear at the above meeting and be heard with respect to the proposed item.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), persons needing special accommodations to participate in these proceedings should contact the Town Clerk’s Office for assistance at (305) 234-4262, no later than four (4) business days prior to such proceeding.

Mauricio Melinu
 Town Clerk