

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-6**  
**January 27, 2026**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**

**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**

**Commissioner Melissa Castro (Absent)**

**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**

**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**

**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Maria Cruz**

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Agenda Item F-6 [Start: 2:00 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission calling for a Special Election on a Proposed Ballot Question and City Charter Amendment to be held on April 21, 2026; providing for submission to the electors for approval or disapproval of a ballot question asking whether the City Charter should be amended to eliminate the Run-Off Election in City Commission and Mayoral Races; providing for a mail ballot; providing for notice; providing for inclusion in the City Charter; providing for related matters; providing for an effective date. (Sponsored By Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Moving on to item F-6. Madam City Attorney.

City Attorney Suarez: F-6 is a resolution of the City Commission calling for a Special Election on a Proposed Ballot Question and City Charter Amendment to be held on April 21st, 2026, providing for submission to the electors for approval or disapproval of a ballot question asking whether the City Charter should be amended to eliminate the Run-off Election and City Commission and

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Mayoral races, providing for a mail ballot, providing for notice, providing for inclusion in the City Charter, providing for related matters, providing for an effective date.

Deputy City Attorney Throckmorton: Good afternoon, Mayor. This item is sponsored by the Mayor. As you all may recall, at the last Commission meeting, there was a discussion from the Charter Review Committee, and one of their suggestions was that this question or a question similar to it should be put to the voters in the April 21, 2026, Special Mail Ballot. As you all may recall, in 2016, voters approved a Charter Amendment that added a Run-off Election to the City Charter, and the Clerk can correct me, but I believe that since then, we've had a Run-off between two candidates in at least one race in every election since then, in the last five elections. There is, of course, a cost to those Run-off elections, and this proposal would strike the Runoff from the City Charter and instead would return to what we had before 2016, which was that the candidate receiving the plurality of votes, even though it may not be the majority, is the one who is elected, and there is no longer a Runoff election. Happy to answer any specific questions, but this resolution, if adopted, would add that to the April 21, 2026, special mail ballot.

Mayor Lago: This is simple. I just wanted to see the will of the Commission. We had multiple, well, we had one individual on the Commission that said that we need to do everything that the Charter Review said or mentioned. This is an example of that. Again, not that I'm saying I'm in favor or I'm against, but I wanted to bring it forward. I think it's an opportunity to have a conversation. Do we maybe have too many items currently for discussion and for consideration by the residents in regard to the referendums? Do we add this one? Do we not add this one? So, I wanted to kind of hear from my colleagues in the Commission what their opinion was. Madam Vice Mayor?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Well, this was an item that I was considering adding because, I think it makes sense because very few people show up for a Run-off election, and we're spending a considerable amount of money on a Run-off election. If the election is moved to November, you're talking about a December election, very hard time to get people back in. They're probably still out for Thanksgiving. Same thing happens in April. A major reason to move the elections to November is because people are on spring break. People are not available. It's an odd time to be voting on things when you want to take off with your kids and go to Disney World or wherever else you want to go. And its low turnout and costs a lot of money. Whether to have it this election or put it on a November ballot, we already have a paper going out. One more item, I don't think it's going to make or break whether or not somebody makes a selection on this item, but I think an opportunity should be given to the voters to make a decision.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

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Commissioner Fernandez: I think if we are giving voters an opportunity to change election dates, this is the time to have this discussion as well. I agree. I think one of the biggest concerns is if the election is moved to November, you're talking of a Run-off election that would land pretty much almost at Christmastime or at least during Hanukkah, so it'll be a little more difficult to get folks to come out to vote. So, I think we should send it to voters and have them make that decision.

Commissioner Lara: Right. So, picking up on Commissioner Castro's, I mean, Commissioner Fernandez's comments, you know, I am concerned as well when elections happen around holiday, religious holidays, right? And when people are away on spring break, and you know, that's why I was a strong proponent and an advocate that we move from April to November, from April odd year to November even year, because we were constantly running into this issue of Easter and spring break as being arguably not a deterrent, but certainly an obstacle that was unfair, I think, put on residents to vote. So that being said, my piece of advocacy there, I'm in support of the ultimate, you know, vote, you know, eliminating the Run-off. But since the question and the issue that the Mayor has brought up is, you know, should it even go on to the ballot? Yeah, I'm, I'm supportive of this going now on to the ballot. Okay.

Mayor Lago: May I have a motion.

Commissioner Lara: Move it.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Second.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, you have a public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor, I do. Mr. Mayor, also, just really quick before we move on to public comment, just wanted to stress there's a scenario where this item passes, but elections do not get moved to November.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: So, we would not have Run-off elections on April either. So that's something that we should consider.

Mayor Lago: Perfectly fine. I understand that.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz, for public comment.

Mrs. Cruz: And it is Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I have absolutely no issue with eliminating the Run-off, but I still feel that if, in fact, we want to know what people think, it should not be mail only.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Mayor.

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Mayor Lago: All right. Close. We have a motion and a second.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes. Item F-7.