

City of Coral Gables

*405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

8:00 AM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84243975634>

Communications/Public Affairs Conference Room

Budget/ Audit Advisory Board

*Chairperson John Holian
Vice Chairperson Joseph Palmar
Board Member Richard L. Barbara
Board Member Thomas Korge
Board Member Debra Register*

Virtual Zoom Meeting Available for Public Participation

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84243975634>

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM by Mr. John Holian.

ROLL CALL

The roll was taken, and an in-person quorum was established. The meeting was also available on Zoom for public access. Mr. Thomas Korge was absent due to feeling ill and Mrs. Debra Register was out of town. Their absences will be excused.

Present: 3 - Vice Chairperson Palmar, Chairperson Holian and Board Member Barbara

Excused: 2 - Board Member Register and Board Member Korge

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Joseph Palmar, seconded by Mr. Holian, to approve the September 17, 2025, meeting minutes.

[25-9905](#)

Budget Audit Advisory Board Meeting of September 17, 2025.

Attachments: [MeetingMinutes-Legistar Generated](#)

A motion was made that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following vote.

Yeas: 3 - Vice Chairperson Palmar, Chairperson Holian and Board Member Barbara

Excused: 2 - Board Member Register and Board Member Korge

DISCUSSION ITEMS

•Draft Resolution regarding \$100 million line of credit reserved for catastrophic events

The Budget & Audit Advisory Board reviewed a draft resolution recommending the City Commission consider establishing a \$100 million line of credit to be used only during declared catastrophic events such as hurricanes or major financial crises. Both the City of Coral Gables and PFM Financial Advisor Jay Glover advised against it, due to the proposed line of credit having an annual carrying cost of approximately \$250,000 and the city's AAA rating allowing it to secure emergency loans quickly. Additionally, historically, other cities have been able to secure large sum emergency loans post-hurricane, without pre-established lines of credit. Mr. Palmar inquired about the bank that the city uses should it need to take out debt. Mr. Glover explained that the normal process would include a request for proposal. However, in the event of an emergency, PFM would reach out

to a few banks with established relationships in South Florida and request proposals on a more expedited manner. Instead of a standing line of credit, Mr. Palmar suggested the possibility of preparing a shortlist of banks and gathering preliminary terms in advance of hurricane season, such as in April of 2026, which would allow the city to act quickly without incurring costs.

•Coral Gables tree canopy trimming & maintenance

Mrs. Deena Bell-Llewellyn, Assistant Director of Public Works, Greenspace Management presented a PowerPoint presentation to the board. She explained that Coral Gables has 40% tree canopy coverage, second only to Gainesville in Florida. The city maintains 40,000 public trees with a \$1.9M annual tree trimming budget. Tree pruning schedule is dependent on tree species to balance safety and budget. The city uses Cartegraph, a geographic information system (GIS), to track tree inventory, pruning history, and costs. Emergency pruning such as in the occurrence of hanging branches or blocked roads is prioritized for safety. Mrs. Llewellyn provided the contact details of her department-pwgreenspace@coralgables.com. Mr. Palmar inquired if it was better for a tree to be fuller in terms of wind damage. Mrs. Bell-Llewellyn explained that improper pruning can make trees structurally unsound due to the unevenness of foliage. Mrs. Paula Rodriguez, Assistant Director for Management, Budget, & Compliance, explained that it is a delicate balance in funding the maintenance of the City of Coral Gables tree canopies. Mr. Holian asked Mrs. Bell Llewellyn if there were specific items that are not currently funded, but that she would like them to be. She explained that staffing shortage and budget limitations are major constraints; the team only has two certified arborists and pruning frequency and tree planting is limited.

•Possible Capital Reserve Fund

Because this was a discussion item of interest for Mr. Korge, this topic will be deferred to the next meeting so that he may participate in the discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

SCHEDULING

The next meeting scheduled for November 19th, 2025 - 8:00 AM.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 AM.

NOTE

Any person who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to the City of Coral Gables Ordinance No. 2006-11, must register with the City Clerk, prior to engaging in lobbying activities before city staff, boards, committees and/or the City Commission. A copy of the Ordinance is available in the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall.

Any person, or persons, wishing to appeal any decision made by the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, will require a verbatim record of the proceeding upon which the appeal is based. Interested persons should, therefore, take the necessary steps to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which contains the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based.

Any person making impertinent or slanderous remarks or who become boisterous while addressing the Commission, shall be barred from further audience before the Commission by the Chair, unless permission to continue or again address the Commission is granted by the majority vote of the Commission Members present. Clapping, applauding, heckling or verbal outbursts or any remarks in support or opposition to a speaker shall be prohibited. Signs or placards shall not be permitted in Commission Chambers.

Any person with a disability requiring communication assistance (such as a sign language interpreter or other auxiliary aide or service) in order to attend or participate in the meeting should contact the City's ADA Coordinator Raquel Elejabarrieta, Esq., Director of Labor Relations and Risk Management (E-mail : relejabarrieta@coralgables.com, Telephone: 305-722-8686, TTY/TDD: 305-442-1600), at least three (3) business days before the meeting