

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-1 and I-1 are related
June 11, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Jorge Fors

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Labor Relations and Risk Management Director, Raquel Elejabarrieta
Finance Director, Diana Gomez

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Items F-1 and I-1 are related [11:23 a.m.]

An Ordinance amending Chapter 46 of the "Code of the City of Coral Gables," entitled "Pensions;" amending Section 46-25, entitled "Definitions", to revise the definitions of Average Final Compensation and Normal Retirement Date for Firefighters; amending Section 46-253, entitled "Normal Retirement Income", to revise the Normal Retirement Income for certain Firefighters; and providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. (The sole purpose of this Ordinance is to incorporate the pension changes agreed upon in the 2017-2020 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City and IAFF).

City Commission Meeting
June 11, 2019

Agenda Items F-1 and I-1 are related - Ordinance amending the Code of the City of Coral Gables, to revise the Normal Retirement Income for certain Firefighters and a resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables Florida ratifying the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Coral Gables and the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1210, for the period of October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020. Page 1

A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables Florida with attachments, ratifying the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Coral Gables and the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1210, for the period of October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, next item is F-1 and I-1. F-1, Madam City Attorney.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes, sir. F-1 is an ordinance amending Chapter 46 of the "Code of the City of Coral Gables," entitled "Pensions;" amending Section 46-25, entitled "Definitions", to revise the definitions of Average Final Compensation and Normal Retirement Date for Firefighters; amending Section 46-253, entitled "Normal Retirement Income", to revise the Normal Retirement Income for certain Firefighters; and providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Good morning, Mayor. Before we -- before the vote takes place on the pension ordinance, there has to be a vote on the resolution, which is ratifying the collective bargaining agreement, and then we can vote on -- or then you can vote on the pension ordinance.

City Attorney Ramos: And that is resolution I-1, a resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, with attachments, ratifying the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Coral Gables and the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1210, for the period of October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020. And we'll need two separate votes.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: So, this is the 2017 -- as Ms. Ramos said, the 2017 through 2020 collective bargaining agreement between the City and the IAFF, which represents the firefighters. I can certainly go through a summary of the changes that you will see in this collective bargaining agreement. There's -- in terms of wages, they will be receiving, in fiscal year 2018, a two percent increase; fiscal year 2019, a two percent increase; and in fiscal year

2020, a 1.125 percent increase and a 0.875 percent in a lump sum. The uniform allowance is being increased effective October 1, 2019 from 600 to \$1,000. That's an annual allowance. The off-duty rate is being increased also effective October 1, 2019, from 50 to \$55. The driver engineers will now be treated as a rank, and there will be additional classes and certifications that they will need to obtain prior to sitting for the driver engineer exam. Promotional exams for Lieutenant, Captains and Battalion Chiefs, there's going to be a new set of requirements of certifications -- Fire Officer I, II, and III, that they must be certified prior to sitting for those promotional exams. And then in terms of pensions, we are making some pension adjustments. Effective October 1, 2019, there's going to be a new retirement, which is going to be 25. And now, I believe it's currently 25 years of service and 52 years of age. So, we're removing the age, so after 25 years of service, firefighters should be able to retire. That brings them in line with all the fire departments as well as with the police department. We're increasing the multiplier on the 25th year to ten percent. So, for those firefighters who have a multiplier of two and a half percent after ten years of service, they'll get a bump, a ten percent multiplier in the year 25, and that is the equivalent of having a three percent multiplier after 25 years of service, which is, again, the standard for public safety employees and it's also in line with what the police department currently has. Driver engineer pay, because we're treating it as a rank now, will now be considered pensionable as well. That's something that used to be pensionable a few years back. And we're also revising the definition of final average compensation for individuals who entered the DROP between 2013 and 2014. And that's a summary of the major points.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Comments, questions?

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes, thank you. I just want a simple question. As per this agreement that is running from 2017 to 2020, it's going to catch us up after about a year and a half of negotiating. Is any of this pensionable? Does this put any potential additional increases to our existing unfunded liabilities? Does this put us in a position where we can move in a -- we can backslide from all the efforts that we've made and all the gains that we've made over the last six years?

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: So, we are making pension adjustments, which are the pension adjustments I recently summarized for you. That is going to create, I think, about a \$373,000 additional to the unfunded liability. But we must remember that the firefighters forewent a 0.875 percent pay raise in order to assist the City in paying for these benefits. That 0.875 percent is the equivalent of about \$123,000. So, that \$123,000 that the City is saving each year because we did not provide them with that raise is sufficient to cover the additional normal cost of these enhancements, and also eventually, the unfunded liability increase of that \$373,000.

Vice Mayor Lago: Is that on a yearly basis, those 300, or is that over the life of the...

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: That's just -- over the life -- over the 20 years that it's amortized is an additional \$373,000 additional to the unfunded liability. But also, the City is going to allocate as part of the additional payment that it makes into the pension plan, it's going to allocate \$373 million either this year or we're going to spread it out for the next couple of years, maybe \$150,000 each year. We're going to allocate it to this basis, so the unfunded liability does not increase, and our funded ratio remains the same.

Vice Mayor Lago: The reason why I mentioned that is because I've made it very clear -- as a matter of fact, you know, the other day when we had our workshop -- I'm not going to get into how much we all support the firefighters and the police department and our general employees. That goes without saying. But what I want to make sure is that we ensure that their pensions are taken care of, you know. Having \$219 million in unfunded liability is, you know, something that, again, keeps a lot of us up at night because of the responsibility that we have to this community as a whole. Like I mentioned to you before and I mentioned to everybody here, I'm not in favor of raising taxes. I will not raise taxes in regard to dealing with this issue. So, we need to be very careful that we're not putting more unnecessary stress on a very stressful system already. So, we are moving in the right direction. But if you can assure me that this is not adding any unfunded

liability to the \$219 million that we owe already, I will vote in favor. But if we are going to put even a dollar on the unfunded liability, I won't support it.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Well, there's the...

Vice Mayor Lago: And this is -- by the way, and these are the same comments that I've echoed continuously. I just want to put them on the record.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Absolutely. It is going to add \$373,000 to the unfunded liability. I mean, the firefighters are assisting the City because they forewent that raise, which is \$123,000 a year, and that's compounded. So, the City's going to realize that savings every year. But yes, it will add \$373,000 to the unfunded. I believe Mike Chickillo, who is the president of the IAFF, would like to make a couple comments.

Commissioner Mena: I just...

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: If that's okay.

Commissioner Mena: I just want to add something very quickly just to that topic of conversation, which is we just came off of a workshop with our retirement board. And I just have to say that I agree 100 percent that I will never support increasing taxes to address this situation. But I was -- I came out of the meeting very optimistic about the approach that we're taking with the unfunded liability and the plan that we have in place to address it. We have a group here who has for years now and currently through this group has been very responsible going above and beyond the minimum payment requirements to address this and make it a huge priority. And kudos to Vice Mayor Lago and Commissioner Keon, who sort of were part of the Commissions that preceded us in taking that approach. And so, you know, we're on a -- we really are on a good path and there are certainly things that can set that back. And there's economic things and not meeting certain returns that can set that back, so we have to be vigilant and responsible at all times. I completely

agree with Vice Mayor Lago on that. But based on our discussions on this and the fact that you've explained to us that the original wage increase that was contemplated, which would have been a two, two, two, was reduced on the third year in order to essentially pay off...

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Correct.

Commissioner Mena: The impact on the unfunded liability, while, yes, in a perfect situation, I'd rather have a zero dollar increase to the unfunded liability, I think this makes sense when you look at the whole picture and when you look at our overall approach to how we're addressing it. And again, I want to continue doing more and whatever we can to address it as quickly as possible. Because to his point, it's a huge sort of albatross that hangs over us. But I'm confident that we're doing that. And I just want to say that I continue to be confident in what we're doing, even with this particular deal that we're talking about today.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: I appreciate it. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I would like to make a comment on the need for us to be responsible on this issue. I mean, this is a legacy deficit. You know, we inherited this from a prior administration and it is our responsibility to be responsible to our current employees and our past employees that are receiving a pension. But at the same time, we have to be responsible to our citizens, many of whom live on fixed incomes and aren't willing to pay for irresponsibilities from past administrations. Anything that we can do so that our unfunded liability does not increase in the long run, maybe it behooves us to do it. Any other comments? Alright, go ahead.

Finance Director Gomez: So, I just want to clarify or add on to something that Raquel mentioned regarding the unfunded liability that is created by this. It is -- the -- in the budgeting process, as we are budgeting for the extra payment, the idea was to pay -- to apply a portion of the extra payment to that unfunded so that the unfunded liability doesn't actually go up, so it pays it down. Whereas, the annual amount that we're getting each year based on the reduction of salary, that

would go kind of to replenish that over time, but so that the initial impact doesn't change the funding ratio nor the unfunded, then taking a portion of the unfunded of the extra payment to pay it in the upcoming...

Commissioner Mena: So, you're just...

Finance Director Gomez: Fiscal year.

Commissioner Mena: So, you -- just so I'm clear. So, you're saying you're -- it's not that the unfunded liability is going to go up because you're going to use the extra payment -- you're going to cut into the extra payment basically.

Finance Director Gomez: By a little bit in order to -- and then the...

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Finance Director Gomez: The amount that we're getting every year -- the annual amount that we're getting above what the required extra payment -- what the required additional payment is because of these benefits will go kind of to repay the upfront of the -- of that -- or reducing of the extra payment, if that makes sense.

City Manager Iglesias: And we are still within the actuarial assumptions...

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: So that...

Finance Director Gomez: That's right.

City Manager Iglesias: The actuarial assumptions that have -- that were presented at the Pension Board.

Finance Director Gomez: Right. So, the actuary does assume certain rates of increases each year. And so, the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Finance Director Gomez: Rate increase that we're doing is below that. So, that creates a gain -- an actuarial gain at the end of any one year, which also kind of factors into everything and kind of -- but every year, there's ups and downs in the gains and losses so, you know, it's not an exact one for one, but it does work itself out over time.

Vice Mayor Lago: So...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Perfect.

Vice Mayor Lago: So, just -- if I may add onto your comment there. So, we have -- we make an extra payment. We've been doing it for the last four years to the tune of about \$15 million over the last four years. Am I correct?

Finance Director Gomez: That's correct.

Vice Mayor Lago: So, by this deal, the additional payment that we're making this year is not going to be, let's say, as effective as it was last year because we're going to be eating into that as a result of there being an unfunded liability...

Finance Director Gomez: So, I disagree because...

Vice Mayor Lago: I just want to be clear on it because...

Finance Director Gomez: Because last year we made an extra payment of \$2.4 million. This year, the total amount available for the extra payment is \$3.9 million. So, because of everything that we've been doing and the fact that we haven't -- you know, we've been saying -- our assumption's been keeping lower, those things are factoring into that -- how can I say it? -- into the reduction of the regular payment, which allows for a larger extra payment. So, as the required payment goes down, the amount that we have available for extra payment goes up.

Vice Mayor Lago: But is it fair to say...

Finance Director Gomez: So, it's going to be slightly lower. It's going to be lowered by that \$373,000 that it otherwise would have been.

Vice Mayor Lago: Correct, gone down to pay down the debt.

Finance Director Gomez: Right, correct.

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay, I just want to...

Finance Director Gomez: But we...

Vice Mayor Lago: I want to be clear.

Finance Director Gomez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: I want to be clear on that because that gets lost in the translation and back and forth.

Finance Director Gomez: Sure.

Vice Mayor Lago: We're paying 3.9. Three point six of that is going to be used to pay down.

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

Vice Mayor Lago: But we would have had \$300,000 plus more if we wouldn't have been -- if we wouldn't have, in this deal, been accepting the fact that we're putting 300 and change thousand dollars on the unfunded liability. Am I correct?

Finance Director Gomez: Yes. But in the first year, there may have been 40,000 extra from the amount that they're getting that they're foregoing in their raises, so it's not 373. It may be three...

Vice Mayor Lago: But in the long-term.

Finance Director Gomez: Thirty. Yes. In the long term, the extra...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Finance Director Gomez: Payment -- the amounts that they're paying -- taking less in salary pays for the increase of the unfunded liability.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Correct.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: It pays for the unfunded and the increase (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: A motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please?

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: No.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No.

(Vote: 3-2)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And now, we'll go to the next one.

City Attorney Ramos: As to G-1 (sic), and it is a public hearing item.

Commissioner Fors: F-1.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: F-1.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: F-1.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: The pension ordinance, F-1.

City Attorney Ramos: Sorry. F-1 is a public hearing item. It doesn't look like there's anyone present, so we can just have a vote.

Commissioner Keon: F-1 is...

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: F-1 is...

City Attorney Ramos: The ordinance that goes with the collective bargaining agreement.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: In order to amend the pension plan, you need to -- it needs to be done via ordinance, so this is implementing the pension changes in the collective bargaining agreement that was recent -- that was just ratified.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you -- motion?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second?

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: No.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No.

(Voter: 3-2)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Mena: Are you -- so, just so I'm clear, Mayor and Vice Mayor, are you guys -- I mean, are we saying -- you're saying that you'd rather go to an impasse than to basically have a net...

Vice Mayor Lago: No.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I've been in impasses and sometimes...

Commissioner Mena: Than basically have a net neutral increase in the unfunded?

Vice Mayor Lago: No. I -- that's not what I'm saying.

Commissioner Mena: That's what I'm...

Vice Mayor Lago: I'm not saying that. And I...

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: You know, what I'm saying...

Commissioner Mena: Well, what do you think we should do then?

Vice Mayor Lago: Okay, let me -- right. But what I think is we need to continue to have conversations with our partners. And just like I voted no on the COLA because it increased the unfunded liability significantly, I'm voting no here. We've made a lot of strides. We've been partners with the police and the fire. And all I'm doing -- and I know that they're not going to like what I'm going to say, but I'm going to be very upfront -- is I'm protecting them. I'm protecting them. I'm protecting their retirement. Because just like we -- at one point, when we walked in here, Commissioner Keon and I, because the Mayor, when he left, he left the pension funded 102 percent, 103 percent. But when Commissioner Keon and I walked in here -- and correct me if I'm wrong, Commissioner -- it was 50 percent funded and it was something to the tune of 250 plus million dollars. Right now, it's funded -- we have an unfunded...

Commissioner Keon: Sixty-three percent.

Vice Mayor Lago: Right now, we're 63 -- almost 64, 63.7 percent.

Commissioner Keon: Sixty-four percent funded.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Sixty-three point four.

Vice Mayor Lago: (INAUDIBLE) 64. But we've had excellent weather. We've had -- we've been at sea. The sail's been -- you know, everything is going well. We've had incredible property values going up. But again, perfect times don't always last. And like we heard at the last meeting that we had last week, you know, any hiccup in the market and we could lose all these gains. This is not an issue about whether I believe that we can make up this ground over the next 20 years. I agree 110 percent that we can. But what I want to make sure is I protect, and we don't backslide all these gains that we've made. Because we've taken \$15 million out of the coffers over the last four years. This year, we're taking 3.9. We've taken 15 years (sic) over the last four years and spent that money on shoring up the unfunded liability, and we've made a slight dent on it, and that's with everything being perfect. That's with everything being perfect, making -- meeting

expectations, you know, ensuring that we have good negotiations with our partners. I don't want to take a step back and leave public office one day and say, you know, I didn't do everything I could to protect the employees here. I've even said it very clear and I'll put it on the record here. I'm willing to give bonuses. I'm willing to give bonuses that are matched by the City in a 401(a) system. I'm willing to do everything I possibly can to limit our pension exposure, even make those -- even those -- even make sure that those bonuses are more significant than what we're negotiating now, just to ensure that it's not -- the exposure is limited. That's my whole point and that's why I vote the way that I vote.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And this is not a matter of taking money away or taking whatever. It's a matter of restructuring the money so that the retirement income of retired people is not endangered and the current compensation being pensionable is not placed on the shoulders of retirees and their long-term income when they need it the most, which is when they retire, is endangered. And that's why I have to be very, very careful from now on -- and this passed -- from now on, on how we structure these things.

Commissioner Mena: But I think it's important -- and you know, there are some things that are not being said here that I think are very important. You know, we -- again, we had our meeting. And what was the current estimate of when we think the unfunded will be paid off, assuming good weather, if you will?

Vice Mayor Lago: Eleven years.

Commissioner Mena: Eleven years, right?

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Mena: And what was explained to us is that even if we have a down year, a bad year, because of the smoothing out process that we have in place, that we can weather that storm

-- again, to continue the analogy -- and continue in a place where we're still going to be -- we still fully expect to be paying this thing off. If it's not in 11 years, maybe it'll be in 12 or 13 or 14, which again, is a long way. But when you consider the unfunded liability and where it was, and again, the good work that has been done already by this Commission, I think it's a positive trajectory. So, again, I -- you know, based on everything I've heard and when you look at the whole picture, I -- listen, I echo the sentiment of making this a top priority, but I want to make clear that I believe we are doing that. And there's a lot of things that I would be willing to do as well, but how long has this contract been under negotiation now?

Commissioner Keon: A year and a half.

Vice Mayor Lago: A year?

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Negotiating a year and a half.

Commissioner Keon: For a year and a half.

Commissioner Mena: A year and -- so, we -- a year and a half...

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: (INAUDIBLE) last year of the contract effective October 1.

Commissioner Mena: Right, so a year and a half of negotiating to get to this point. And so, I understand there's other things we might want to do, but that's part of negotiating a contract. And the reality is that the other side does not want to do those things, and so, this is the compromise. And I think when you factor all that, it's a reasonable compromise. Again, I think we all share the sentiment of making the unfunded liability a priority. But again, if the alternative -- I'm at the point where if the alternative is an impasse here and, after a year and a half, I think it's pretty much that, I don't think an impasse is the right thing to do in this moment. So, that's why I'm trying to

get clarity on what we would do differently here because we've tried other things and we've proposed other things. And at the end of the day, you have to compromise to make a deal. And I think it's important to put that on the record that that's the vote we're taking today. We can keep negotiating, but we don't have any reason to believe at this point, based on the multiple meetings we've had on these topics over and over and over again, going back over a year, that there's going to be a deal made in some other format than this. And I actually appreciate your efforts to find a way to at least budgetarily address this so that the increase is dealt with -- yeah, it digs a little bit into the extra payment. But again, when you're looking at big picture and all the factors -- and we're talking about paying this thing off over, hopefully, 11 years, maybe it'll be a little more than that. I don't think that this is going to have much of an impact on that, if any at all. So, again, I'm comfortable with it for that reason.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner, I appreciate your thoughts. And when you said that we have explored this for a year and a half, there are issues there that we have not touched. And maybe, in future negotiations, they should be touched.

Commissioner Fors: And I think we'll be negotiating again now.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Six months.

Commissioner Keon: Six months.

Commissioner Fors: All over again, right, in six months.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah. And at that point, I would like to look at the whole picture...

Unidentified Speaker: Absolutely.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: As opposed to focusing on, you know, the -- whatever it is.

Commissioner Mena: I just -- I feel like we have -- I just -- in response to that...

Commissioner Keon: I feel like we have.

Commissioner Mena: I'm certainly looking at the whole picture.

Vice Mayor Lago: No, but...

Commissioner Mena: Based on...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well, you are, but...

Commissioner Mena: But based on multiple...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: This process wasn't.

Commissioner Mena: Based on -- based -- again, we had, just last week, what, a two- or three-hour meeting with the retirement board on this.

Vice Mayor Lago: And a workshop before.

Commissioner Mena: A lot of information, a workshop. I mean, this was a brief discussion at a Commission meeting, but there is a lot that has gone into this and a lot of factors that we've looked at. And again, just based on where we are, yeah, I would love to get everything I want in a negotiation, I really would.

Commissioner Keon: It's not a negotiation then.

Commissioner Mena: But that's not a negotiation.

Vice Mayor Lago: Of course.

Commissioner Mena: So, I think that this is reasonable deal, and that's what we're approving today, is a reasonable compromise.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I need a motion to get...

Commissioner Mena: Absolutely.

Commissioner Fors: We have a clear path to getting -- like you said, we have a path to getting to 100 percent funded in 11 to 12 years. I think it's unrealistic to think that we can, during those 11 to 12 years, not add anything to our unfunded pension liability. There's going to be certain years where we'll have to do it. So long as we stay the course, that 11- to 12-year trajectory takes that into account. And like Mr. -- like Commissioner Mena, I'm optimistic about it.

Commissioner Keon: I also agree with Commissioner -- well, obviously, I do. I voted the same way as Commissioner Fors and Commissioner Mena. I think that there are so many issues that when we talk about unfunded liabilities and what's happening here that are, you know -- there are things that are in place that we are not going to change today, and the likelihood is we are not going to change.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Not today.

Commissioner Keon: We have a defined benefit program. That is the pension. That is the structure for our employees. It is prohibitively costly for us to move away from that into -- entirely to change out that system. We're not going to. Their pensions are -- that is an obligation that we,

as a government, owe to these employees that we cannot dismiss or not hold and be responsible for. We have an obligation to those things.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Commissioner Keon: We have a path forward. We have worked...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: Over the last six years to achieve the goals that we have set out. We have been successful. They are our partners in these. They are our City employees. They are the primary service that we provide to our residential community. We need to work with them in good faith. I think that this negotiation and this contract was achieved in good faith with all of the information that has been provided to us that, you know, you're not going to be able to share with the public and this dais just because you don't have the time to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's...

Commissioner Keon: Be able to do it. So, I thank you very much for the work that you did and - on this. And I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you also.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we have a contract.

Vice Mayor Lago: Can I add just...

Commissioner Keon: We have a contract.

Vice Mayor Lago: Can I add one...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll?

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Lago: One last thing just...

Commissioner Mena: We already voted.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: You already voted.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Lago: I just wanted to add two things because we were talking -- Commissioner Keon mentioned that we -- you know, that this is a negotiation. I think we all agree that our main intent is to protect the future of the employees. That's not in question. I don't want to take anything from the employees. And that's where -- that's what happened in the past. We gave benefits, and then we found ourselves in a very tough financial shape. And then it went -- then that Commission -- not us, but a Commission prior to us had to go back and make a very tough decision and go to the employees and say, we want these benefits back. I never want to do that to somebody because that's brutal.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: Yes.

Vice Mayor Lago: That's brutal.

Labor Relations and Risk Management Director Elejabarrieta: I agree.

Vice Mayor Lago: And Commissioner -- you know, Commissioner Mena mentioned about, you know, where we stand and what we would like to do. My comments on this dais today are nothing different than what I made behind closed doors in our meetings, in our sunshine meetings.

Commissioner Mena: (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Lago: So, I just want to be clear, you know. I have the utmost respect for all my colleagues up here and we may disagree on this point, but we agree on the magnitude and on -- that we all -- all we want to do is protect the employees and we want to protect...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

Vice Mayor Lago: The longevity of the City. So, that's it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll, please?

Commissioner Mena: We already voted. I think we did. We voted.

Unidentified Speaker: We've already voted on the item.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have voted on this one?

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes, on both.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We voted on both?

Vice Mayor Lago: We voted on both.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Commissioner Keon: (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Fors: And one final thing.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, that's right. We did.

Commissioner Fors: I just want to state on the record that I am in line with the Mayor and Commissioner Lago in that I do believe that, you know, we need to take strong positions by this Commission on these important issues. It is necessary. And I intend to do so. I just, like Mr. -- like Commissioner Mena said, don't believe that it was possible to take the positions that we need to take, which are going to require significant changes, during this negotiation relating to this three-year period. But in the future, so everybody knows on the record, I do believe that it's something that we need to attack more aggressively, and I will be voting along those lines most likely than not in the future. And it may not be the next negotiation...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good.

Commissioner Fors: But once we see where we stand.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Okay, F-2.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you. Great work.