

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-20
August 26, 2025
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Melissa Castro

Commissioner Ariel Fernandez (Absent)

Commissioner Richard D. Lara

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-20

A Resolution of the City Commission rescinding Resolution No. 2025-246 which directed that the City Commission may consider whether to participate in particular lawsuits by filing an Amicus Curiae Brief or intervening an action already pending. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

Mayor Lago: F-20.

City Attorney Suarez: F-20 is a Resolution of the City Commission rescinding Resolution No. 2025-246 which directed that the City Commission may consider whether to participate in particular lawsuits by filing an Amicus Curiae Brief or intervening an action already pending.

Commissioner Castro: By rescinding this resolution, we send a strong message that we hear the people, we respect the law, and we don't use backdoor ordinances to make fundamental election changes. I move it.

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Mayor Lago: Madam City Attorney, you gave us guidance in regard to how we could handle moving elections, correct?

City Attorney Suarez: Correct.

Mayor Lago: We're not breaking the law. That's number one. Please don't say that. It just makes the whole city shine in the best light.

Commissioner Castro: Right now, we're breaking the law. Right now. Right now, we are. But if you want to say at the next Commission meeting, if you're more comfortable, I'll be okay with that too.

Mayor Lago: No, no. Again, I'm not voting for this.

Commissioner Castro: Of course, you're not.

Mayor Lago: We're moving forward. We're wasting time here. So again, look, the plan is simple. It's to send out a massive email saying, I voted for you. I did all this. I did all that. It's a waste of time. We've already set the election, depending on what happens with the City of Miami today or tomorrow. We've set it for April, along with all the other referendum items. It's very clear. It's very simple. Enough political theater. Let's move on. We have a lot of items on the agenda.

Commissioner Castro: What's the issue? Vote on it. What is the problem? You're not going to go ahead and sue anyone. You're not going to go into legal lawsuits.

Mayor Lago: Let me explain to you.

Commissioner Castro: Then go ahead. You just don't want to vote on it because I am the sponsor. That's ridiculous. Like, be a Mayor, for real.

Mayor Lago: The reason why I'm not voting on it, again, continue to antagonize, just like you said, liar, be a Mayor, all these ridiculous things that you say. And we're waiting for the Supreme Court to respond. I'm in favor of supporting the City of Miami if it was picked up. We're still waiting for that. At the end of the day, I look forward to the outcome and whatever the Supreme Court decides. But at the end of the day, you can't stop the inevitable. We're already set on the docket for April. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: The only thing that I think deserves clarification for residents is that's not what this matter is about. It's about whether or not to file an amicus brief. And a City Attorney normally possesses authority to make that decision unilaterally. This actually limited her authority and required this Commission to weigh in, which we did. And we didn't file an amicus brief. So,

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just so it's clear on a record. So, no, I'm not going to vote for it. We will continue to monitor the situation and wait for the court's opinion.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Lara.

Commissioner Lara: Well, I don't want to belabor the point. I was going to say what the Vice Mayor said, because what Commissioner Castro said mischaracterized what the action taken by the Commission was on the resolution that she seeks rescission. But I just want to say, to make it in simple terms. At the time that the majority of this Commission voted to move the elections to November, it did so not only with the advice and counsel of our City Attorney but given the state of the law at the time and the facts. Subsequently, there was a challenge to a different municipality, the City of Miami. There's been no challenge to the City of Coral Gables. A Third District Court of opinion came out after we voted. It wasn't in position or existed at the time we did vote. And that is also subject to further appellate review. What I don't want to do, because you said it yourself a few meetings ago, you don't want to begin debating the law. That's not your field. Did you not say that? Did I quote you correctly?

Commissioner Castro: Do you want an answer from me?

Commissioner Lara: It's rhetorical.

Commissioner Castro: Okay.

Commissioner Lara: But you did say, "I don't want to get into the law. So, I don't want to get into it with you either. But when you say what we're doing and did is illegal, you're speaking out of turn. Just like when you say to one of your fellow colleagues that you're a liar, you're speaking out of turn. Respectfully.

Mayor Lago: Moving on. Would you like to make a motion on this item?

Commissioner Castro: If there is no support for it. Please bring it back next Commission meeting, Billy.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes ma'am.

Commissioner Castro: Thank you.