

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-10
April 14, 2026
Public Safety Building, CMR
2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Commissioner Melissa Castro
Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Commissioner Richard D. Lara

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-10

A Resolution of the City Commission urging Miami-Dade County to reexamine peafowl protections and support coordinated countywide mitigation efforts.
(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: I think it's the last one F-10, Mr. Clerk. All right F-10 a, resolution of City Commission urging Miami-Dade County to re-examine peafowl protections and support coordinated countywide mitigation efforts. We're trying to build a coalition here. We sometimes like we talked about the RTZ and the golfing situation that we're in; we have to do what is unpopular. It is impossible to make everyone happen. Some people like peafowls, some people don't like peafowl, but I will tell you one thing. They're an invasive species and we're receiving a lot of calls and emails from residents who are complaining about peafowl, the aggressive nature, the staining, the cars. Again, we need to do something. Mr. Manager, how much have we spent already in regard to mitigation of peafowl. I think we already blew through our budget didn't we.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, we picked up 141 birds so far.

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Mayor Lago: And we spent how much?

City Manager Iglesias: Over \$25,000.

Mayor Lago: So over \$25,000. I don't want to kill the birds, okay. I grew up with my father with chickens in the backyard, a finch house, quail, all kinds of birds. My father still has it on Miller and 59th, okay. We love birds. I'm a big fan, but there has to be some common ground. If you have snakes that are being hunted and you have obviously the iguanas that are also being addressed, we need to address this peafowl, while they are beautiful. I'm getting calls and I know you're getting emails from physicians who work at night and come home at five or six o'clock in the morning and they can't fall asleep because the peafowls are on the top of the roof or they're squawking, from people who have been attacked or that the fecal matter is all over the driveway. They're trying different measures, but what's happening is, if our neighboring communities like the City of Miami do not address this they just travel through LeJeune and come into the south side of the city. We're having a major issue. So, what I'd like to see is if my colleagues are interested in having the county advocate for us to take a stand on this. They are not native species. They are competing with native species. Our environment is already sensitive enough; we need to do something about this. I know that it's a political hot button and everybody running for office doesn't want address it at all fronts of government, because the peafowl, obviously some people love them, some people are enamored by them, they're beautiful, but at the end of the day we have to make a decision and move forward.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes, Madam Vice Mayor, go ahead ladies first.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'm a little older too.

Mayor Lago: So, ladies first.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I've had this debate with a few people that say they're beautiful.

Mayor Lago: It's contentious, it's contentious.

Vice Mayor Anderson: But I also bring to their attention that we're losing a lot of beautiful fauna and flora because of them, and yes, our native birds eat the same fauna and flora, but they don't weigh 40 pounds. A 40-pound bird can wipe out a lot more butterflies and a lot more you know little worms that are making very endangered butterflies than our native Mockingbirds, Cardinals, Woodpeckers, etc., that are in our trees. So, we have to make a choice and then there's nothing controlling the population of these birds other than the coyotes that are coming up from South Dade to eat them and hunt them because these are all the way up on the beach, very much so north. I know because I ride my bike up there. It's amazing how far and wide these birds have invaded

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our county. So, something has to be done to control the population, because they're not being controlled by the coyotes, they're not being controlled by anyone else and there's like 12 eggs that come out of one bird every single season. The only thing that's controlling them a little bit are cars, so yes, I'll join with you that these birds need to be brought under control.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

Commissioner Fernandez: I was just going to say I actually passed three of them on my way in today and it wasn't a long drive through Little Gables. They have major territorial gains in Little Gables, and I think we've avoided them crossing into Coral Gables for some reason so far, but they're starting to make their way in. In my block I had never seen one. I would say over the last six months I've seen five or six and they are extremely aggressive. The car is coming, they do not move out of the way, you know, they think that road is theirs and I think we definitely have to take a stand. I know we've discussed this two or three times already since I've been on the Commission. The county for a long period of time had no appetite in changing its stance. I think there's more of an opening now because they're seeing the impact it has. We've even heard from the Commissioner who originally passed the legislation sponsored the legislation to protect the peafowl and she has said that was the one, her biggest mistake of her political career, because she's seen the negative impact that it's had on our flora and fauna in South Florida. So absolutely, I think we definitely need to do something about that.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: I think this is a very touchy subject but, I'll go ahead and share what I'm dealing with peacocks. In front of my house there's probably like 15 peacocks and either they're on top of my roof or they're in the front or in the middle of the street, but the problem is when i go walk my dog that is a Yorkie they're vicious and they go and attack the little dog and I think that's something we need to keep into consideration as well. I think we need to do something about them but in a very humane way.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, what I was saying was we need to take action, so the intent here is very simple. It's to pass this resolution, send this out to the 34 municipalities, to the League of Cities and then move this up the chain to our State Representatives and our Senators and the Governor asking for action. Asking for us to take action and to help us address this issue, they're everywhere. If you go to the University of Miami where I live, they're everywhere in that area already. So, if you're a professional you can see the emails, if you're a person who lives in this community and you want to rest on a Saturday and you want to maybe wake up a little bit later and they're screaming, you know and waking you up you know we've gotten contacts. What do we do here as

a city. I passed legislation a few years ago, I did not allow exterior construction on Saturdays. Why? - to increase the quality of life in our community. You want to do construction you can do interiors. These are animals that are not native to our community, so politically it's a hot potato, but I really don't think it's that much of a hot potato, becomes more and more of a worse issue we're going to have to face this issue, and we cannot handle the issue for other communities. For example the City of Miami, we need to work with other cities and we need to work in conjunction to say we're going to they're going to address their issues we're going to we're going to address our issues not allow them to migrate into the City of Coral Gables or be you know or be addressed in one form or another, because people are getting frustrated and I've talked to residents say, listen I don't want to take measures into my own hands, but if you see that area on LeJeune that runs all the way from US-1 to Coco Plum Circle that area is overrun with peacocks, they're coming from the Grove. So, I'd like to get support on this and send this over to all elected officials asking for action along with our State Legislators and Senators to please assist us in one form or another. We're going to have to take action at one point or another.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Lara: I'll move it.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll second.

Mayor Lago: Prepare to prepare to receive a lot of hate mail but we got to do something, something's got to be done.

Commissioner Fernandez: It's not just peafowl that we're having issues. We have a large coyote issue in the North Gables area as well that that needs to be addressed and obviously that's not something for municipality to address. It should be something for the county or the state to address residents are concerned about having their children playing outdoors. It's a growing issue for residents in the North Gables east of Granada over the last I would say three or four months.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Lara: So, picking up on Commissioner Fernandez's comment regarding the coyotes. If you allow me just one minute because I think it dovetails very well with the peafowl resolution that we're talking about right now. So interestingly, I was just about to say that if the residents go to my myfwc.com that is the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission web page under

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coyotes, if you just indulge me for a moment, I think this is something we discussed before and I think it's apropos of the conversation we're having regarding the peacocks. So briefly this is just important for the -- because a lot of the residents have talked to me about the same thing that all of you have heard. Coyotes help maintain balanced ecosystems by controlling the populations of rodents and smaller predators, such as foxes, possums and raccoons, which naturally occur in higher densities, can quickly overpopulate areas of habitat. Coyotes are native to North America, have been in Florida for many years and continue, will continue to make their homes around the state. Removing coyotes for the purpose of eradication is an inefficient and ineffective method to control populations. New coyotes move into areas where others have been removed. Removal activities such as hunting and trapping place pressure on coyote populations and the species responds by producing at a younger age and producing more pups per litter. Populations can quickly return to their original sides. So, if you would go to the web page that I just referenced right, so that's myfwc.com you'll see two incredibly interesting videos and they're very informative. One is how to haze coyotes, right, it's a short educational video that discusses how to effectively haze or deter coyotes. The coyotes in urban areas such as Coral Gables, which has been increasing, may learn to tolerate human presence instead of fleeing. So hazing is a process of disturbing an animal's sense of security so it can leave an area otherwise change its behavior. So, coyotes react to two things very well and very humanely, right, they react to deterrence such as emotion activated sprinklers or audible alarms. Those are the two most effective ways to help haze and scare away coyotes and other wildlife from our properties. So if you go to the website you'll see the two videos that at least can begin educating our residents, typically the coyotes would not be dangerous, but the longer that they hang around, let's say humans, the more that we leave outside small dogs to run free or you leave food outside then you're going to invite them to be more acclimatized, more comfortable around humans which would only increase the problem rather than deter from it. So perhaps at the next Commission meeting I'll provide an update regarding feedback. I hope that I'll be getting from the residents and all you will be getting from the residents, but it's an increasing issue, but I also want to deter people from feeling that these are dangerous animals by nature, they are not. They're more afraid of us than not, but we should take steps, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is advocating hazing or deterrence factors over things like eradication through hunting or removal. So, thank you for that opportunity.

Mayor Lago: So, we have a motion, thank you Commissioner. We have a motion; do we have a second.

Commissioner Fernandez: We did. I seconded.

Vice Mayor Anderson: He already seconded.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

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City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Can we make sure we send it to all the elected officials in the county and you know pass it along to the state, obviously League of Cities and I'd like to see if we can potentially maybe work together in this effort.

Commissioner Fernandez: Mr. Mayor was that the, I can't remember, did the resolution have it included in our legislative priorities.

Mayor Lago: We can do that.

Commissioner Fernandez: Can we then re-vote and amend it to include it in our legislative priorities.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We'll move it into the legislative priorities with an amendment yeah.

City Attorney Suarez: So, the motion is...

Commissioner Fernandez: To reconsider and add the language to include in our legislative priorities.

City Attorney Suarez: So, there's a motion and a second.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes. I moved and she second.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. All right.