

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item H-2**  
**September 10, 2024**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Kirk Menendez**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Amos Rojas, Jr.**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Finance Director, Diana Gomez**  
**Chief Procurement Officer, Celeste Walker-Harmon**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Maria Cruz**

---

Agenda Item H-2 [3:51 p.m.]

Update on the audit and review of all Amazon purchases

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item H-2, I think it's the final item of the day.

Finance Director Gomez: Good afternoon, Diana Gomez, Finance Director. So, at the January 23, 2023, Commission, no 2024 Commission meeting, I think it was, I'm sorry, the City Commission directed an audit to be conducted by the Finance Department to review all Amazon P-Card transactions for the city to determine if any misuse or violations of the program existed. This item is to provide a final report related to that audit. We have already provided the Commission via email a copy of that final report for the remaining 16-month period from January 2022 to May 2023. The preliminary 8-month report was issued back in March of 2024. The use of the Amazon platform awarded through the Omni Partners Cooperative Agreement provides value-driven

*City Commission Meeting*  
*September 10, 2024*

procurement and cost-savings solutions authorized through the city's ability to access other official governmental entities contracts. The contract is widely utilized, not only by the City of Coral Gables, but other municipalities, including the City of Miami Beach and City of Miami, to realize cost-savings. The corporate Amazon Business Prime Account offers a corporate discount and savings on all city purchases and the platform is utilized like any other citywide contract in place to assist user departments and facilitate their needs associated with their daily operations while providing convenient and readily available source of supply. So, the Amazon transactions made by departmental users are reviewed by the departmental directors and then by the Procurement Division of the Finance Department, each month with the P-Card reconciliation process. Procurement's specific duties are to enforce and monitor the guidelines in place for the program, while department directors have the discussion and the ultimate responsibility for determining and approving the purchases that are necessary for them to conduct business and to maintain operations for the respective departments. So, we performed the review of the Amazon transactions and found that no misuse of city funds has been identified. It was noted that certain purchases were made to increase engagement and productivity in the workplace for employees and the public. For example, purchases of coffee, water, medial aides, kitchen supplies, office decor, etc. Our review shows that all purchases were made in accordance with city and departmental past practices, as well as policies in effect at the time and were approved by respective department head. Additionally, it should be noted that there was a \$12,000 purchase of Amazon gift cards. This purchase was made by the Human Resources Department with the funds received from a healthcare provider which could only be utilized for the benefit of the city's wellness program. The gift cards were secured and issued to employees as incentives and rewards for attending health and wellness events throughout the year. So, if there is any specific transaction or issue that you'd like to address or need additional information on, Finance and/or the respective department is available to provide that information.

Commissioner Castro: So, what I'm hearing is basically that there could have been personal transactions, but they all fit into the policies and guidelines. So, what I'm also hearing is that maybe we need a clear, more clear boundaries to what is permissible and what is not permissible from our department heads or whoever has P-Cards.

Mayor Lago: To ask you a quick question, to piggyback off of that. Can you name some of those questionable.

Finance Director Gomez: I didn't mention that there were questionable ones, purchases necessarily. I did not say that they were questionable purchases. I just said that they were purchases. So, for instance, one could argue that buying coffee and water for the staff is questionable. I don't believe that that to be the case. I'm just saying that some of the purchases were made were for things such as coffee, water, medical aides, kitchen supplies, office décor, things like that, but again, they were allowable and are permissible within the guidelines of the city's policies. Regarding the policy that currently exist, we had reviewed the policy with the new City Manager when he first came in, and it was determined that the policy is sufficient as written. It has the boundaries. There was a change made having to do with when we purchase food for meetings and things like that, that it needs to go through his office and make sure that his office is aware that those purchases are cleared and approved by his office, but the policy itself of the use of the P-Card and as well as any other contracts available to the city, it is very specific. Department

*City Commission Meeting  
September 10, 2024*

directors do have discretion to determine what is needed to continue the operations of their respective functions.

Commissioner Castro: So, do you think that maybe we can guide or maybe have, give department heads a better understanding of what is permissible. Give more of a clear definition, because I remember Mrs. Maria Cruz coming up here and naming a lot of things, like wedding presents and like kitchen stuff, energy drinks, a lot of other, I can't remember, I haven't delved into it, I haven't looked at – this really hasn't been my subject, but could you agree with me that maybe we could work on a clear definition of what is permissible or not.

Chief Procurement Officer: Well, we do have things that are defined, that is prohibited. So, then that leaves the interpretation that the other things are permitted. So, for us to be able to monitor the actual program to say that we would be a little bit more stringent, we would need more guidelines to say what would be on that list, but when you start considering that, that would be kind of hard to manage because it would be so exhaustive to say that an energy drink would be permitted, but flavor of water wouldn't. So, we would have to get very specific and again, that's up to the Commission working with the City Manager to do that, but you would have to get into the weeds almost to get that specific. Again, if that's what you guys do, then that's what we'll monitor against, but I can only monitor against what we actually have in place now, and we don't get down to that infinite degree to say that those specific things are prohibited right now.

Mayor Lago: Purchasing Director, can you put on the record what was the amount that any individual, including a director, was allowed to spend the total amount, a cap before they had to deal with the City Manager. What was the amount?

Chief Procurement Officer: Well, each transaction itself is \$1,000.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Chief Procurement Officer: So, they'd have to come through me for anything for \$1,000, and then their total monthly spend is 15 (\$15,000), and unless there are extenuating circumstances where we need to have that extended, then the City Manager or the Deputy City Manager gives the authority to do that, but for transactional purposes, its \$1,000.

Mayor Lago: So, at no point could anybody go out there and spend over \$1,000 without the approval of yourself and the Manager, correct.

Chief Procurement Officer: Correct. Well, without the approval of myself, yes. So they...

Mayor Lago: At the end of the day, you have to answer to the Manager.

Chief Procurement Officer: Yes. Correct.

Commissioner Castro: But there was an instance where there were two transactions, and I believe it was for an event and it was in Development Services where a transaction was cut into two different pieces, and it exceeded \$1,000.

Chief Procurement Officer: That's not actually. They had two different events where they had food with them and according to our small purchase policy, which is the SPL Policy, they have to initiate getting competition, so they have to get three quotes to prove that they are being competitively responsible for being able to get whatever goods or services they are asking for. Once they do that and they send that information to me and it's vetted that they actually followed that process, then they are allowed to use the P-Card as a payment method, but they still have to follow the SPL process which means that they got quotes, competitive quotes for that, for anything that was over \$1,000.

Finance Director Gomez: So, we can charge things over \$1,000 if the proper procurement was done in advance and then they requested that the limit get lifted in order to push it through. The actual credit card will decline if its over \$1,000 without that special permission being granted. So, a lot of times we do need to pay for things with a credit card and it happens to be over \$1,000. So we make sure that the proper procurement was done in advance and then we ask that the lift, that the limit be lifted for that specific transaction and its literally the department will contact Procurement say, here's the quotes that I received, can you lift the transaction, they lift the transaction and as soon as the transaction goes through, they come back and they close the transaction.

Chief Procurement Officer: Put the controls back.

Finance Director Gomez: Exactly. So, they can't overcharge.

City Manager Rojas: If I may. Can you speak to the issue of the Amazon cards, the gift cards for the health fairs and so on, because I think that's important to understand.

Finance Director Gomez: Yes. Again, the health insurance company provides the city with dollars for wellness programs, and so, the Human Resources Department, they have wellness fairs, and they have wellness initiatives and so as incentives and rewards to employees to attend when they have a door prize or raffles, or if you participate in four or more events, you'll get a gift card. Its an incentive and so then Human Resources tracts all the gift cards and they then will. For instance, if you participate, you have to actually sign the receipt of the gift card, so it is tracked and monitored, and so, the idea is it incentivizes the employees. So, one of the events that I can think of is wear red for cancer awareness or something like that. Everybody who wears red that day, submits in the sense of a raffle and if you get selected, you may get a gift card, a \$25 or \$50 gift card to Amazon or whatever it was. It increases engagement with the employees.

City Manager Rojas: And its reimbursed.

Finance Director Gomez: It's paid for 100 percent by the healthcare provider. They reimbursed us for that purchase, where we just provide them the receipts that we actually made the purchase and

*City Commission Meeting  
September 10, 2024*

explain the program to them, and they did reimburse us for that. So, it was not, that was not done with city money, but it was done on the Amazon account.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'm just going to fill in because I did go for one of those health care screenings and they look at your face, you can freak out when you look at it about how many blotches you have on you, and it incentivizes you to then go see a dermatologist. So, to get people to go over there for the testing and get your blood pressure checked, to get your bloodwork done, sometimes you make a little game out of it and its all part of employee morale, you know, when you have things like this, whether it be the lunches, you know, to collaborate with the team on how you can get things done more efficiently. All these things were normal and processed and used for really city purposes, when you think that people are working during their lunchtime, getting together to collaborate how to do the job better, how to smooth processes out. I'm very pleased with the work that you've done and that its pretty clear that nothing was out of line that was not approved. I know that some folks found some expenditures unusual, but when you understood the circumstances of the situation, it was all justified and reasonable.

Commissioner Castro: What gives me a little heartburn is when we say we're going to leave it to the discretion of the department directors or whoever holds the P-Cards. As much as I trust the directors, I think its easier to function in a department or an environment where there are clear guidelines, right, where you are not wondering, oh is this going to be acceptable, is this going to be a problem, that you could work with complete faith that I'm doing the right thing. And I feel that we could probably tighten a little bit, close the gap, and give them a better understanding of what is permissible and what is not. I feel that we could work on that just a little bit.

City Manager Rojas: Commissioner Castro, I commit to you that we'll put some training, not only for staff, for the employees, the initial line supervisors, but also the directors to go over the purchase policy and the P-Card policy. I know we do it when we issue the P-Card.

Chief Procurement Officer: We do it annually.

City Manager Rojas: But I think a refresher would not hurt.

Commissioner Castro: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Quick question. So, at the end of the month, and I do it in my own business, at the end of the month when the employees submit their monthly reports and it's a line item per line item, every single expenditure, does the director review that?

Chief Procurement Officer: Yes sir.

Mayor Lago: Does the director sign off on that?

Chief Procurement Officer: Yes sir.

Mayor Lago: Is it basically noted that on the following day this was reviewed, every single expenditure was cleared by the director. This is the process that was happening before.

Chief Procurement Officer: Yes.

Mayor Lago: This is not a new process now, correct.

Chief Procurement Officer: Yes. So, it was done in paper, but now its automated in our ERP system in INFOR, so the transactions come through and they have to be reconciled by the actual cardholder, so they provide all of their reconciliation information, the funding, the attachments with the receipts and everything else and those are reviewed, mandatorily reviewed and approved by the director. So, they don't move to Procurement to review until they are reviewed by the director. So, it's all done automatically through our ERP system. So yes.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. And have you caught people, for example, it happened to me, like I have my own personal debit card, I have my credit card, then I have my business card. Sometimes I've used my American Express versus using my business card because they are silver, they are the same brand. Do you catch, say look, I spend \$150 on my city card, I need to reimburse the city, here's a check.

Chief Procurement Officer: That is correct. That has happened before some years ago.

Mayor Lago: And have you caught people who haven't caught it and then like, oh, I'm sorry, I made a mistake.

Chief Procurement Officer: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think there's a couple of items on the report where it says that there was something that was caught and went back.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, do you have any – I didn't know you had anything to say.

Commissioner Fernandez: I have concerns about some of the items. What I would like to do is sit down with the both of you and the Manager to go over them. I agree with Commissioner Castro. I think maybe the process can be streamlined a little bit more where there is a little more clarity as to what can be done to address some of these issues. It's a 70-page document. We're not going to go over it here now. I want to have a sit down with the two of you, go over all of the questions that I have. I've gotten through about 55 pages. I still have another 15 to go through and I've marked quite a few that I want to go over, so that we can address them and really come up with a plan to ensure that there are no questionable things going forward.

Finance Director Gomez: So then for that I'm just going to recommend that perhaps the department that actually made the purchase be also involved, because we may not know more than what is written there, as to why they needed something.

Commissioner Fernandez: And the report is broken up in a way where we know.

Finance Director Gomez: Yes, by individual, by department.

Mayor Lago: If you may, this is just for my edification through the Manager. We had protocols in place before the Manager, we have a new protocol in place as per memo that was provided by the memo, I think there was a difference of maybe one or two sentences in regard to how the P-Card is going to be addressed. There weren't many major differences in that memo, and now there's going to be changes potentially made as a result of a Commission review. I would like for all three of those to be made public. I want to see how extensive the changes are from our first P-Card policy to the second, because from the first to the second, they were minimal. Am I correct or no.

Chief Procurement Officer: That's correct.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, there were minimal changes. There wasn't much done that was different. I read both of them very clearly. I sat down. I asked the team, let's review this together. What are the differences, show me. So, what are the differences that have been made to make this more stringent. So, now Commissioner Fernandez is going to make an audit and is going to address this issue. I look forward to it. I just want to see the differences. I want to be able to provide those differences so I can understand. And then I would believe, through the Manager, that those differences should be disseminated to every single person who has a P-Card.

Finance Director Gomez: Sure. Of course.

Mayor Lago: These are the three changes that were made, these were the three changes, one by the Manager, two by the Commission, three by the Commission, four by the Commission, 15 by the Commission, 30 by the Commission, I don't care what it is. My point is that these are the changes that were made, send it to everybody, because that's what we do in my office.

Finance Director Gomez: So, my understanding is that we're not necessarily changing the policy but working with departments and training to discuss.

Mayor Lago: You never know.

Finance Director Gomez: Exactly. So, I'm not sure if its going to be a specific item that wants to be removed and then yes, that would then go onto the prohibited items list of the use of the P-Card, as opposed to reenforcing and training and conducting an additional training with the department directors, as well as with the P-Card users, as was discussed a little bit before through the Manager.

Commissioner Castro: Changing the top just a little bit. The credit card fees, were they addressed already, as far as like working with American Express, who's paying the fees.

*City Commission Meeting  
September 10, 2024*

Finance Director Gomez: Yes, different topic. When individuals pay the city's bill of the city, I guess that's what you're talking about. When somebody comes to pay a bill, the city absorbs the credit card fees. The city does not pass those fees onto the resident or the company or the customer, the individual who is using a credit card to make the payment. Since I have been here, it has always been that has always been the way. There has never been a direction given to Finance to look towards charging that fee back to the resident or to the business owner. So, we absorb those fees, as a cost of doing business.

Commissioner Castro: Okay.

Finance Director Gomez: And there is no limit for which somebody could charge.

Mayor Lago: You can pay your permit and get 400, 500,000 points.

Finance Director Gomez: And they have. Yes. And so, if the direction is to change that, we can work towards that. Its not something that can happen overnight, but we could then come back at some point to discuss what do we want to limit.

Commissioner Castro: That is something I have an appetite for. I don't know if the Commission does, maybe address this, because that's – if we're looking for money that's where we could find money, at the end of the day.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think every single organization you do a credit card transaction for is charging the credit card fee.

Finance Director Gomez: Other municipalities don't always charge.

Commissioner Fernandez: But some do.

Finance Director Gomez: Some do. Some have, yes, for certain types of transactions, not across the board.

Commissioner Fernandez: We've had transactions in the tens of thousands of dollars where the city has lost close to \$500,000 in credit card fees.

Finance Director Gomez: Not in any one transaction.

Commissioner Fernandez: I believe there was at least one.

City Attorney Suarez: You said \$500 to \$1,000.

Commissioner Fernandez: \$500 to \$1,000 in credit card fees.



Finance Director Gomez: The largest one that I had heard of recently was about \$70,000 in credit card fees.

City Attorney Suarez: He's saying \$500 to \$1,000.

Finance Director Gomez: I heard 500,000.

Commissioner Fernandez: If there had been to \$70,000 in credit card fees that's substantial. That's an entire salary, that is how many sidewalks can we do with \$70,000.

Finance Director Gomez: Agreed. Agreed. And so, again it has never been the direction of, since I have been here – the opposite. It has been no; the city will absorb the credit card transaction fees. Again, if there is direction to go that way, we can absolutely go that way.

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll be happy to make a motion directing you to start working on a plan for charging the credit card fees and you can come back to the Commission.

Finance Director Gomez: Even to residents on their waste bill, is there a certain dollar amount, so those are the considerations that have to be discussed and understood for us to move forward with that. What is the appetite.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, let's do this. I'll make a motion, or I'll just ask you to come back with the different fees that we're charging and how much the city has absorbed over the last twelve months in credit card fees in each one of them, and that will give us a better idea of what action we should take.

Finance Director Gomez: Any bill that anyone wants to pay the city up to and including parking, right, when you pay by phone there is a fee that's in there, we absorb that, the credit card merchant processing fees. Somebody paying their waste bill, we absorb the fees; somebody paying a permit; somebody paying a false alarm bill, anything that can be paid to the city, if they pay it with credit card has a fee, has a merchant processing fee. So, anything could theoretically. So, there is no limit as to what it is.

Commissioner Fernandez: [Inaudible]

Finance Director Gomez: I can give you, oh, I can tell you how much it is.

Commissioner Fernandez: How much do you think we've left on the table in credit card fees?

Finance Director Gomez: So, I think I looked at this, I would want to say that it's a little bit under \$2 million dollars a year, maybe \$1.6 million dollars a year.

Commissioner Fernandez: We need to do something about that.

Finance Director Gomez: Sure.

*City Commission Meeting  
September 10, 2024*

Commissioner Fernandez: We need to do something about that.

Commissioner Castro: The last transaction that we did was a \$90,000 credit card fee that we paid, so when it comes to permitting, I think that's one of the departments that will benefit economically, giving them the option, at least, you can either pay with a check or if you want to pay the 3 percent or whatever the case is, then you are more than able to do it.

Finance Director Gomez: Absolutely. So, is it going to be for just for residential bills as well, should I look into, or should I look at...

Commissioner Fernandez: Everything.

Finance Director Gomez: So, everything. Okay. Very good.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: I know we have people waiting to speak, so I just want to make sure we get everybody. It's getting late.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz.

Vice Mayor Anderson: While she's coming up, I just want to point out some things can be paid with a credit card, I mean with a debit card, I should say, or a bank account and some things can't. So, I think we need to segregate which ones, and also have the capacity to give the resident notice when they are paying the bill that they will be charged this fee, because I've already gotten contacted about fees being charged that were not disclosed, you know, when the resident was paying.

Commissioner Fernandez: My taxes in Tennessee and South Carolina, both of them you can pay with credit card, but the credit card fees are assessed on top, and it shows it, and it shows it on the log, it says, you can pay with credit card, I'm sorry, with a check, zero fee, or it would be this much fee if you pay with a credit card.

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's called a convenience fee with Miami-Dade County Property, but you put the notices on the website. Now the problem is the notice here is not on the website. Now you don't have that option with paying for your parking.

City Manager Rojas: If I may, we'll take it back, we'll look at it, we'll do the numbers, see what we can save. My only other recommendation, if the Commission decides to go in the route of charging the residents the convenience fee or the fees is that we give ample notice before we actually start charging that so that they don't show up expecting to pay with a credit card and find out, I'm not going to pay it now because there is a fee, so.

*City Commission Meeting  
September 10, 2024*

Commissioner Castro: Agreed.

Mrs. Cruz: This is my turn.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mrs. Cruz: Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I'm sorry, I wanted to finish the day with good news, but there comes a point in time when we have to look and see how we try to avoid scandal in the City of Coral Gables. Let me tell you. In 2011, 2011, we had a P-Card audit, it was given to us at a budget meeting, I don't remember when. I believe it was at the beginning of Ms. Gomez term here, because I think I remember she was the one that explained it. This P-Card audit happened only 13 years ago, and I guess we filed it, and we forgot. Several places in this P-Card audit talks about the P-Card is supposed to be used to support a legitimate business purpose, legitimate business purpose, okay, remember that. I know that we would like to say, we didn't find any improprieties is very good for the city not to find improprieties. Let me start by telling you, and let me settle down because I'm going to be very nice, that years ago there weren't any improprieties here, except when some of us looked and we found an employee that was depositing city checks into her mother's bank account and I had to come to the Commission because we did not want to touch that, we did not want to press charges, and charges were pressed and my understanding is that the person had to somehow a little bit at a time pay back the money, and it was big money. So, we're talking here about using the P-Card and you were given some wrong information a minute ago. The question was the maximum was \$1,000 per P-Card. You all didn't think of asking, how many P-Cards are there. There's a whole bunch of P-Cards out there, and each one of them has a limit of \$1,000, and there were not two different events when I brought it up. It was Havana Harry's, one luncheon, one luncheon, one Christmas luncheon that they split the bill, because listen, if you are going to have a luncheon, the main meal and... [Inaudible]... same restaurant on one bill. I don't remember any time going to a restaurant and telling them to give me the desserts on a separate bill. Okay. Its one bill, yet two different P-Cards were used. Two different P-Cards because there was a limit that was wrong. Okay. But let's move on to other stuff. Who authorized? Well, I can tell you that some of the stuff that I brought up before and today, I though we were going to hear, yes, some things were done wrong, and it wouldn't happen again, but we keep covering it up, and that's why I'm here. Okay. We had or still have, I don't know, the bad habit of letting the Administrative Assistants, the people that we trust use our digital signature. So, my understanding is when they say the director authorized and then somebody else authorized. Well, you know what, as much as I didn't like Ms. Cabrera, I doubt that she would have been part of this shenanigans. Okay. So, whoever had access to her digital signature could have signed stuff. Seriously. Okay. Here we go. Okay. We talk about employee morale. You know where I get the information. I don't have a black ball. I don't have a drone that checks. I get information from good employees that are upset that their employees that were abusing the system and got caught by somebody and we had very important people telling this employee, don't worry, we'll tell you how to massage it so it looks good. Okay.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz, Mrs. Cruz, may I ask you for a favor please.

*City Commission Meeting  
September 10, 2024*

Mrs. Cruz: Yes.

Mayor Lago: You've been speaking for over five minutes.

Mrs. Cruz: I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: Will you please wrap it up.

Mrs. Cruz: No sir. Could you please, somebody give me more time because, you know what, I'm going to tell you what went wrong, whether you want to hear or not. Okay. Good employees have left this city with good money on the table because they couldn't take it anymore, because they saw the wrongdoing happening and they left. Okay. Explain that one, because the morale means the people that are doing a good job should be recognized. It doesn't mean the people that are abusing should be covered so they don't suffer. Okay. Because let me tell you, let me tell you, that's what's killing the morale in this building. People that take advantage. Okay. I would like to know, and I know we talk about little money, but little money adds big money, and the people that pay taxes need to know why it was a good, what's the word, a legitimate business purpose in an office to have a burner and a soup pot. I was told originally, well you know, they bring food, and they have to warm it. There were only two microwaves in that office. Usually, people warm up food in a microwave, they don't bring a soup pot. I almost brought a soup pot today to show you what a soup pot means. It's not to warm up something for one person or three people. Its to make food. Let me tell you, there were architects that came to the Board of Architects that called me to find out how come every time we go in that building you can smell cooked food that's being cooked. I said, what do you mean food that's being cooked. It looked like a restaurant, because the person who obtained all this, who used her P-Card to buy stuff, okay, was cooking there.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz.

Mrs. Cruz: Okay. I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz. Mrs. Cruz.

Mrs. Cruz: Celsius drinks.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz, I'm asking you please, I'm asking you. You've been speaking for over seven minutes.

Mrs. Cruz: That's okay. I still have a few more. They explained it longer than that and they covered up a whole bunch of stuff.

Mayor Lago: We give everybody three minutes.

Mrs. Cruz: Sorry. I need a few more minutes.

Mayor Lago: I'm very lenient. I'm very lenient, but I think its time that we bring it to a landing.  
*City Commission Meeting*  
*September 10, 2024*

Mrs. Cruz: I'm sorry, I need a few more minutes.

Commissioner Castro: Do you feel like two minutes would be enough?

Mrs. Cruz: I try to talk fast. Thank you. Celsius drinks, you know why we bought Celsius drinks, you know why in that office some people, not everybody, boyfriend would come in the morning, sit in her office, and they would share the Celsius drinks. Okay. Listen, I'm being good, I'm not mentioning the name. Don't go there because I know the name. Okay. Holiday celebrations by the bundles. Okay. Let me ask you something. When the other departments and let me tell you, I'm going to give credit to Diana Gomez, the people from Finance say, you know what, if we want to have a birthday, if we're going to have a holiday, you know what, we all chip in and we pay. No, not in Development Services and not in Public Works, they charge it on their P-Card, on the city P-Cards, the money that the taxpayers pay. Wedding presents – most people in the world when somebody gets married, they get together and they put money together. No, not in Development Services. We bought and let me tell you, if you want to know I can tell you what was bought too, because it says so on the bill.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz, thank you very much.

Mrs. Cruz: Graduation.

Mayor Lago: Mrs. Cruz, if I may, if I may, please, we're entering nine minutes.

Mrs. Cruz: You know what, Mr. Mayor, you started the meeting ten minutes late, you spoke let me tell you, after every meeting, every presentation and protocol and we waited and we waited and I've been here waiting since 8 o'clock, so be respectful and allow me to finish, allow me to finish.

Mayor Lago: We're going on nine minutes here, so I think it's done.

Mrs. Cruz: Allow me to finish.

Mayor Lago: I know you want to continue to make a point and stretch it as much as you can. I get it.

Mrs. Cruz: The bottom line is, the bottom line is, we were told, we were told there was a mistake. The person putting in the orders for that and when she started buying for herself, she didn't use her card. That was the first answer that we got when we questioned it. The money was never reimbursed, so I guess that was not the truth. The next one was the steamer was for Parks and Recreation, it was not because I asked Fred. Enough is enough. Stop covering up abuse of taxpayers' money and you know what, if you all cannot come up with a way to find the mistakes, I will make a public. I will publish the list of what was bought with taxpayers' money, and I can assure you that when people see what was bought, they are not going to be happy.

Mayor Lago: If I may, I think it's a very good idea you publish that list. Madam Vice Mayor, do you have anything else you like to add for the Commission meeting.