

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item C – Public Comment
October 26, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz

Agenda Item C [Start: 9:15 a.m.]

Public Comment

Mayor Lago: Now moving onto Public Comment.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor the first speaker today is Ms. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz, good morning – Mayor Cruz, please come forward.

Ms. Cruz: [Laughter] Good morning. You know that I really think this is the best place to be and seeing the Fire Rescue people here is – I've used them for my husband several times and they've been wonderful. So, having said that. Today I come with two issues. First one, I want you to know that even though the Budget Book in 2018-2019, page 11, we have listed recycling bins with lids for \$500,000. Think how far back and July 7th this year, I mean there are several mentions in between, but I don't want to bore you, we had a solid waste services discussion where you all were there, and very clearly said that you wanted that thing to happen, the recycling bins with tops.

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Well, Mr. Zamora left, his last day was August 13th. August 13th – okay, well let’s see, let’s count since July; July, August, September, October, next week is November, okay, November 1st. Last week, I contacted the Sanitation Department. I left a message. I got a call back very fast, I mean 3 minutes, amazing. I spoke with the Interim Assistant Public Works Director in charge of Sanitation, and much to my dismay I heard that, as luck would have it, she was talking to the Procurement Department to see how they were going to proceed getting the darn recycling bins with tops. I mean, how long does it take. You all have the power to waive requirements. Come on, let’s get it done. We cannot wait for, you know, let’s see which one we’re going to buy. I thought we saw one that we said we liked at that meeting, but something is going on that we haven’t obtained them. Whatever it takes. If you have to use your power to waive the requirements, get it done. Okay. That’s important. The second one goes a little bit farther back. And I’m here because I really think that we have dropped the ball and we haven’t done what we should have done. And I’m here to ask you all, unless you know of something has happened, you need to look into it. Wednesday, July 19, 2017, before some of you were here, before Mr. Iglesias was City Manager, okay, something happened in this city that cost a lot of grief and a lot of pain to a whole bunch of police officers – 14 police officers went through hell in this city. They made the news, they made world news of something that happened that was not right. Okay. We are now 2021, I’ve talked to everybody I could talk to. I know we’ve had investigation on top of investigation. In the previous administration we brought in people from the outside. You know, we’ve done a whole bunch of stuff. What have we done for those 14 officers that were maligned and abused and harassed? What has this city done for those 14 female officers? You know, I have three daughters, most of you have daughters. Come on guys. We need to step up to the plate and do something, so they know how much we care and how much they count for us. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you Maria. First off, in reference to your second comment, which I think is critically important, something that this Commission has taken a stand and as the representative of this Commission, as the Mayor, I’ve taken a formal stand over the last few years to really make sure that those officers were represented, and we took action in the city. I know there is still some pending business to take care of, and I appreciate you bringing that to our attention, and I’m going to sit down with the Manager to make sure that we correct that. We correct that and we give that moment in history, which was maybe not our most bright moment, but at the end of the day, we give it the necessary justice that it deserves. So, I give you my word that on behalf of the Commission we will take care of that issue. Thank you for bringing that back to our attention. Moving forward, are there any other public comments?

City Clerk Urquia: No sir.