

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item C
January 14, 2025
Police and Fire Headquarters
2151 Salzedo Street, 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

Public Speaker(s)

Irene Hegedos, Miami-Dade County
Jackson Rip Holmes
Tom Wells
Felix Pardo
Maria Cruz
Gonzalo Sanabria
Peter Bamberger

Agenda Item C [9:34 a.m.]

Public Comment

Mayor Lago: Moving onto Public Comment. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, first speaker today is Irene Hegedos.

Mayor Lago: Good morning. Thank you for being here with us.

Ms. Hegedos: Good morning, everybody. My name is Irene Hegedos and I'm here representing Miami-Dade County. I'm the Project Manager for the Underline and I would like to speak on the item 2-2, the Waterway Advisory Board, is recommending that the City Commission ask the U.S.

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Coast Guard to actually extend the review period by 90 days and eliminating the viewing plat from all the projects. Respectfully, we would like you to not pass such resolution, because it would tremendously affect our budget, our funding and our schedule for this project. You have been incredible supporters of the Underline since the inception, and this bridge itself and the project has been shared with the community on eight different occasions. We started the process on December of 2022, and in the last meeting, presentation to the community, with full support of the community, it ended up in October 2023. So, we are in 2025 and then suddenly there's a request to actually extend the review for a project that is already fully under permitting. It's a strain. Now, I would like to point out also that the staff has had opportunities. We have four members of the City of Coral Gables staff that act as a liaison between the county, the Underline, designers, and also the community and staff for Coral Gables. So, please respectfully, do not allow that extension or recommend the extension to the Coast Guard. I do have, Mr. Clerk, I do have a PowerPoint of a picture of the bridge that has been seen by the community. You didn't receive it.

City Clerk Urquia: No.

Ms. Hegedos: Okay. I do have PowerPoints in here or a document that I prepared. I have copies if you would like to see it. I can definitely pass this so you can get an idea or what we're talking about, and I would like to address any of the items that are on the resolution.

Mayor Lago: If I may. First off, I want to say thank you for being here with us. You've always been very vocal and very accessible in regard to the Underline and everything that deals with Miami-Dade County. So, it's truly a pleasure to have you here. I started this process almost ten years ago, when I sponsored the item to move forward on the Underline and fund the Underline, using a mechanism that is not city dollars. It's not taxpayer dollars. What it is, is 1,000 feet within from the Underline is being paid by impact fees. We are at the beginning of this process of a long-awaited process, project that is sorely needed in this community, that will increase accessibility to open spaces, that will slow traffic down, that will beautify our community. This has been long awaited. It is something that's going to be a game changer, not only in Coral Gables, but in South Florida – ten miles of linear parks are sorely needed here in this community. If you look at other communities like the Beltway, New York escapes my memory right now, the name of it, the Highline. These projects have been transformational projects, and this is why when I sat down with Meg Daley ten years ago and started working on this project, with Irene, and members like Les Pantin, and other members of the board, who wanted to deliver something transformational. I'm all in favor of having a conversation about the parks, excuse me, about the bridge, but I want to be very thoughtful. I don't want to see one item derail the process after such a long time; budgets are in place, from my understanding a PO has been granted to the contractor.

Ms. Hegedos: Well, we are way under construction, so to give you an idea.

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Mayor Lago: But the construction is literally right there at the precipice of Coral Gables on 37th on LeJeune.

Ms. Hegedos: Yes. So, this affects Section 6, which is within the state of Coral Gables. Its over the big Coral Gables waterway. It is within our waterway. It is right under the Metrorail, so keep that in perspective.

Mayor Lago: I understand.

Ms. Hegedos: Because this, by no means, what this bridge does is that increases pedestrian and bicycle safety. Right now, the bicycles come in on U.S.-1 and already comes up to Ponce de Leon. There is absolutely nowhere to cross that canal. It does not affect by any means the boater's experience. Our bridge is higher than the lowest bridge – U.S.-1, and so boaters experience is not affected. There are issues that had been brought up about, we have a small viewing platform that people will be fishing. You are absolutely right. We are going to be complying with all of the signage necessary to say, no jumping, no diving, no fishing. We can only imagine somebody pulling a rod and hocking a bicyclist, pedestrian.

Mayor Lago: So, we have this item for 10:30, but I wanted to make sure that people who are listening, they understand that we've gone through an extensive process. We'll discuss it once again at 10:30, a time certain, but I wanted the Commission just to be very thoughtful and be very careful, because this has been ten years in the making and I'm all for more discussions between the Manager's office, City Attorney's office, and the county, the more the merrier, and I think that should be the real conversation and the real kind of direction that we head in when we have this conversation at 10:30 time certain.

Ms. Hegedos: I will remain to answer any questions that you might have, but just keep in mind that the U.S. Coast Guard provides 30 days commencing period. To extend it by another 90 days, four months, you can expect this project to be completely delayed and off the rails for that.

Mayor Lago: Okay. We'll cover it at 10:30. Thank you.

Ms. Hegedos: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker is Jackson Rip Holmes.

Mayor Lago: Good morning, sir.

Mr. Holmes: Greetings. I ask all of you, including the people at home, I am about to prove to you right now that free energy exists. Can we roll the video.

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City Clerk Urquia: Sure sir.

Mr. Holmes: This is a video you've seen before and what I got instructed by the friend of the guy who did the video originally is, this is a demonstration of free energy. You're seeing it right now and I'll explain it at the end of it. You have sound.

City Clerk Urquia: There is no sound, sir.

Mr. Holmes: So that's a block of iron and you can see its warping, its melting, if you will, at room temperature. This is a replay, same block of iron melting at room temperature. So, the amount of energy the guy is using is like a heater from his home, right, think of your own heater in your home. How much electricity does that take? That's the amount of energy he's using and yet, to melt that block of iron would take 1500 degrees Fahrenheit. So, you can see that's free energy right there. Its too bad we don't have the audio. So, listen, I've spent six years – I'm in touch with the guy. This is – you just saw, the people at home, free energy. What does that mean? We don't have to become the underwater city of Atlantis. Coral Gables City Commission is going to save, not only Coral Gables, but the entire State of Florida from sea level rise. Let me carry on with the experiment that I want to do to prove to ourselves that the water in Biscayne Bay can be used to generate free energy. I'm talking now with the people over at the Sea Level Rise Solution Center at FIU, but I'm saying is we need to use their detectors there. Heavy sea water is seawater that contains deterian, so you go out. Let's say we located ourselves, so you come back, you find the deterian, you bring it back in a lab bottle. I meant to bring it – I meant to bring a bottle of water, but I just got my coffee, buy anyway it's the same thing. Think this is a lab tube of heavy seawater. You run electricity – let's say you run 100 watts of electricity into the bottom, right, you input that. Then you – how much comes out at the top and there's been over 100 experiments where you get 150 watts of energy at the top, that's free energy, and you multiply that enough times, you power the whole planet. The end of petroleum that is causing sea level rise.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Holmes. Thank you for bringing this to us. We have a long agenda today. If there's anything else, if you'd like to wrap it up, ten seconds, whatever you'd like to say.

Mr. Holmes: Well just bear in mind, people at home, I just proved there is free energy and now we've just got to do it in our own experiment and that's the end of the fear that sea level rise is going to drown Miami.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much sir. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Tom Wells.

Mr. Wells: Good morning. My name is Tom Wells, I live at 1310 Coral Way. My law firm is at 901 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. I'm also running for Coral Gables Commissioner Group 3. I'm here today to discuss voter engagement for Coral Gables residents. The Coral Gables Farmers
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Market starts Saturday and it's the perfect venue to generate voter interest and educate residents as to candidates. I asked to set a booth to meet residents and educate them as to the election. The response was no, until there is a decision otherwise. I'm here to ask you to allow Coral Gables candidates to have an educational booth at the Farmers Market. In 2023 there was an unsuccessful motion made by some Commission members to move our election to November. I was against that for four or at least three reasons. First, April keeps our elections non-partisan with the folks on the needs of the residents. There is also less voter fatigue caused by multiple elections in November with an overwhelming mailouts and canvassing. Second, April is when the...held this election for the past 100 years. As we celebrate our centennial, we should recognize and respect our history. Finally, residents who do not vote in April should not be attacked. They have a right to decide not to vote. The point is that the city has a unique opportunity with the Farmers Market to grow voter engagement by allowing candidates to have booths and educate residents as to the election. Having booths is a better option to telling a candidate to walk around the Farmers Market and randomly speak to someone who may not be a Coral Gables resident or may not have an interest in our local election. In conclusion, please direct this at Community Recreation Director to allow Coral Gables residents to have a booth at the Farmers Market, to educate our residents as to what that candidate has done for Coral Gables residents and our upcoming election of April 8th. Not having these educational booths for residents to meet candidates and learn about the election could be described as voter suppression, suppression. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Felix Pardo.

Mr. Pardo: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, Commissioners. The last time I was here I was sitting next with Commissioner, Mayor Dorothy Thomson. It was really great to see how well that meeting went. I watched the rest of the meeting later as a recording and I saw the last agenda item, which had to do with City Hall. The reason that I'm here is because, I am here out of the sense of great urgency. After that December 10th Commission meeting, I observed personally later because of my concern, I requested an appointment, and I was able to tour the City Hall building. I observed personally structural issues throughout the building from the ground floor to the third floor. I saw the amount of necessary structural shoring that has fortunately been added and there is more to come. I looked at the past six five-year economic cycles and the plans of how to repair these items, which have escalated completely out of control. In order to save our most iconic building in the City of Coral Gables, we cannot keep mis-correcting our focus. The roof replacement and the pending windows are a small part of the necessary repairs to be achieved to make this structure safe. The exterior envelope of the building is only one part, but the bones of the building have been neglected too long. City Hall certification had its first report completed in January of 2011. Fast-

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forward to 2025. Of the many boards that exist in the city and the many boards that I have had the honor and privilege to have served on in our great community, the Construction Regulation Board, which I sat on, exist to maintain the proper standard of construction in the city by enforcing the construction laws in force and effect in the city. I pulled up the Construction Regulation Board agenda for the next meeting, which is in March of 2024. There are seven cases and only one could not be accessed. Of the remaining six, the same sentence in the description and defects of buildings were included and these buildings were originally built in 1973, 1973, 1963, 1953, 1963 and 1973. Under the description and defects of the building, it almost looked like it was a cut and paste. The structure is hereby declared unsafe by the Building Official pursuant to Section because the exterior structure has spalling and cracked concrete throughout, including but not limited in the walls, stairs, walkways and balconies. Mr. Clerk would you be kind enough to put up the pictures that were given to you.

City Clerk Urquia: So, I could put up the photo's sir, but the format in which you gave it to us only allows me to put up one at a time.

Mr. Pardo: Okay. Can you just put up one at a time.

City Clerk Urquia: Can Cable TV share my screen.

Mr. Pardo: This shoring which has been referred to as overkill is not overkill. If you look and you focus on the center of the picture, you will see reenforced concrete that is spalled out. I am not here as an expert, although I've been a registered architect for about 46 years. We have dealt with in my professional experience with projects that have had spalling, very bad spalling, to the point that we've had to have buildings torn down. This is not the case here with City Hall, but I think it's a very, very important thing that we understand exactly why its doing what its doing. Can you go to the pdf on there, please, at the end. Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This picture was taken in 1927. This is the structure as it was being built. The little box that you see on the bottom are Terra Cotta, which was used, which was the block dezure and that block then had a facing of stucco but over it. Structurally, its not as good as the concrete block that we have nowadays, but still it did its job, and it worked. Unfortunately, in 1927, many people used salt and train sand, in other words beach sand, to be able to make your mixture of the reenforced concrete, in other words the steel with the concrete. Unfortunately, what happens over time is that you have spalling which pushes out the concrete and separates the structural steel from this. The other 21 pictures that were given to the Clerk, I'm not going to go through them, but they are showing tremendous amounts of structural deficiencies, all the way through the top floor. I went back to the Capital Improvement plans, the past six 5-year plans. The budget is detailed, but unfortunately there is no distinction between the 405 Biltmore Development Building and the 427 Biltmore City Hall Building, other than perhaps the roof. *[Note for the record: Speaker made an error in address – should be 405 Biltmore Way City Hall Building and 427 Biltmore Development Building]*

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Mr. Pardo: However, looking at the difference over the years, the proposed improvements doubled and these even included the Development Building. There has been a clear understanding that City Hall needed a great deal of repairs and maintenance for all of this time. The CIP which is the purpose of the Capital Improvement Plan is the long-term strategic planning tool required by state statute to ensure that the city can effectively manage and maintain its infrastructure. The key objectives of the CIP include, number one, identifying priorities; number two, budgeting planning; number three, transparency; and number four, guidance for execution. Were these actual expenditures or proposal allocations. Were the capital improvements in the proposed allocations, these city priorities and intentions are shown clearly there. Therefore, the items listed in the CIP reflect what the city intended to address, not necessarily what was fully executed. The detailed analysis of allocation by year started off in 2019 to 2023 at only \$5.84 million dollars. Under necessity it said, to ensure compliance with safety standards, maintenance, public accessibility. To preserve the historic and aesthetic integrity of the site. In 2020 through 2024, the CIP allocated \$11.5 million dollars. The necessity of the upgrades to ensure safety to staff and visitors. In 2021 to 2025, there is allocated \$11.389 million dollars. In there, the necessity was the long-term preservation of historic infrastructure, ensuring compliance with evolving safety and building codes, as the board that I sat on. Under necessity, there is an urgent attention to water intrusion and humidity control. Now in 2023 to 2027, the allocated budget is \$21.2 million dollars. In 2024 to 2028, \$23.3 million dollars. The planned expenditures for final renovations for staff and Mr. Gomez' presentation on December 10th is very conservative schedule should be applied, because its within the last six 5-year cycles. The necessity was for the long-term preservation for future generations of the most iconic building in the City of Coral Gables. It represents the employees; it represents our history, and it represents what the residents stand for. The most troubling factor that I have seen of all this is that over these many years, we had been prioritizing things like the Mobility Hub, things like a building that shouldn't have been purchased by the city and/or improved. This short-sightedness, to me, is very troubling. I want to make sure that the residents and this Commission understand how deeply disturbing this is. I know that people have used this podium for their own personal agendas and whatever they have in mind. At my age and my station in life, the only thing I've done for this great city is serve through all the boards, all the Blue-Ribbon Committees, all the different functions, which if you write them down, they are kind of crazy, but I've done that with a tremendous sense of service to this community. I must tell you that I am very concerned what the next 40 years are going to look like, and I have no choice but to say that I am going to run for public office. Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz.

Mrs. Cruz: At my age it takes a little while to get here and it is Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road, a resident of the beautiful City of Coral Gables since 1976. As always, I like to start with a nice comment. This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. I wished when I came here that that was all I was going to say, but I'm here to tell you that I'm very grateful that Felix
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Pardo has taken the time to research how we have failed our city by not doing the right thing and I would like everybody to memorize the following dates. From 2018 to 2024, we had an Administrator, we had a Manager who is an engineer, because nobody has decided to go after his license yet, who has allowed our iconic building, who has allowed our City Hall to be in this condition. There is no excuse. Its shameful and I'm going to tell you, every time I hear his name as the wonderful person, the wonderful job he did, I suggest people need to look at what happened during those years so they can see the reality and not smoking mirrors. I think I've said enough. It's a shameful day in the City of Coral Gables.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Gonzalo Sanabria.

Mr. Sanabria: You've got a good crowd here. A lot of good people. Good morning, everybody.

Mayor Lago: Morning.

Mr. Sanabria: Good morning Mr. Mayor, Mrs. Vice Mayor, and Commissioners. I have some comments, and I may run a couple of seconds past the three-minute limit, and I apologize. I will not run ten minutes.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Mr. Sanabria: Yes sir. Mr. Rojas made a savvy decision and again, its nothing personal sir, its just that you are not qualified to be a City Manager and its very evident from your inactions and your lack of qualifications, that you don't belong there, you don't even belong here today. So, you made a decision to either get fired on April or resign and not have the fired notation in your work record. I commend you for that. Off the record, I would have done the same thing – smart move. But you don't belong in that seat, and you shouldn't even be there right now. Jointly and separately, some of you know that term, jointly and separately means that the city has been taken for \$365,000, \$1,000 a day with the ambush hire of an unqualified City Manager by the votes of Commissioner Melissa Castro, spearheaded by Commissioner Ariel Fernandez, and vigorously supported by Commissioner Kirk Menendez, and this has to be jointly and separately, and if you don't mind sir, I didn't interrupt you, you don't interrupt other people. Thank you very much. I'm not violating any rules. Okay. So, jointly and separately means that you are liable to the city for that money that you owe the city. I want you to know that. I filed an official complaint with the City Commission on Ethics and it should be made public. The reason the Commission on Ethics did not prosecute the case after 30 days of investigating it, is because there is no ordinance respecting the Home Rule protocol on hiring the City Manager, which you violated. So, I urge one of you, you can even sponsor it Mrs. Castro or somebody else and make it into an ordinance, a procedure for hiring the

next City Manager, so its set in stone. I appreciate all that. You owe us \$365,000. Goodbye Mr. Rojas and God bless.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

City Manager Rojas: Mr. Mayor, may I make a comment.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to move on, if possible.

Commissioner Castro: Actually, I would like for you to comment, please.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll make a motion to allow the Manager.

Commissioner Castro: I'll second that.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, a vote, there's a motion and a second on the floor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

City Manager Rojas: Mr. Sanabria, may I ask you a question. Would you be so kind as to tell us what the requirements of a City Manager is in Coral Gables?

Mr. Sanabria: Could you repeat the question sir.

City Manager Rojas: Could you tell me what the requirements of a City Manager for the City of Coral Gables is.

Mr. Sanabria: What were your qualifications for City Manager because you had no experience in city management whatsoever. So how would you qualify.

City Manager Rojas: Madam City Attorney, would you look at the Charter for the City of Coral Gables and let me know what requirements for the City Manager is.

Mr. Sanabria: Its an HR policy Chapter 4 and 5. You should read it sir, you're the sitting City Manager.

City Manager Rojas: I have a question to the City Attorney.

City Attorney Suarez: So, the HR personnel rules do not apply to the appointed officials. The Charter provides that the City Manager shall be the chief executive; the Manager shall be chosen by the Commission, solely on the basis of his or her executive and administrative qualifications; may not be a resident of the city or the state one appointed; no member of the Commission may be chosen to serve as City Manager during his or her term; and there are more details about that, the service of the Manager in the Charter and that it does set forth the responsibilities, duties, authority, appointments generally, as well in the Charter.

Mayor Lago: If I may, Mr. Manager, just one second. We have a long agenda today.

City Manager Rojas: Thank you. That's all I have.

Mayor Lago: We have a lot of items today. Whether you agree or disagree with the Manager, obviously everyone knows where I fall on that issue. We have a long agenda. I'd like to move forward and address the issues at hand and let go of the past and move on from that. Okay. Let's move on.

Commissioner Castro: I agree it's a long agenda, one hundred percent, but the Manager, please finish what he is trying to prove.

City Manager Rojas: No, that's the point. I just want to make my appointment was in the authority of the Charter.

Commissioner Castro: In other words, he cannot define what qualifications, what actually defines for you to be qualified, is what you are trying to say, right.

City Manager Rojas: Yes, but as the Mayor said, I'm willing to move forward.

Commissioner Menendez: My question for the City Attorney, based on what you read, the HR policy doesn't apply to elected/appointed officials, like City Manager, City Commission, it's the Charter that governs, correct.

City Attorney Suarez: Correct. The HR policies does not apply to the appointed officials.

Commissioner Menendez: It's the Charter. Okay. That's all.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker, Mr. Mayor, Peter Bamberger. He's going to be on Zoom.

Commissioner Fernandez: If I may, Mr. Mayor. I do have a comment.

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City Clerk Urquia: Go ahead, Commissioner Fernandez.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think the presentation that we just saw is a little disingenuous. If we were to go back, and Mr. Clerk, I just sent you an image I'd like displayed on the screen.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes sir. Cable TV can put my screen.

Commissioner Fernandez: In 2014, the city went through the process of replacing the City Manager and Mr. Sanabria actually spoke out against the Commission at the time over the process that the Commission was following. And this is an article that was written at the time regarding Mr. Sanabria's comments, saying that it was a waste of time, and the process needed to be expedited, but I think in comparison to what was said here today about the Manager not having experience running a municipality, Mr. Sanabria stated at the time that the problem we had was, that we were recycling other municipalities managers and we needed somebody from the private sector, so completely different area. So, in contrast to what Mr. Sanabria is saying here today, this hire was exactly what Mr. Sanabria was advocating for in 2014, Somebody who had the wherewithal to do what needed to be done in the city. You can remove the image from the screen Mr. Clerk. The issue that we have here today is, its just the constant attack and the constant attempt to divide our city. Over the last year, our residents have had the best response we've had in many years when issues have come to the Manager's attention. Why? – because we've had a manager in place who has been addressing the needs of residents on a regular basis, and I know that's a concern to some who had favoritism played by the former City Manager and if they had favorites, they were able to get their things done, but this Manager has addressed the needs of this community and ensured there are policies put into place and I'll reserve my additional comments on this, but Mr. Sanabria, you will be hearing from my attorney in the next few hours regarding your complaint which was a frivolous complaint filed with the Ethics Commission and we will be pursuing legal charges and legal fees when it comes to your complaint. Politicizing the Ethics Commission has been a tactic that has been employed against Commissioners Castro, Menendez and myself for over a year now, and I don't know what the point is, I don't know what the intent is, but it is time for those forces who are trying to divide our city to take a step back and allow for people to do their jobs. This city is a shining light for other municipalities around this state. We are celebrating our centennial and its time for you to stop the division. Its time for us to start working together. We said this since the first day we got here and all we've gotten is somebody hitting the brakes, constant attacks from the Mayor and his PAC, constant attacks from your trolls out in social media who are attacking our family, my wife, my son had been attacked by your friends, Mr. Mayor, and that is unacceptable. Its time for us to move forward. You lost the last election. Don't set yourself up for another loss. We can move on now.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker on Zoom is Peter Bamberger.
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Mayor Lago: Sir, the floor is yours.

Mr. Bamberger: Good morning. Can you all hear me okay. I don't think the video is working here. There we go. Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, good morning, my name is Peter Bamberger. I'm a 25-year resident of Coral Gables. I live at 545 Vilabella Avenue. I'm speaking today to discuss the pedestrian bridge issues. I'm not so concerned about the water viewing area. What I am concerned about is any further low bridges across the Coral Gables canal. I have thoroughly reviewed the public notices that were in the paper and are online. There is some confusion that has been contained in those notices. The notice in the paper stated that the bridge, that the proposed bridge would have the same vertical and horizontal clearances as the U.S.-1 bridge, an extremely low bridge. The online notice similarly stated that the bridge would be at the same elevation as the U.S.-1 bridge. Now, I wrote an objection pursuant to the notice procedures to the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Representative Matt ___ wrote back telling me the description in the public notice was wrong. In his email he stated that the U.S.-1 bridge is a pathetic 3.26 feet above the canal and he said that the new bridge will be 6.7 feet above the canal, I believe he was referring to high tide, I hope he was. That gave me some slight relief, but in later correspondence sent to one of my neighbors, the Underline represented that the bridge will match the height of U.S.-1. That I heard some earlier comments that it would be higher than U.S.-1. That's not enough. There are over 100 homes on the other side of U.S.-1, including mine. The west side of U.S.-1 is serene, its calm. It is a place for paddle-boarders and kayakers to use. There is a paddle-board drop-off right near where this U.S.-1 bridge is proposed to be constructed. There is one, as I understand it, that's going to be installed there near the Blue Road Park that I think is coming our way. I'm 5-foot-8, I have to duck down to go under U.S.-1. At high tide I have to get on my knees. I think we need to start with some clarity from the Underline as to exactly what the proposed heights are of this bridge. We, of course, have storm surge issues. There is sea level rise that the county has been fighting forever. Any bridge that is remotely near the height of U.S.-1 is a serious problem for those who use the canal. I just think that the notices have not been clear whatsoever. So, I do support extending the time to address the comments, because the notice itself, by the Coast Guard's own emails to me wasn't accurate. I just want to really impress upon our city leadership the need for us to have no conflicts, no further conflicts on the Coral Gables canal for those who use it. I thank you for hearing my comments. I know this is going to be discussed in the future at the meeting, but I just wanted to highlight this very important issue. Thank you very much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Alright. We're going to take a ten-minute break. When we come back, we'll be hearing F-2, which is our Tax Collector, who is here with us and we'll be moving on from there to F-3, which is the caroling contest. So, F-1 and F-3. We'll be back in ten minutes. Thank you.

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