

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item C – Mayor’s Comment
January 24, 2023
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Michael Mena
Commissioner Rhonda Anderson
Commissioner Jim Cason
Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suarez
City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Police Chief, Ed Hudak
Police Officer Kelly Denham
Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz

Agenda Item C [9:15 a.m.]
Mayor’s Comment

Mayor Lago: Moving onto Mayor’s Comments. I have a few items that I want to discuss today. The first one, which in my opinion is the most important item of the day, it is something that is very near and dear to not only my heart, but to the heart of the Commission. This is something that has been lingering for over five, I can’t even remember how many years it’s been, and it’s always been a very tough conversation to have on multiple fronts, because you have an investigation that’s been ongoing, our hands have been tied. We’ve been reached out to, and I know that you’ve dealt with many people call media outlets along with the Chief, along with our staff members and the Commission, in regards to what transpired years ago with the female officers in the Police Department. I wanted to take this opportunity to have the Chief say a few words in regard to the outcome and where we stand today.

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Chief Hudak: As late as Friday, last Friday, Thursday afternoon, the city through myself, the City Manager, the City Attorney present and the previous City Attorney came to an agreement with the FOP and the twelve officers currently working here, based on some of the things that went on during that time period that you mentioned. We have come to an amicable agreement to the officers, which we have all signed and agreed to with the City Attorney's office. I will say that this, in my opinion, or in my mind, put this entire timeframe, if you will, to bed, so to speak. As I've told all of you independently, but also collectively, the toughest time for me was actually when it affected my family and when it affected the fourteen officers that were involved and used as a tool, which because of Internal Affairs Commander Rudy Gonzalez kind of discovered after the fact, that they were used as pawns. There was no kind of agreement to that. There was nothing else that came out from the improprieties that were discovered through us. So, I think I am and still can't be anymore prouder than the twelve officers that are with us that were involved in this, because sometimes – the ugly part of our world does kind of sneak into our ranks and I think, on behalf of the Manager and the city, and all of you and your bosses, I can't think of another way to kind of make this just, if the whole thing was unjust. As much as I've had all of your support over the years, I feel the same way about all our officers, but especially these twelve officers that were drawn into this for absolutely no fault of their own; and as I've said before, if they ever invite me again, I'll go again, but I might leave the uniform at home. Thank you all very much for your consideration and allowing myself, the Manager and the City Attorney's office to not only look into this, to investigate it, as you all did, to get to the bottom of it, but also to make something more palatable for the officers who will never forget this either as will I.

Mayor Lago: Chief, I've had a conversation with multiple officers who were involved who were used as pawns in a political gain in an effort to, we won't go into details, but it was a political – it was pretty disgusting, in my opinion, what occurred. It was shameful and when you talk about individuals who go into the line of duty of being a police officer and we have the utmost respect for police officers in this community, we support the Blue, we've been very, very clear on that front. But to be a female police officer is incredibly difficult, incredibly difficult. It's a privilege to work here in the City of Coral Gables and I spoke to many of these officers, along with my colleagues on the Commission. I know the Vice Mayor spoke to many of them, having been here the longest; and we reassured them that there is an ongoing investigation. Your team did an incredible job. I want to say thank you for that, because this restores credibility in who we are. Under my watch, under the watch of Mayor Cason, the watch of my colleagues on the Commission, especially the City Manager, we will make sure if anybody is injured or if anybody is mistreated or if anybody is taken advantage of, like they were here politically, in an effort to politically sway somebody, we will do everything in our power to make them whole. And I haven't spoken to all twelve women, but I have spoken to a handful of them who have come up to me, and thanked me, and I said, don't thank me, thank the City Manager, thank the Chief. Thank you for being so strong and not leaving the city and allowing us, our team to do a great job and bring this in for a landing and make you whole. So, I want to thank our City Attorney's office, everyone who worked on this negotiating and bringing this to a conclusion. Hopefully, like the salacious story was portrayed not only locally, but internationally, hopefully a good story will be written that the City of Coral Gables did the right thing, that we stood by our female police officers. How proud we are to have them here in the city. But without them, I think we wouldn't be in the position that

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we are in today, a world class city. I just want to say thank you to them. I apologize, as I've mentioned before, this is not the first time. I apologize on the record. We put this on the agenda multiple times to make sure that it continued to see the light that it deserved, not that it would not have, during your leadership you've been very clear that this would not be swept under the rug. So, I just want to say thank you to you for your leadership and to Kelly, you and I have had many conversations, many conversations over this matter and I gave you my word and the Commission gave you their word and the City Manager and their office and the City Attorney Miriam Ramos, who is no longer here, but her team that we would make sure that we would make everybody whole. So, thank you.

Officer Denham: On behalf of all the women that were there that day, we've always been so proud of our Chief and that never ever stopped. We absolutely love working for the Chief and the Police Department, but I want to thank Peter Iglesias and you, yourself Mayor, and Vice Mayor Mena, and Miriam and her team, you guys always stuck by us and we always had faith in you. And on behalf of the girls, we just want to say thank you.

Chief Hudak: There are very few Commissions in this county, in this state that put their beliefs where their actions are with their employees. So in the middle of a recruiting frenzy for police officers there is one reason why I won't bring back somebody who leaves, because they think the grass is greener, because the grass here is always green and its because of you all and your leadership for all of us. So, the one thing I can tell you about the twelve officers that I'm most proud of is that all of them plan to retire here and that's a sentiment to you all leadership and your guidance through the Manager of what we stand for in Coral Gables, not just our victims, but our employees and I appreciate that.

Mayor Lago: Thank you Chief. I think Ms. Cruz wanted to say something.

Ms. Cruz: It is a great day. It is a great day. It took a lot of effort. It took a lot of undoing what had been done wrong and I'm very happy and since I was the one that was here pushing and begging and asking, I would like to thank everybody that was involved in making these ladies whole. I think it's a long, long time coming, but I think at the end it was all worth it, and I thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Thank you Chief and I appreciate that. Thank you so much. Number two, Billy, I would like to have on the next agenda an update in regard to sidewalks and where we stand. I know we have about a handful of projects that we've been working on. So, I'd like to see if we can have our Public Works Department, I'm not sure if they are here today, to give us an update on where we are on the sidewalks.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes Mayor, they are downstairs, they are listening.

Mayor Lago: They come back, they come in. Number three, Mr. Clerk, Mr. Manager, I would like for my colleagues to join me on a formal letter to our new County Commissioner, Commissioner Cabrera and State Representative Demi Cabrera, asking that Bird Road be addressed. What do I mean be addressed? We need to address something in regard to traffic calming. I know you can't

put speed humps on Bird Road, but there has to be something. I think we also need to address the

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issue of cleanliness of the trees, the dumping. There are a lot of things on the median. We need to step up, we need to really, really step up the level of attention in regard to Bird Road. I just think it's, again, it's not up to the standard that I believe that Bird Road should be up to. I also want to address with the Manager and my colleagues, please, I'd like to see an entrance feature on Bird Road. There is a property for sale. I know that we've been going back and forth, it's a little overpriced, in my opinion, and we've been trying to see if we can find something that falls in line with our vision to have an entrance feature there on Bird Road. I think it's a good opportunity we should really push for that in the near future. So, I'd like to draft that letter, Mr. Manager, if possible and send it to the Commissioner and see what we can do, just to spruce it up a little bit. I think it needs a little bit of attention. We need, also, crosswalks there, potentially if we could get some, we need to update the signage. In regard to letters, I'm also preparing a letter which will go to the Manager and the City Attorney for review, along with all my colleagues, that I want all my colleagues to sign. I had dinner the other night with Mayor Cava here in the city. We discussed issues of importance to the city. We are drafting a letter to talk a little bit about, I went over this with the Manager already and our staff in our pre-agenda, which is a discussion of resources in regards to milling, in regards to stop signs, which are tarnished and faded, in regards to crosswalks, in regards to our bridges that the county is responsible for that we are painting and we are maintaining for them. We've got to get on some sort of cycle with the county when those are maintained. The one on Alhambra when you pass Bird Road has been crashed twice. It currently has yellow tape on it. It has water barricades, and it has cones. That is an eyesore and it's a safety hazard and that's the responsibility of the county and these will all be addressed in my letter to the county. I'm asking that my colleagues review it, provide their input. I'm sending it out this Friday, along with the Manager and the City Attorney, look it over for legal sufficiency.

City Attorney Suarez: Yes Mayor. So, if you'd like, if the Commission so wishes they can designate you to draft the letter and send it out.

Mayor Lago: But I want my colleagues to be involved and we are going to send it to the entire Commission. I had dinner with Commissioner Cabrera last night and we talked about this letter in full detail. Suramy to get a look at the letter also and the ACM. I want our team to look at it, please, I miss things. There are a lot of things that are the responsibility of the county and we provide a significant cash infusion to the county, over \$100 million dollars a year. We are a full service city, so our requests to the county are very limited and I explained this to the County Mayor and I would like a little further representation in regards to who we are as a city, and those things need to be addressed. Now, like I said, we are maintaining the bridges, we're painting the bridges, we're pressure cleaning the bridges, just to keep them up to our standards, and I'd like to see that across the board, and I'd like Naomi to engage and tell me a little bit more about what our county responsibilities that maybe we can add to this letter. So, I want to send this letter out by Friday to all 13 County Commissioners, along with the Mayor.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'll make a motion designating the Mayor to do that and to basically follow the process he just outlined.

City Attorney Suarez: Yes. Thank you.

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Vice Mayor Mena: Use his discretion.

Commissioner Anderson: Mayor, may I add one thing.

Mayor Lago: That's the whole point, please. Add as many things as you'd like.

Commissioner Anderson: The south side of Bird Road is where the High School is and we have no sidewalk along Bird Road whatsoever. It's a very dangerous situation for the students. We have asked that DOT to do something about it last year, but we haven't had any action whatsoever. I'd like to add that to the list.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Perfect.

City Attorney Suarez: So, Mayor, if there's a motion to designate you to prepare that letter and send it, and I think its two letters, so there probably should be two separate motions. You should discuss here some of the things to include in that letter, while you can get more input from staff, obviously you won't be able to get that input from your colleagues by Friday.

Mayor Lago: I'd ask for my colleagues to think about what is important, because I know that we're forgetting things. For example, like the sidewalks, because right now I can't think of anything else, I've been discussing with my team about it, but I imagine there are many things that are missing. So if anybody from staff, please feel free to copy the Manager, copy the Commission, send it to the City Attorney, and I will include it in the letter, as long as within the boundaries of the County Commission. The intent is to bring the County Commission into the city and have them understand what the City of Coral Gables is lacking and how – I know we get gas tax money in regards to resurfacing, but that's diminishing, that's diminishing, and we need to make sure that the county is engaged because there's over 700,000 people that drive through the city every single day and there's 51,000 residents. So for example, if we're doing traffic calming throughout the city on city roads, but if there's a county road that we can, that we've identified through Public Works that needs to have some sort traffic calming, either a circle, maybe a raised intersection at one form or another and we can get the county engaged, we need to do it now. I want to include it in the letter saying the following areas that are county areas have been designated or have been noticed that are problematic in regard to traffic and speeding, we'd like for you to look at those.

Vice Mayor Mena: Madam City Attorney, I think we are designating the Mayor, I think he's clearly articulated the general subject matter of what the letter will cover and I'd like to give him discretion to kind of phrase it in a way that you think makes sense and that's within the county's discretion, and as he's said, he will circulate it to us, we'll take a look and if anybody has any issues with anything we'll let them know, but otherwise I'm perfectly comfortable with him exercising his discretion on these topics to put together that letter.

Commissioner Menendez: Just want to chime in that as Commissioner had a couple of discussions with the administration on some traffic calming concerns that neighbors throughout the city have had, and the thing that sort of slows the whole process down is the county support and county approvals. So, I think it's a phenomenal idea. I already have one particular area that's been asking

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for help and help and help, because the county directly has control over that particular intersection, hopefully this is a way to resolve that and many other problems.

Mayor Lago: Do we have a motion and a second.

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

City Attorney Suarez: So that motion was for the letter to the County Mayor. I believe, Mayor, you also wanted to prepare a letter to the County Commissioner, Commissioner Cabrera and to State Rep. Demi.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes. I'll make that motion as well, again, designating the Mayor to draft a letter.

Mayor Lago: To address Bird Road.

Vice Mayor Mena: Commissioner Cabrera and others relating to Bird Road in particular, some of the issues that he outlined with respect to that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Second.

Commissioner Anderson: Second. Oh, we got a second.

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you Vice Mayor. Thank you, colleagues. And the last item in regards to Mayor's Comments. So, we put together a piece of legislation a few years ago that address sidewalks. By the way, the sidewalks have never looked better in the city, how clean they are, just like the landscaping has never looked better, never looked better in the downtown. You guys are doing great work on that, and I've gotten so many compliments from residents, from non-residents, they see the change in the city in regards to the fact that we're taking additional care, we're being very thoughtful; the flowering plants were a great addition to Ponce, to Miracle Mile. Now the problem is you can see the big difference between the old landscaping and the new landscaping. Its really clear. I know that we're budgeting the new landscaping and its coming, but it kind of shines a light on the fact that that needs to be done in the next few months. I had a meeting, I'm taking this opportunity in the Sunshine, I had a meeting and I welcome you to have a meeting with the representatives again from Merrick Park. I was very clear, very clear that I'm not happy where

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the current standards of the landscaping, their signage tarnished. A lot of the signage is incredibly old and I told them very clearly and I spoke to the Manager about this. If they're incapable of getting this done, we will take care of it for you. Half of the landscaping is dead. We need more security. We need to make sure the buildings are painted. We need to make sure that the buildings are pressure washed; the sidewalks are pressure washed; the garbage is being picked up, and I use the city's example as we are upgrading our landscaping, we are adding additional police officers to the downtown, our Neighborhood Safety Aides are working, our trolleys have been expanded to Saturdays, now they are moving to Sundays. We're spending money in regard to marketing, management, marketing and public relations, excuse me, we're doing our part. We're doing part to elevate the quality so that they can attract more people to Merrick Park, but I need them to step up. It was a rather tough meeting, but we discussed getting this done. I know there's budget constraints, but there hasn't been anything done on that property for over 17, 18, 19 years. So, I need the Manager, I need my colleagues to please apply a little pressure to make them understand that we will not wait two or three years to get this done. This has to be done now. I know the amount of money that they're making, fully rented facility, they are doing very well, and by the way, we signed a bad deal years ago, but we own up to our bad deal, but at a minimum having that be a city property, let's keep it up to the standards like we did with Burger Bob's, like we did with the Country Club. We are elevating our quality that we are offering to residents, at a minimum they should do the same. Its unacceptable that the trees facing the new Collection Building are all dead, the sidewalk is broken, the curbs are broken. These are things that should be done, all is full of mildew, they haven't pressure cleaned that, the sidewalks. So that needs to be addressed.

Commissioner Cason: What was their reaction?

Mayor Lago: Well, we're trying to do the best we can, but you know budgeting and I said, that's not a concern, you haven't done anything in 17, 18 years. We've got to get it done. They are working, they are doing a few things, but its not completed. We've had issues with directional boring for irrigation that hasn't been addressed in months. It just sits there, piles of dirt. They've got to be proactive. They have to make an effort to just not do the bare minimum, they've got to be more proactive, especially when the deal they have is essentially probably one of the best deals I've ever seen in my life. Second thing is, Mr. Manager, I would like for Ms. Cabrera and Antoine, who by the way are doing great work in regards to Code Enforcement, to please give me a list of the businesses that are not complying in regards to pressure cleaning the sidewalks. I know that there's not many, there's only a handful. Its time to take it to the next level. If they will not comply we will do it for them, every six months, and we will lien the property, okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Will do Mayor.

Mayor Lago: We will lien the property and we will do what is required because at the end of the day, I will not compromise on the level of quality that we expect, because the City of Coral Gables, as you can tell across the street is pressure cleaning their sidewalks and we are also fining, as Ms. Cabrera will tell you because I've had conversations with her, we are also fining the city, we are also citing the city and the city does not comply and we run out there and we clean those areas where we may have missed a portion of a sidewalk. We are holding ourselves accountable. I expect every business to be held accountable, because by the way, we are very strict with residents and

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citations in regards to their swales, in regards to bollards on the swale, in regards to trash on the wrong day, in regards to the colors that they can paint their house, in regards to where their roofs are dirty, there should be no free passes for businesses. It's the law. They have to clean their sidewalks every six months and their facades. There is no reason why not. They should be putting their best foot forward. Moving on to Public Comment.

[Note for the Record: The Commission took up Public Comment and then went back to Mayor's Comments to conclude items].

Mayor Lago: I have one more item that I forgot to mention in the Mayor's Comments. So, if we could reopen Mayor's Comments, just for one second.

City Clerk Urquia: Sure.

Mayor Lago: Do we need a motion or anything, because I've never done this before.

Commissioner Anderson: No.

Mayor Lago: So, Flagler section, community visioning, excuse me, this is something that we've been talking about, this Commission has been talking about for a long time. I'd like to get a quick update from our Public Works Director, along with our Manager, where we are in regard to, we've had a virtual community meeting, August 5, 2020, I have the results here from that meeting. I'd like to understand where we are with Dover Kohl, what are the next steps. I had the residents at my open office hours, and they wanted to kind of get some guidance in regards to some milestones that we can be held accountable to, so we can bring it back to them.

Public Works Director Diaz: Good morning, Hermes Diaz, Public Works Director. Where we are – the next step that we need to do on this project is go back to the community and hopefully get an agreement as to what kind of cross-section they want for the neighborhood. The last meeting that we had was virtual, I think that was during Covid, it was a little difficult to do, but we do have cross-sections, we have some estimates, which now need to be updated. We can probably go back to the community in May.

Mayor Lago: Has Dove Kohl been engaged?

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes. We are working with Dover Kohl.

Mayor Lago: Dover Kohl, excuse me.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes – absolutely.

Mayor Lago: Let me ask you a question. If we schedule a date today in May, before the summer, we schedule a date in May, would you have something to show them a design, some sort, anything?

Public Works Director Diaz: What we still don't have from the community an agreement as to which cross-section do they want; and then, the question is, how is this all going to get funded?

Mayor Lago: I understand. But that's a different story.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, we will provide various alternatives, just like we did recently, to Biltmore Way, and then we'll discuss estimates are generated based on those cross-sections, and we'll look at the involvement, as you know there's probably going to be some assessments involved, depending on the extent of the work that the residents want. So, we'll be addressing the same way that we are doing Biltmore Way.

Mayor Lago: So my question to you is, do you need February, March, April, May, can you meet with them now, get the cross-sections, so we can start moving forward so that they understand the assessment, how we are handling the Biltmore Way, and how we are proposing to handling in that area, so we can get a true, true number or a true scope, so that we can really attack it and say look, this is the price for that area. You can do a \$20 million-dollar project, or you can do a \$5 million-dollar project, how would you like to see. Let me just add one last thing, one last thing and I'll be quiet. The reason why I'm saying that is because you have one project that I'm aware of, one project that's being considered to be redeveloped in that area. The zoning code – the residents brought it to my attention this week, that they are meeting with the developer, talking about a possibility of building an office building there, okay. We would like to have a conversation with the developer as they come forward through the process and say, look, the residents are looking for all these community improvements, maybe we can partner up and you can handle some of the traffic calming, the lighting, the sidewalks, whatever we can do to all be rowing in the same direction. Understand? What do you think?

Public Works Director Diaz: I think that's a great idea. If we can get the developer to do some of the work or fund it, I think absolutely.

City Manager Iglesias: I think we can look at what the impact of that project is and get something – that project would not be as large as some of the others. It won't be an Agave or anything like that.

Mayor Lago: No, no, no, this is a small project, small project.

City Manager Iglesias: We can get that area around that project done. However, its not obvious what's happening there. There is no technical problem with that area, its mostly an aesthetic issue, Mayor, as you know. So what the residents want and also what we can afford are key issues there.

Mayor Lago: So, you want to meet with the residents in February, again?

Public Works Director Diaz: February would be difficult. We have a lot of engineering work done, okay. Dover Kohl will help with the imaging, to help people see what is out there. We also need to look at the financials. I think May will probably give us the time that we need.

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City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, can we meet with – let’s meet with Dover Kohl and give the Commission an update next Commission meeting with firm dates.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Mr. Clerk, please put this on the agenda for next Commission meeting. The Manager will provide an update in regards to firm dates to meet with the residents again after they have spoken with Dover Kohl.

Commissioner Menendez: To piggyback on this discussion. First off, your team did a great job Biltmore Way workshop.

Mayor Lago: I heard that went very well, by the way, thank you for bringing that up.

Commissioner Menendez: And had the residents meet in separate tables, come up with ideas, designs, like the options that they liked. I thought that was very well done. The one thing we talked about and Commissioner Anderson, and I want to avoid that happening again is, at the end of the day go, well we want to know what’s the price tag, or at least what’s the impact going to be on us. And I said, if we can come up with a low number and a high number somewhere in between, doesn’t have to be too detailed, because we don’t have the details, but just remember that the questions they had, going forward, I think we need to at least have a ballpark number, if its going to be something that the residents will have to absorb.

Public Works Director Diaz: And that’s the plan for the next one over, because we have way too many options floating around, because we wanted the community to really tell us what they were looking for, so now we manage to, after this meeting, to shrink that further and then we can get more into the weeds, so to speak, with the preferred options for that.

City Manager Iglesias: We’ve tried to be clear with the residents, because we have a lot of infrastructure work coming up. We have Fire House 4 coming up, we are looking at a lot of infrastructure work and this work is truly – those areas do not have technical issues, these are aesthetic issues.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

Commissioner Anderson: I’m going to just add. I share Commissioner Menendez concerns. We need to have goal posts. We all may like to have a Bentley, but we may not be able to afford the Bentley; and we need to provide them some basic math too. We know how many folios we have there. If you divide it up, it gets down to a number that’s meaningful to that person. So it may come down to a much smaller number that is palatable, because they are only paying for a small piece of the pie. I’ve also been approached by a couple of residents after the fact that said, well, I just really didn’t understand the impact of how putting a median in the middle will help slow down the traffic. I didn’t understand that when I was making a choice. So, we need to provide this in some educational level as well. You know it. I know it from years and years of experience and observing how traffic flows, that if you’re able to keep people in their lanes and they don’t have this wide piece of asphalt there, not only does it slow down the cars, but the median provides a refuge area for people when they are crossing the street, and if someone comes peeling around the

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corner, as people will do sometimes unpredictably, they have a place that they can feel protected. So, educational level, some goal posts, and then bring it down to the individual level, how much per folio is this going to cost.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct. And that's the next phase in this.

Commissioner Anderson: Plus, we have two funds. We have one for the Flagler area section, as well as Biltmore Way.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Commissioner Anderson: So, when these projects are coming in, we can start adding some of the money in per the contribution from these developments coming through.

City Manager Iglesias: We do have multiple, we expect to have multiple meetings in all these projects, so part of the Dover Kohl contract is multiple meetings with the residents.

Commissioner Anderson: I know.

City Manager Iglesias: I believe we have up to four.

Commissioner Anderson: Why not have that information on the palate for them during the first meeting, because it will assist them in a decision-making process. Oh, it's only going to cost another \$20 bucks or \$5 bucks, add that to the palate of things. We need to have that relationship with the dollars and...

City Manager Iglesias: Understand Commissioner. This meeting was just really kind of the start.

Commissioner Anderson: Alright. I understand. That was the number one question. It was the elephant in the room that was not addressed.

Public Works Director Diaz: There's a lot of detail, especially for example, the signal, depending on which option is chosen, the impact on the signal could be significant. So there's quite a few knows that hopefully after we gather all that information from the community, like I said, we shrink the options down and then we can provide more information, more detailed information.

Mayor Lago: So, let me ask you for another request, if my colleagues agree, then please make sure this happens. I don't want to hear in two years about any information being missing or not available. There's a website for this Flagler section, let's make sure that everything we do is included there. Just like, for example, with Biltmore Way. If we had a meeting, put the meeting minutes up, if you have pictures, put the pictures up. I want to show that the city is moving forward on meeting with residents, meeting with consultants, being transparent. I don't want there to be anything up for debate.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.
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Mayor Lago: So, next Commission meeting, we are going to hear of when we're going to have our next meeting with the residents in regards to the Flagler section, okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. And also, I asked for a sidewalk update. I want to see movement. I want to see cost. I want to see design. I want to see it into the budget. I don't want to miss – I need to know, please. I'm doing multiple trips to Tallahassee this year again. I've already been twice. I want to make sure for me to chase – we had record-breaking numbers last year because this Commission worked with Naomi and my team incredibly hard to make sure we can get that money. Let me chase the money, but give me the tools to chase the money.

Public Works Director Diaz: Any of that money would be welcome.

Mayor Lago: I know but give me, we are going up in two weeks, so give me the information so I can get it done.

Public Works Director Diaz: Will do.

Mayor Lago: One last item that I forgot to mention. H-2 by the way is deferred. The last item I want to mention before we move onto the agenda is to my colleagues, using this as an opportunity for the Sunshine. I drove by the downtown this weekend in the North Gables area and I noticed on Saturday and Sunday there was a lot of illegal dumping going on, okay – couches, pieces of furniture. I'm not saying its residents moving out, but they know better than you can't dump things on a weekend, you've got to dump it the night before. I'm pretty sure people who don't live in the city, who take advantage of coming into our neighborhoods, its very quiet, they open the door, they dump things out and they don't get it picked up. Its happening all over the county. These are areas that are consistent hot spots for illegal dumping. We have the addresses. I had a meeting with the Manager, the ACM, Ms. Cabrera, Antoine, and my staff, we went over this, along with our City Attorney. These areas are consistent hot spots for illegal dumping. I asked for Antoine to please memorialize that on an e-mail, send it to the City Manager. I will be requesting from my colleagues and from the Manager to have it on a budget item this year, to have a post with a camera and signage in these areas to ensure that stop this illegal dumping. Let me tell you why its important. You may think this is a significant investment, could be \$20-\$30,000 per post, \$40,000 per post, especially if you connect it to our CCTV camera, which is beneficial for us. You may think its "Big Brother." I understand. But this is costing the city thousands of dollars and it's costing the city manpower for Code Enforcement to have to deal with this, to have to research, where did this come from, who did this, having to interview residents. Its unfair for our Public Works Department to have to go there and deal with this issue and remove that furniture, that toilet over a weekend, and then dispose of it. It cost us thousands of dollars. The police are having to patrol these areas. The Neighborhood Safety Aides are having to patrol this area. So, to make a long story short, I think the best answer here and you can use it as an example for those that do not know, go to Monegro, we had a bunch of crime in that area, five dead-ends that abut the City of Miami. We installed a beautiful wall with a gate that does not have a lock; a camera and a light, very benign. Its not intrusive, not aggressive. If you go and speak to the residents there, all the crime has stopped; all the targeting, all the farming that was going on where people would go and look and see if somebody was home, touching on their Ring Door Bell, the missing bikes, the

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missing FedEx packages that has come to an end. This is the neighborhood of Monegro adjacent to Christy's, because people understand. You have to stop at that gate; you can open that gate, you walk through, but you're on camera. So eventually we will catch you, because we triangulate what's going on in that area. This area needs similar attention. So, I've asked and I'm asking for my colleagues to support me, to please put together these ten areas. I want it in the budget. I'm asking for a motion to make sure that this gets put into the budget next meeting.

Commissioner Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Cason: Second.

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Alright. Last item. Chief, can we talk about, and I forgot about it, its my bad, I apologize. NSAs – I know the NSAs...

Chief Hudak: [Inaudible]

Mayor Lago: I know you did. The NSAs are very busy, by the way, doing a great job, because when you tag up the NSAs, tag team with the police, it's just another layer of redundancy. How are we doing with Code Enforcement, talking about Code Enforcement.

Chief Hudak: Since July 1st through the 15th of December, we had 47 incidents where we actually called in or dealt with boxes in the pit, political signs in the swale. A couple different ways we do that, either through the NTL, which is the Neighborhood Team Officer, who then contact the NSAs, which will then contact the Code Enforcement people. To your other point about the dumping and things like that, its after hours for the most part. So, I believe along with personnel, I don't have 24-hour coverages on those cameras, as it stands right now. We've got three shifts going. I would have to actually increase that, and look at the headcount to watch those cameras all the time and put up certain cameras. We talked with the IT Director this week about looking at certain places where we can put cameras. We have some other pressing cases right now, antisemitic postings that were actually in the process of investigating as well. So there's a lot of calls for the cameras, but the NSAs, again, I think there was a total of like 1,600 packages that were moved during the front door step for the "Porch Pirates" so we had an unusual low number with doing that during those holidays, as well. So, we've continued to go out there, I don't want them to get engaged. They are doing a really good job of educational flyers. They are actually doing the same thing; the Fire Chief and I talked yesterday, but then again, this is the notification, following up with the enforcement side of it, its going to be to deal with the Code Enforcement people.

Mayor Lago: So in regards to the NSAs, they are a God-send when you compliment them with the police, there's another layer of redundancy. What I want to see, and we talk about simple things,
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a dirty roof, a couch on the side of a corner, nothing real granular. I don't want them to be engaging with people. I want that to be left to Code Enforcement, but if they see something on a weekend that's blatant, help us out with the couch on the corner or something that was thrown out. They know very well that that area doesn't get picked up till next Friday, and that shouldn't be there. But we're seeing a lot of this issue. Another issue is with the illegal dumping. Its not the police's job to try to catch people who are illegally dumping. They are not going to catch them. These people are very smart, and they do it in the cover of darkness. They may run into somebody who is illegally dumping, but its more chances than not they are not going to catch them. When you put that camera up on that camera post, immediately with a sign saying this area is under surveillance, no one is going to do that. Look at Monegro, they don't even go into the neighborhood anymore, because they know that there's police, there's the Neighborhood Safety Aides and now there's five cameras that are looking at them. So if they are foolish enough to even consider stealing a package from a porch, they are going to get caught. So that's what I'm trying to achieve here, which will open up our Code Enforcement to do other things, our NSAs to do other things and our police officers to not be worrying about these kinds of ridiculous Code Enforcement illegal dumping issues.

Chief Hudak: The other thing that works in some areas throughout the state is, I put it out there, reward for tips on illegal dumping on those signs, does generate some people to help. I think I can probably employ some of our homeless people if they sit there with a phone and call us and make a living just to keep an eye on it and literally kill two birds with one stone, but I think there's different ways that we can go about the illegal dumping. I know the Miami-Dade County does it, a very large unit to do that. I think we would have to kind of look at how much investigation we would have to do from the police side, if all we have is a license plate or something like that. So, we would have to work it alongside, but that helps us with that.

Mayor Lago: Chief, as always thank you for your hard work and thank you to everyone, the NSAs and all their hard work in the residential neighborhoods. Thank you.