

ORIGINAL

EXCERPT  
OF THE  
MEETING  
OF THE

CODE ENFORCEMENT BOARD  
CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, Florida  
Wednesday, 9:10 a.m.  
March 21, 2018

PARTICIPANTS:

ANDRES MURAI, JR., Chairman  
JEFF FLANAGAN, Board Member  
CHRISTOPHER ZOLLER, Board Member  
GEORGE KAKOURIS, Board Member  
J.M. GUARCH, Board Member  
IGNACIO BORBOLLA, Board Member

SURAMY CABRERA, Director of Development Services  
CHARLES WU, Assistant Director of Development Services

MIRIAM RAMOS, Esq., Assistant City Attorney

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2 MR. MURAI: I have one more short item.

3 Charles, may I? I just want to address that it has come  
4 to my attention in a number of occasions the matter of  
5 code enforcement during the weekend.

6 We changed, you know, the code to  
7 construction cannot start until nine a.m. on Saturdays and  
8 so on, and you know, there's a whole bunch of regulations  
9 on that.

10 We only have one officer for the entire city.  
11 Years ago we used to have two. It is almost physically  
12 impossible if you have three or four complaints or five  
13 complaints to have one officer running from the north to  
14 the south. I mean, they just don't get there.

15 Most of the violations, you know, occur  
16 before nine a.m. The others occur during the week, but  
17 most of them occur before nine a.m. We need to address  
18 this. We need to address, you know, whoever, you and the  
19 higher-ups how we can solve the weekend problems, but I  
20 think we need more than one officer on each day.

21 MR. WU: You're correct. That should be --  
22 the commission is aware of this. They brought it up in  
23 the commission comments at the past meetings, and what we  
24 are doing, we have temporary Saturdays for code  
25 enforcement officers for Saturdays, so we have one

1 additional officer for the Saturday just to do trash  
2 violations. That was the prime --

3 MR. MURAI: Yeah, but that's fine, you know,  
4 but. You know, just having one --

5 MR. WU: So Saturdays we have two.

6 MR. MURAI: Saturday we have two officers?

7 MR. WU: Two officers, yes.

8 MR. MURAI: Not that I'm aware of.

9 MR. WU: One is full time and one is, one is  
10 temporary Saturdays.

11 MR. MURAI: Was the part-time officer just  
12 addressing trash?

13 MR. WU: Yes.

14 MR. MURAI: Well, that's, you know, that's  
15 the problem. That's fine to address trash, but what do  
16 you do if people are calling -- because now it's getting  
17 to the point that I don't know why I put my number, you  
18 know, available because I get three or four calls at my  
19 house, you know, thinking that I have to do something. I  
20 do nothing more than report it to Mr. Ortiz and say,  
21 "Listen, I'm getting complaints about here, there and  
22 everywhere."

23 So I think that -- I know the commission has  
24 a fixation on trash, but that is not the issue. Yes, it's  
25 part of the issue, but the ultimate issue is construction

1 going on and violations and people. One officer cannot  
2 get to everybody. It might take two or three hours if  
3 he's working a case and he has another case in line.

4 We need to get together or you need to get  
5 together.

6 MR. WU: I should introduce you to the new  
7 director.

8 MS. CABRERA: Good morning, Suramy Cabrera.  
9 I'm the director of development services.

10 MR. MURAI: Nice to meet you.

11 MS. CABRERA: Nice to meet you all.

12 MR. MURAI: Okay.

13 MS. CABRERA: So we have had some issues, and  
14 since then I have spoken with a lot of code officers, and  
15 there are several changes that we would like to make.

16 We know that we don't have sufficient  
17 coverage at this time. We are short code officers at this  
18 time even if we're fully staffed, which we're not. I  
19 still feel that we're short on code officers, and we will  
20 be presenting with the new budget, hopefully, really some  
21 ideas in order to address this shortage that we really, I  
22 feel we've been having for a while.

23 MR. MURAI: I'm very glad that you're here.  
24 Actually I was going to stop by and meet you personally.

25 This is an issue that needs to be addressed

1 because the commission enacts, you know, changes to the  
2 code and so on, and you know, it represents and so on.

3 But we cannot enforce them, and people get  
4 annoyed by that. You know, there's no point of even  
5 having the regulations.

6 Right now, you know, we have code enforcement  
7 until seven p.m., that's fine, but it's a waste of city's  
8 resources to have people calling the police department to  
9 come out here, or parking lot, or whatever, and not having  
10 enough officers, because certainly the expense of sending  
11 a police officer is much higher than having a code  
12 enforcement officer.

13 So I'm glad you're looking at it. We might  
14 need two part-time officers during the weekend, not to  
15 address trash, but to address code violations, including  
16 trash.

17 MS. CABRERA: I agree.

18 MR. MURAI: Why should, why should trash take  
19 priority, and I'm fully, you know, in favor of addressing  
20 trash, priority of somebody calling and saying, "Listen,  
21 they're constructing next door, they're waking me up"?

22 MS. RAMOS: That's been the commission's  
23 directive. Trash has been the commission's directive.

24 MS. CABRERA: And trash has been -- should be  
25 an ongoing enforcement effort from all the code officers.

1           The reality is that we don't have sufficient  
2 code officers in order to take care of just all the zones  
3 in the full area of the city. If we did, we wouldn't have  
4 issues, but on the weekends you have one code officer who  
5 is trying to do rounds for the city and is responding to  
6 phone calls of violations.

7           MR. MURAI: Okay. So I'm also asking the  
8 board members to address our benefactors up there who  
9 appointed us here and mention, you know, what is  
10 happening. I know the trash, you know, but we do have a  
11 problem.

12           MR. ZOLLER: It's more than trash.

13           MR. BORBOLLA: Let me ask a question.

14           MS. CABRERA: Any support that I can get from  
15 the board on moving on, what I feel should be the next --  
16 you know, how we should move forward with the new budget  
17 would be very much appreciated.

18           MS. RAMOS: You may pass a resolution  
19 requiring commission action, asking the commission to  
20 increase the code enforcement department if you so wish.

21           MR. FLANAGAN: Didn't the city recently pass  
22 an ordinance that prohibits construction, exterior  
23 construction on Saturdays?

24           MR. ZOLLER: Sundays.

25           MR. FLANAGAN: It's always been Sundays.

1 MS. RAMOS: It's definitely Sundays and  
2 holidays. I think Saturday, it's just time, but I would  
3 have to double check.

4 MS. CABRERA: No, Saturdays --

5 MS. RAMOS: Saturdays as well.

6 MR. FLANAGAN: I think it's just outside,  
7 through the homeowner hearings --

8 MS. RAMOS: Unless it's by the owner.

9 MR. FLANAGAN: -- say you're doing pressure  
10 washing.

11 MR. GUARCH: I have a question on the trash  
12 issue. How efficient are we on enforcing the trash bins,  
13 for instance, the landscapers coming in there and just  
14 throwing trash? I see it all the time. How efficient are  
15 we in catching them and fining them?

16 MR. KAKOURIS: Landscapers can do it all the  
17 time. I mean, it's, the pick up is once a week, but for  
18 landscapers, they can, from my knowledge --

19 MR. BORBOLLA: I thought you can only bring  
20 it out on Sundays.

21 MR. KAKOURIS: No.

22 MS. CABRERA: No. You can put the yard  
23 anytime.

24 MR. KAKOURIS: Yard, landscapers.

25 MS. CABRERA: Yeah, anytime.

1 MR. KAKOURIS: But I'll tell you this, some  
2 of those pits are about three feet deep.

3 MR. ZOLLER: We've had that for years, since  
4 I've been in that office.

5 MR. KAKOURIS: And especially, there is one,  
6 there was a car that had been turned --

7 MR. MURAI: That can be addressed with public  
8 works and they'll come out and fill it.

9 MS. RAMOS: They will. They just have to be  
10 notified.

11 MR. MURAI: So I don't know that we need a  
12 resolution. Maybe you can draft a resolution. You know  
13 the feeling of the board for the next meeting.

14 MS. RAMOS: You would like to bring it back  
15 next meeting? That's fine.

16 MR. MURAI: Yes, bring it back next meeting  
17 and we'll, you know, see the resolution and act on it, but  
18 I'm very happy that you're here, and see what's happening.

19 MS. CABRERA: Thank you, thank you. Miriam,  
20 would it be appropriate for me to, once I have the  
21 manager's approval on basically an organizational chart  
22 and the number of code officers, to present it to the code  
23 enforcement board?

24 MS. RAMOS: For their input, certainly.

25 MS. CABRERA: Thank you.



1 MR. GUARCH: We could do that in conjunction  
2 with that resolution. That would be great.

3 MS. RAMOS: For the April meeting.

4 MR. GUARCH: Yes, synergy. Thank you.

5 MR. KAKOURIS: I have one thing off the  
6 record.

7 MR. MURAI: We have to adjourn the meeting.

8 MR. KAKOURIS: Okay.

9 MR. MURAI: Meeting adjourned.

10 (Thereupon, proceedings were concluded at 9:25 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF DADE)

I, DOREEN M. STRAUSS, do here by certify that  
the foregoing pages, numbered from 1 to including 10,  
represent a true and accurate excerpt of the record of the  
proceedings in the above-mentioned case.

WITNESS my hand in the City of Miami this 10th  
day of April, 2018.

Doreen M. Strauss, RMR

*Doreen M. Strauss*

