

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-4
January 25, 2022
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

Development Services Director, Suramy Cabrera

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-4 [Start: 1:49 p.m.]

An update from staff regarding the City of Coral Gables' code enforcement efforts and staffing. (Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Moving onto G-4, same thing. It's an item in regard to Code Enforcement, this is very quick. I know that Code Enforcement is stretched, they are working hard. In the weekends, we only have one person working. I know we are looking to hire two more individuals for the weekends.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Two part-timers.

Mayor Lago: Two part-timers. I also want to put something out there and I want to be very careful when I say this so staff understands, okay. I don't know how to say it anymore. Staff is doing a wonderful job. I say it 15 times. We have sushi out there for everybody, we buy pizza, we are trying to show our gratitude during this very difficult time. If Code Enforcement needs help in the downtown to blanket the downtown to ensure that we just put everybody on notice, to be able to enter the data saying, the following entity, the following building is not complying as per the

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development agreement – check. To basically do a one-over review of the downtown, I do not have an issue bringing in a private company for a limited time, so we can focus on what we have to focus on, for two months, three months, get that done, and have staff come back in, because I know it's a heavy ask in between the private, excuse me, in between the residential and the commercial areas. We do not have the staff right now to address that, and I'm asking, and this Commission is asking for a lot, they are spread thin, and they are working as hard as they possibly can. What do you think?

Development Services Director Cabrera: I think that right now if I ask anymore of them, they are going to put their resumes out, because the cardboard has been a major, I mean, they've issued over 700 citations and warnings since this started in December, but I don't see that its unreasonable that we look at how we do our work. We are already looking to change so that the code officers walk their zones twice a week in the mornings required, because you see a lot more when you walk. I've walked with them and there is a lot that you see when you walk, and I don't think it's unreasonable to maybe, like once every six months or once a year have all the staff work on maybe doing a sweep. I can look at that.

Mayor Lago: We did it. We walked – Hermes, we walked it, you were there, some members of staff. What I'm saying is, do we need like an outside company to come in and provide a little bit of assistance, to work under the employees whatever it is that we need to push this forward.

City Manager Iglesias: These two part-time officers at 29 hours, I think are going to help us on the weekends, and I think we can augment that during the week slightly and I think it's something that the director and I are working on, but we appreciate what you're saying, and we can look at this again, and come back and discuss it with you.

Mayor Lago: Okay. I just want to make sure that everybody knows, if you need resources, I'm here to give resources. I will not stop in regard to beautification. I want to make it very, very clear. You guys get my e-mails every morning, you guys get my e-mails on Saturdays, and by the way, I'm driving the city. I'm putting together lists on Saturdays, Sundays and weekdays, and I ask my colleagues to do the same thing. When you see an issue in regard to Code Enforcement, send it to staff. Residents do the same thing. We have residents, as you know, that sends us e-mails every single day and I recommend that my residents do that, because that's the only way we are going to hold ourselves accountable in regard to maintaining our property values and the level and standards that we so appreciate here in the city. I'm going to continue pushing this forward. We are going to tweak it like we did this morning, say maybe three months is too aggressive on the cleaning of sidewalks, maybe we've got to go six months. We need to find answers, because I think when we get the ball rolling and we hit a certain standard, like we did with cardboard, its going to get easier, it's going to get much easier. And the difference is significant, its not only me talking, its my neighbors talking, who didn't want to comply, but it looks great, its beautiful now. So, thank you for your hard work and I want to make sure that everybody knows that they can come and speak to the Commission, they can speak to the directors, if they have any ideas, please feel free to reach out to us, okay. Let's take a lunch break.

