

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-8
August 28, 2018
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias
Assistant City Manager, Frank Fernandez
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Police Chief, Ed Hudak
Police Sergeant, Javier Bruzos

Public Speaker(s)

Raul Mas

Agenda Item H-8 [5:55:00 p.m.]

An update and overview by the Office of Public Safety of the school safety measures practiced in Coral Gables public schools.

(Sponsored by Commissioner Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's go to H-8, an update and a review by the Office of Public Safety, Commissioner Lago.

Commissioner Lago: This is just a simple update. I just wanted to make sure we put it on the record that we had met our goals and that we were the first City in Miami-Dade County -- we're the first -- to take a stand and put a police officer in every single school, not just talk about it, that we actually did it. And certain other municipalities received the credit for it in print, and I wanted to make sure that people knew that we weren't just playing around and playing smoke -- you know, smoke and mirrors, that we actually delivered on that. So, I just wanted to make sure we can get Frank and the Chief up here to really discuss how we're delivering on the promise that we made.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, Raul Mas wants to address.

Commissioner Lago: Of course.

Raul Mas: (INAUDIBLE) real brief. I noticed that this is on the agenda, too, Chief and Frank. I want to reiterate...

Commissioner Lago: Just so you know, your insight is always appreciated.

Mr. Mas: I appreciate it.

Commissioner Lago: Even though I may not agree with you all the time, I still appreciate it.

Mr. Mas: So, listen, real quick, I'm sure you folks participate in the Miami-Dade County League of Cities Annual Best...

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Mr. Mas: Practices Conference. So, on October 18th is when it's going to be this year -- Thursday, October 18th. I've been helping the city -- the Village of El Portal. Claudia Cubillos has put together a conference, which will deal with lessons from Marjory Stoneman Douglas. And, among the speakers that will be there will be Christine Hunschofsky, who I guess is the Mayor of Parkland, Mayor Skip Campbell. We also -- at the (INAUDIBLE) last night, we had Robert DePriest, who is the FBI's active shooter program manager here in South Florida; Frank Zenere, who is the top psychologist for the Miami-Dade County School System, and I would encourage the City to participate in that, because I think it's going to be a terrific event.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Commissioner Mena: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you for that input.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Alright, next is J-1. Madam City Manager.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm sorry. What we're also passing out is the private school manual.

Commissioner Lago: Can we just get a quick update from Frank?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Just one second, and from the Chief, also. No, no, come on, come on, come on, both of you. Let's go. Everybody, come up. Let's go. I just want real brief, so we can end the day with the fact that we actually kept our promise here. This is important.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: So, we have -- Commissioner, you asked us to -- of course, I responded by memorandum to all of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: (INAUDIBLE) you would have a list of the efforts taken by us in terms of private schools and also, public schools.

Commissioner Lago: Which I know Vice Mayor Quesada's made it a point about the private schools results...

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: Right.

Commissioner Lago: Are just as important.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: So, we put together a taskforce for the private schools. Sergeant Bruzos led the taskforce out, to give you a quick briefing on it, all the schools that they visited, and we put together a best practices manual. It's right in front of you. We'll then take that now and help these private schools try to comply with the recommendations that we have put forward. So, with that, I'll pass it over to the Chief and Sergeant Bruzos.

Commissioner Lago: And I also wanted to mention the Fire Chief, because his team also did an exceptional job. I saw them at the schools, acting as crossing guards. They had the -- you know, they were there making sure the parents knew exactly what was going on. It was a nice added touch, something different than we've done in the City before.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Public Works checked the sidewalks, broken limbs and all around the schools. Parking was involved and Code Enforcement, so it was...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, it was a nice touch.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: A good team.

Commissioner Lago: Very nice.

Commissioner Keon: I ask if we could make it available to preschools as well.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: Yes, we'll definitely do that. Absolutely.

Police Chief Hudak: And again, I want to recognize the collaborative effort of everybody from the Manager's office to the Director. I -- from the legal standpoint, from my involvement of one of the board oversights was actually dealing with the City Attorney's Office and Ms. Naomi Levi, who -- in -- while we're doing all this multiple facet thing was getting an MOU ready when everybody else was doing the exact same thing and then not know what the budget restrictions are going to be. For the supplements to this was we ended up pulling it today, but there will be an additional FAF request that will come through the consent agenda that'll be money earmarked for those postings of schools that we have. Sergeant Bruzos is the sergeant of the Youth Resources Unit -- is actually the one that kind of spearheaded the oversight and the investigations and looking at the assessments, if you will. So, my hat's off again to Sergeant Bruzos as well. If there's anything you'd like to ask him about his work.

Vice Mayor Quesada: I just want to say thank you. It came out great.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah. This...

Vice Mayor Quesada: You could there was a lot of hard work that went into it, so thank you.

Police Sergeant Bruzos: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Vice Mayor Quesada: A lot of hard work.

Commissioner Mena: This document came out spectacular.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah.

Commissioner Mena: It's really nice. It's very informative. But, I just want to -- I don't know how everybody else feels.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: It's a great team effort; the City Attorney's Office, the Police, Fire Department, Peter Iglesias, his personnel, Suramy Cabrera, from Code, and also, CGTV had put together, under Maria Higgins Fallon, the graphics behind that information so...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And this is just the digital version of the hardcopy as well, but -- that's why you see -- and down at the bottom a...

Vice Mayor Quesada: You have to click -- yeah.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: You know, click to expand type...

Commissioner Lago: We should maybe put a link and make this available for everybody to read.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: Sure.

Commissioner Lago: Either on our weekly email that we send out to the public -- my biggest concern was, in the private schools, the resources are there. They usually have one, if not two, individuals, you know, roaming the premises, making sure that everybody's safe. I wanted to make sure that in the public schools, that we had those officers there. And we have all our bases covered? We're good?

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: Now, there's eight schools in the City of Coral Gables. All are covered by either a Coral Gables officer or a school police officer. They're all covered.

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: No concerns.

Commissioner Keon: Wow, thank you.

Assistant City Manager Fernandez: I just want to extend my appreciation to Sergeant Bruzos, who did a great job of leading the taskforce and visited all the schools with the team that we just outlined. So, he did a great job, so congratulations. Well done.

Commissioner Lago: And if, for some reason, we fall short -- I know that we have a lot of other priorities, you know, outside of schools in the City. Just come back to the Commission. Come back, reach out to us. Reach out to the Manager. Come back to us and say, listen, we don't have the necessary resources. We're stretched; I understand that. We have a lot of priorities. Certain things happen, but I just want to make sure -- I never want to hear that an incident happened in a school and we didn't have somebody there because they were out on a call, they were -- whatever reason there may be. A lot of things happen.

Police Chief Hudak: No. The direction is there will always be an officer on the campus that we're responsible to cover, even for lunchbreaks. We're actually having a rotation list. The

budgeted amount that we put through, both from what we got from the School Board, which is about \$35,000 a school -- we've supplemented that from Law Enforcement Trust monies, as I said. That's all covered on overtime to the tune of whatever that may be, but we're going to have a penny to penny accounting of that. But the officers posting will be there at all times.

Commissioner Lago: Frank, Chief, this is what I want to make sure that we have this discussion this year and have it again next year, and the following year, as long as I'm blessed to serve. I want to make sure that this is a priority. This is going to be a priority ongoing for me. I want to make sure that you guys have all the resources you need, because I honestly -- I know that nobody on this Commission could live with themselves if something under our watch happened in one of the schools.

Police Chief Hudak: I don't think anybody in the police department could live with themselves either.

Commissioner Lago: No, but I know you're answering phone calls and there's a lot of emergencies that are happening on a daily basis, and I just want to make sure that we have no outside distractions and that we're focused on just the school.

Police Chief Hudak: No. We collectively had those discussions, myself and the Director, and that is our mandate.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, thank you. Thank you very much.