

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-3
August 23, 2016
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Sustainability Specialist for Public Works, Matt Anderson

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-3 [1:28:07 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, encouraging Florida voters to vote yes on the Solar Devices on Renewable Energy Source Devices; exemption from certain taxation and assessment amendment, known as Amendment 4 on August 30, 2016.

Mayor Cason: Let's move onto F-3. This is a resolution.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Commissioner Lago this is your recommendation for a resolution regarding the renewable energy source.

Commissioner Lago: Yes. I was hoping that – we had a little bit of a mix-up in reference to the team members from the Amendment 4, the Pro Solar Amendment, they weren't here today, I was hoping that they would give a detailed explanation, but we can move forward.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Can you summarize it for us real quick?

Commissioner Lago: Yes. In real simple layman's terms unless maybe somebody from Sustainability wants to kind of come up here and take the place of the Amendment 4 Team. I think it was my fault. I think I forgot to invite them.

Mr. Anderson: That's OK. Basically what Amendment 4 is, it's going on the August ballot for everyone to vote on and it would allow our property tax exemption for people who install solar panels on their home or business, where the value of the solar panels would be exempt from the property taxes when assessing the value of the home or business. So, I think it's an additional; it's a great additional financial incentive to get people to go solar. As a state we have the fourth highest potential for solar, the Sunshine State, but yet we rank thirteenth in installed solar, so I think this is an additional mechanism that would be well ready to put more solar here in the state.

Mayor Cason: So basically, you put it on your house and you don't pay it, you don't pay taxes. It doesn't raise the value of your house for taxable...

Mr. Anderson: Yes – and I think it aligns perfectly with a lot of the initiatives we've done as a City as far as waiving permit fees for solar TV installations and supporting Go Solar Florida and South Florida Regional Climate Compact and it aligns great with our Sustainability Master Plan to reduce our Greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.

Commissioner Lago: So we are not exempting people from current taxable value in their home, because drill taxable value doesn't exist right now. So, I think it's a great opportunity just like Matt said, to continue supporting solar and making it as easy as possible and debunking, like I was talking with the Vice Mayor a few moments ago, about the issue of people for some reason are extremely concerned whether or not they should install solar or not. Is it going to be a different type of energy stream?- am I for some reason going to feel it?- is it going to make noise?- is it going to be reliable? Again, I have solar in my home for almost seven or eight months now. The Vice Mayor just installed it and I think like he mentioned before, he's down to almost zero. The minimum that you can pay to FPL is a service fee of \$9.39, and that's what I pay and the Vice Mayor pays that also. So it's here, the technology has advanced sufficiently where you can have enough solar panels on your home to feed your entire home, your electric car, the cost savings are there, and now it's time just to really spread the word. So I appreciate the few moments. Continue to press people and make them understand that August 30th is another opportunity to support and vote "Yes" on Amendment 4 and really push solar.

Mr. Anderson: And there are a lot of other cities too and counties that have passed similar resolutions supporting it, such as Monroe, Broward, Palm Beach, City of Marathon, City of Miami Beach, City of Key West.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And the Miami Herald, I believe is also advised to go forward.

Mayor Cason: Do we have a motion?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Motion for the resolution.

Commissioner Lago: I'll second the motion.

Mayor Cason: Vice Mayor made the motion, Commissioner Lago seconds – City Clerk.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

[End: 1:31:32 p.m.]