

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item J-1
March 20, 2018
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Economic Development, Belkys Perez

Public Speaker(s)

Mary Snow
Vinny Torres

Agenda Item J-1 [11:47:00 a.m.]

A Resolution approving the Umbrella Sky Project (the Project) and authorizing the Procurement Officer to secure a vendor for the installation of a temporary structure for the Project in an estimated amount of \$80,000.00 as a bid waiver pursuant to Section 2-501 of the City's Procurement Code.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Item J-1, Madam City Manager.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yes, we have a quick PowerPoint. We'll have CGTV get the PowerPoint ready. This is a joint project with the Economic Development Department, the Business Improvement District and the Coral Gables Foundation.

Commissioner Quesada: Before you begin, I think it's awesome.

Commissioner Lago: Great – let’s call the roll.

(Laughter)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: This is a wonderful project.

Ms. Perez: Belkys Perez from Economic Development and I’m here with Mary Snow from the Community Foundation and Laura Russo, Chair. So, you guys have a PowerPoint in front of you and I just wanted to let you know who the partners are. The Coral Gables Community Foundation came to us with this project, the City is a partner and just recently we have the Coral Gables Business Improvement District that has on board as well. The art vendor is Sextaferia, which is out of Portugal; this is a company that does this.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Sextaferia means Saturday.

Ms. Perez: Means Saturday, I didn’t know that, thank you. So, we brought this to the Giralda Committee and everyone is in favor of this project there. The merchants are very much for this, and they want it on both sides of the street as well.

Ms. Snow: Mary Snow, I’m the Executive Director of the Coral Gables Community Foundation with offices at 220 Alhambra Circle, Suite 320. Thank you for allowing me to be here today. Thank you Mayor, Commissioners, City Manager so much for your consideration and support of this project. The project came about, I am going through Leadership Florida right now and I was in Pensacola for one of our sessions in November and I saw this project and I saw the umbrellas in Pensacola and I thought if Pensacola Florida can do this, we need to do this. It’s absolutely beautiful, so I did a bunch of research and found out that the project, as Belkys mentioned, is done by a company based in Portugal called Sextaferia. It’s called Umbrella Sky Project. It’s been done all over the world, we’ll share some of those cities with you; and we would be just the third City in the U.S. to do this project, Pittsburg Pennsylvania has done it and Pensacola Florida, so we would be just the third. We’ll be able to capitalize on the international branding of Umbrella Sky. I think it would just be fabulous, come for the shade, stay for the brunch. We are coming up with a lot of great marketing ideas for this. So, proud to be partners with you all and the B.I.D., thank you for that.

Ms. Perez: So, these are just examples of other installations that have taken place, basically all over the world, a lot of these are in Portugal as well, but as Mary said, we’d be one of only three that have taken place in the States. So, these are some examples of the installations that have taken place. This is the one in Portugal, this is one in France, this is the one that took place in Pensacola and you can see how the lift is used to string the wiring and then open the umbrellas

once they are in place; and this is the one in Pittsburg that use trusses, very similar to what we are proposing here on Giralda; and this is what it would look like on Giralda.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Look at that, it's beautiful – awesome.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: That's great.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's great. Can we keep the umbrellas?

(Laughter)

Ms. Snow: They are our property. After the installation they can be reinstalled at a later time as well.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Great.

Ms. Snow: And I want to show you, if I may, the project was featured in the New York Times travel section a couple of weeks ago. So, there really is a lot of great recognition for this installation, this project, and I think the timing is perfect with the rebirth of Giralda and Miracle Mile and our downtown Coral Gables area. I think this would be similar to the Museum of Ice Cream and Winwood Walls that there is just so much presents and exposure on social media and I think it would be great for our City.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So Mr. Mayor, the item is actually authorizing the Procurement Officer up to \$80,000 for the trusses and that she can go out and find the vendor and that it would require a bid waiver and the bid waiver would be at least a four-fifths vote. We've briefed you all. Your responses have been jaw-dropping in terms of the beauty of the exhibit. We are thrilled that the Community Foundation brought it to our attention. We know that you are financially contributing, we are thrilled that the B.I.D. is joining too, also financially contributing. Obviously, the City will play, will write the largest check, but we will do it in a way that's acceptable to our ACM for Operations from a structural soundness.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think it will be a beautiful project and really well enhance what we are trying to do to attract people. Its creative, it's beautiful, and provides shade too. Do I hear a motion?

Commissioner Quesada: So moved.

Commissioner Lago: Moved.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second – will you call the roll please.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Commissioner Quesada: My only requirement – B.I.D. market this, I mean really get it out there...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And nationally market it.

Commissioner Quesada: Let's really push it, because this is an attraction for tourists as well. So the busses that go around, all those kinds of things, let's make sure we get a lot of traction on this so in the down time we get a lot of foot traffic.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How long will they stay up?

Ms. Snow: I'm sorry.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How long will they stay...?

Ms. Snow: We are hoping for 60 days, that's the plan, but it has to be down by hurricane season, so we need to move. I'm going to make a phone call now to get it going.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When do you get it going?

Ms. Snow: Fifteen to twenty days, the umbrellas in the...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But we need to get the trusses, but we can tell your excitement and we'll get it done as swiftly as possible.

Ms. Snow: Yes. Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It will also be an attraction if you had them up for hurricane season.

(Laughter)

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, there is hurricane season and then there is hurricane season, right, and so we are not looking at August...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, but April, May, June then. Thank you, thank you very much – congratulations, wonderful.

Commissioner Lago: And also Venny, – at our last meeting we had the pleasure of meeting on the Mile to discuss this project. We also discussed the opportunity to potentially bringing galleries for temporary space on the Mile. I don't know what the final outcome of that was; maybe you can also kind of update my colleagues on that idea, which I thought was a really good idea.

Venny Torre: Good morning everybody, Venny Torre from the Central Business District. That idea is moving forward and I am right now solidifying how many spaces we can actually put in use and those are pop-ups, those are people who are contributing their spaces for a small amount of time. We do have a couple of people already shown interest in participating, so once we do have the quantity of spaces, we are going to try to hook up with so many people as we can. We'll need assistance maybe from yours.

Commissioner Lago: I've already reached out to two galleries and I know that, I think we are in the same; we are seeing eye-to-eye on this issue. They are world class galleries, they are actually in Art Basel and they are interested in coming down and doing a pop-up opportunity here. I don't know what the timeframe is going to be, but I think we talked about a month or a few weeks; and I think since those spaces are already unoccupied or they are waiting for somebody to take hold of those leases in the near future, I think it's a great opportunity, it's a great concept, I think it will bring a little bit more life to the downtown area and just bring a little bit more culture. So, it's something interesting that I wanted all of you to become a little bit more aware of what the B.I.D....

Mr. Torre: Yes, we are doing that too.

Commissioner Lago: And, the Mayor has been working on that and it's going to be interesting, because we are getting some top notch interest from galleries that are important, and that could really bring some...to the area.

Mr. Torre: Not making too many promises. What we are trying to do is once the celebration at Miracle Mile opens on the 14th, we have a full month of activities that are going to bring people consistently to the Mile or to the downtown area. And it's just again, rebranding and keep the momentum going.

Commissioner Lago: Spaces are open anyways.

Mr. Torre: And, the umbrella project is another one that's going to go and come in right at the right time. I think there is another project the City is working on, we want to make sure that comes in, so its bang, bang, bang for the celebration.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It's already happened with open spaces in Giralda. I'm talking about where the Christian Scientist used to be, maybe we can have a pop-up gallery there where the umbrellas, if nothing is going to go in there for a month.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: No, no, no sir. They are actively recruiting and negotiating with tenants. They have, I believe, a signed lease and they are also doing others.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, good – good.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Fabulous homegrown architects that want to do what is right for Coral Gables. I understand they even went to Belen, but it is a – we were very, very fortunate that they stepped up and purchased the building. I expect those to be built out very quickly.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Great. Great.

Mr. Torre: Thank you to the City for putting, for the generous support, really, really, really appreciate it, Madam Manager. Thank you.

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

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

[End: 11:56:12 a.m.]