

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-4
September 11, 2014
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason

Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.

Commissioner Pat Keon

Commissioner Vince Lago

Commissioner Frank Quesada

City Staff

Interim City Manager, Carmen Olazabal

City Attorney, Craig E. Leen

City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman

Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Acting Major Ellinport

Sargent Klaus Reinoso

Major Terry Molina (Acting Chief)

City Consultant, Merritt Steirheim

Public Works Director, Glenn Kephart

Public Speaker(s)

State Representative Erik Fresen

State Representative Rodriguez

Gema Pinon, Coral Gables Resident

Peter Kouchalakos, Coral Gables Resident

Kirk Menendez, Coral Gables Resident

Fernando Armandi, Coral Gables Resident

Molly Gail Kiely, Coral Gables Resident

Freddy Balsera, Coral Gables Resident

Silvia M. Unzueta, Coral Gables Resident

Dennis Daley, Coral Gables Resident

Luis Palacio, Coral Gables Resident

Aurelio Durana, Coral Gables Resident

Alberto Manrara, Coral Gables Resident
Yvonne Fournier Coral Gables Resident
Maria Palacio, Coral Gables Resident
Barbara Reese, Coral Gables Resident
Albert Poza, Coral Gables Resident
Ingrid Kohler, Coral Gables Resident
Carlos Gimenez, Coral Gables Resident
Ariel Fernandez, Coral Gables Resident
Enrique Lopez, Coral Gables Resident

Agenda Item F-4 [Start: 11:15:56 a.m.]

Update on Crime Statistics, Discussion and Possible Action
Commissioner Frank Quesada

Commissioner Quesada: OK. Thank you Mr. Mayor. I placed this item on the agenda, so let me just give an introduction as to why I put it on the agenda. Crime is always a concern whether it's up or down, whether it's the lowest rates we ever had or whether it's the highest rates we've ever had. It's always the number one concern for me and I know for the rest of the Commission up here. Public safety is always the number one issue. People think taxes and other issues throughout the City and maintenance and picking up your trash, those are important, but they always take a second seat to public safety when it comes to our City in Coral Gables. Now, I specifically put this item on the agenda for today's meeting because we have been hearing from the Chief in the Police Department that crime stats are down, they are historically low, but at the same time, in the last two months I've heard more complaints from residents when I'm at Publix, when I'm taking my daughter to the Youth Center, I've heard more complaints than I've ever heard in my three years as being a Commissioner. So Commissioner Cabrera walking around in the crowd and he knows an issue that he brought up a while back, we had discussed it before Commissioner Keon, before Commissioner Lago were on this Commission; and the difference to that time and now is the amount of feedback that we are getting from residents. We are getting e-mails, but the phone calls are non-stop and the personal communications – when I step out to go grab a sandwich during lunch time, I work in the City as well, I get stopped constantly. So it's important for us to really be, not only reactive but proactive, and making sure that residents not only feel safe, but they actually are safe, so it's very important for us to have that. So that's why I put it on the agenda today. And I basically have three questions that I want staff to address at this meeting today. Obviously, with the resignation of the Chief yesterday, there's a fourth question that comes up, but I just want to start it right now with the specific issues as to what's going on in the City. Number one is, I want to hear the details specific, the statistics from the Police Department; I want to hear why the numbers may or may not be different from the FDLE

number, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. I want to hear those actual metrics. I'm assuming the three of you are the ones that are going to be providing that information, so just keep that in mind, that's what I'm looking for, and I think the public wants to hear that. I think the rest of the dais wants to hear that. Number two, communication – how are we going to communicate better with the public? There are some individuals I see here from some of the Crime Watch meetings I've attended over the years and a lot of times there were discussions of, why don't we have a Tweeter to communicate more effectively?- why don't we have some simple few minute programs on our Gables TV Station, those types of initiative events so that the community understands what is going on; they understand maybe they have to be looking out for certain types of vehicles, maybe it's a BOLO, "Be On the Look Out", so how can we communicate more effectively with the public so that they feel safe and they actually are safer?- and number three, how will we be proactive to prevent crime rather than being reactive once a crime has already occurred? We love in Coral Gables that we have the response times. People lot of times here, the police is there right away, but I think – you have to look further back, and the question is, it's great that they are there right away, it's great that they are investigating the case, it's great to have leads, in some cases, but the real question is, what are we doing to ensure that we are preventing crime? We all realize, everyone realizes you can never get rid of crime 100 percent, you can't, you can't do it, we realize that, but what are we doing to move forward, to make sure that we are making every effort to keep crime down? You know there has been some discussions that more police cars on the street actually increase crime or lower crime. I want to hear the details; I want to hear the facts. I know we had a matrix study that this Commission decided to move forward and outside consultants, a specialist that's looked at over 250 police departments and they gave us a number of recommendations. I want to know where we are with that as well, what we are implementing. I know we started the implementation; I want to make sure that it's carrying it forward. Is it working?- is it not working?- those are the details that I think the community at large feels a little bit in the dark. So that's why I put it on the agenda so we can have that clarity so people are more involved and being brought into this process. So I want to discuss that first and then we can discuss the Interim City Manager, I'm sorry, Chief at that time, so I will pass it over to – unless any other Commissioners has comments, but I think it's the appropriate time for staff to give us the details on that.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: First I want to start with – we are never happy with the number of crimes that we have in the City. One crime in the City of Coral Gables is one crime too many. So we have listened carefully and heard the community with respect to the recent crimes that we've had, and we cannot over emphasize the safety and security of our residents is our number one priority. In response we are ready to take action and safeguard our community by taking certain steps. As to what we are doing right now, the first step of action is that we have made a formal request to the FBI to get a UCR audit in coordination with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

Commissioner Quesada: What does UCR stand for?

Interim City Manager Olazabal: UCR is the code that is used to classify the different crimes.

Mayor Cason: I think it's Uniform Crime Report, is that correct?

Interim City Manager Olazabal:...To validate the crime statistics. If there is a problem with the numbers we want to know it, we want to understand it. I believe I just got confirmation that they will be onsite on September 22nd and will be doing the audit from September 22 to September 26th. Once we have results from that audit, we'll definitely come back to you and let you know and inform the public of what the results of those audit's are, and make sure that we have to get to the bottom of what the numbers are and where we are, but that's not enough, that just tells you what the numbers are, we need an action. So we are also looking at getting a new burglary task force. We understand that has been an issue recently in the media, so this will be a highly targeted approach to address residential burglaries; using that and intelligence to deploy officers strategically. We also intend to continue to use COMSTAT Management Process to ensure the organization is focused on City's top crime threats. We will continue to have marked vehicles and presence in zones and continue to have crime watch meetings where residents can engage face-to-face with police staff. In addition, once we have an Interim Police Chief, these are things that we are going to be working in conjunction with that person. We are going to evaluate. Whether we need to. We have some vacancies in the Police Department, so we can use that salary savings at the moment to incur some overtime and we need to when we have problems like this have groups of people that are going to be focusing on addressing the issue, so we could increase the overtime budget to deploy a greater number of officers in marked and unmarked vehicles and...create like the --- task force, or depending on what the type of crime or issue that we have that we have a response team that is able to address the issue. Also, we need to have more proactive and frequent communication and I can't emphasize that enough. We need to be listening more to what we are hearing and we need to get that feedback and incorporate that feedback into what is our action plan. So we are planning to have a community engagement liaison component so that we have a person, a contact person when the residents are having a problem that they can contact. We also are looking at having that person can help do security surveys. If for example, somebody is burglarized this is kind of the person that goes back to the home, the person that has been victimized and walks the home and tells them, hey you may want to do this to your door, it may not be the safest and try to make sure that that home is as secure as it can possibly be and provide that assurance that we are working with you. We understand this is a problem, we need to address it. It's one crime too many. We also intend to have more public demonstrations and awareness. For example, create....CSI, just be out there more; and also have a "Chief's Corner", so maybe have some sort of publication that goes out monthly, like the

initiatives that we are doing and how we are deploying them out, with perhaps a section that is from the residents and the residents can give us feedback on those strategies that we are deploying, how effective are they?- how effective they are not?- so we can adapt our strategy and move forward. We also – one additional step that we thought would be useful is having a crime and intelligence analyst. This is a person who is looking at the statistics, not the ones that are sent to the FBI, which are like six months and they need to be validated, but the current ones, the ones that you are getting immediately, so that you can start seeing what the trends are and adapting your strategy to it, so that you are being very effective and controlling the crime threat at the moment, because it changes, there are trends with it. Those are some initial thoughts of what we have how we are going to address this issue going forward and we have a team here that's going to talk about the statistics in burglary. There are a lot more statistics and I think what we need to do also is present the audit once we have it back from the FBI. So with that I'll pass the floor to Sargent Klaus Reinoso and Steve Ellinport.

Mayor Cason: And if you could explain what you do in the department, all three of you.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Yes – and I don't know are you going to be talking about, you want me to share. That's not part of the packet because we couldn't get it out on Friday to hand out.

Acting Major Ellinport: I guess it's almost afternoon, so good afternoon, City Attorney, Commissioners, Vice Mayor, Mayor. Sorry, I'm a little tall for your microphone.

Commissioner Keon: There is a hand-held mic right here, would you like that?

Acting Major Ellinport: So I was saying good morning, good afternoon to everybody. My name is Steve Ellinport; I'm the Acting Major of the Technical Services Division. I've been with the City for 20 years now, most of that time was spent in Uniform Patrol, either as an officer or Sargent or Lieutenant. My division is responsible for the records section, which maintains the data that is sent to FDLE in the form of Uniform Crime Reports, which is what UCR stands for.

Mayor Cason: How often are they sent?- and when?- after you get your data.

Acting Major Ellinport: They are sent every six months.

Mayor Cason: OK.

Acting Major Ellinport: They are sent January to June and then from January to December. So it's two times, but one is the six month period and one is the year period. So the chart you see in front of you is a 5-year period.

Commissioner Quesada: Can we do it a little differently?

Acting Major Ellinport: OK.

Commissioner Quesada: Year-to-date --- 2014 year-to-date compared to year-to-date 2013 has there been an increase in burglaries?

Acting Major Ellinport: I do not have the year-to-date for 2013. If you are asking from January to August 31st...

Mayor Cason: 2014?

Commissioner Quesada: Whatever information you have related to burglaries.

Acting Major Ellinport: Year-to-date this year?

Commissioner Quesada: Yes.

Acting Major Ellinport: We are at 200 UCR burglaries.

Commissioner Quesada: OK – and last year we had 391 total for the whole entire year.

Acting Major Ellinport: Total – so I can't tell you what we are going to have at the end of the year. I can – not being a statistician I can say that 200 for 8 months is an average of 25 a month. If you continue that average you are talking another 100 over the next 4. You are looking at 300, which is one of our historically low burglary rates.

Mayor Cason: Can you explain the difference to people because sometimes people use the word robbery to refer to a burglary and you have special terminology used in your statistics. What's the difference between a burglary and a robbery?

Acting Major Ellinport: A robbery for example, is someone walking up to you and pointing a gun and taking something from you. A burglary would be entering a structure, 4 walls, entering a structure and doing something inside your home, your business; it has to deal with a structure, entering a structure.

Commissioner Lago: Does this include car break-ins at all?

Acting Major Ellinport: This does not.

Commissioner Keon: I think it's important, I think it's very important that you explain for the benefit of the public what are the – what are the crimes or what entities go into the report to FDLE that go to, that eventually go to the FBI that these graphs are – that these graphs reflect, alright? Now it's my understanding and please correct me, that the only crimes that are committed, the crimes that go into these numbers are robbery, as you described robbery --- robbery doesn't go into?

Acting Major Ellinport: Burglaries.

Commissioner Keon: OK. But the numbers that you report to the FDLE are, it's my understanding were robbery, residential burglary, and commercial burglary, is that correct?

Acting Major Ellinport: There is about 12 that gets reported UCR.

Commissioner Keon: What are the others that get reported?

Acting Major Ellinport: I'm sorry. There is murder, forcible rape, forcible fondling, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, pocket-picking, purse snatching, shoplifting, from a motor vehicle, motor vehicle parts, bicycles, from building, from coin, operated devices, motor vehicle, and motor vehicle theft.

Commissioner Keon: OK. In the numbers that have been presented to the Mayor or to us when we talk to the public, these numbers, right?- these are the numbers that the Police Department is using. I was told that these numbers do not – none of the information that we are provided with includes car theft...

Acting Major Ellinport: This chart right here is burglary...

Commissioner Keon: The numbers that we get when we talk about crime and you talk about crime going down, included in that statement of crime going down we are not talking about car theft, we are not talking about burglary to vehicles, or theft from vehicles, it's not the vehicles that are put up on blocks and your tires are stolen and your wheels are stolen, or the front grill is stolen from a Mercedes and it ends up to be \$25,000 to repair it, things are stolen from the

outside of your home, from your pool area, or whatever else. So on this report the only thing that this addresses is actually just a burglary to a residence and commercial, is that right?

Acting Major Ellinport: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: Only.

Acting Major Ellinport: Only.

Commissioner Keon: OK. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Can you explain and sort of set the framework. Your officers are out in the field, you get calls, you find out a crime has been committed. How is that collected by you?- and how does that differ from six months later, say it's on January 1st it happens and you report in June or July 1st. What happens to that date?- it could change?- could you change categories? So explain why there might be a difference between your data as you collect it as crime occurs and what's reported.

Acting Major Ellinport: Those changes aren't very large, but it is possible. For example, February 1st someone's house gets – they come home and their window is broken and they report it as a burglary to their hours. The officer gets there, writes it up as a burglary, but they don't know if anything was stolen, they don't see anything out of place. It gets submitted --- I was going to give the example that I was saying. So if it's written as a burglary and let's say it goes to the records section and they read the narrative or more information comes up like a video camera shows that the person, some juvenile came by and just threw a rock, never entered it. Originally it was written up as a burglary, maybe reported as a burglary, new information came to light that shows it as a criminal mischief. So that might be one less burglary. That's how things might change, like fluctuates. If it gets reclassified or more information comes up or the detective discovers that it in fact wasn't a burglary, things change like that.

Sargent Klaus Reinoso: Klaus Reinoso, Sargent with the Investigations Division, previously in the capacity of the Records Sargent. One of the things that I wanted to add on to what Major Ellinport was saying. As an example, somebody walks into your car-porch that's an open car-porch, they would remove a lawnmower. We would say to ourselves that's a burglary. If somebody entered my domicile and took something from me, but it really doesn't get reported to UCR as a burglary, it gets reported as a larceny. So it still gets reported on the report to the state and to the federal, but to us that we see it as a burglary it's really not being categorized as a burglary. So that might be part of the discrepancy.

Commissioner Keon: Right – so it’s really important that we understand that these numbers don’t necessarily capture what most people would think of or we might regard as a burglary or a particular type of theft. That is not reflected in these numbers that are being used.

Sargent Klaus Reinoso: They are reflected but just in different categories.

Commissioner Keon: But the ones that we are being shown. I mean it’s really important to understand to tell the public when the message goes out that crime has gone down it encompasses not everything that they are thinking of in regard to crime.

Sargent Klaus Reinoso: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: OK.

Commissioner Quesada: Can I sort of jump in here. I’m going to go straight to the metrics. If you can just give me simple yes or no, up or down. So you are telling us, the chart that you gave us burglaries is down?

Sargent Klaus Reinoso: Correct.

Commissioner Quesada: Alright. And you were talking about the different classifications. So I want to know all the different classifications, so that we are clear because I think what’s getting lost in the process here is, what is classified as what?- so maybe burglaries are down because it didn’t occur at home, but it occurred on the street so it’s a larceny or it’s a robbery. So larcenies are they up or down from 2013 to 2014?

Acting Major Ellinport: It was my understanding, correct me if I’m wrong, but the City Manager’s office requested only burglaries.

Commissioner Keon: We don’t know. We don’t know. They are not tracked.

Mayor Cason: Quiet please.

Commissioner Quesada: Let me jump in for a second.

Mayor Cason: Can you get this for us by this afternoon.

Acting Major Ellinport: Absolutely.

Mayor Cason: We are going to have a lunch break at one, I'd ask you to come back with those other – you have the data, just please bring it. I know the focus was...

Commissioner Quesada: Here's what I'm going to ask for specifically. Larcenies – if you can write this down to make sure that you guys are getting it and if you can call someone back at the station whoever has access to the computer so they can start running the numbers and they can send all of us an e-mail. Robbery however classified, petty thefts, however classified, larcenies however classified, smash and grabs, I don't know if that's a terminology you guys use, all crimes in general, from the most heinous to the least heinous...

Commissioner Lago: One year.

Commissioner Quesada:...up or down, so that we get a full picture. Again, this is part of the frustration that we have that's very difficult for us to communicate with the public and it's very difficult for the public to fully understand, it's been the problem in the last few months with the Police Department.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Could I get one minute...

Commissioner Quesada: OK, but I just want all the different categories.

Interim City Manager Olazabal:...because I know it sounds terrible, because...

Commissioner Lago: If I could just interject one second. Let me explain something to you. And you just heard the frustrations from the residents here, OK, and I direct this not at you as individuals, OK, because you guys are great individuals that work very hard to protect the residents of the City. I direct this at management, OK; and let me explain and I see management in the room, I don't know where Mr. Hudak is, Mr. Pedroso, I see our Acting Chief. We need to get this together. This is really, really simple because every time when I walk in the street when I run into somebody, like Commissioner Quesada said, at Publix I have to give them an answer, and the answer we are providing today with this beautiful chart, with the yellow spike going down, trending down, is not a sufficient answer. It's not going to be accepted by the residents of the City and I think we can do a lot better. I think what we should do is exactly what Commissioner Quesada says. Let's get the information, let's be transparent, and let's address the issue, let's not try to avoid the situation.

[Applause from the audience]

Commissioner Lago: This is real, real simple. You are over complicating this and what end up happening is individuals that are in this room they take offenses and they feel that we are insulting them, their intelligence.

[Applause from audience]

Commissioner Lago: This City prides itself on being the safest, having high property values, being a community that's inclusive, being a community that's tolerant, but it comes a point where there is a break and right now we have an opportunity to right the wrongs that may have occurred in the past, and I think that we can address this issue, like the Mayor was saying, maybe come after lunch and put all the cards on the table so that there is no whispers that numbers were hidden, that numbers were misconstrued, that we hid behind a graph that shows a yellow spike going downwards, which maybe doesn't encompass the entire issue here.

Mayor Cason: Bring us the data after lunch and second, I'd like to ask you a direct question. Could you explain to us how you compile the statistics?- who does it?- do you do them?- who actually takes the data from the street and compiles it?- and you can explain how you do it, and then I want to ask you a very direct question.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: I just want one minute. We were compiling the data for the presentation yesterday at 4 p.m., so we weren't necessarily going to be able to do the 12 charts. We decided that we'll provide this, we'll have the audit, we'll present again. No, this does not represent the full picture. This represents burglaries, we are not trying to hide information, I just want to make it super clear.

Mayor Cason: That said, bring us the data, and bring us the data...

Interim City Manager Olazabal: This was at 4 p.m. and I can say that, but it's just because we didn't have time to draft everything.

Mayor Cason: Understand.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: The City is not trying to not address the matter. I just want to make that clear.

Mayor Cason: Bring us the data after lunch and I would like you to answer how you compile the data?- and then I want to ask you a direct question.

Commissioner Keon: Could you also when you compile the data by whatever the name of the crime is, could you also define it? However you define that incident and the definition of that incident.

Acting Major Ellinport: Sure – absolutely.

Commissioner Keon: So we know what you are talking about when you are telling us about numbers. Thank you.

Commissioner Quesada: And please include....as you did for burglaries as well.

Acting Major Ellinport: To answer your question sir. The data is brought into the system; we have one database and the database is created by police officers in the field as they go to different incidents, and they put the data into the system and those fields include names, addresses, case numbers, time of day when the incidents occurred, and in the end it goes through a process of quality assurance and it ends up residing in the database, and from there is where we extract the reports that you all are familiar with. So who actually runs the report?- it's the software itself that runs the report. We push a button and it creates the UCR report that you see.

Mayor Cason: OK. So your reports do not come from what the Chief or anything else? Your data comes from the troops in the fields, is that correct?

Acting Major Ellinport: Correct.

Mayor Cason: Has anyone ever asked you to manipulate, change, alter the data?

Acting Major Ellinport: No. No.

Mayor Cason: Alright.

Commissioner Quesada: You are discussing UCR and I've seen those e-mails that we get, the weekly updates. Tell me if there is a difference between the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, FBI, COMSTAT, USR, is there any difference in the analysis or the reporting method for all the different "animals"?

Commissioner Lago: Entities.

Commissioner Quesada: Is there a difference?- is there a possibility that our internal UCR numbers are different from the FDLE numbers?

Acting Major Ellinport: No that's not possible.

Commissioner Quesada: And what about with the FBI numbers?

Acting Major Ellinport: Also.

Commissioner Quesada: What about COMSTAT?

Acting Major Ellinport: When we report to the state and the state then follows up by reporting to the feds.

Commissioner Quesada: So there is a standardized format that the state requires?

Acting Major Ellinport: Correct.

Commissioner Quesada: And we follow that, that's the information we are given, and that's the information the FDLE is given?

Acting Major Ellinport: Correct.

Commissioner Keon: But those reports don't capture everything that happens.

Commissioner Quesada: That's a very good point. Tell us why there is an apparent discrepancy when we hear FDLE and we hear our internal numbers? What are we missing?

Acting Major Ellinport: We are looking at different definitions of crime. For instance...

Commissioner Quesada: OK. So it's not standardized.

Acting Major Ellinport: It's standardized for UCR.

Commissioner Keon: It's standardized for that data set. It's standardized across the nation. It's standardized so that the FBI can look across our country, they can look across cities, they can look across states, and using a standard definition can identify a trend in crime. It isn't – they are not numbers that we would necessarily use to deploy our forces, they are not. They are broad sweep numbers that look at over-ranging crime trends. They are not the numbers that should ever be used to deploy – they come into it, but they are not the singular force that is used to deploy resources in a given city. They are not.

Mayor Cason: Do you use those data to deploy resources?

Commissioner Keon: Because they have different definitions and they have a different use.

Acting Major Ellinport: I'll give you a very good example. I go back to the example of the lawnmower stolen from the open car-porch.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm sorry, can you speak up a little bit.

Acting Major Ellinport: I'll give you a good example. The example is the lawnmower stolen from the open car-porch. For UCR that's not considered a burglary because there was no entry made into the structure, but for us, for operational issues we are going to look at that as a burglary because we are going to investigate it as a burglary, and we are going to treat it as a burglary. So we are deploying resources in an effort to curtail the burglaries, but it's not counting as a burglary.

Commissioner Keon: But it's never going to show up on this chart as a burglary. So that's what you need to understand is that the numbers they use internally to guide them are not the same numbers that are these numbers, and these numbers shouldn't be used for – maybe these are not the numbers that should be used to give us a picture of what is happening within our community, and I think that they had been. So I think maybe we need to, we need a different data set and different numbers to guide us and to inform us and to inform our residents as to what is happening in the City.

Mayor Cason: Do you agree with that statement?

Commissioner Keon: What do you think?

Acting Major Ellinport: I hope I'm not speaking out of turn, with the Manager's permission we can have a workshop and we can discuss what exactly the numbers would be and the categories would be that we would look at that would best inform the public.

Mayor Cason: But you track all kinds of crimes, whether or not it goes to, whether it makes it at the end of the year or bi-annually into the FBI and Florida. You have your own set of data that you track.

Acting Major Ellinport: Right.

Mayor Cason: That's what we want you to come back after one and tell us in all those categories, up-down, where are we?- so we know...

Commissioner Keon: Can you compile that data in that period of time?- or do you need a much longer period of time?

Acting Major Ellinport: I think we need a much longer period of time.

Commissioner Keon: I think you going to – if you ask them now to provide you with that data within one hour, I think you are going to again get inaccurate information. You are not going to get what people...you are not going to get...I think and I agree so strongly with what Commissioner Lago said and I know the rest of the Commission here. I don't believe that the police have ever tried to misinform us. I think we have been maybe using looking at information in data sets that are not really what we need to give us a snapshot of what is happening in our community. I don't want to force them to come back and give us another set of data that doesn't do it either because they don't have the time. You know this is a very reasonable, good, well-educated community, we understand data sets and what we want are correct data sets.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let me just say very quickly. I understand numbers; everybody knows that you can make numbers go whatever way you want. I'm not saying that you are doing that whatsoever. At this point I really don't care about the numbers. Apparently there is an issue...

[Applause from audience]

Vice Mayor Kerdyk:...and what I think we should do Mayor is hear from the residents and then let's talk about solutions. Essentially we can talk about numbers all day long.

[Applause from audience]

Major Terry Molina: We just want to be clear. We are going to provide, we want to be transparent and we are prepared to provide all the information. It's not a push of a button for us and we want to make sure everything is correct and that we are not rushing to do it. So what I'd like to discuss a time period so that we are all on the same page that we would report back to you with that information.

Commissioner Lago: What would be an adequate timeframe that you could provide this information?- and I hate to say this, but I just want to make sure, just to put on the record, I want to "dumb it down" as much as possible. Really, really, really clear, really simple, you know

categories broken down where every single person who is not a police officer who is not involved in some sort of policing activity can understand it. I don't understand the numbers.

Major Molina: We will.

Commissioner Lago: I'm going to ask you a simple question and I know you've been thrown into this, today is your first day and I think you are doing a great job, by the way. I'm a little disappointed that the previous Police Chief is not here today. I wish he would have been here prior to his resignation, it would have been great to at least hear his side of the story amongst all of the residents here, because again, going back to Publix, we are giving a lot of free publicity, we all have to listen to the residents at Publix. It's our right, their right to talk to us. Simple question – and I think it goes a long way amongst the individuals in this room, do you think that crime is up?- simple question, don't make it difficult. Do you see your forces, individuals that work side-by-side responding to calls in regards to burglaries, in regards to car break-ins, stealing bicycles, stealing lawnmowers, a multitude of crimes that have been...?

Major Molina: I see what the residents are saying – yes. I see our officers responding to various crimes and I understand how it would be unacceptable.

Commissioner Lago: OK.

Major Molina: But it's important for the City, the residents, Commission, to know that the Police Department is very dedicated to solving this problem and working hard to eradicate crime. We recognize it.

Commissioner Lago: Let me give you my reasoning behind my question. It was not to put you in an awkward position. The reasoning behind that is to give the individuals in this room some peace of mind that we are here not to pander to them, that we are here to listen to them, this is a key thing, and that we need to understand if there is a problem we are going to address this issue; and I mentioned it before and I'll mention it again, the police force does an incredible job. When it comes to violent crime, as the Mayor has mentioned a multitude of times, I think we lead the state as one of the lowest crime rates in regards to violent crime, that's to be commended. You guys do a great job. But there is an issue here and we have to obviously get our hands around it, and everyone here amongst us, it can't just be the elected officials, it's got to be also the police, the residents, anyone who has a vested interest in this community has to come to resolution, come to the understanding that we have a problem. So that's why I asked you that question and we are going to deal with it. We have no other choice but to deal with the issue.

Major Molina: It's a partnership – yes.

Commissioner Lago: Yes, it's a partnership, that's why we are here.

[Applause from audience]

Commissioner Lago: I'm in favor – I don't know in regards to what my colleagues are, but I'm in favor, I know that people have time constraints. I think we need to hear from the residents. The Mayor will obviously lead us in that direction.

Mayor Cason: Alright, let's start. We have a number of cards.

Commissioner Keon: They just want clarification on when they want that information.

Major Molina: We are asking for two weeks.

Commissioner Keon: Two weeks – OK.

Commissioner Quesada: Hold on a second. Sorry to cut you off Commissioner. I want to come back to my three questions. First the stats, what's the reality of the situation?- which I guess we've had some of that conversation. Number two, what's the Police Department's plan on how we are going to be more proactive rather than reactive? That's something I want to hear from the Police Department, whether it's putting more officers in uniform on the street, more undercover, whatever it is. We are not experts in Police Department strategy. We want to hear from whom our experts are, staff. So how are we going to be more proactive moving forward considering everything we are hearing, everything that we are seeing?

Commissioner Lago: Can I interject just one second? We have in the back room and I wish I had a chair for you, I apologize, State Representative Erik Fresen and I also requested that State Representative Jose Rodriguez, who represents the Edgewater area, these are the two State Representatives that have encompassed most of the City of Coral Gables and they have a vested interest in our City. As you know, we are in budget season Mr. Representative, it just past, correct?- but obviously we can start planning for the next budget season and he has some ideas and some potential insight to what he will be offering the City in regards to resolutions for additional policing monies, crime-fighting tools. So we'll be hearing from the State Representative in a few moments.

Mayor Cason: Let's do this. Let's hear from the Representatives and let's hear from the citizens and let's come back after what you've heard from the citizens and it will probably be after our lunch break. Give it some thought, come back and tell us – answer the Commissioner's questions

about what you think we should be doing differently based on what you've heard. OK. Alright, Let me ask Erik Fresen, appreciate you being here. Thank you.

State Representative Erik Fresen: Thank you Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, thank you so much for having me here today. I'm going to be very quick because it's obviously much more important to hear from the residents. I actually live one block in removed from the City of Coral Gables in the first block of the Little Gables on 15th Street and 45th Avenue, but...

Commissioner Quesada: But you represent us in Tallahassee.

State Representative Erik Fresen: But I represent the majority of the City of Coral Gables in Tallahassee and at the invite of Commissioners Lago and Quesada, I thought it was important not only to let the residents and obviously the City know that there is an "all hands on deck" approach to this issue, but also to recognize and to hear what it is that's going on and look at the end of the day and I commend the incredible job that the Police Department in the City of Coral Gables does every single day, but what I'm starting to hear today and I'm glad that several Commissioners have already kind of pointed to the fact, at the end of the day whatever they come back at the end of lunch, I can tell you having served now six years in the Florida Legislature, across the spectrum of what we do as public servants, in my position whether it's health care, education, public safety, whatever it may be, I can tell you that I've already read enough white papers that tell you that whatever statistical conclusion you want, I could probably put on a piece of paper, but nothing whether they come back with something a little bit more glowing than what you have right now or a little bit more abysmal than what's presented to you right now that will never act as a comfort blanket for the collective anxiety in this room, and I think what needs to be focused on and I'm here to assist, help, if it requires finances from the state we'll do that, if it requires some sort of assistance with collaborative law enforcement, we'll do that. But to the extent that the attention is focused on the reality of real anecdotes that you are going to be hearing about in this room right now it's real, it's palpable. Every time you go to Publix you hear about it. However it is you are collecting your data you've got to make sure that you address it in a very proactive way. Make sure that law enforcement recognizes that while there may be major crimes and certain things that you want to avoid and certain issues that's high, it's 50,000 feet in Homeland Security, the broken window syndrome is real and that can quickly snowball in the anxiety that you are feeling here today. So whether it's a spoiler or a rim or a broken window in a house or something else, there is an anxiety in this room that's real, and I think that to whatever extent it can be addressed directly with some sort of a shift in policing policy that's more maybe neighborhood patrolling that's maybe more direct to the neighbors so that they actually feel that there is a presence there and so that it doesn't become an invitation for thieves and burglars to come to the City of Coral Gables knowing that they can get away with it.

So realistically, honestly, I'm really just here at Commissioners Lago and Quesada's invitation and to let the public know that whatever we can do from the state perspective we will.

Commissioner Lago: Erik can I ask you just a few things? Do you represent the area of South Miami?

State Representative Erik Fresen: I do. The entire City.

Commissioner Lago: The entire City. It's my understanding that they had a shift in policing strategies, which recently has reduced crime by about 30 percent.

State Representative Erik Fresen: They did.

Commissioner Lago: And their policing strategy was in response to having more police officers on the ground in marked vehicles, marked vehicles and marked clothing, which again I have nothing against the SIT team and the efforts that they do and I commend them for that, but you saw the shift that South Miami did and an immediate 30 percent reduction in crime and those numbers are significant. We are not talking about 1 percent or 3 percent; we are talking about documented numbers that are 30 percent in regards to crime. Again, we need to drill down on the numbers, but when you are talking about a reduction in that amount it's pretty significant. You have helped us as a City be able to achieve financing for a multitude of projects, you helped us with the Museum in regards to financing, excuse me, in regards to monies for programming and projects. Do you foresee any ability in the next forthcoming budget that we can basically maybe looking into slipping into the budget somehow, somehow, something that deals with additional policing strategies, additional policing ideas, let's say like cameras. I've heard from several residents they want cameras in the main entrances of the City. Obviously, that's up for debate, people can say you know that "Big Brother" is watching you, but I'm saying that could potentially be an option. What do you see as a major opportunity for the City in regards to finances?

State Representative Erik Fresen: I think at the end of the day whatever it is that this Commission decides based on the public's input as to what resources, if any, are lacking from the structural perspective in the Police Department in order to be able to accomplish the higher level of patrolling. It's my purpose and my reason to represent you all to try to bring that back to Tallahassee as long as it's kind of well-scripted and it has a direct purpose for this end goal. I can tell you to your example, in South Miami at the time that those strategies were implemented and at the time that they were responding to very similar issues here. It was constant break-ins, windows, cars, that whole thing. I can also tell you that at the time even though it was kind of under the spotlight of what we have here today, the crime statistics in South Miami also showed

a sharp decline. So there is often an incongruency between whatever a statistic can tell you and what the reality on the ground is, and they did do that. They actually went into a more visible strategy in the neighborhoods and apparently the break-ins and that anxiety has gone down. From the state's perspective, I can tell you that anything that leads to that, and obviously you have to strike the right balance between the "Big Brother" concept and something that at least calms the public as far as the ability for people not to want to come into the City of Coral Gables to commit crimes. We are more than happy to do that.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: I think there is technology that currently is not approved for use in the State of Florida. Just as at one time the red light cameras on the intersections were not, once they were we put them in place, it really reduced the number of red lights that were run and the accidents and whatever else. We have a huge problem with traffic in this City because of where we are located in the County, and we have a huge problem with the speed of traffic on our City streets. It's my understanding right now that there is the technology to track speeding electronically or whatever, the equipment for it, but it is not acceptable to use as an enforcement measure where actually tickets can be issued. I guess there are cameras also on them that can track the license plates and issue tickets with regard to speeding also. If we have other means such as that to be able to deal with some of the traffic issues in our City, it frees up some of our police officers to do other things and that is to patrol and we can deal then with the speeding issues and take our personnel to actually deploy them onto the street and to be on patrol, and to be in our neighborhoods too. So there are a number of things that could be done to help us more efficiently and effectively deploy our officers, but it needs to come from the state level. So I would ask you that you would work with us to look at some of those things that we can do that will help us in that regard.

State Representative Erik Fresen: Sure.

Mayor Cason: Thank you. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Mr. Representative thank you for being here. I know you came here on very, very short notice, I appreciate that, and every time I've given you a call you've always set present. You've never denied this City and it's residents the opportunity to have us close here to you. Thank you.

[Applause from the audience]

Mayor Cason: I don't know if Jose Javier Rodriguez is here yet. He's a little bit late. OK. Let's go to Gema Pinon – Gema Pinon.

Ms. Pinon: Hi. Good afternoon, my name is Emma Pinon, I reside at 339 Alesio Avenue, I'm your neighbor and have lived there for almost 50 years. I want to thank Vice Mayor Kerdyk for always taking my phone calls and listening to my concerns. I have a couple of comments; I'm going to be very brief. I have never seen as many police officers in the City of Coral Gables in the last year as I have seen here today.

[Applause from audience]

Ms. Pinon: They are invisible. They don't patrol. They don't bother with the speeding, they are under trees, they are hanging out, they are having coffee. They have a huge image problem and a huge lack of leadership, which reflects on each and every one of you.

[Applause from audience]

Ms. Pinon: And so I appreciate everything that you've said about the transparency and the data and the numbers, but everyone in the City is concerned about the lack of leadership and the invisibility of our Police Department. And so I hope that you listen to everyone here today and take action, not just talk, but take some real action. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Let's see if I pronounce this right, Peter Kouchalakos, did I get it right?

Mr. Kouchalakos: Good morning Mr. Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor, Commissioners. I'm going to be as brief as I possibly can because I know there are a lot of folks standing behind me and I'm highly aware of folks desire to get to lunch and break. I'm a 59 year resident, I live on 920 Messina Avenue. Some of you were neighbors of my mother, some of you went to high school with my brother, I'm a local. I have no other agenda other than to tell you that I have been sitting in my house minding my own business hearing the same things you guys do, when I got asked to go to a crime watch meeting around my corner. I went there one night and I had the opportunity to grill Major Molina, Pedroso. I'm not going to get into the specifics but I did ask them about elements relating to dispatch, forensics and the ability of them to be able to respond to burglaries and do techniques that they are well aware of. I won't get into the details. So what I did was when I came away from that meeting, I started thinking what can I do?- OK. I generally am one

of those residents that most of us are, that was just content to let our leadership take care of the situation, let the Police Department do it's job, and I said, there is a problem here, because when I finally have to get around going to a crime watch meeting and I see what I heard, I know there is a problem. I drafted – it took me 30 minutes to drive these five initiatives. I have a little bit of experience, I won't relate it, but I have a little bit of experience with understanding what some of the statistics. I'm not here to bash the Police Department today. I'm sorry to see that the Chief isn't here, we need to move on, and I am fully confident that our Police Department will be able to do it's job with your guidance. I ended up circulating a petition with these initiatives in our North Gables area. I want to read it briefly into the record, but I'm going to tender this original to the Clerk. I want to make it part of the permanent record, you should all have copies. There were 158 signatures, but at the time that I've been sitting here 19 more just came in, on the back three pages, so total is 177.

Commissioner Quesada: You can turn it in when you are done speaking.

Mr. Kouchalakos: I'm sorry.

Commissioner Quesada: You can turn it in – go ahead.

Mr. Kouchalakos: I want to read this into the record real quickly. "An open letter to the Coral Gables City Commission. Whereas, we the undersigned residents of North Coral Gables in recognition of increased criminal activity in our neighborhood and being desirous of maintaining a safer neighborhood and quality of life, do hereby petition our elected leadership to consider and support a sustained commitment to the following initiatives: Number one, fully fund and expand the Coral Gables Police Department's Strategic Initiatives Team, the SIT team, as I believe and we believe that the undersigned here, this is a critical out-of-the-box way of dealing with crime. There is also a Strategic Intelligence Unit that I understand is on paper, that component of these initiatives that I am proposing is important. I believe that it should be nurtured; it should be expanded, and should not be put on a back burner. Number two, take immediate steps through the Office of the City Manager, Interim or otherwise, to evaluate and implement usage of technology in the Police Department. For example, real time camera systems, posted at strategic entry and exit points and linking said systems in real time to patrol unit's. Now in the age of the "selfie" photo cameras and all other means and manner of photographic capabilities, this is a technology that's not only fully usable, it's also being implemented by other municipalities and I know this for a fact. I'm not talking about speeding cameras, because there may be some issues relative to that from a Constitutional perspective and a criminal procedural perspective, but just cameras alone at strategic entry and exit points in areas, particularly in the north end, but from Ponce to the Granada entrances and other areas, we'll leave it up to the Public Works Department and the Police Department to consider those. I think that's a viable initiative.

Number three, authorizing the Office of the City Manager to revisit the feasibility of street closures along the corridors of 57th, 47th, and 8th Street. We are...in the North Gables and anybody that lives up there will tell you it's not a question about numbers. There is a perception of criminal activity that is palpable. That's why most of us are here today. I don't know how many north-enders, I can't speak for my brothers and sisters in other parts of the City, I'm addressing what I see in my area of Coral Gables, but it's clear to me that this needs to be revisited and I want the City Attorney and the Commissioners to weigh what is rationally related to the legitimate municipal interest relative to the two competing forces here in this initiative. One, the public safety and welfare of the residents versus ease of traffic flow in the morning and afternoon commutes, OK, because those are the two balancing counter-forces. I understand that you are going to have to work with the County on this because it's a public works issue with the County, but I want the commission to revisit this issue. I think it's relevant. Can we close all of the areas off?- no, but we can narrow it, bottleneck it, and I think this will have a tactical benefit to the Police Department and their ability to police crime in the area. Number four; expand the number of marked and unmarked patrol unit's per shift in the affected North Gables areas. A greater population density in the North Gables compels a greater marked unit presence. The vast majority of what I've seen just in my reading Neighbors and I read Neighbors, I'm not crunching numbers. Most burglaries, most crime, and I don't care how you categorize a burglary, it could be a theft, it could be anything. It occurs between 2 in the morning and roughly 2 o'clock in the afternoon when all of us are at work, OK, the houses are empty. That's when most of these guys come in. Number five, authorize the Office of the City Manager to initiate negotiations with qualified local alarm companies to provide incentive packages to Coral Gables residents and create a waiver period for free permitting of new and updated systems. That could also incorporate the opportunity to maybe consider expanding, because I know by Code you've got a false alarm, you've got two or three false alarms you are going to get wacked with a fine. That may be something that needs to be revisited relative to the amount of false alarm issues that goes to response that's a tactical and strategic thing that I think the City Attorney needs to analyze with respect to the Code. Finally, I got to take responsibility myself and I think everybody here, the residents have to assume the primary responsibility of making sure that we participate in this action. If we have a burglary and somebody contacts us from the State Attorney's office, we need to be ready to go forward and have the courage to go forward and prosecute a crime otherwise I've got news for you, an Assistant State Attorney is going to drop the burglary, they are going to drop the theft. If we don't participate as residents we are going to have a problem. The Police Department needs to expand and show some, I think, a little bit better public presence relative to them being on the ground, mingle with the community, be more sensitive I believe, to the community and it's needs as opposed to being more separated or aloof from the community. Number three, the Office of the City Manager, you guys are the ones that are responsible for implementing the budget and making sure the Police Department is fully funded and has the resources available to it. So the responsibility also lies with you and ultimately obviously, you

are our leadership, you guys are the ones that need to make sure and I'm preaching now a little bit, but you guys need to make sure that you get on board with this and I want to see specific initiatives. I like these initiatives and I've got 177 of us that like them as well. I'll get you a few thousand more if you give me a month, OK. But the bottom line is these are initiatives that are concrete, they are not hypothetical, these are things that we can do and implement right now; and finally, and I heard some mention made recently about maybe doing another study. I'm done with studies guys – white papers.

[Applause].

Mr. Kouchalakos: What I would suggest – you've got enough cerebral fire power in this City, we've got some of the best and brightest minds in this City, OK. You've got enough of it sitting here. If you would consider maybe and maybe each one of you could appoint several people, create a committee where you could actually have input from citizens, digest that input and use that in applying whatever protocols you have with the Police Department or through Code or what-have-you, but seek more citizen – not just at events like this. Get a committee, a sitting committee where there is a sustained commitment, because this is all going to fade away after a few months, but get a sustained commitment from the community to be able to help you guys do a better job for us. That's it. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Thank you. Thank you very much. Kirk Menendez.

Mr. Kirk Menendez: Good morning. Kirk Menendez, 325 Malaga Avenue. I'm a 52-year resident of the City of Coral Gables. I've seen Coral Gables grow through the years for the better and sometimes not for the better. I've coached, actually I coached Representative Fresen at the Coral Gables Youth Center when he was a kid, played ball with Commissioner Kerdyk, coached Commissioner Keon's boys, so Coral Gables is part of my life, it is who I am. Unfortunately, I hate to say it, but the City is at a crossroads, a very important crossroad, because the City today is not what it was before. There has been progress. We have beautiful restaurants, wonderful restaurants, beautiful buildings, great landscape, but the residents part, the heart and soul of the City is leaving us. It's like a train at the station taking off. There has been a trend the last few years, very concerning trend, a disconnect between the residents and what the City government purpose and function is all about. I've spoken to a lot of friends, other residents who have had their house burglarized. A dear friend of mine walked into their home, mother, young daughter, and the burglars were in the house. They had to run back out their front door. I hate to think what could have happened. But when they report it for the last few years their voices are muzzled. It's like no one wants to hear it. We want to make decisions and not take your concerns, your

worries, your dreams, your aspirations, into consideration and that's not Coral Gables, that's any other city USA, that's not the City I grew up in. The data that everybody talks about studies, data; the data is here, this is the data. We are all the data – blood, flesh, heart and soul.

[Applause]

Mr. Menendez: The reputation of Coral Gables for decades was it's an impenetrable fortress. We knew it, we felt it, and the criminals on the outside wanting to get in knew it as well. But there is no presence. That mystique is gone, it's fading fast, just like everything else is fading fast and we can't allow it. Decisions must be made, not only with regards to crime, but every other aspect of the City government, every other aspect of quality of life has to take the residents into consideration. Decisions have to be made on principal, on lives, on children, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews, our lives, because we are the ones who are impacted. Folks travelling from West Miami to downtown they pass through, we live it and breathe it. Today's my daughter's birthday. She was born on 9/11/2001. When I talk to my kids about where would you like to travel?- where would you like to go on a vacation? I mentioned this city and that city, and my daughter goes, dad I just want to be in Coral Gables. This is where I belong. So it's my obligation as a dad to be here and make sure that you, the police and everyone else does the right thing for us. Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Let me ask Jose Javier Rodriguez. Thank you for coming.

Commissioner Lago: How are you sir? Thank you for coming.

State Representative Rodriguez: Thank you very much. I appreciate the invitation. Jose Javier Rodriguez, I am the State Representative for part of Coral Gables. Here in Coral Gables you have the benefit of having two State Senators and two State Representatives. One of my colleagues spoke a little earlier and I want to relay the same sentiment that he relayed, which is that we stand with you, in terms of resources that we can work with you to bring for the residents of the City, we stand here with you. In terms of what those resources are, basically our jobs are two; one is to work on the budget and on any policy recommendations; the other is because of that role we can often help interface with state agencies. Also to the extent that there are FDLE law enforcement resources that we need better coordination with or we can bring those resources down or to the extent that there are budgetary needs that we can help develop and work on. We've done both of those kinds of things before and we look forward to doing that with you. So thank you for listening to your City residents and thank you for allowing me just to relay that message.

Commissioner Lago: Jose, if I could just interject one second like I did for State Representative Fresen. When the residents started finding out that we were having today's meeting and it was going to be time certain at 11 o'clock, several of them requested that you and Mr. Fresen be in attendance and I told them, you know it's funny you mention that because immediately the two State Representatives reached out to me and I know they reached out to Commissioner Quesada and probably to Commissioner Keon also, and to the Mayor, and said that they wanted to be here. They didn't have an exact course of action, but that they were going to start drilling down to try to find the monies to maybe, hopefully be able to entertain certain issues like the cameras that we had discussed in the main entrances of neighborhoods, to discuss other crime initiatives that could be financed either through the state or through the federal government. So, I appreciate you being here. I know you have a very busy schedule, the residents here are grateful for not only your support, like you said, you represent the area of Edgewater, but more importantly for what you do every day to represent the entire City and County. So thank you.

State Representative Rodriguez: Thank you very much.

[Applause]

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, I was going to mention this later after lunch, but one issue that was going to be raised with the Commission which maybe you and Representative Fresen can help with is: there is a statute which all of you have talked to me about, which indicates that whenever there is an alarm that the alarm company has to call the homeowner and clear those numbers before they can call the police. I've been told by the Police Department this can add 3 to 5 minutes, maybe even more to response time. Now today I'm going to propose to the Commission a way that I think we can get around this legally and allow an appointment of an agent so that, that can be addressed, but that's a really big problem for our City to be able to respond as quickly as possible and it is a legal issue. I was hoping that maybe it can be addressed.

Commissioner Lago: Just like you had mentioned, Craig right now, something I know that the Commissioners – because when I talked to you about it you had mentioned that every Commissioner was discussing it. I think that's something that's perfectly up your alley, you being an attorney, I think that maybe you and Commissioner, excuse me, State Representative Fresen can maybe lead the charge to see if we can get that passed in the State next year. It's something that could really help, like our City Attorney stated in regards to response times; and catching these individuals in the act if a crime is committed.

State Representative Rodriguez: Yes absolutely this issue, if I may, this issue has come up before in other contexts and so to the extent that the City Attorney determines that there is a statutory change that needs to be done and you can't do it on your own as you've seen, please be in touch with me and we can start work on that now.

Mayor Cason: We'll do it.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, I'm going to be presenting that to you today, but it's going to ultimately be up to the Commission because it's going to be based on an interpretation of state law, which I cannot – my interpretation is my interpretation for the Commission, but ultimately state law is determined by the courts and the Attorney General. I would recommend that you seek a change to this law no matter what.

Commissioner Lago: Is this something that would have to be sponsored by State Representative Rodriguez at the State level and basically made into a law?

City Attorney Leen: I can put something together for you.

Commissioner Lago: Maybe it's something that we could also have the neighbors, the residents put together something that's in support of this and just get a little more traction. I'm willing to go to Tallahassee; I know that my colleagues are also willing to speak in regards to this issue, whatever you need.

Commissioner Keon: It should be included on our legislative agenda.

State Representative Rodriguez: Any support you need and maybe you determine there is an Attorney General's opinion, maybe the more appropriate route. If it's statutory change please let me know what your determination is and loop me in and we'll start working on it.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Perfect.

State Representative Rodriguez: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

Mayor Cason: You'll brief us later what your idea is.

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Fernando Armandi.

Mr. Armandi: Good morning Commission and Mayor, I'd like to add my voice. My name is Fernando Armandi; I live in the North Gables for the last 12 years. I'd like to add my voice to the heartfelt and compelling statements that we have heard from the residents of this City. I want to give you the "Houston, we have a problem" call. We do. I'm the former Citibank Chief Operating Officer, President of Motorola, now retired, and I've just completed 4 years as an advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Department of Defense. I have moved back to Coral Gables and we manage an investment group of real estate properties throughout the City and in the City of Miami. I have 8 unit's along Segovia Street and I'm also an active member of the University of Miami President Council where I have heard comments from parents seeking off-campus residents for our students expressing concern about the security of the City, which was never an issue before. When we elected – I want to give you a different perspective on the concerns that we have with the community and why we support the effort to improve law enforcement protection here. When we invested in this City, aside from the location and the greenery, the environmentally sensitive City, the Beautiful City that Coral Gables has always been. The number one priority that decided for our group to invest was the security at public safety. There is no more sacrosanct responsibility to a governing body in this county at the federal, state, and local level than the public safety of it's citizens and it's residents. That is the number one priority in governing as you all know is about allocation of resources and prioritization. You deal with many, many important matters on this Council, but everything pales to the need that we have for effective leadership in law enforcement and ensuring that the citizens of this City can live in peace and tranquility. In fact, at the last meeting I had with my partners, one of the deliberations that we have tabled is the possibility of exiting our investment portfolio and clearing out and leaving the City of Coral Gables and we don't want to do that. I'm encouraged this morning to hear Commissioner Quesada, Commissioner Lago, and the Vice Mayor express that you have no other priority, no more important priority than public safety. I've been in business for 35 years of my life, this representation suggesting misrepresenting and I'm not speaking to anyone police officer, I'm speaking to the management, the leadership of this City, representing a downward trend for this year that hasn't even been completed, it's an insult to the intelligence of the residents of this City.

[Applause]

Mr. Armandi: I don't want to see any of this garbage anymore. I want to see a comprehensive analysis of crime in this City and more importantly the action plan to deal with it. The gentleman that just spoke last very eloquently talked about possibly a Blue Ribbon Panel to assist in the criteria of selection and the appointment of the next professional law enforcement Chief of Police. FBI statistics and guidelines suggest that you should have 4 per 1000 residents. We are not at that level, which means that we probably have to increase the department, the capacity of the police with which to patrol the areas. We need visibility on the streets. We need a law enforcement officer, a Chief of Police that answers to this Commission, but more importantly answers to the residents, reach out and touch the residents, seek their input, report back, listen and act. I'm sickened after many, many years and I know Mr. Mayor that you've been a very honorable public servant in your life, and you know the beurocracies that we've dealt with throughout our lives. Leverage the brain power of this City, engage us, use us, we are willing to make this a better place to live, but act. We are going to be holding you accountable. We are going to be holding you accountable. Let's make this the City Beautiful that it can be once again. Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Molly Gail Kiely, is she here?

Ms. Keily: Commission, Mayor, Attorney Leen, I've been a resident of Coral Gables proudly for almost 30 years.

Commissioner Keon: Give us your name and address.

Ms. Keily: Molly Gail Keily and I live on Castile and I've proudly been a resident of this wonderful, beautiful City that I love living in and I think most of us do. Kerdyk knows me from when my two boys were very young. I'm really concerned with what is happening. I had been the Crime Watch Captain for our area for so many years and have been trying to make our neighbors aware of the crimes that have been occurring. Sometimes I feel like it falls on deaf ears, maybe right now with the high profile amount of crimes and who was targeted will bring this to attention. I think all of hopes are that what's been said here this will stay in the attention of you and won't be a ciprical kind of issue that the crime has risen and we are responding versus when it's quiet. It needs to be something that's focused on at all times because we came to the City because of it's beauty, we came to the City because it's safety, police and fire. Right now our backs are against the wall, every one of you as well as everybody within the City. A high profile case brought us here today. I hope that it will remain here. As the gentleman said, we do need to act and we need to act continuously. Our Police Chief for me, who I contacted so often about things that were going on or concerns that maybe I had with dispatch and a response, was

very proactive, was very responsive to me, dealt with it. When I sent him a message in the middle of the night, dealt with it and by that next morning it was brought before the staff and changes were made. I would like to see that occur with whoever is the new Interim Police Chief and whoever is hired from that point forward. I expect no matter how small my group is, it's about 150 people that I be responded to in a manner equating something bigger. People are telling me that they are scared to be home, they are scared to go outdoors, they are scared to walk the streets. We walk now, my husband and I, with a phone, which maybe makes us a little vulnerable, but it's that a shame that I have to be scared that I have to take off my jewelry, I have to walk with a phone that I'm concerned will be stolen by somebody targeting us as we walk. We had a block party to try to make sure that our neighbors got to know each other's faces, so that when somebody was in our neighborhood which is a very high traffic street that we would recognize that they don't belong there, that they aren't the typical people that walk our streets or drive our streets. I would encourage the citizens of Coral Gables to have block parties and to get to know their neighbors. It's not about each person protecting themselves, it's about us protecting our property, it's about us protecting ourselves, but it's about us protecting our neighborhood as a whole. I'm a southerner and it's very much what I grew up with and very much what I try to bring into my particular community or neighborhood. Hold on a second. I wrote a letter to my residents late night with something that I have stated to them many times over, and I would like to bring it forward. Some of you had been at the crime watch meeting that I had. Quesada thank you so much, Commissioner Quesada for coming. The one that I attended this past week, Pat Keon and Commissioner Lago were there and we are grateful to see you that give us some support that you are listening, you care, you are concerned and you are going to be responsive to us. That is what we need to hear. We've had excuses at the last minute, Mayor Cason, as to why you couldn't be there. I was called within an hour of my crime watch meeting that you had a ribbon-cutting ceremony. I have to ask you personally is a ribbon-cutting ceremony more important to you and to this Commission than residents who are experiencing crime in their area. About a year ago, I ran into you at a home tour and it was about 7 or 8 months ago and I personally went up to you and asked you a question to say I was very concerned about what was happening at that point in time in my neighborhood and at the City at a larger glance and that we needed to get the information out so that people could protect themselves, they could protect the property, they could protect the neighborhood. You told me very specifically and my residents know this because I've talked about it many times in an e-mail, under no circumstances would that information goes out. Now we are finding – very clearly and I can go back to records that show my conversation with my residents. At that point in time you weren't willing to get the information out. Now we find ourselves at a time where people have been victimized, people have been scared; things are starting to happen with a different MO, with the woman in the yard being forced into her house. I heard that it was a situation with the doctor who was coming in late at night was robbed as he got out of his car. Now we are starting to get really scary crimes that are taking on a different profile than what has

previously happened. How can you say as our Mayor that you aren't willing to get that information out and leave us so vulnerable? Your responsibility is to this City and to the development of this City, but it's to each and every one of us citizens to protect us, as with the Commission, it is to protect us also. We get a loud message that you don't care about us and our safety when you tell us you cannot be at our crime watch meeting, you cannot get the information out. How do you respond to that?

Mayor Cason: I attend crime watch meetings and I've never said that the information shouldn't go out. In fact, we provide the information at crime watch meetings from the Police Department, we are not hiding information and we are looking now to get a handle on what we can do moving forward to solve the problems.

Ms. Keily: You very clearly without mistake told me those very words, without mistake. I do not lie and I find it offensive and just awful on your part because now we are at a part where we are all fearful of being in our homes, and our neighborhoods, and going away.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Freddy Balsera.

Mr. Balsera: Good afternoon Commissioners, neighbors, my name is Freddy Balsera, 2020 Ponce de Leon Boulevard. I am a citizen of Coral Gables, a taxpayer, business owner and now a victim of crime in Coral Gables. I want to start by talking about this presentation we had by the Police Department. It was pathetic. That's the only word we can use to describe that presentation. It looked more like the "Keystone Cops" than the Coral Gables Police Department and quite frankly, Ms. Manager, the fact that you would scurry over the last couple of days to have these folks come up here and make that pathetic presentation is embarrassing and really questions your capabilities as a City Manager.

[Applause]

Mr. Balsera: I feel bad for my neighbors, I think it's embarrassing for our neighbors and you all should be outraged that the response that you get from the management of this City and the leadership of the Police Department after a week where the number one story in this town has been crime in Coral Gables during a Commission meeting that every single last media outlet is here with cameras and pens reporting what is happening. That this is the presentation that you are going to give to the people of Coral Gables is truly outrageous and what it tells me is that

there is a complete lack of leadership both at the Police Department and here in the City administration and here at the Commission. I want to thank Commissioners Quesada and Lago, specifically. When I was robbed they called me that night, I've spoken to them every single day since. I've had numerous conversations with Commissioner Kerdyk whom I've known close to 20 years, Ms. Keon, I don't know you, but I'm sure if you knew me we would have spoken.

Commissioner Keon: I would have spoken to you – yes.

Mr. Balsera: Mayor Cason would have loved to have spoken to me. I would have loved that you would have returned my phone call. I would have loved that you would have returned my e-mail and I want to echo the statements....

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: I returned your e-mail and asked you if you will meet with my office yesterday.

Mr. Balsera: Mayor, I couldn't hear what you said because folks are applauding, but it doesn't matter. Excuses are tools of the weak and right now you are showing weak leadership.

[Applause]

Mr. Balsera: The biggest problem that I see here is that there is still not complete recognition that there is a problem and when you have people in life, when you have a friend that's an alcoholic or has a drug problem, the first thing you need to do before you can treat the problem is recognize that there is a problem, but the comments that I here show me that some of the folks that lead our City don't recognize there is a problem. I wrote some notes as I heard folks speak. Some called it an issue in the media; you Mayor, yesterday in your interview and thank you for finally after six days coming out and speaking because we were all wondering where you were. Your comment in the media was that it was poor communication. No, this is not about issues in the media, this is not about poor communication, this is about a crime spree in Coral Gables and a crisis in confidence by the City, by the citizens, I'm sorry – a crisis in confidence by the citizens, and Commissioner Lago said it earlier, this is simple. We just need to figure out how we are going to stop crime and restore confidence in the hearts and minds of the people of Coral Gables. That's your number one task here today. Talking about numbers, having people come up here and try to convince us that this doesn't exist with these cockamamie numbers is insulting, completely insulting.

[Applause]

Mr. Balsera: I think it was Kirk Menendez who said it or Fernando Amandi who spoke very eloquently, you want numbers these are the numbers, raise your hands if you've been burglarized, those are the numbers, those are the numbers. So these are the people you need to pay attention to, these are the issues that you need to address. You have a huge opportunity today in choosing an Interim Chief, that's a first step in starting to restore confidence. Choose an Interim Chief that people in the community will respect, that people in the community know, that people in the community will immediately say, you know what?- that person is in charge, I know change will start immediately. You need someone that the minute they walk out of this City Commission Chamber and goes to Coral Gables Police Department, the minute they head over there they start effectuating change, not continuing with the same strategies that clearly have not worked. Crime is up folks. Wake up. There is a crime epidemic in Coral Gables and it's up to you all to fix it and I hope and I pray for the sake of my wife, who is terrorized in our house and for the sake of my children who I had to explain to them why the door was smashed in, why there were people showing up and asking about crime. I had to explain to a 9 and 7 year old that there are people that come inside folks houses and steal things. The way I explained it was about the Grinch that stole Christmas. I said, you know what, remember the Grinch that stole Christmas?- well that's what we had, so that my kids also aren't terrorized. So I hope and pray that instead of talking about statistics and studies and numbers and all this crap, that you guys focus on the problem at hand, which is a crime epidemic and start showing leadership. Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Bella Smith.

Commissioner Keon: I'm sorry, what was the name?

Mayor Cason: Bella Smith.

Commissioner Keon: She left.

Mayor Cason: Alicia Amaya. Silvia Unzueta.

Ms. Unzueta: Well, it's now good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, members of the Board, staff. The issue of crime is quite complex and I concur with my friend Freddy. I was the recipient of a home invasion earlier, some 34 years. I had been held hostage for an hour and 45 minutes, along with two other people on Pizarro Street and I lead the entire effort to close 28 streets, only 27 were closed because of the....residents didn't have the money and it ranged between \$13 to \$16,000 to close the streets. At that time two women had the audacity of writing to the City Manager and

saying that I was duplicating stuff I was using in closing streets in my County job. I was a high level County official. I needed to have been insane to be using County stuff because I know that is illegal and jeopardize a position that was in excess of one hundred grand, but it is the level of harassment that you are going to get when you are really serious about turning the City around. You cannot do it in a vacuum. We are living in a society where people are hungry, many things are happening out there and we are not an island, we are in the middle of this entire hub. Not all streets can be closed, but some need to get consideration for closures and somebody has to have the intestinal fortitude to make that happen. The other thing is I can't understand, you are putting, you are Acting Manager on the spot when you should have already hired a permanent Manager. The authority of an Interim Manager is totally different from one that you have blessed with the full powers of that office, and don't delay it. I am very proud of the job you've done. I think you have – they threw you to the wolves and you have battled with them and I congratulate you for what you have done, but ultimately the City needs a permanent City Manager. The streets are not safe. We spend some two years and you can look up the North Gables Advisory Committee, you shouldn't just look at what happens in the north end. Years back we discovered that there was a differential deployment of police and assets to south and north and there was a differential time responses to north and south. The squeaky wheel gets the oil. I guess this is the oil that we have right now that is squeaking really hard. I have no qualms with you Mr. Mayor. You have been to my street to look – I did a study back in '94 that my present residents on Astoria are short 8 or 9 lights. Today and I have been working on this since '94; the damn 9 lights have not been put in place even though we the residents are paying for it. Beyond that, I have been looking at the it'sy bity lights that we have, many of them are totally not working. I researched it further, I came to conclude that Florida Power and Light that I assume is a major lobbyist with the City, Florida Power and Light charges \$6 per light to change the bulbs and in additional charges that could be as high as \$10 to \$12. Check it; research it, because I've done the research. So some people like to live in darkness, but some of my neighbors are spending an outrageous amount of money. I'm going to find out what has been some of the donations of Florida Power and Light, they are ruthless. I find out the other day, the Public Works Interim, adorable, great responsive.

Commissioner Lago: Excuse me, who did you meet with?

Ms. Unzueta: I have met with many people.

Commissioner Lago: Because I have an answer for you in regards to when you are talking about FPL. I can give you an update if you'd like one.

Ms. Unzueta: Well allow me to finish.

Commissioner Lago: Of course. Of course.

Ms. Unzueta: I would love to hear what you have to tell me. The Public Works Department has been diligently working, but it's like a City in an impasse and you cannot just look at the north end. I have a hunch that in other neighborhoods things get responded to considerably faster. I put a public information request regards stats and I knew what was going to happen. What you just saw today because it took us more than a year to really understand what was happening back then, so I know that it's a legalize that never the two shall meet with regular American vernacular. Yes, you should consider a Blue Ribbon Committee of residents that know what they are doing, that have lived through that before. I don't want anybody's head, I'm not into that and you should have a very able police officer to lead this department. I have my preferences and they are people that have been not allowed to attend crime watch meetings. That is absurd. I have always; I have always respected the work of Major Hudak, absolutely. I have respected the work and I'm putting the name out there because you don't need to invent it, you don't need to base often million consultants because you need somebody....Mr. Lago.

Commissioner Lago: First of all, I appreciate you being and I'm sorry about your home invasion, no words...

Ms. Unzueta: There is a View Point article in '93 in June or July, you can read what happened.

Commissioner Lago: OK. But no words that I can tell you today could quell your fears and right that wrong, but I do want to tell you one thing in regards to FPL which is important. Since I was elected along with Commissioner Keon, Commissioner Quesada in negotiations with FPL in regards to the power lines, the expected power lines on US-1, hopefully we are still fighting that as a City. Commissioner Quesada came up with a great idea at that point to as part of our negotiations to take control of the 4,000 lights in the City. You are correct, FPL...

Ms. Unzueta: I think it's 5,000.

Commissioner Lago: You could be correct.

Commissioner Quesada: Public Works has the detail.

Ms. Unzueta: Yes. I met them; they were in the street doing...

Commissioner Lago: The reason why I'm telling you this is because for the first time ever, we actually have the capabilities to take control of those 4 to 5,000 lights. There was an individual who I'm sad to say, I was going to mention before, today is her last day at the City of Coral

Gables, she took another job, her name is Sonia Succar, she is the one that did an entire light inventory of all the lights in the City. That was the first and initial step in regards to addressing the problem that we have. Now that we have that survey complete, we are going to be able to now move forward in a direction where I, my goal, I can't speak for the Commission, which I think they are also going to agree with me is and I met with several vendors, is a transition from the standard lighting that we have to privatizing the lighting and moving toward a LED alternate, which by the way, I'm not reinventing the wheel, all other municipalities are doing this already. They are saving an enormous amount of money, not only in maintenance because those lights last 15 years and we've discussed this in the Commission for over the past six months probably what?- Commissioner Keon, Vice Mayor, maybe 3 or 4 times, so that is forthcoming. Do I wish that the City worked like the private sector does, which is what I'm used to, which a lot of the individuals here are used to?- I'm tired, I'm tired of trying to deal with FPL, I'm tired of trying to deal with certain things which are stopping us from moving in a direction. The streets need to be better lit, we need new technology, which results in the lights not going out every six months and having to have somebody go out there from FPL, which takes them a month to resolve the issue, when we all know that LED lights take probably about a life span of 12 to 15 years. So it is forthcoming. I ask you to be patient; you've been sufficiently patient since 1994. Just give me a chance, OK, give this Commission a chance.

Ms. Unzueta: The 1994 issue relates to having to add lights because they were never sufficient lights, the light volume is inappropriate for the street.

Commissioner Lago: Let me just address that one issue. The biggest step, the two biggest steps have already occurred. Thank you to Commissioner Quesada, we took control of those lights that was a huge deal that FPL in negotiations relinquished, number one. Number two, the light study was completed by Sonia Succar and that's now a tool that we have so we know where every single existing light pole, light fixture is, the type of light fixture it is and what's going on. Now we can move forward in the direction of hopefully budgeting for a project which will meet the adequate needs of our City, OK.

Ms. Unzueta: Thank you. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Daley Dennis or Dennis Daley.

Mr. Dennis: Good afternoon, thanks for the time. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, I'm Dennis Daley; I live at 1304 Capri Street. You've seen numerous e-mails and I appreciate the time today. Thanks for having a forum here as well. I started working with Chief Weiner several

months ago and I was fortunate enough to get to go to the COMSTAT meeting and so I think the City Clerk passed these out, there are two pages of statistics that came from the COMSTAT meeting, which is the Coral Gables statistical look-back of crime each month. It's very effective; they actually do a very good job with it. The Police Department actually had the answers for you today; I think it was just a little bit difficult to probably portray them well. If these two pages – one is vehicle crime for the month of June. The second page is burglaries for the month of June. So if take vehicle crime – there were 32 vehicle crimes north of US-1 to the North Gables, so just the area that we are talking about today, so it was 32 that month; and then burglaries there was 27. So north of US-1 to North Gables you have almost 60 instances that month and that's what victim crime is. Victim crime is auto thefts, auto break-ins, burglaries, stolen bikes and so on. So you have 60 a month. Now if you do the math the mean in the area is around 55, so you are looking at almost 700 instances a year north of US-1 to the North Gables – 700 a year. If you take that out to 3 years you have almost 2,000. So you have 2,000 of these instances that are victim crimes in 3 years in the North Gables, there are not 2,000 homes in the North Gables. So the probability of people having being victimized is really high. What we are seeing is, I think, we are seeing it concentrated in the North Gables area, which is what's going on now. It's gotten worse, I feel, and filtered into the North Gables because the deterrent force has slipped year-after-year-after-year. Patrol unit's used to patrol our neighborhood all the time; we would see them all the time when we are in the yard playing soccer and stuff. We don't see them anymore. The deterrent force is gone. So you can see why people are here today, the numbers aren't hard to figure out. If you look at the COMSTAT briefings from the last three months, 40 slides, take 2 out, add them up and do the math, you can see right away what numbers you need. This is really easy to do. I did it in 30 minutes. So we don't need a lot of studies, they've got all the data, it's right here. I gave copies of them out. Simply do the homework on it. This was easy. The last thing I'd leave you with is sorry to see the Chief leave, you know, I think he was on the right track. I think you have an excellent police force. I think you need good leadership and I think you guys need to be good leaders for them as well. So I appreciate the time today, but the answers are all right here, so you know, thanks again for the time and best wishes.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Luis Palacio.

[Note: Ms. Maria Palacio came to the podium by mistake to speak]

Mr. Palacio: Mr. Mayor, I don't want to be redundant. I thought I had changed my sex so anyway. By the way, that portrait behind you Mayor doesn't do you any justice, but that's alright. I don't want to be redundant because I think that the people that have spoken before me have been extremely eloquent in telling you what it is that is happening. When there is election time you come to us to support you, now we are all coming to you to give us the support that we need. You can look – you can go to Publix like I go to Publix and one thing that I do, I have a great deal of respect for our police officers because every time they put the uniform on and they go out they are putting their lives on the line. I ask them always how things are happening within the Police Department and the one thing that has been clear to me is that Major Ed Hudak is the leader that should be extremely considered for the position of Chief of Police. Everyone that I talk to supports him.

[Applause]

Mr. Palacio: After 30 years in Coral Gables I feel like a rookie because many people have been here so many years, but his is our City, we love our City, but we want to know that it's a safe City where we can raise our families, and it's unfair to the City Manager, the Acting City Manager, she is just being in the position for a short while and I know that there are a lot of things, it's a complex business when you run a City. So what we want to do as citizen's support you and we want you to support us. Thank you so much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

Mayor Cason: Aurelio Durana.

Mr. Durana: Good afternoon Mr. Mayor, Commissioners. I'm not going to mince any words. I believe the Police Department is a broken system, the problems that we face are systemic, the top braze of the Police Department with the exception of Major Hudak – cares more about preserving their privileges than protecting the citizens of Coral Gables. I said the top braze of the Police Department with the exception of Major Hudak care more about protecting their privileges than protecting the citizens of Coral Gables. You see a prime example of that in the direct connect program that is only available to businesses in Coral Gables that means that means that businesses here are able to connect their alarms directly to the Police Department. They don't have to go through ADP and the 5 to 10 minute delay in dispatching police officers to an emergency. I consider that to be a violation of the equal protection laws of the constitution of the State of Florida and the United States of America. We seem from a moral standpoint, we seem to be to care more about protecting personal property in the downtown areas than we do about

protecting human lives. I am particularly concerned; the City of Miami now is hiring a great deal more police officers. That is going to have the same effect upon our residents as the direct connect program has had, which is a displacement of crime into the residential neighborhoods. The department is also – and I have no problem with the troops on the ground, 99 percent of the officers that I have dealt with are very professional law enforcement personnel. We have the City of Miami hiring a vast number of police officers, that is going to bring down their crime is going to displace it into the abutting areas of Coral Gables, make no mistake about that. We need to prepare now, we should have prepared before; the lack of leadership, the pathetic presentation that was made by the braze of the Police Department, by the Acting City Manager, frankly it's an embassament to all of us. I have lived here for 24 years; I have worked here for 24 years, my children live here, my grandchildren live here, they go to school here. I used to be a member of the City's Anti-Crime Committee; we had oversight over the Police Department. I know what I'm talking about. There is no sense of responsibility when you have your top braze who live in Juno Beach or they live in Broward County or they live God knows where, there is not a sense of community among those individuals. It's a para-military organization, basically that we have nowadays, maybe necessitated by the acts of terrorism that we have suffered, but nevertheless it's not an organization that is inclined to step out of the air-conditioned police car and say, let me meet the neighbors. That is simply not happening. It happens with the bicycle patrol, where does it happen?- downtown Miami, I mean downtown Coral Gables. What is in downtown Coral Gables?- is the businesses and it's also the businesses that employ the off-duty officers and that's a practice that you need to look at too, because as I understand it, a business owner can hire an off-duty police officer and pay that officer in cash. You are creating a system of loyalty to a business because that's where my cash is coming from. I've never hired an off-duty police officer and I think it's unbecoming to take cash from somebody who employs a person with a badge. So those are issues that are systemic, this is not new; this has been going on for many years. So I ask you to take a broader look, no more consultants please, alright. We have the manpower; we have the brain power in-house. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Alfonso Perez.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I think he left.

Mayor Cason: Amelia Mel Maguire.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: She may have left. I think she left.

Commissioner Keon: I think she may have left.

Mayor Cason: Marisol Arboleda-Diaz.

Ms. Arboleda-Diaz: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Marisol Arboleda-Diaz. I live in the North Gables on San Benito Avenue and I own a construction business here in the City and several investment homes. I'm going to echo on every other person's comments here, so I'm not going to talk at length about that, but I'm going to add to it. I've been a victim and I've been terrorized personally by crime where my purse was stolen from my car in front of my on the 500 Block of Minorca. I was taunted by the thief for weeks where my life was threatened with death via daily phone calls to me. My case went unsolved. On the 600 Block of Mendoza I also own a home. My house was broken into where all the appliances were stolen, the house was vandalized. This happened between the hours of 6 (a.m.) and 8 a.m. in the morning, with two trucks parked outside. The intruder was not afraid; he was there for a while. How will this Commission help in keeping the citizens of Coral Gables safe, my family, my neighbors, and me? Help us, we need it. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Alberto Manrara.

Mr. Manrara: Good afternoon Commission members. We all know you work very hard for us, it's unfortunately you can't go to Publix and no be accosted by the residents and the citizens. I know Quesada; I run into you at the beach, we talk about this, the Mayor last night and others. I am not surprised that all of you are against crime, I'm not surprised that the City Manager that says even one instance of crime is one too many. I was very surprised to see your reaction today when the discussion began as to what appears to be either your lack of familiarity or your involvement in managing the City Manager, and through that position our Police Department. I am not surprised with the typical political knee-jerk reaction to ask for more money, more money from those of us who are back here to solve problems that should be solved with the money that we have already given you, the very generous budget that you have to spend. When this day is over, members of the Commission, you need to look at yourselves in the mirror and say, where did this problem begin?- have I been forceful enough in reviewing the work of the Manager and through the Manager the work of the Police Department?- because your comments today did not seem to indicate that you are really that familiar with what's going on. The gentleman here who spoke and had to explain to his little children why there was burglary, his anger is the anger of a lot of people here today. You did not need to have to wait for the water to boil to know that the water was hot, yet we've had to have this meeting here to in effect have you all of a sudden be

hit over the head to find out that there is a crime problem. I have lived in the same house in the 500 Block of Sevilla since 1978. During that time period two cars have been stolen from my driveway, one car has been vandalized, we've had a "peeping Tom" incident, and this one we did not report but my wife's orchids were stolen from our front yard. And I'm concerned when I drive up at home at 9 or 10 o'clock at night that maybe there might be somebody lurking in the bushes or somewhere. So we are all victims. If we are afraid to get to our homes at night we are already victims, whether we've had somebody literally put a gun to our heads or not, and you as a Commission have a responsibility to address this. You need to ask the hard questions, you need to hold the Manager accountable, because that is the one person that you are hiring and through that position everybody else is hired, but you've got to ask those questions. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Yvonne Fournier.

Ms. Fournier: Yes, good afternoon, City Manager, Commissioners, City Attorney. Basically everything that I was going to say has been said. I back-up the lighting issue; I'm glad that the City is taking care of that. Two more, how do you say, frightening situations that I encountered have been in my backyard and having somebody walk to our backyard with me there and lighting may be something that could help being that the thieves or whoever comes into – the trespassers we could see them or other people could see them on the streets. I'm all for that, for the street closures, for the cameras, and I have a question for the City Attorney concerning the alarm issue and the notification to the police. Do we have to wait until the legislature for the state works on it?- or can we do it via the ordinance appointing the Police Department as our agent to receive the calls when an alarm goes off?

City Attorney Leen: I looked at the statute; I believe it can be done by ordinance.

Ms. Fournier: OK, so we don't have to wait?

City Attorney Leen: Ultimately the Commission would have to have a hearing on that. We could make an emergency ordinance based on what's been said today.

Ms. Fournier: Yes. I would really appreciate that.

City Attorney Leen: I'm going to start working on that right away. I believe the Commission would want that.

Ms. Fournier: Thank you. That's all I have to say. Thank you very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Maria Palacio. You are not Luis.

Ms. Palacio: Yes, Luis is part of my family; we all became family here today. I live in 712 Zamora Avenue and my car has been broken 5 times. Last Thursday we had an attempted robbery in my house and yesterday when I spoke with the officer that came to the house, because I was on a business trip, and somebody else was in my house and when she told me what happened I said, let's just call the police and I had a very good experience with the police that have been to my house. They've been very attentive and very wisely....but yesterday he mentioned something that I need to tell you. He said, the past City Manager just destroyed our department, he basically destroyed it, and we feel totally unsupported. He said when you call, right after you called I had 5 more calls right after you called, they are in my car waiting for me to do something. So I have two children and I like the Gables and I'm a UM alumni, I go to Christ United Church. We also own and I really would like you to note this down, we also own a school for children with autism here in the Gables, primary school and therapy center. It's 107 Antilla Avenue, it's inside the same Lutheran Church. On Mondays when I go there with my husband, I go to the playground with those kids go, my own kid, whose in the autism spectrum and I find sex paraphernalia and drug paraphernalia in the premises, inside the playground. I mean we have called the police before, the fences have been broken in to and we know there are people at night that do not do nice things in that playground. So, one is my home, but the second one is where my 26 kids with autism go and I really would like you to pay attention to that as well. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Barbara Reese.

Ms. Reese: Good afternoon Mayor and Commissioners. Two of you Commissioners, Pat and Bill, I've approached you all, we've sat here and talked about many issues involving the City of Coral Gables over a very long span of years and I think this one tops the list. Street closures they are nothing, this is really a very paramount issue and two years ago I was burglarized and I'm here to speak on behalf of my new neighbors, I'm so sorry, Freddy and Gloria Balsera, they moved in – first it's a great neighborhood you know and then they get robbed, and I live right – I'm at 840 Coral Way and they live right behind me. Unfortunately, I was burglarized and of course I didn't tell them that when they moved in, so anyway, I was burglarized with the alarm on in the middle of the afternoon, 11 o'clock, it was around noon time. This seems to be a paramount time. So I know what we are thinking about how to fight crime. I think if we know that this is a definite time between 11 (a.m.) and 2 (p.m.), it should be where the police presence should be the most. Since they were broken into, I can say I have seen no police presence. The only police presence I have was two mornings ago, a police officer knocked on my door to ask me some questions about the burglary, but I think one of our phrases we should have for the Gables right now with this crime episode is "Act Now". Act now and get the policemen in these areas where the crime is actually happening. I mean, we all want to be safe, we want to walk safe, live safe. My daughter just moved back from Memphis, Tennessee and she is going, are you kidding me?- I mean this is happening in our backyard and it's really very, very disconcerting that we pay the money we pay for taxes. The police officers, I think, they are there when you call, but they can only be so many places. If they are not assigned they cannot. Some of them hang out at Venetian Pool, but I think they need to be a little more present. Pat lived right down the street from me for many years on Andalusia and I just think we don't see that police presence and I think we can assign them right now to be around the golf course, to be right here on these little side streets. Where we live Toledo is just a little haven for people just to come in and out, and I think we know these areas, I think if the police presence can be there right now before we start dealing with all these facts and figures. It is what it is. We can all sit here as we said today, we have all been burglarized a lot of us in this room, whether our cars have been vandalized, I've been three times vandalized. Now I'm forced I'm going to have to get a camera because I'm starting to feel maybe my husband is right, maybe we should downsize and move out. It's come to that point. I don't know. I think the answer is to act now, not do these tests, surveys and say, oh we are going to do this and you give them another two weeks – another two weeks how many more burglaries are going to happen in the Gables? We just had two more on San Amaro. A few years ago we had 10 on San Maria, one of the best streets in the Gables, I mean that's a lot of robberies, and when it came to two years ago how crime was in the Gables, it kind of got swept under the carpet. I went to crime watches and we talked about it, Oh no, we are doing really good here. I don't know what you are hearing. What I'm hearing is what's actually happening and we brought it to the attention of the crime watch, how can you say there is no crime when we know

10 of my friends are robbed on Santa Maria. So there was crime at that time and it wasn't made a big issue, and now all of a sudden unfortunately because of your robbery this is all really, really managed to come to fruition and it's something that has been around, this isn't anything really new, it's just something that is now becoming so paramount. I really think we need to act now. Thank you for your time.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Albert Poza.

Mr. Poza: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Albert Poza, been a citizen here at Coral Gables probably for almost 28 years and I think I have a little bit of a different, a little bit of an artistic, and a little bit of reality, a little bit of numbers, a little bit of art. I'm an architect by profession so I have to deal with beautiful things, but the reality of budgets, the reality of dimensions, the reality of beurocracy, codes and so forth; and City of Coral Gables even when my father used to drive me around here it was known as the City Beautiful. I think lately in the commercial aspects of the City, it's almost like we want to make it the City Super Beautiful and by that I mean that when you look at the five-year budget, which I picked out of the Internet, and you look at what's been going on in the commercial districts and I think somebody mentioned it a little while ago, the homeowners, the neighborhoods, have kind have been left to themselves. If you want to beautify them, you beautify them, you go the Board of Architects, you get your plans approved, you beautify. In the commercial districts and I know that there are impact fees that get added to that, gasoline portions, gas taxes get added to that, but in the next five years from Fiscal Year 2014 all the way to 2018, there is close to \$25 million of streetscape improvements, that's \$5 million a year on landscaping. If there is one thing that Coral Gables is famous for, and I don't mean famous for today, famous for 10 years ago, famous for 30 years ago when I moved in, was the abundance of trees. We do not need any more trees. We need more police protection. If you look at what is actually spent. I took some time so that I wouldn't be putting one by you. I walked the two City blocks from Ponce de Leon to LeJeune and I also called a colleague of mine to get a little information from a landscape architect's point of view. So I said the architect the part of the artistry and the part of the numbers that comes to play right here. Between Ponce de Leon and LeJeune there are 57 and I won't get technical terms, there are 57 of the very bold, spiny looking palms at the lower level. There are 62 – 30-foot high date type palms, each of those palms has two lights pointing at them, that's 238 lights. They are all irrigated and they all have lower ground planting. I took some quick numbers and I know that the landscaper that provides that has other contracts with the state and I know that the City gets tremendous price cuts on that, but nevertheless it still cost money and even if you were to get them for free, which

I know you don't, there is a maintenance cost forever. When I went the other day and counted all these trees at 8 o'clock or something in the morning, the lights were on; somebody must be paying that bill. I took some quick numbers; I cut it in half, based on what the cost of those plants is. I put the irrigation for free, I put the lower ground plants for free, and I put the lights at extremely cheap cost. It came out to about \$1.25 million on two streets. I don't think we need 119 plants and 238 lights to beautify two City blocks. I think probably a fourth of that would not only make it the City Beautiful, it would make it extremely beautiful. If you kind of go forward in the current budget and everybody here is aware of similar things have been done along Ponce. When you go from 8th Street to Flagler, the northern most extension of the beautification project of Coral Gables, there is \$1.8 million worth of streetscaping improvements. If you were just to take a decimal of that and you put it toward police patrol, they don't have to be in gas-guzzling cars, they don't have to be anything, just be in little scooters, they could be on bicycles, they could be in anything, you take several of these millions and it would put a lot of police officers with the presence of moving around the North Gables, the South Gables, Central Gables, I'm not even going to call out which Gables, I think they are all Gables and they are all beautiful and I think somehow it's gotten a little bit over the top and there is a lot of money. Somebody spoke here about, well we are going to ask for money to do this, money to do that, I don't think you have to ask for anything. I think all you've got to do is look again at your numbers, just put 10 percent, 20 percent, whatever your accountant or budget people tell you and put it toward police patrol. Nobody could ever tell me that if there were 40 plants, 40 palms, in those streets as opposed to 119, it would look any better or any worse.

[Applause]

Mr. Poza: If you multiply that out times everything that obviously what's spent is spent, but right here in your own numbers, \$24,646,200 on streetscape improvements. I'm not talking about site lighting that's a different number and \$1.8 (million) from 8th Street to Flagler, you take a percentage of that whatever an officer gets, it doesn't have to be the highest paid, the most seniority, it could be a rookie, whoever with some communications, walkie-talkies, cell phones, hey some things going on here on this street, you ambush it and it's over, you get it before it's done. It's not too much to ask for; it's just a little percentage of the huge improvement budget. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Ingrid Kohler.

Ms. Kohler: My name is Ingrid Kohler and all the previous speakers have mentioned quite a few things that I wanted to talk about, so I will not go there, but I will mention that I want to talk about human behavior, and usually we have in companies, here at City Hall, regardless where you go the leadership will listen to the employees, to the community, to appease them and there is no action. Hopefully this meeting will make you all very proactive because what happens is when we don't act we are waiting for a tragedy and hopefully this tragedy will not happen to any of you or to members of our community. I live at the beautiful building at 600 Biltmore Way and a few people have been attacked there, mugged there. I am myself a victim of crime here and one of the interesting aspects is that when the gentleman from the police department talked about the graphs which are an insult, sadly enough it's not his fault it's no one's fault, is that we need to consider the crime. The intent of crime is already crime whether perpetrated or not, so how much of this is happening in our community as was mentioned before who knows the numbers, we don't have the numbers. I was threatened quite a few times by a member of the community who lived in a previous building here in Coral Gables where I was living. I had to call over 12 times, if not more, in order to get some action from the police department until I was threatened to death. That is no funny matter and one of the issues about the police department is that it's ambivalent. I have met many members of the police department who are very helpful, very gracious, well-mannered and others who will approach us as if we were the, let me say not the terrorist, but we were the crime offenders, so the behavior of members of the police department should be reviewed how we are treated. The City of Coral Gables is not a shopping destination; it is a community where human beings live and the consequences that we do have a business community. A previous speaker said, you know how is it possible that the businesses receive more attention, police attention or protection than it's residents. It's uncanny, today is September 11th and we are talking about tragedies. If you don't do anything about this we are going to experience a tragedy and then we will react? What are we waiting for? It is unacceptable to be in a community like the beautiful City of Coral Gables where the outward is pretty to look at and yet it's citizens, it's residents are living in fear. Something has to be done and you need to take it seriously and this is not a political campaign, this is something that needs to be done because of your own values about life, about the residents of this beautiful City. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Carlos Gimenez.

Mr. Gimenez: Good afternoon members of the Council, for the record Carlos Gimenez, life-long resident of Coral Gables, currently reside at 517 Minorca Avenue. Here to address this very important issue for our community. Obviously, some of you know me personally, most of you do

I think and my family very involved in government locally. Understand how the process works, understand what the policy should be in order to bring about the most effective and efficient government for the resident and taxpayer. One of the issues that I hold most dear is transparency and openness in government and I'm sad to say for the last several years here at the City of Coral Gables that has not been the case and that comes from the leadership from the top down. Not to besmirch someone who is not here and can't defend themselves, but I was not impressed at all with the tenure of Mr. Pat Salerno and we have remnants of that administration that are continuing to impede the progress of our City. We need to extract them and extract them immediately. Case in point – this graph, are you kidding me?- this graph which shows year-to-year crime statistics and then they show a precipitous drop this year which we are not even through all the way. Come on, please. We are not stupid; we are very smart in this City. I think we have a very enlightened electorate and resident and business owner in this City, please don't do this to us, please don't make us look like we are stupid or think like we are stupid. This cannot continue to happen and this is the misinformation that this community has been receiving from the City, not just from the Police Department, but from other departments during Mr. Salerno's tenure it continues to this day that we are continuing to impede the progress of this City for the betterment of all, and I for one am not going to stand for it any longer. As to the issue of Police Department and what the issues are there: They clearly had a communication problem, I agree with the Mayor there, absolutely had a communication problem. You didn't see them out in the streets. We also had a problem with command control. The command staff strategy has totally been backwards. Instead of placing more marked unit's on the field, we are taking them away replacing them with undercover personnel. People need to see the police on the streets. You see the police on the streets then criminals are probably going to stay away. I remember Freddy Balsera, he is my business partner, we work together in the center of Coral Gables, three blocks from my house. I walk to work. I spend a lot of time on the streets of Coral Gables walking, I'm an epileptic, I cannot drive, so I walk everywhere and I was telling him I couldn't remember the last time I saw a Gables squad car drive on my block of Minorca other than responding to a call, and it just so happened this Monday after the firestorm was created, I see the first squad car in about 4 or 5 years, and that directly correlates to the time that Mr. Salerno started his tenure here at Coral Gables, and the shift was made in the Police Department. We brought in people from the outside that don't understand our community and frankly don't deserve to understand our community. We need people in leadership at the Police Department who understand Coral Gables, who have the respect of the elected officials, the respect of the electorate, the respect of the business owners in the City, and there is one person whose name has been mentioned several times here and I'm going to mention it again because that's Major Hudak.

[Applause]

Mr. Gimenez: And the reason I'm going to mention his name again is unfortunately this whole entire path of misinformation that has been taken upon the prodigy of Salerno has started to attack Mr. Hudak. I'm not going to stand for that. Mr. Hudak has my respect, he has the respect of this community, and he has the respect of most of the people in this room, and he should have your respect too. He understands Coral Gables. He understands what it's going to take to deliver the services that the residents need and deserve. If your staff is going to start issuing memorandums two days ago, when it was clear the Chief of Police was going to resign, attacking Mr. Hudak. I need to warn you, I'm going to be watching every step you take.

Commissioner Keon: I don't think that anyone, anyone in this City, anyone in this dais, anyone in this administration has attacked anyone at all, no one has.

Mr. Gimenez: With all respect Commissioner, I can show you some documentation that's being spread around today that was issued on September 9th that directly attacks Mr. Hudak.

Commissioner Keon: You know what, if information was provided to the Commission, that was information provided to the Commission in order to make a decision, that is not an attack and there is no information that has been sent out or distributed to anyone by anyone in this City to attack anyone, and you know what, let me tell you....

Mr. Gimenez: Well Commissioner, I read the memorandum so with all due respect, I'm a lawyer, I know how to read, and it was....

Commissioner Keon: I'm asking my colleagues, has anyone that has attacked anyone?- all of you, have anyone attacked anyone?

Commissioner Lago: You have a copy of the memorandum?

Mr. Gimenez: I can get a copy.

Commissioner Keon: It's a fact sheet. Who was it given to? Yes, it's a fact sheet and it's information that is provided to the Commission with regard to a decision that's being made. Who chose to give it to anybody?- I don't know. It is not an attack.

Mr. Gimenez: Well that's a public document so that should be released to the public upon request.

Commissioner Keon: It may be released, but it is information that is provided to this Commission in order to make a decision. You know and for anyone to come here and stand here and represent that that is being distributed to attack anyone is....

Mr. Gimenez: My understanding is actually the information within that document is not entirely correct, alright.

Commissioner Keon: And you know what?- and I think those of us that have seen it have asked about it and we have dealt with it.

Mr. Gimenez: Well that's an issue that actually should be brought up for public consumption. This is exactly what I'm talking about in terms of openness and transparency in government. If you have questions about Mr. Hudak's record or the Acting Chief's record that should be addressed in public in front of the lights, in front of the cameras, in front of the residents. That is my opinion.

[Applause]

Commissioner Keon: Mr. Gimenez, Mr. Gimenez, who is your father Mr. Gimenez?

Mr. Gimenez: I don't think that's relevant in this discussion.

Commissioner Keon: Mr. Gimenez it most is because you are exceedingly knowledgeable in the operations of government and the administration of government Mr. Gimenez, you know it well.

Mr. Gimenez: I'll accept the characterization, but I still....

Commissioner Keon: You know it well, you know it well.

City Attorney Leen: Just as a parliamentarian. You know this is getting a little tense. I would ask everyone to direct their comments through the Chair, through the Mayor and that is what Robert's Rule say, not trying to stop anyone from talking, but please go through the Mayor.

Mayor Cason: Is there anything else you'd like to say.

Mr. Gimenez: That's essentially it. I just want to make sure that this process of selecting a new Chief which has to occur and then we have a new City Manager coming very soon. I'm very happy that that's going to happen and that we can continue progressing in the City. I just wanted to make sure that in terms of the potential candidates for Police Chief that everybody stands on

their own two feet that all the information is brought to light and allow them an ability to respond to any allegations made, whether it's Major Hudak or anybody else. Thank you for your time.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: We have two more before we go take a lunch break because we have something at 5 o'clock as well and a lot of other issues. Ariel Fernandez and then Enrique Lopez.

Mr. Fernandez: Good afternoon, Ariel Fernandez, 831 Monterey Street. I want to say that I'm glad that we are finally having this discussion in Coral Gables. For too long the issue of crime has been swept under the rug and we have decided not to address the issue, but guess what?- the residents have been discussing this issue. I have spoken to over 500 residents in the last two months and each one of those residents has expressed the same concern; the concern about crime in our City not being addressed. Yesterday the Chief resigned that is only the first step in addressing this issue. I believe right now we have to begin a process; this issue cannot end here today. We can't discuss this issue, send it over to the Police Department and let them deal with it. I believe it takes leadership from the Commission, I think it takes leadership from the residents, because we have an integral part in this process as well. We have the crime watch meetings, many people participate, many people are there, and we do take action, but we also expect and demand action from our elected leaders. We have to move from a reactive society that we are and Coral Gables when it comes to crime we just react. There is a crime on Mendoza, we send the police, and we deal with that issue and we try to see what we do in the future. But guess what?- we have to become a proactive society; we have to see what the criminals are doing. The criminals right now are watching this meeting trying to see what we discuss, what resolutions we bring up and they are looking for new ways to break the law. We have to do the same thing. We have to find ways to catch them before the crimes are committed and I don't think we've been doing that. In the last few months like I've said, I've spoken to many residents and it's really sad to hear from some residents that are considering leaving the City of Coral Gables because of the crime issue. Young families who have moved in, but they are concerned about leaving their children at home with a nanny, because guess what?- at noon on a Friday afternoon somebody broke into their home with the nanny home with two infants and they are considering leaving our City. A doctor who arrived home at 2:30 in the morning from a late shift, he arrived home and he was rushed in by three burglars. These are things that should not be happening. There are things that need to be addressed, again not just by the Police Department, we need to be active, I think the Commission needs to be active, and the first step is selecting a

true leader for our Police Department, somebody who has the respect of all the officers and like I said before me, the respect of the Commission and of the residents. Somebody who is a no-politics person, they are not interested in who's on what side of the issue, they are just interested in making sure that we are safe in the City of Coral Gables and as many have said before, I think the only person for that job is Ed Hudak. I think he is somebody who has worked in the department, he has seen what has worked and what has not worked in the Police Department over the last few years and he is ready to take that leadership today. We can't start a process now like the City Manager process, which has taken months to select a new City Manager, we can't do that with the Police Chief. We have a huge crime issue and we need to take action as soon as possible and I think naming a new Police Chief should be a priority today. We can't wait a few weeks; we can't wait a few months, that's something that has to take place today so a change can begin today. The last thing I want to mention is the issue of transparency. As Mr. Gimenez said there was some kind of message that was circulated for the Commission and it's alarming to hear that that was only for the Commission to see. We are residents and we demand to see all the things that are brought up to this Commission. Why?- because we are residents, we are part of this process; we want to know what you guys are talking about. There are Sunshine Laws in this State. If that was issued to the Commission we the residents should be able to see that as well, and we will hold this Commission accountable.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Finally, Enrique Lopez.

Mr. Lopez: Good afternoon Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, appointed officials, and my fellow residents. In my 20-plus years as a resident of this City, I have been a victim of crime; however, I have no plans, no plans of leaving the City. I do plan to hold the administration very accountable to make sure that we pay our police is funded and allowed to take our streets back. Having said that, I would like to first of all appeal to my fellow residents and to the elected officials with respect to our Police Department. What you saw today is strictly a reflection of the management of this City. They were told only bring the issue with burglaries, that has been the cancer that has basically affected the City in this crime. You know me; you've received many an e-mail. I've met with all of you for over 4 to 5 years. This didn't start just in the last few months, it peaked out. I'm very sorry for Mr. Balsera and his wife because I've been there, our police have responded, but as that gentleman which I really felt sorry for, like City Manager put him to, it was a hastily placed meeting last night where basically questions were asked. She wasn't even there; she was out for an hour. Now they are only as good as what they are told to do, and I'll tell you what, Ed Hudak has been mentioned, Raul Pedroso, Silverio, Masington, they are all very, very, very respectable people, let's not confuse their leadership or the lack thereof by who they are and what they are, anyone of them can fit the bill. If you decide to keep Silverio, excellent,

it's basically that interim, a new Manager will definitely make that determination. That has been the problem with the City. We've kicked the can around once again – FBI, FDLE, -- laughable. We don't need the FBI ladies and gentlemen we happen to have the best Police Department in Miami-Dade County, enviable, enviable. I've met with these individuals, I have the statistics. The many things that unfortunately the management said not to share, you all have been made aware. We don't need the FBI, we are just kicking the can down the road and I like proactive listening. I'll like to ask the City Manager's office to be that proactive in listening and responding to the residents of this, including this resident who has many a time called the office to receive, including the e-mail to all of you in public records yesterday that have never been received. Having said that, we've been buffeted by real negative reviews, but I'll tell you, I'm very proud of all of you, because we've got the trolley garage, the City rights violation, the trolley route, the crime, etc., and when you all have been made aware of the issue, which was the real hiding place, City Manager's office, you have all acted on it. So I want to thank all of you individually because when it has been brought to your attention you moved on it. Now we have another challenge. No millions in our City's reserves are dwarfed by the millions in property loss, increased insurance policy cost and the non-tangible violation of our peace, tranquility and quality of life when our homes are broken into, property stolen and become another statistic. This has been a long time coming. We had a former Manager and team who left us plenty of very expensive palm trees, selecting and support an absentee Chief, great person mind you, I had the privilege of meeting him on a one-to-one numerous places...great person, can be a good parent here at home, and make sure that we had continuously an undermanned Police Department. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, for the last seven years you've been paying for close to between 183 and 190 officers and those monies were never fully funded, that account was never funded and those went to reserves. So we are richer, but also more crime-ridden and more of a victim. We are basically playing catch-up. This started seven years ago when we made the infamous back on Richard Naue the change from zone patrol to area; it was time to video game with the City of Coral Gables. Then Manager Brown we needed to cut cost and he started doing things. So we went from zone to area. It was a disaster. Back then the Patrol Commander was Edward Hudak, do I blame him?- no, but it was the leadership that told him you will do this, because we needed to save money. I can't tell you even if there was back then and I was in front of this Commission and I will, City Clerk share with you and send it for the record today, a similar scenario. It was deja vu where I basically presented facts to this Commission that totally negated the scenario at the time. Sometimes things in the City Manager's office haven't changed, but don't blame the police, blame the leadership above the Majors, by hook or by crook they are all there and I respect them. It took the engagement of a law enforcement consultant years later to basically in June go from area to zone. Wow. Low hanging fruit, seven years the damage has been done. We are playing catch-up. We were at experimental strategy at the expense of public safety. Commissioner Lago, yes, you're right – no super hero can clean this up overnight. However, whoever you look at be it one of the four, any of them would fit the bill very well and

the permanent City Manager, let's make sure because over the years I've looked at every one of their personnel files. I know that I can tell you the yeas, the nays, the good, the bad, and the ugly, and I'm still saying they are respectful. So they need to be given an opportunity, but also the support. The City Manager's office cannot and I will not tolerate because why I got here?- because fortunately Freddy Balsera has a marketing firm and thank you Freddy, thank you for robo-calls, I know you are running for office, but I guess you are not (laughter) and the fact is, it was thanks to Freddy and you all have finally said we've had enough, but the City Manager's office cannot continue running the Police Department. They don't even know how to run the City, God forbid run the Police Department. You say there is no crime, it's an anomaly and one does not show responsible judgment. Mr. Mayor, yes you are right, we have a communication problem as this City Manager's office has been operating and continues to operate under their own rules with total disregard, total disregard to any and all input or participation from the residents, and even attempting to reach out to them. Everything iseverything is...and you know what?- again I want to thank you because whereas the residents can look to you and say, Oh they are to blame, every time you found that little flaw or you stepped up to the plate and batted that home run back. It's about time a new era has begun in the City. This is a major second event, it may be negative, no it's not, it's very positive and our City's ears is beginning to show signs of freshness. I trust you will continue to stay the course as I know you will, and challenge the president [sic City Manager] yet to come in certainty and challenges through sound ethical and responsible actions. Thank you very much for listening.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you sir.

[Applause]

Mayor Cason: Alright. We are going to take a lunch break until 2:30 (p.m.)

[Note for the Record: The Commission to a break at approximately 1:44 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 2:40 p.m.]

Mayor Cason: We are back together again resuming our discussion on the crime issue. I would like to first of all ask Commissioner Quesada and then I'm going to ask Merritt to come up and say something.

Commissioner Quesada: Thank you Mr. Mayor. I want to address a topic that was discussed at the end right before we broke and I believe it was Carlos Gimenez showed a document. When I asked to put this on the agenda, probably about a week-and-a-half ago, it was – we were discussing the stats, discussing the things that we are hearing in the community; and obviously when the Chief resigned yesterday there were already some discussions happening with staff

with the City Manager, the City Attorney and the Police Chief that it looked like it was going to happen. So at that time I was talking with the City Manager with potential Acting or Interim Chief, who was going to be in that position at that time. So I just want to be clear, I want everyone on the rest of the dais to know this, because you probably don't know this. I asked for information from the different possibilities from the Majors. You know there was a discussion related to Major Masington that he had recently resigned and he was in North Carolina or was about to go. So we had those internal discussions and then I also asked for any information related to Major Hudak because that was someone that I had in the back of my mind. I saw the document yesterday in the pre-agenda meeting with the Manager. After that meeting I e-mailed it to Major Hudak and I asked to speak to him about it and so I had a conversation with him. I sent it to him because I said, hey look, this information from your record and I have questions about it and we had a conversation about that; and I took a step further and I noticed there was an entry from Major Mark Ginn back in 1999, and called up Major Major Ginn, I got his number and I called him up last night and asked him about it. So just so that I had peace of mind with all the information that I was given so I know it was taken from his personnel record, but I just want to be clear that that information, I asked for it and that was information that I felt was necessary if we were going to get involved in the selection of an Interim Chief, that was information that was necessary for me to help my decision, because obviously – again with the Majors that we deal with. For example, I've known Scott Masington probably longer than any of the police officers because I was on the Traffic Advisory Committee before I was a Commissioner and he was the police representative. So Scott and I know each other well because we were on those Board meetings every month for several years before and obviously he was the Interim Chief when Chief Weiner was in Guantanamo, and then Major Hudak – us tall people tend to stick together, but I run into him quite a bit and Major Pedroso, Molina, on certain occasions we talk about certain issues, but that's as little as we know about you and I wanted to be more informed. So just to be clear for anyone up here that may have any concerns or anyone in the public that had any concerns about it, I specifically asked for it because I thought it was necessary so we'd be more informed.

Commissioner Keon: I asked for all of their information too.

Commissioner Quesada: OK.

Commissioner Keon: I think all of us asked for all of that information, but you know asking for information from somebody's personnel records in our capacity as a Commissioner in making a decision on what steps we might take with regard to appointing someone to a position, an administrative or being involved in the appointment whether it's appointing or ratifying someone's appointment to an administrative position within the City is not the same thing as taking out information in making it public and disseminating it throughout the City. I would have

no intention of disseminating someone's personnel record throughout the City. Now if someone wants to see it and if they are public records you certainly can go and you can ask for it, but I don't think that it is appropriate that you disseminate that information particularly when there is nothing particularly, nothing in there that is really going to affect anyone's decision.

Mayor Cason: Would you discuss the legality of personnel – I hadn't handled one of these before and it might be useful as we go forward.

City Attorney Leen: Yes. When the Commission is making the decision and I'll talk about it in a second, but when the Commission is making a decision, you are entitled to all information you would need to make the decision.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Making what decision?

City Attorney Leen: If you are going to appoint...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: But we are not – the City Manager appoints the person, we are not really making a decision. No, I understand what you are saying. I wanted to make sure

City Attorney Leen: Let me just explain my opinion, you are free to disagree, but I was asked a question. The Charter is very clear on this issue. City Manager runs the day-to-day; City Manager generally would appoint anyone in the administrative service of the City. City Commission appoints the City Attorney, the City Manager, the City Clerk. City Commission also has the authority it's expressed in one sentence to appoint or discharge or basically appoint or discharge or remove any employee within the administrative – any employee in the City, that's what it says. Now my understanding, we looked into it, that authority isn't generally used and from people I've spoken to it's generally not recommended to be used, it's there though, you do have that authority and it may be for types of circumstances like this, it may not. Ultimately that's a decision for the Commission to make. All I was saying was, if you are going to make the decision that's certainly on the table today, you are entitled to all the information you would need to make that decision. That does not make it matter of public record though; there are still exemptions that apply to information that's provided to you. That's why usually when we get a public records request for personnel matters, either the Human Resources Director or myself or my office would take a look at it to see if that sort of material exempt or not. There have been documents that have actually been provided to you where we have gotten public records requests for related to this matter where I have asserted an exemption to disclosure. Now on the question the Vice Mayor raised, I'm your legal advisor; I just want to be clear about this because there has been too much back and forth, honestly on these issues. I'm the umpire, the neutral person, I just look at the Charter, I tell you what authority you have. You have the authority to hire or fire

anyone in the City, whether you should exercise that power is within your sound discretion and of course you need a Manager ultimately who is going to do the day-to-day management of the City and you need to trust that Manager. So at some point you don't want to exercise that authority. Also, on personnel matters, if you do get involved there is a lot of information there that and there are a lot of things going on with personnel matters that cause a lot of problems that lead to lawsuit's and it just involves you in things that can be difficult. So generally that's why you have a City Manager and a Human Resources Director, but ultimately that's within your sound discretion. The last thing I would say and we talked about this, you know the one concern I have here is and this really relates to the prior administration, but the main concern I have here is I want employees to be comfortable coming to speak to the Commissioners. I want them to be comfortable and not feel that they might be punished in some way, and in my opinion they should be able to come to you with anything within your purview and you should be able to speak to them about anything in their purview. Does that mean that you should then put it on the agenda and try to overrule the Manager on some issue?- not at all. Maybe in certain extraordinary cases you have that ability and it gives you the ability to go to the Manager and raise it and it would be more than just an inquiry, you do have the ability to put it on the agenda, but that does not mean you should always use that power and I don't mean to – my vote here today is not to provide a lecture, ultimately I work for all of you. I just want you to understand that this is a complicated issue, but the legal part of it is very clear, you do have that authority.

Mayor Cason: OK. Merritt would you like to come up, you asked to speak next and then we'll talk about what we are going to do.

Mr. Steirheim: Thank you Mr. Mayor. I just appreciate the opportunity lady and gentlemen of the Commission to put something on the record that I...

Mayor Cason: Tell the audience your background that's watching.

Mr. Steirheim: I have 55 years of experience. I began my career in the City of Miami in 1959 as a Wharton graduate intern; 8 ½ years as an Assistant City Manager ultimately, City Manager of Clearwater for 6 years, moved two blocks to the Courthouse, Pinellas County Administrator for 3 ½ years; County Manager for Miami-Dade County for over 9 years, the first tour; then I died and went to heaven and I took over women's professional tennis worldwide, and did that for 4 years and then I ran the Convention and Visitor's Bureau for 9 years, and then I went back as County Manager the second time in '98 through 2001, and then I was Superintendent of Schools for 4 years, and then I've been doing a little consulting and advising ever since.

Mayor Cason: So we accept your credentials.

[Laughter]

Mr. Steirheim: Thank you.

Commissioner Keon: And you are currently in the City now.

Mr. Steirheim: Yes. I'm advising and somewhat of a consultant and I have appreciated the assignment and I hope I've made a contribution. I understand and appreciate the anger that was so prevalent this morning and the frustration. I can remember when I first became County Manager my home was robbed and things were taken out and I remember feeling that it was contaminated and it took a long time to get over that and so it's a traumatic experience. But what I have difficulty with was the savaging of the Interim City Manager by some of the speakers; it was outrageous, uncalled for, inappropriate. I have worked with a lot of professionals and I can tell you from personal observation Carmen Olazabal has not spent one minute in any activity that she didn't think was in the best interest of this City. She is a professional, I think she has done a remarkable job and you've had a lot of major issues over the last four months, I've been here since May, off and on, but she is outstanding and she didn't deserve that criticism and I just want to put that on the record. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you very much and I echo those sentiments and I know she's been working extremely hard. She didn't really ask for the job, it was thrust on her and a lot of these things like police work are not, that's not her expertise, she is an engineer from MIT, Harvard and Berkley, so she is a professional who ran operations for the City, I think she has done a wonderful job and I agree with you, I think it was not called for and I think now we need to – I don't know if you want to have – the first thing I want to say before is that I think this has been very useful today. When I said we had a communication problem, I mean both ways. I mean from the residents of the City getting accurate, timely information from us and from us hearing from the residents about their concerns. We've had a lot of discussions on police issues over the last number of months. I remember when we first started talking about the budget, we asked the Chief and the staff, do you have all the technical equipment you need in the budget?-did you get what you wanted?- and they said yes. We've been discussing the balance between patrolling versus undercover and which was more effective and you have to do both, but which one is the most effective. We talked about response times, we talked about covering every zone rather than having every one of the 12 zones, rather than 3 that we had before, that would be more effective. So we've been discussion police issues for a long time and we rely on the leadership of the Police Department to tell us, none of us are police experts on what it is we should do to help increase the feeling of security and the fact of security for the residents. So we heard today and it was very, very helpful to us. I think we got some great ideas and I think now it's time for us to, particularly as we move into discussion of the budget to look, what are we going to do to address

these citizen concerns. I think there are a lot of things that we can do and Frank you said you wanted to start this off with a discussion.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes. There are two things I want to do, I want to ask the Commission to do. Number one, on the action plan, I want to make a motion, but I want to discuss it before I make the motion. Based on what we've heard today I want to make a motion that Police Chief on Monday or Tuesday, whatever day we feel fit and I'm asking the City Manager to carry this out is, I want an action plan from the Police Department addressing each division's involvement and what is going to be done moving forward. I don't want – I want the 30,000 foot opinion and I want the sea level opinion for every different division and I want it to be shared with each one of us so we know exactly. You know for patrol, does that mean we are going to have more uniformed officers?-does it mean more undercover?- does it mean more police vehicles?- does it mean less? I want a detailed action plan what we are going to do. What is the Police Department going to do?- what are they going to do? I can't pronounce his last name so I'm going to call him Peter K. Peter K. had a petition that he talked about...

Commissioner Keon: Kouchalakos.

Commissioner Quesada: Sorry?

Commissioner Keon: Kouchalakos.

Commissioner Quesada: That guy. He had a petition, he had a number of signatures, there were a number of recommendations on there. I want the City staff and the Police Department obviously by your direction to analyze those. Should we do them?- can we do them?- those suggestions that are in there so we have a detailed answer on what can and cannot be done and whether it makes sense for us or not. The matrix report – we spent a lot of time, money, bringing those people in. I know no one wants to hear from more consultants, but the good thing is we had consultants look at these already two years ago. They did surveys; they came into our department and analyzed everything. I want a check list on what has been implemented and what has not, whatever has not been implemented to improve the efficiencies and improve the police force why has it not been implemented. Is it a monetary issue?- is it an efficiency issue?- does it not make sense? We need that clarity and the last one I'll pass it over – the thoughts I had is public outreach, what's it's going to be? Obviously, we are failing there and we need to improve there. Obviously one aspect is ensuring that we are preventing crimes, the second aspect is making sure that the residents know what we are doing and that they are involved. Whether we create a TV show for our television station saying what you should do, what you shouldn't do. I know we have crime watch meetings every week, but obviously that's not enough, we've got to do more, whether it's walking the street, I don't know what it is. So I want a detailed action plan at a

minimum addressing those five points that I just brought up there. Obviously, any other thoughts that the Commission has. As I was going through as the different speakers were speaking, really what we heard Ms. Pinon, Mr. Menendez, not enough police presence, I want you guys to address that specifically. Ms. Molly Gail Kiely talked about block parties, my neighborhood does that and I thought it very helpful, not only do you get to know your neighbors better, you know who should be in your neighborhood and who shouldn't. I thought that was a great idea. I want you guys addressing that as well in this plan. The FPL, the lighting, I think this Commission has taken a very strong affirmative step on addressing we have been doing it for months, unfortunately dealing with FPL has been a frustrating process, but obviously we've used all the leverage we can to move them as quick as possible; and also Aurelio Durana talked about direct connect for home alarms, I don't know if you recall that and I'll ask the City Attorney to look into that to see – don't give me an answer now, I just want you to make a note of that and the report that we get back from the Manager and the Chief please include that in that report as well. Those are my thoughts in the action plan.

Mayor Cason: Let me ask a couple other things to be included in that as well. First of all, I would like to know where we have on our web page, if we do; I always thought we had on our web page the weekly crime stats that come out. They are broken down, if I recall, by the 12 zones. There is a map that shows – I would like to see if it is available and should be very easy for people to get it to the extent they are interested and that sort of information. I would also recommend that we get some input from the police union. They are close to the ground. We have great relations with them; let's ask them if they have any thoughts from the point of view of the rank and file to make sure we get it from...

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Say that again, ask who?

Mayor Cason: Police union.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Oh, the police union -- got it.

Mayor Cason: Thirdly, if there is any disagreement with the conclusion of the matrix study; the matrix study took a long time. We accepted it because this was the premiere organization in the county that's done like 250 police departments, they told us here is how we can become more efficient. We were looking at that as the guide plan moving forward, if there is any disagreement about any of those elements we should know about it. Also, again we ask the former Chief two meetings ago if your equipment needs had been met?- and we were told yes, so I would like to go back, take a look the question of cameras, any other kind of technology out there. If there is something you want let us know because we are in the process of looking at the budget and we can do something about it. We were told it was taken care of, but let's take another look at it; and

the other thing we ought to do, take some thoughts, we have – with the changing of the shifts from 10 hours to 8 hours, we were told we gained 13 positions that are basically the SIT team right now. We know we have something like – how many do we have in the academy right now?- 13. Next week the first group coming out is going to be sworn in, but we were also told we have 19 vacancies. I would like to know is there anything we can do that would be helpful to accelerate recruiting for those vacancies? Now we in our last discussion with the FOP contract, we raised the salary levels throughout, basically entering people into the Police Department. We gave a, I forget, was a \$2,500 signing bonus to try to recruit people. Take a look and see what would be required for us in terms of signing bonuses or other things to quickly fill those 19 slots because I assume that they are budgeted, it's just that we've got to find the bodies and we are very particular since we always go for is it 54 hours of university that you have to have in order to be a candidate?- so we don't just take any policeman anywhere, we have a high quality university educated policeman, so let us know what would be required to accelerate the filling of those 19 vacancies – it was 19 and the other 13 we are 32 more officers hopefully soon.

Commissioner Keon: I think they are actively recruiting. I think they have been actively recruiting all along.

Mayor Cason: Yes. I'm sure they are, but is there anything else that if we went from \$2,500 to \$3,000.

Commissioner Lago: Don't forget that we also discussed in the last budget hearing that we are going to be raising the starting salary.

Commissioner Keon: We did.

Commissioner Lago: We did so we are taking steps to make sure that we, when I say we, I mean the City of Coral Gables is as enticing as possible.

Mayor Cason: Right.

Commissioner Lago: Can I just give you my four points that I would like, I don't know if it's the police, if it's staff, whoever can provide me with these answers. I need to know, these are simple answers again, so that when I run into this gentleman on the street he ask me a question I can tell him. How many police officers are in the Police Department?

Commissioner Keon: 192.

Commissioner Lago: Just right it down. I need to know how many people are on the ground, very simple, and when I mean on the ground, I mean bike, motors, SIT, SIU, I get confused, I apologize, I need to know, and if there isn't an available resource I'm walking the streets. Figure it out, whatever it is, let's go, let's get them on the street.

Mayor Cason: Perhaps there is something that can be done in the interim as we try to fill these vacancies with overtime that would...

Commissioner Lago: I have a different, that's number two – that's number one; number two, state funding – figure out what you need. You had two state representatives, one Republican one Democrat who is willing to work hard for this community across party lines to get funding for our City. This is going to take a year to probably get that funding in the next budget hearing, but let's start planning now so when the budget hearing comes we can say we want to attack the following ten items which are important to the City. Let's do that. Number three, you said 19 vacancies, I heard it was 26. Give me a number – simple spreadsheet. Vacancies the following – the following people are located currently, are being trained they will be delivered on X day, just give me a number, because he's got 19, I've got 26, somebody mentioned 9.

Commissioner Quesada: I had heard 29.

Commissioner Lago: You had 29 – let's get it together. Final one, so when I run into this gentleman again on the street and he asks me, hey listen, I've been trying for the past 5 years to get street closures, why can't we get a street closure? My answer right now and I'm embarrassed to say this, but it's the truth, the County doesn't let us. Is that even true?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: That's true.

Mayor Cason: Yes, that's true.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, the County does not...

Commissioner Lago: Let's solidify that answer with a letter from the County saying we no longer allow that policy anymore, so that...

City Attorney Leen: Can I give you a suggestion?

Commissioner Lago: Go ahead.

City Attorney Leen: I would really consider this Commission passing a resolution to the County Commission asking them to relook at that for these types of situations and direct one of us, maybe one of the elected officials or the Manager or the Attorney or someone to go to a County Commission meeting and present that and explain what's happening, because I do think that there is that policy in existence, I know we've run into it and the only way you are going to be able to change it is to probably go above the department.

Commissioner Lago: Craig, I'm not saying to do any legislation right now. What I'm saying is or an ordinance or a resolution no matter, what I need to know is the answer, I need to know an answer and it needs to be the correct answer so that we don't continue to one elected official gives one answer and the other elected official gives the other, we need to be a unified front so that when we present something it's the truth.

Commissioner Keon: I can tell you historically, factually that there was a period of time in the City that they were closing streets. The County got involved because as they started closing streets you were shifting that traffic to other streets to where you were over-burdening the streets and you were affecting the flow of traffic in the City. So you have to understand that as you close off one street that doesn't mean that traffic necessarily goes away, it just goes to the neighboring street, so you have to decide whose go to gore.

Commissioner Lago: I understand the issue of traffic because I live on San Amaro, which there were two burglaries on that street two days ago.

Commissioner Keon: And because the County is the one that controls traffic, they have the final say.

Mayor Cason: There is also another issue; we've raised this number of times over the last couple of years...

Commissioner Lago: Emergency vehicles.

Mayor Cason: Emergency vehicles – the fire engines when they get down a one-way street they can't turn around and so...

Commissioner Lago: I just want to have a unified front to an answer.

Mayor Cason: Got it.

Commissioner Lago: And then if we even entertain that we'll discuss it, but at least let's get an answer for it.

Commissioner Keon: There may be an instance when maybe it is appropriate, but in large part it was addressed and...for that reason.

Commissioner Lago: When you go to these crime watch meetings and when you run into individuals on the street, they say why don't you do that, it's so simple. How do the homes on 57th Avenue right off Miller have it?- and you say because I live in that area, I live on San Amaro, you say well my understanding is the County doesn't allow it anymore.

Mayor Cason: That's been 5 years, right?

Commissioner Keon: Initially when it started it was because you closed one street, then they closed another street, you know an overall plan or package as to how you are going to deal with this issue was never presented to the County and when the County realized the number of streets that were actually in the pipeline in the City, that's when they stepped in.

Mayor Cason: Glenn.

Mr. Kephart: Thank you Mayor, Commissioners. Just to clarify, the County procedures does allow for street closures, however they review them on an individual basis and they are thinking and review of that has changed from the past when several streets got closed, they are very restrictive now and I haven't seen them allow a specific street to be closed in the last, I don't think 4 years. Having said that, the process allows for it, it's just that they do have jurisdiction.

Mayor Cason: I remember that it was like 20 lines of steps you have to take.

Commissioner Lago: This is a clear example of what I'm talking about. His response completely contradicts my response; I didn't say anybody else, my response. I want to be educated so when speak to somebody I know what we are talking about. I'm talking about me, just me. So if we can get something in writing, a simple piece of paper that explains it as soon as possible and what are the guidelines that we need to follow.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm sure it's in the Code.

Mr. Kephart: There is a street modification guidelines procedure that the County has, it lays out their jurisdiction and all the steps that need to be followed and when somebody asks for a street

to be closed we evaluate to see if we think it has any merit and then we forward it to the County for further evaluation. Those have not been receiving approval in recent years.

Commissioner Quesada: Now if I can direct Ms. Manager to, if you can have Glenn follow up. You said it was 4 years ago maybe was the last closure. If you can find out...

Mr. Kephart: Within the last few years....

Commissioner Quesada: I understand. I understand. If you could find out for us the rationale that the County used either to allow the closure of a street in the last few years to see if for future reference so that we have a better idea our potential success rate if we try to close a street. Get a little bit of background; maybe pick two or three examples of recent from the County so we get a better idea.

Mr. Kephart: I'd be glad to do that. I can tell you what the rationale is and you've seen it, whether it's the temporary closing with the Granada pedestrian....whatever, what we've seen is there is nowhere else for the traffic to go and there are very few streets that I know of that we can close that don't cause then additional burden on an adjacent street somewhere in the neighborhood, that really becomes an issue.

Mayor Cason: Look at the discussion on Segovia, Alhambra, it's all connected. It's like the Pillsbury Dough Boy, you push it and it goes the other way.

Mr. Kephart: Exactly.

Mayor Cason: If you could find out if there is any – what the rules are, if there is any – if we can go speak to somebody and do something perhaps to convince them in particular areas.

Mr. Kephart: We'll follow up on it.

Mayor Cason: One other thought that came up was the idea of a police-citizens advisory committee that sounds like a good idea. In fact, I think the former Chief raised it.

Commissioner Keon: Suggested it.

Mayor Cason: Three or four days ago and there was a procedural way to do it because our committees are chosen here, so that's something we ought to look at too. How many people should be on it and the Blue Ribbon?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: We had one before; maybe we want to look at that what the format was. It was very successful and it stayed for many, many years and then it was suspended finally, but the fact was it was very, very proactive.

Commissioner Quesada: I think it's a great idea, Mr. Armandi mentioned it and Peter K. also mentioned it and the former Chief brought it up as well a few days ago. I think it's a great idea, but keep in mind when you guys are thinking how to properly structure it maybe it's a few people from every district, so we get a good representation.

Commissioner Keon: That's how it was structured.

Commissioner Quesada: Now we have a Crime Watch Committee so I think we've got to be clear what the duties are for each organization, so you guys can think about it.

Mayor Cason: One other thing that should be done too is, at least three different cases here that we've raised the Sweetwater issue. This liquid that's available that you can put on...

Commissioner Quesada: Smart Water.

Mayor Cason: Smart Water – put on your jewelry and so on. I don't know, we need to keep hammering away at that because I put it on all the stuff in my house and it works and it helps lead to prosecutions. So whatever we can do, even if we mail a letter to everybody in the City with that inside and tells you where to send your check and you can get it at home, but it's simple to use and it marks all of your stuff so that when people are caught you can link the burglar to the goods.

Commissioner Lago: There is another thing that I forgot to mention. I completely forgot the name now. We had a meeting and I'm not sure if the City Manager was involved a while back ago, I brought forth a product or software, which tracks items that are stolen, it was currently implemented in the City of Miami, I brought it to our old City Manager and he said he was not interested. The name of the product...

Unknown Speaker: Leads On-line.

Commissioner Lago: Leads On-line – I brought it twice, twice here and Mr. Salerno said we are not going to use that because they cost, they charge too much and for some other reason. At the end of the day the fundamental principles are is that they have a network that spy all the pawn shops, everything, so when they go to sell your stolen goods, usually they don't sell your stolen good here what they do is they ship them and the FedEx your stolen goods to let's say another

state, and they sell them there because obviously the pawn shops are not tapped into Miami-Dade County. So Lead On-line program from my understanding, after the two times that I brought it here to the City, it does cost money, but it provides you a network of resources that you can basically tap into all over the United States and Leads On-line again, this was about six months ago when I brought them here, they were the largest resource for potential stolen items, from Best Buy to pawn shops to Radio Shack to wherever you can sell say an iPhone or you can sell jewelry and all those types of items. So maybe we can look at those people again.

Mayor Cason: And again, another thing that we were discussing over the last several months was the strategic communications plan for the Police Department. I always thought the one thing that we have to do; we catch a lot of people. When I talked to you all on individual cases and you say you've got leads, you are arresting people, you are tracking other people, we need to let people know, our citizens know that we actually catch people, have their photos if necessary; and then also, I know some of these take 6, 9 months a year to get resolved which is why the case clearance is low part because they wear gloves and they do it quickly and they don't leave any evidence, but when you find them a year later, go back to everybody that was burglarized if that's the case and let them know we solved it, because part of this lack of communication, two-way communication is that they don't know we are having considerable success with the SIT teams and with the patrols, so let them know the good news, I call it that we actually catch people.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Can I just say something? I think basically everyone talked about pretty much exhausted what we were thinking about which is patrolling streets, better communication, Blue Ribbon Committee. I think each one of us share that the fact is the reason we are up here is all quality of life for the residents of the City of Coral Gables, there is no doubt about it and the number one issue of course is crime. When crime is affecting people that's when we are having issues. Before we move forward we have to look at why we maybe in this hole. For years and years we've tried to increase our Police Department, we've gone from over the last 15 years from 154 police officers to I think 194, 193 police officers, but the real problem is of course, we don't have police officers in those seats and that's sort of shame on us to a certain degree up here because we should have been demanding from staff, I'll point the finger at me because I've been up here longer than anybody, I should have been demanding of staff that we fill those vacancies. Now in favor of the Commission, I mean what we've tried to do is recalculate the issue, we tried to figure out why people are not coming here and representing the City as a police officer and we've done some good things. We've increased the salary as everybody said, we tried to make it a more attractive place work environment to work, because I firmly believe that people patrolling the streets no matter what studies say whatever, the key is making sure people are on the streets and when you don't have enough people to put people on the streets you have a problem, that's it and that's essentially what our issue is, we don't have enough manpower. I'd like to say one

other thing. This City has never said no to the Police Department as far as funding mechanisms. If the Police Department come to us and says, hey this is what we need, really need to help prevent crime we will support that for sure. So I hope that we can move forward make sure that the residents know that we are committed. It's easy to sit up here after we just had a 4-hour hearing and say, yeah, we are committed to solve the crime, the real issue is how do we implement from this point forward, that's basically it because we can talk all we want it's whether we can implement or not.

Mayor Cason: Thank you. Pat.

Commissioner Keon: I think that we all sympathize with anyone who has been frightened in their home or frightened on their streets, but I do think that we have been proactive as a Commission. I know the concerns that were raised over a prior City Manager...that City Manager is no longer here and have tried to change the tone and whatever at City Hall. We, I know over the last two months the former Chief was here before us, came before us and was directed to put more patrols on the street, to put more police on the street. Because of the difference in the philosophy as to how between this Commission, this group and the Police Chief over how he deployed resources the Chief made a decision that he would resign. So I think that we have been very active and proactive in addressing this issue. I know that these things are not usually apparent to the public at large because it's not something that you really go to the public and have a discussion about, but it is what we do and it is what we have been doing internally. I think that every single person sitting on this dais is committed to public safety and we all know that that is our primary job here is to keep our residents safe and sound and your property and your children and your lives. So I think that we have, I certainly understand your anger. I know that my house was burglarized twice over the years; I know a neighbor of mine was robbed once at gun point and my children were playing next to where the person was robbed. I know how frightening it is and I know that once your home is burglarized it takes you a very, very long time to walk through that door again and not walk through cautiously and not look to see that everything is in place and not be in fear that it has happened to you again. So it is a very, very troubling thing and I really want to assure this community that we are listening to them and we are reacting and that's why we are here today. It has not been static, we have been active and we have seen some changes and hopefully going forward we will see more. Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Madam City Manager you have your marching orders for the things that you will like to see and the Chief would you like to come up and....

Acting Chief of Police Molina: So I just wanted to as the Acting Chief of Police, I wanted you to know that I heard the community today, I heard the Commission, and with this position that I've been given today this morning it comes with great trust and every day or every hour that I have

this authority I'm committed to reducing crime, I'm committed to putting police officers on the street. I hear you and I'm also committed and I hear that the request for the detailed action plan and that's exactly what the Police Department will give the community and the Commission what it's asking for. Thank you.

Commissioner Quesada: I think one last point. I want to go through and it would be the end of the issue for me to discuss on this item. On Tuesday I image we are going to be selecting a permanent Manager, hopefully...

Commissioner Keon: Who knows? [Laughter]

Commissioner Quesada: Who knows? Who knows? If we have the votes and we are all happy we'll get those votes, so I think it's very important and I think it's incumbent to show them, those applicants that the Manager's role is important and that the permanent Chief should be selected by the permanent Manager. Having said that, I've gone back and forth with the Interim Manager on this and will be remiss if I didn't give my opinion on the conversations that I've been having with her because I think it's important for all of us to discuss. I have a lot of faith in the Majors – with Major Masington, you know again, I have a longer relationship with him, Pedrosa and Acting Chief Molina, I've had less exposure with them. I will say this, I don't know if this comes as a surprise or not, and again I want to be as differential as possible to the Interim Manager, however again I would be remiss if I didn't say this. Major Hudak for me with the previous administration, he was the only one who told me things good, bad or ugly, and I tell this to employees all the time, if you aren't sure about something, if you are wrong, admit it, you were wrong, tell me you were wrong, tell me we messed up, tell me how we are going to move forward and correct this and it's never going to happen again. When Carmen was first selected as Interim Manager, I thought she did something brilliant. She had no experience dealing with union negotiations collective bargaining, she brought in Merritt Steirheim. I applauded her then, I continue to applaud her for that decision because bringing someone, we heard his resume earlier, who is an All Star who has been doing this for longer than more than twice the time I've been alive, so I was very impressed that she recognized there was a weakness and she brought someone to support her there.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: And he's an All Star.

Commissioner Quesada: He is. So I like to see that. We are not all perfect, we make mistakes, we learn for it. My experience with Major Hudak with the previous administration has put him at a very high level for me. I specifically asked for his background information, if there was anything negative whatsoever, so that I can review it so I can be fully informed before I had this conversation with you guys, that's why I called the person who wrote the one incident he had

that I'm clear with and my conscience is clear. So I'm going to let everyone else discuss it, but at the end of the discussion if I feel there is support I'm going to make a motion to have him be the Interim Chief for the time being, and again I don't want Major Molina to take that as a stab at all. I respect you greatly, but my experience with him I think the public right now needs someone who they know, someone who've they've heard from who is involved in the community, which I think he is, who has a great respect and I think we need that right now. I also got to see a leadership survey from the internal Police Department from the rank and file supporting him from; I guess years past, I don't know the exact date of it. So that's where I'm at, that's what I'm thinking right now. I'd like to hear from what everyone else thinks.

Commissioner Lago: Just to echo a few sentiments that Commissioner Quesada stated. Again, I had a moment to speak to Acting Chief Molina, the most conversation I've had with her, it was a pleasurable experience, but I have to reiterate Commissioner Quesada's statements in regards to Major Hudak. During the prior administration, which we knew we fought very, very hard and long for transparency, he was always very honest with me and told me the good, the bad, and the ugly, and that's something that I have to respect and I have to honor. Let me explain to you a little bit of an issue that I have. Again, we have an All Star here who has helped us with a multitude of issues from negotiating with the unions to negotiating the trolley station deal and he was also yesterday in a meeting when I was at, but he was not at the meeting that I had with the Interim City Manager and Cindy Birdsill. While we made it very, very, very clear, crystal clear, as crystal as this glass, I did not want anyone named Interim or Acting Chief, I wanted the decision to be made by the Commission. I did not receive a phone call, that was yesterday at 6 o'clock, 5 o'clock, I'm sorry we had the meeting that ended probably around 5:30, 5:45, I did not receive a phone call being notified that Ms. Molina had been chosen as Acting Chief, she is probably more than capable to be Acting Chief, but I was not notified, neither yesterday or today and I find that to be a concern. I don't want to play politics, I don't want to deal with issues, but when you look at the multitude of individuals that were in this room today who are individuals who have lived in this community for 5, 10, 30, 40, 50 years and they are telling you that Major Hudak is the individual who has stood by them arm-in-arm and has represented with what is the best of our City Beautiful, I find it hard to refute that, that's number one. I know for a fact that I received a phone call that Major Hudak has the support of the University of Miami, which is the largest employer in our beautiful City, that's number two. Number three, I know that for a fact that Major Hudak has the support of rank and file and let me give you my last clincher why I'm going to support Major Hudak, again no slight against any other individuals here. Over the past year and three months that I've been fortunate enough to be an elected official in this community, when we have battled on behalf of this City, I've always found it very interesting and I know that Commissioner Keon has been at meetings where we've asked, where is Major Hudak?- where is he?- why is he not allowed to be with the other Majors?- why is he not allowed to be in COMSTAT meetings?- why is he not allowed to speak at the Commission?- and I found

it very interesting. I think we need to get away from the clicks, from whose in favor today, who is the favorite person today, who is following up or who is jockeying for position. I think we need to start fresh. Exactly what we are doing next week with hopefully a more than credible City Manager, we need to start fresh with an individual who has been part of this community for 30 years and I'm willing to concede on one fact and that is, let's give him an Interim tag for six months, let's let him lead the police force, here he has the support of rank and file, let's put him a six month tag where the new City Manager which will hopefully, I can't wait for the new City Manager to come in, to let them analyze whether Major Hudak has done the appropriate job as per the residents of this City in six months and then he or she may decide keep him on board, we can save the money in regards to having a national search or we can do the national search. So I would support Commissioner Quesada in naming Ed Hudak as Chief of Police for the City of Coral Gables.

Mayor Cason: Pat.

Commissioner Keon: Let me tell you where I start here. As an elected official in this City when we were sworn into office, we took an oath to uphold the Charter of this City. The Charter of this City provides for, I'll address Craig's issue, where a City Manager Commission form of government. The administration of the City lies in the hands of the administration. We give direction to the administration and the administration administers the City. When we don't believe that what is being administered is not in accordance with the direction and a policy that we set, we take action through the Manager. Thankfully our Charter also provides us with the opportunity that if we have a Manager that is not responsive to what we have to say, or is not responsive to the direction that we give, we do have the ability to remove someone from office, but our Charter was also written at a time when early, early in our years and has not changed significantly over time, when we were a Commission form of government, the City Manager form of government then came into play and so it is somewhat of a hybrid, but the administration in this City should to me, lies in the office of the City Manager. Now we vested that duty in Carmen Olazabal when we named her as the Interim City Manager. I don't think it is ever or rarely, rarely is it proper that we would administer this City from this dais. We are a policy-setting body, we give direction to the Manager and we don't interfere in the day-to-day running of this City. Yes, we have the right to ask questions, people can come and speak to us, whatever else, but just as the Board of Directors and I think you said you were with Motorola, just as your Board of Directors can set policy and has oversight, they don't step down into your ranks and hire and fire your people, and I don't think that we have the right to do that either. So I will – to me Ed Hudak is a very, very good man and a very good police officer. Scott Masington is a very, very good man and a very good police officer. He was the Acting Chief and he was able to carry out that role of Acting Chief even with the two-ton gorilla of Pat Salerno on his back. The newer Majors I don't know as well, I don't know them, but for me, I asked Carmen what she intended

to do, she told me that she would make a recommendation. I will support her recommendation unless I feel that her recommendation, that she would recommend someone that I couldn't support. Now I think it most appropriate that that person most likely be an interim appointment until the new Manager can come in. Now I felt the same way when we were getting ready to name an Interim City Manager and I said at the time Carmen was going to put her hat in to be a candidate for City Manager, and I said if she is going to be a candidate to be City Manager I cannot support her, because whoever is in that role has a very clear advantage over anyone else. In this instance, depending on what a new Manager may want to do, now a new Manager may want to go out and look for a search, but that's a policy, that's a decision we as a Commission will make, we will make a decision. Whether we take internally, whether we do a national search, that's a policy decision that at that time with a new Manager in place we will make. Now I will tell you both of these gentlemen want to be City Manager, I mean want to be the Police Chief, both of them are qualified to be the Police Chief, both of them have experience, and everything else, but I will support the recommendation of the Manager on this because I think that that is what our Charter calls for and I will support that Charter.

Commissioner Lago: Can I inquire a question?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Craig?

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: In regards to what we are discussing today...

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Commissioner Lago:...are we as a body allowed to make that decision on who is the next Police Chief for an interim time until a new City Manager comes as per your legal opinion, as per the Charter, are we allowed to make this decision?

City Attorney Leen: Yes. You have the authority interim or permanent you have that authority.

Commissioner Lago: OK. So I just want to make sure that that's permissible. How many people on this Board here, 5 elected officials, how many people here were notified about Ms. Molina being...?

Commissioner Keon: Let me clarify something first – no, let me clarify something. Before you – when we started this morning at 8 – when was the Police Chief’s resignation effective?

Mayor Cason: 8 o’clock.

Commissioner Keon: So from 8 o’clock this morning until we name a Police Chief we have no existing Police Chief in this City if something were to happen who do we turn to?- we didn’t have one. It’s my understanding that Major Molina was appointed the Acting Chief to fill in that time gap between the time that the Chief retired and a new Acting Chief, permanent Chief is named, so she is only in that position until we make a decision and it’s only so that if something were to happen that there is someone that is in charge.

Commissioner Lago: Let me just respond to that. Commissioner, I had a meeting yesterday with Cindy Birdsill and the Interim City Manager in my office, excuse me, in Commissioner Quesada’s office because as you know we are all bundled together and we are jumping around from office to office, just want to get that straight. I was never notified of this.

Commissioner Keon: I heard it this morning.

Commissioner Lago: Hold on, let me finish. I had another meeting with this gentleman, the All Star, was present and I was not notified of it at that point at 5:30 in the afternoon. I walked in this morning like we all did, half asleep, after not sleeping all night because of the new born, and I was not notified of it again as I walked out unto this dais. Let me tell you what the problem is here. This is what got us into trouble in the beginning. There is fact, there is no lying about this, that’s why I’m asking a simple question, and if my colleagues up here can answer me which I hold in the most highest respect, all of you, who knew stepping onto this dais that that very qualified individual was the Acting Chief?- just answer me, that’s all I want to know.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk:...I got an e-mail.

Mayor Cason: I got an e-mail.

Commissioner Quesada: I got an e-mail as well. Commissioner Lago, Commissioner Lago, let me just say something real quick and I want to pass it over to the Manager. Last night I met with the Manager at I think I got out of here about 8:45 at night, and when I originally saw Mr. Hudak’s personnel file I was concerned a little bit and I actually suggested Major Molina to be Acting Chief. She said she didn’t know, she was thinking about it, she was going to work it out. I left, she stayed working. Then we all got an e-mail this morning that was the only time, that was the first time I heard, so you are clear.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Yes. Let me clarify. Actually in a conversation I had with Scott Masington probably at 10:30 yesterday night, we were discussing that we knew that the resignation was effective at 8:00 a.m. and that although we were waiting to have an Interim Police Chief that we couldn't have a gap in service, but we needed leadership in place and that's why I wrote the e-mail and tried to be very specific and differentiate between what I believe is Acting versus Interim, which is the resignation is effective 8 a.m., so until we select or we reach a resolution as to who is our Interim, not our Police Chief permanently, but an Interim, Terry Molina is going to be Acting Chief. I didn't say that she was going to be the Interim or the permanent solution. This is a matter of you can't have interruption in service and at 10:30 when he comes to me, his resignation is effective at 8 a.m. and we don't have leadership then that was the only decision I made. I wasn't making a permanent decision. Now going to what would be my recommendation. My recommendation – I think we are in a very lucky place in a sense, we have great Majors and they've all served our police force very well and I have – they have really come together and I'm very happy to say that, but my recommendation would be Scott Masington. He's done the job before, he has great work ethics, he's a leader, and he has a lot of thoughts to tell the steps we need to take to turn around the department and I think he can get the job done. So that would be my recommendation. As to Terry Molina, I think she is wonderful, I think she is a very good communicator. I've worked with her directly as Acting Chief on a few occasions and I do trust the way she works. My recommendation would be Scott Masington and I selected her because we don't want to have a gap in service. Now we should discuss this and decide whether you want to take my recommendation or not, but that would be my recommendation.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let me – I'm a traditionalist. I believe in working through the City Manager form of government and that's why we are here, that's how we've been successful in the City of Coral Gables. If you want to turn it to the Mayor's form of government then that's something else we change the Charter, so I understand that. I also understand having the Commission talk to the City Manager and provide their recommendations to the City Manager then ultimately you make a decision. You basically have now told me that the Acting and you are recommending Interim. I didn't know there was that step that was thinking about taking it this point. I thought you were going to try to talk to each one of us independently and then come back, because I've got to tell you the truth, I like each one of these. Ed Hudak is a very good friend of my family for years and years and years and I know Scott Masington extremely well and I've got to tell you that there are issues with each one of them that have been brought to our attention and I've got to tell you it's really sad. I've never seen this type of thing in the City of Coral Gables. It's really sad. People are trying to destroy other people to promote people. It's something. You don't know how bad it is but I can tell you, it's just been mind-numbing over the last day. So I would like to have before you appoint an Interim, I would like to have a

conversation with you in privacy, go through each of these things and then let you hear my things, then you can make a recommendation after you talk to each one of us on an individual basis and then we'll move forward from that point forward, but I will support the Acting Manager as of this point right now because of what I've outlaid...

Interim City Manager Olazabal: Absolutely, we can do that.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let us have the opportunity to talk this through.

Mayor Cason: I agree with Commissioner Keon and I agree with the Vice Mayor that this is a – for 90 years we've had this form of government. The City Manager does the administrative day-to-day things for the City, of course we can make extraordinary circumstances appoint people, fire people, but I think it's important to keep that discipline. I've known over the years, I've been in 20 different organizations, beauracracies, there are hierarchies, there are rules that you have to follow to keep order. I would be willing to support the Acting City Manager's, Interim City Manager's decision in terms of the Acting Police Chief, and I agree with you that let's have some discussions with us. I have not seen any of the files on any of these people. I know them, I think they are all great, but I would like to see the information to make up my mind who could be interim until – it may only be depending on who we pick as the new City Manager that decision is going to be on Tuesday, maybe only a couple of days. We obviously have to have somebody in charge, which I think this give us somebody in charge and it gives us a chance to look at the information about the Majors and come to a decision, either at the Special Meeting or at the next session who we want as Interim and then I will leave it to the new City Manager to come to us with a recommendation from hopefully within the department and if they can't find anybody that he likes or she likes then we go with a national search, but my preference for now is somebody locally within the department that has the experience of the City. I think that way we can do both; we can keep continuity and we can have the discussion that we haven't been able to have about the qualifications of each of the ones that are up. So somebody wants to make a motion?

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I don't think you need to make a motion unless somebody wants to – I mean it's already been submitted, it's not really necessary.

Mayor Cason: OK.

Commissioner Keon: We will take up the issue of the...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Interim.

Commissioner Keon:...Interim City Manager, I mean Police Chief. I was relieved the decision with regard to the interim...

Mayor Cason: Acting.

Commissioner Keon:...well we have Acting; an Interim Police Chief to the new City Manager comes on board?

Mayor Cason: In the next couple of days...

Commissioner Quesada: Here's what I suggest because assuming we select someone on Tuesday to be the permanent Manager, that person may not begin for another month or two, we don't know. Maybe they start right away, who knows? They are all coming from very reputable locations so they probably have to give a little time. So what I suggest is let's have the conversations with our current Manager and give any feedback and we will discuss it privately with her so we can go through the personnel files or anything else we need to review or anything else we need to vet before we make a determination on the Interim Chief.

Mayor Cason: I agree.

Commissioner Lago: Can I just say one last thing. In the effort to not play politics guys because what we are doing right now is we name someone as Acting, excuse me, let me get my verbiage correct, Acting Chief, then we are going to go name somebody Interim Chief, then we are going to go name somebody Chief.

Commissioner Keon: Permanent Chief.

Commissioner Lago: The whole point of this was we have a lot of Chiefs and not enough "Indians", so what we need to do and this is why I was a little bit perturbed when we talk politics because I never got an answer to my question. There was an e-mail sent at 6:50 (p.m.), someone was named, even though I had multiple conversations yesterday with our Interim City Manager in regards to this issue. I didn't even get a comment in regards to the fact that this person was going to be named. I didn't even get a peep, a response like I'm going to give the name.

Commissioner Quesada: Commissioner Lago you got the same response we all got.

Commissioner Lago: No, no, no, but I'm saying in my conversations with the Interim City Manager when we had staff there, thank God I had staff at both meetings, I didn't get a response. Listen, I think the best thing is that the Commission makes this decision, this is an incredible

policy decision and as our City Attorney stated it's within our purview to make this decision. You may disagree with the mechanism, you want to maybe do it old school, which I respect wholly and that's not a problem, but I think that Interim, Acting, I think we are not getting to the point here. The point here is no one is going to get traction here. What you want to do is traction. Guys let's get traction. You need somebody who is going to deal with this issue today, right now – 3:43 (p.m.) walk out those doors and start working on this. Not have somebody who could potentially a week from today lose their title and then we may go in a completely different direction, that's my concern. That is why I think that instead of playing politics with this – I have a simple question, why is this perfectly credible person who is great for the job, why was she chosen over the other three candidates?- why was Mr. Masington flown here from being retired from the police force?- why is he here?- why are these people here?- why was this person chosen over Mr. Masington, Mr. Pedroso or Mr. Ed Hudak?

Commissioner Keon: I'm going to assume and I'll let the Manager speak, the Interim Manager speak for herself. Why was he flown here?

Commissioner Lago: I want to clarify this. There are a lot of rumors going around.

Commissioner Keon: I have seen more politics played here in these last few days than I've seen played in the year that I have been sitting on this Commission and I don't think that it's a pretty picture for any us. I don't think it's a pretty picture for anybody. So I think that – it was my understanding that Carmen would make a recommendation as the Interim Manager as to who would be the Acting Chief. She apparently made that decision which is within her purview to make, my understanding from talking to her this morning that she made a decision that it was going to be Scott Masington, she brought him forward, and she was going to make a recommendation. As a result of this discussion here, she has been asked to not make that recommendation.

Commissioner Lago: I'm waiting to hear from the Interim City Manager. I want to hear her side.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: The question is why Masington was flown in is because if you are asking me for my recommendation, that's my recommendation, and if you want to ask him what his plan would be going forward you should have him here to be able to ask those questions. So that's the answer to that.

Commissioner Lago: My question is why is Chief Molina the Acting Chief when not Pedroso or not Ed Hudak, that's my question. Why was she chosen to be up until the meeting until a decision is made? To me it makes no sense. You are trying to fill a gap. We have an Assistant Chief by the name of Miller who has been on the force for 9 months to a year, why wasn't he

made the Chief the moment that the Chief resigned. I mean guys, let's stop going around this, let's stop playing games. Again, let's be transparent. You have a Chief that resigned, you have an Assistant Chief, make him the Chief and then we make a decision as a Commission. Why are we playing games? You are insulting my intelligence by telling me – and look at the crowd, the crowd is clapping, the crowd is saying yes, Vince, you are correct, you are going onto something. I want an answer. My answer [sic question] is very simple. Why is she the Acting Chief?- why is he here?- and why didn't you name Pedroso the Acting Chief?- why didn't you make Hudak the Acting Chief?- why are we going back to these games?- why isn't even Miller in the room?- why isn't he the Chief?-

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: He's here.

Commissioner Lago: OK. Why aren't you the Chief?- explain to me. If the succession line in a business is President, Vice President, why isn't he, why isn't he the Chief?- I want to get to the bottom of this. I'm done. I've had two meetings yesterday and nobody told that she was going to be named Acting Chief, Interim Chief, whatever you want to call it.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: I think you select a City Manager based on what that person, the recommendations of that person can make, the things that that person knows from the day-to-day, and her judgment or her or his judgment, and it was a decision I had to make and I still think I made the right one. If you don't like it, evidently you have the ability to choose whoever it is that you think. I was in a position where I had to make the decision as to who was going to be responsible for the department from 8 a.m. until we make a decision. I had to make a decision.

Commissioner Lago: Why do you have a person who has an Assistant Chief title for one year and you are paying him as an Assistant Chief and you don't give him the job as Chief?- tell me why. I need an answer on that. Why is it?- why did you make a decision that she is more capable because you can't say it's years, she's been on the force 20 years, this gentleman Hudak has been on 30 years, and Pedroso has been 12 years, I think, on the force.

Major Pedroso: 23.

Commissioner Lago: 23 – so if we are going to go based on years, you've got the most junior person. She is more than capable to lead, I would love to have her as Acting, but I want to be up front. I don't want again, to go outside and deal with the individuals who are shaking their heads in front of me and then you are not giving me a straight answer, because I'm going to give them the truth and the truth is that you play politics with everybody in this room and that's the bottom line.

Mayor Cason: Let me say – one second. I think the principle that Commissioner Keon started off with is that we chose an Interim City Manager, that Interim City Manager we gave her the right to make appointments, this was her choice, whether we like it or not, that's the reason. We may all disagree with the choice, but you have the power to make the choice and you did.

Acting Chief Molina: May I say something?

Mayor Cason: Yes.

Acting Chief Molina: Commissioner Lago, I wanted to address something specifically to the Commission. As we all know I was selected this morning as Acting Chief and I want to assure everyone that the continuity that we are talking about will continue. If I'm here only until the afternoon or till Saturday or till Monday, whatever the Commission chooses, I'm going to start on the action plan, and whoever is placed as Interim, permanent, whatever the case may be, I'm going to work with that person and I'm going to continue to plan and pass it over. So we are going to maintain that continuity regardless, you have my word, but also a lot of you have said, you don't know me very well, you don't know Major Pedroso very well, so my recommendation is....

Commissioner Lago: Can I interrupt you right there. What is the first thing I did before we came back from break? I spoke to you, I took you into my office and I said, let's have a discussion face-to-face just you and I.

Acting Chief Molina: That was a 2-minute conversation.

Commissioner Lago: I know but I'm saying, I'm just looking out for the interest of the whole department. I don't want to have two or three people – we are going already from one Chief, now to you, then to an Interim, then to an eventually a new Chief. We could have four people in the span of two months.

Acting Chief Molina: We are a team. We are a team, because I'm still going to be here today, and I'm still going to be here tomorrow and if you select any of the Majors or the Assistant Chief, I'm still part of that team, so you are not going to lose that continuity, you are going to still have that work because if it's me and I come back with an action plan for you, all of those people are going to be involved in it, so you are going to have a continuity and I think that the Commission should take the time to not make a decision, a rush decision and speak to each and every one of the candidates. You've had said they were all good candidates, take the time to interview us, take the time to look at the file, look at each and every one of us for who we are and make a decision and don't make a rush decision because you are correct, the decision

shouldn't be made instantly. We have the coverage in place, you are going to maintain the continuity if it's any one of us, and at the same token if there is an outsider that comes in from another jurisdiction we are going to work with that person as well. So I can assure you that we will start on the action plan and you are not going to lose that continuity.

Commissioner Keon: Major Molina when you were appointed as the Acting Police Chief this morning at 8 o'clock, did you understand that you were being appointed until the Manager appointed an Interim?

Acting Chief Molina: Correct. She was extremely clear.

Commissioner Keon: OK. So you know that you are here for this very short period of time.

Acting Chief Molina: I was going to be here for an hour, maybe 8 hours, that's all it was.

Commissioner Keon: OK. Ms. City Manager, you have the authority to appoint an Interim Police Chief, you have that authority. Do you want to exercise your authority to appoint an Interim Police Chief now?- you have that authority.

Mayor Cason: Or do you wish to do what we discussed earlier which was giving us some more background information, because I don't have any of this, so that we can make that decision Tuesday.

Commissioner Keon: I think every single one of us knows these officers, every one of us knows them and knows them well, and we have been lobbied to death over these officers, and this City needs a Police Chief in place today – today. You need a Police Chief in place to read back 191 other officers to do their jobs. Now you know what?- no more politics. This is an administrative decision that needs to be made by this Commission. Under our Charter that decision can be made. You have the authority to name an Interim Police Chief. I would suggest that you name that Police Chief and if someone here would like to overturn it and they have the votes to overturn it then you can do it. That is the procedure as set forth in our Charter.

City Attorney Leen: I just want to talk. I just want to talk. I just want to explain so that everyone knows. Our Charter vest day-to-day authority in the Manager, the Manager does have the authority to appoint an Interim. Likewise, the Charter vest power in the Commission to direct the Manager in the appointment or discharge of any employee, and ultimately the Commission's ruling on that is final. So yes, the City Manager is able to appoint an Interim at this moment or the City Manager can meet with each of you and then make the appointment, or the City Manager can meet with you and bring it back for your decision. That's what you are discussing,

but you should come to a conclusion as to how you want that procedure to work because the debate that's occurring right now is --- I would suggest....

Commissioner Quesada: I'm going to do something for clarity.

City Attorney Leen: I would suggest that there be clarity.

Commissioner Quesada: I would suggest for clarity. I'm going to make a motion to appoint Major Hudak as Interim Chief.

Commissioner Keon: I'll second your motion. I'm going to second your motion. I want a Police Chief in this City.

Commissioner Lago: Let me just say one thing. My number one point is not based on whether it should be Hudak or should be Molina or should be any of the individuals here in the room today, but my point is I don't want to have 4 Police Chiefs in three weeks, that's not the way it works.

Commissioner Keon: You weren't going to get them. You weren't going to get them.

Commissioner Lago: Listen, if you want to have Molina as Interim Police Chief, I'll have it, I don't have a problem, but I just want to be in the know, not an e-mail at 6:50 (p.m.).

Commissioner Keon: I'm telling you that I think based on our Charter, which we all swore to uphold, I think the administrative function in this City belongs in the office of the City Manager and I think that if we don't agree then you can make a motion and we can overturn it, but I think you have to respect the Charter of this City because Pat Salerno was our Manager and because of what happened under his reign we know what?- that's over. It is over and you cannot now legislate with regard to what happened in the past. It is over and I do not believe as it keeps being said here that Pat Salerno remains involved in the management of this City. He may have relationships with people that worked here, I don't know, but I do not believe that he is involved in the day-to-day management of this City. We entrusted Carmen, we have given her the authority or take the authority yourself and name a Police Chief, so that someone can stand up at role call tomorrow and be in charge.

Mayor Cason: City Manager do you want to name an Interim Police Chief?

Commissioner Lago: We have a motion.

Mayor Cason: We didn't have a second.

Commissioner Lago: I'll second the motion. I'll second the motion.

[Disruption in the audience]

Mayor Cason: I would ask you to please --- you are out of order. City Clerk?

Commissioner Keon: Carmen you chose not to name someone?

Interim City Manager Olazabal: My recommendation continues to be Scott Masington.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: We already have a motion.

Mayor Cason: We already have a motion.

Commissioner Lago: If you want we can discuss it. I don't have a problem.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let's just vote on it then if not she goes back and deals with it.

City Clerk

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: No

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: No

Mayor Cason: No

(Vote: 2-3)

Commissioner Keon: I would like the Manager to make a recommendation.

Commissioner Lago: And let me tell you before she makes her recommendation of Mr. Masington. Just to be clear. Mr. Masington is an individual who is still on the police force and he is an individual who, again, I hold in high respect, but has been on administrative leave or has been on vacation due to the fact that he retired. I don't have a problem with any of the four individuals, but if we are going to bring somebody back and we are going to make them Interim, I would prefer to see Ms. Molina who is the first candidate and we don't have a change.

Commissioner Keon: The City Manager can make a recommendation. She has made a recommendation that Scott Masington is the Interim Police Chief that is her recommendation.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm going to make a motion to approve the City Manager's recommendation.

Commissioner Keon: I'll second that.

Commissioner Quesada: Do we need to do that?

City Attorney Leen:...appointment herself or you could....

Commissioner Keon: Ratify her appointment as Interim position.

Commissioner Quesada: I think we need clarity, I think we need unity, I think it's important to have a motion.

Commissioner Keon: I will second your motion.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Hold on, hold on. We have an issue that was brought to our attention yesterday. Where do we stand on this – this is why I wanted to delay this for a couple of days. I know you don't, but I do, because I have an issue with not knowing the full extent of what is going on. Just like you are upset, I'm upset that we can't wait a few days to figure this out because there are a lot of issues going on that you may not know about that are problematic and I don't have perfect clarity on the situation and until I get the perfect clarity then I'm going to feel uncomfortable supporting anybody. So yes, that's why I asked until Tuesday, that's why I asked the Acting --- four days, OK. We are not talking about changes so that I can get clarity; make sure that I felt comfortable on the vote. That's the problem, that's the problem I have.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: I understand. I spoke with the City Attorney during our lunch break and I asked him if he was comfortable...

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Can I say one more thing please? Do we really want to be talking about each one of these fine police officers and discussing the plusses and the minuses on this dais? Again, why I want to have this in a closed session, not the fact that I don't want to hide things from people, but just out of the integrity of these people that have served the City so well. I don't know why we are up here talking about these different issues. Wait for three or four days, talk to each one of the City Commissioners, then make a decision and come back, so then I can vet these things and you can tell me here or what's there, then we can make a decision from that point forward. That's my thought process.

Mayor Cason: Are you willing to do that?

Interim City Manager Olazabal: I'm willing to do that if that's the direction I receive.

Mayor Cason: Anybody have a problem with a couple days?

Commissioner Keon: I know. I don't know why you would.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: I got clarity from – I don't know – the City Attorney may want to talk on the matter.

Commissioner Lago: I will agree to disagree, how about that?

Commissioner Quesada: I'm going to say this. I think it's a very important decision. I think we need to be unified at this time, however, I think we need to move forward in a clear manner, because right now if we are hesitant what's going through their heads?- and we need that clear leadership so the action plan that the residents are thirsting for us to move forward on, we need an apex that's going to carry that out. My recommendation the only one that can really control this is the Mayor, is that we break for half-an-hour; the City Attorney can discuss any privileged issue that needs to be discussed with the different individuals that don't know. I have been fully briefed. I did my research because again, I was here very late last night and early this morning, so I would like to do it today. If the desire from the rest of the Commission, I think the community deserves, I think we deserve to figure it out, now move forward on a unified front moving forward whoever it is. So I would ask that whatever items we have remained on today's agenda we table them to the next meeting, we break for half-an-hour, 45 minutes, we come back, we move forward with a clear direction of who the Interim is going to be and then we have our Budget meeting for another few hours.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: We'll take a half-an-hour break and be back at 4:30 (p.m.)

[Note for the Record: The Commission took a break at 4 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 4:47:28 p.m.]

Mayor Cason: Are we back in the saddle again or are we missing one rider? Mr. Lago? OK. We have exactly 13 minutes to do this because we have a 5:01 with time certain we have to begin the discussion on the budget. What I'm going to do is as soon as we finish this discussion we are

going to defer two more items till after the budget, we are going to discuss the parking fee and the fire fee which has to be done in terms of the whole budget process.

City Attorney Leen: And Mr. Mayor they will be continuances, not deferrals to the next meeting.

Mayor Cason: Continuance is right. OK. Madam Interim City Manager.

Interim City Manager Olazabal: My recommendation would have been Scott Masington. I've been made aware that he has withdrawn his name from consideration, so I am going to defer the decision to the Commission.

Mayor Cason: OK. Does anyone want to make a motion as to the candidates? We've had discussion; I think we've had a chance to look at the records. I've looked at the – I've been briefed on ratifying nothing significant, really negative in anybody's personnel files, so for me it's a question of the majority of this Committee.

Commissioner Quesada: I guess I should ask this question of Craig --- I'll just make the motion. I am going to make the motion to name Major Hudak as the Interim Chief.

Mayor Cason: Do I have a second?

Commissioner Lago: I'll second the motion.

Mayor Cason: OK. City Clerk.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let me just say, I'm sorry that Scott Masington is not going to pursue this further. Scott you've served the City very, very well for many, many years and when you served as Interim Chief you did a heck of a job for the City of Coral Gables. I can't tell you how honored I am that you have served this so, so well. Scott is a guy that is product of the City of Coral Gables. Grew up in the City of Coral Gables, went to school in the City of Coral Gables, and I'm sorry you are not going to pursue this any further. Thank you very much.

Mayor Cason: Thank you Scott.

Commissioner Keon: I am also; I'd like to reiterate his thoughts. Scott Masington is a good a man as any of us will ever meet.

Mayor Cason: And you've had wonderful leadership positions in the Miami-Dade Police, sorry we brought you down from your vacation, North Carolina is a lot cooler there than here. Thank

you. Alright. So Commissioner Quesada made the motion and we had Commissioner Lago seconded.

City Clerk

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Cason: OK. That ends that discussion. So continue to work on this action plan, we want to see results. I know you all work together as a team, we have a great leadership of the department, great police officers, and citizens are looking for your ideas for us and we will do everything possible to make sure that what you recommend is carried out. If we don't have the money we'll find it, but I'm pretty sure we do have the funds to do what needs to be done.

Commissioner Quesada: Just real quickly, I know we've got to break because we have the Budget Hearing starting up. I just want to say Interim Chief Hudak; we have a very detailed action plan that you've heard us vote on today. We are expecting you to hit it out of the park, so just to give you a little bit more pressure there.

Interim Police Chief Hudak: I would suggest to you and thank you all for your confidence. I understand this has been a unique day in the history of our government in Coral Gables. As Terry so aptly said, our team is together, I'm just probably just reluctantly going to be the face of the team going forward to everybody else and working through the Manager's office and the Interim Manager put it well, there is an ability to keep our funding right where it's at and to change the delivery of what we do. In it's simplistic form, I never want to have a conversation about statistics to any resident unless they want to know what it is and we will be very clear on what our statistics are, and we will never use them as an excuse. We will never use them as a barometer. We will come to you at the end of the year and say this is what happened; this is what happened in our City. From now on we are going to step back to get better. We are going to have a balanced approach because some of the things that the staff, Chief Weiner brought as far as technology are something that was never on the table when I started here, and we are going to find a balance. We are going to find a balance between traffic, marine patrol, those people as well as making sure everybody in this place that has been victimized because we understand that we are all held to a different standard in the Police Department, because this City is at a different standard than any other in the County and any other in the country, and I have a lot of faith in my

colleagues that are with me today. We are going to tweak some things, we are going to move some things around, we are going to answer every one of your questions, and I know we all want to talk about budget stuff, so I'd better hurry. But moving forward, I will tell you that Scott Masington is one of the most honorable people I've ever known. We may not have seen eye-to-eye over the course of our careers, but hopefully and I have every intention of having a conversation with him too, to keep our team going forward, but I promise you this, we are going to be balanced, we are going to be held accountable, and we are going to communicate. The communication phase will start today.

Commissioner Quesada: And as well as the time being, I don't think it needs to be said, but I'll say it anyways, keep our Manager in the loop on absolutely everything and obviously you respond to her so clearest communication so that no one is ever in the dark on any issues.

Mayor Cason: And celebrate our successes. If you catch people let us know.

Interim Police Chief Hudak: We will - and I'm a big proponent of that. I have some ideas of what I want to do with our award ceremony to really kind of focus what our officers and detectives do to you all, do for you all. It's been a long day Commissioner, I really never thought I'd hear my name that much in this room, and I do want to say this to the Interim Manager, we were talking briefly about this morning and everything else like that. It is a world-wind when you step up to this position and I really was doubting if saying yes was the right thing to do, but I will submit this and I understand the votes have already been taken, and I have a lot of friends that have sat in these chairs over the 26 years that I've been here, but I don't think there is any time in this City that I have seen the intestinal fortitude collectively of a group to step and deal with the issues you have and I am proud to be your Interim Chief and I understand that, and when the City Manager is picked that you pick wants to go in a different direction, we will go in a different direction, and I am fine with that, and the citizens should be ready to hear from me. I'll be delivering the message; the officers will be out there. I really have some ideas about like assigning an officer to an area so we have accountability of where they are at, at all times, and we'll keep the boats - and the boats will keep the traffic side and our team, it's our team will be back to you by Tuesday through the Manager to make sure you have clear direction of where we are going and with the Manager's permission I will keep you all very much in the loop of everything else that's coming along, including personnel moves, personnel decisions, so when you do get asked you can answer without having to refer back to us.

Mayor Cason: And let us know what you think we can do to expeditiously fill the 19 vacancies. If we need incentives, whatever, because that's where the manpower is going to come from, especially if they are experienced officers elsewhere you don't have to go through the academy that gets boots on the ground a lot faster.

Interim Police Chief Hudak: And understand, you've been told a lot, you've seen SIT team members, we've talked about how we are doing our divisions – I don't want to get into the details with you now, however I believe that there is a position for the SIT team in here and the work that they do as well as detectives, that may be modified, and I will come back and tell you that we may have to modify that until we get closer to that goal of what it is. But as the Manager stated this morning, there is some monies able to be moved around and I know we will have an in-depth conversation about that to help offset some of the patrols that we need to do to do this, because it's not about whether it's a burglary or robbery or anything else, you are a victim and it doesn't make a difference what stats I give you what we say. Your world changes when somebody walks into your house or takes something from your cars and we are going to be out in the media bi-lingual, tweeter, on the video, and I hope to do this within the next two weeks so people know it. So we are giving one message, whether it be from the Chief's office or not and no discretion for the officers, if this is what they need to do they need to see with us, and along with that we are going to talk about our successes and everything else on the police website and everything else. I look forward to working with MR and I'm going recommend to the Manager that we get back – we used to have critical staff team. It was myself from Police, Dona Spain who was the Assistant City Manager, and one of the Fire Chiefs and we actually responded to those neighborhood issues to bring in Code Enforcement and everything else, and I really want to start that back up again, so we can respond to the needs of the community as we have to that may not be crime related.

Commissioner Quesada: Just make sure you run everything before the Manager.

Interim Police Chief Hudak: Absolutely. I suggested to her because it comes from their office as well.

Commissioner Quesada: OK.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Thank you.

Mayor Cason: Thank you and congratulations and we are looking forward to results.

Interim Police Chief Hudak: Thank you.

[Applause]

[End: 4:57:52 p.m.]