

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item K
October 24, 2023
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Melissa Castro

Commissioner Ariel Fernandez

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

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Discussion Items

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor, do you have any comments that you would like to say before we adjourn?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Come back to me for one minute. Let me refresh my memory.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Castro.

Commissioner Castro: Yes, I do have a comment. It was regarding another comment that you said, is it me or I can't control the media. I barely even know the people – you're blaming me for going ahead and be talking to them about. But when you say, is it the people or is it me? I think that was an interesting comment you said, because you should consider that maybe the problem here is you, not the people. That's all I have to say.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: I had to put a little salt in the wounds to try to give you all perspective, because it comes from us as well, and I'm referring to this body as well. You reap what you sow. Let's stop sowing it, and perhaps it won't be sprouting elsewhere. So, I do have a question for you all. Thanks for giving me a moment. I've been working for weeks with Board of Architects _____ Longo, Jennifer Garcia, our City Architect and our wonderful Board of Architects has interacted very well, working on language and discussing the language for the Mediterranean ordinance revisions. And we've discussed doing just a presentation to the Commission at the next Commission meeting on November 14th. It's not for a vote. It's a presentation, it's a lot of material. It's the opportunity for you all to get introduced to it, be able to take it home, digest it, and then we'll come back. Have any additional comments, questions that you have and then start the process of voting on the item, but there'll be a presentation from the Board of Architects and from our staff, so you understand the process that was done, that these changes were not done to increase anybody's development rights, but to improve the quality of development that we have. So, the question is, do you want to do this in a regular Commission meeting or do you want to have an evening presentation. I want you all to think about that and get back to the Manager with your choice.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Commissioner Menendez.

Commissioner Menendez: Is my image ready. Okay. I have two movies. At the Art Cinema, I have Doctor Strangelove, which is by Stanley Kubrick, starring Peter Sellers, you may know from the Pink Panther movies. He plays like five or six characters. George C. Scott – this was filmed during the Cold War, early 60s, and the scenario, it's a comedy. What happens if a mad man has access to the button to launch nuclear, to World War III. But believe it or not, it's a comedy and it's a classic movie, fantastic movie, actually. The next one please. This is at the Miracle Theater, November 5th, Sunday, 5:00 p.m. If you're worried about Dolphin football, they play at 9:30 a.m., no conflict. This is Rocky, which is the ultimate underdog movie. Actually, I watched a clip of it the other night and its still, years later it won the Academy Award for Best Picture. Sylvester Stallone wrote the script. The movie studios wanted to pay him off to get the rights and push him away and it was actually Henry Wrinkler who played Fonzie who told him, I can get you a deal and you don't lose the rights to the movie, and the rest is history. But it's a great movie with Burges Meredith and Sylvester Stallone. It's great for the entire family. So, both movies are free. This one, you go to Actorsplayhouses.org and you can access your free tickets and the other one is at the city's Play Gables at the Art Cinema. That's it.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Fernandez.

Commissioner Fernandez: I just wanted to thank our staff once again for an incredible Pumpkin Patch. It was a very successful event. It was a great team effort. I saw people there early in the morning setting up tables and setting up booths. Thank you for your great work. And a reminder that this, on the 28th, we have Halloween on the Mile from 2 o'clock to 6 p.m. Bring the children out. It's a great event for the community. Dress up and enjoy Coral Gables at its best.

Mayor Lago: Go ahead. Thank you.

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Ms. Santiago: So, we have a tie. It was pumpkin 4 and 5, which are those two right there, and it's the Attorney's office and Communications.

Mayor Lago: Love it. Congratulations. Congratulations. Great job. Great job. So, I have two items that I'd like to mention. Mr. Manager, one of the pieces of legislation that I passed this year was the HOA board. I know that we were working on that. I'd like to get an update on that, if possible, please. Maybe we can have that at the next Commission meeting.

City Manager Iglesias: You can have that at the November meeting.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to get that started already.

City Attorney Suarez: So, Mayor, as you know, the legislation was finally adopted and so, it's just a matter of getting the process.

Mayor Lago: The more input the better, obviously, and I think that those HOAs which are on the south portion of the city can provide a lot of input in regard to the city. It can be a real lifeblood on a litany of different issues that they are addressing. I've been working on something with Senator Ileana Garcia, which I want to say thank you, as always. She's amazing. I had breakfast with her the other day, and I know the Vice Mayor has been working on a bunch of different things with her. One of the calls that I've been getting, and I got a call this week and I actually had a resident visit me by the name of Magda. She came to see me to talk a little bit about insurance issues that people are facing in our community. So, I was talking with the Senator over the last few months and tomorrow, October 25th, from 9 to 11 a.m., this is for the residents, if you are a Citizens policyholder in Coral Gables, and you'd like to come in and have a conversation with one of the Citizens residents, excuse me, representatives. We are going to have also Senator Ileana Garcia's office is going to be there, and I'm going to be there. You can come in, step into a meeting, have a conversation with the representatives from Citizen, along with the Senator's office and myself, to see how we can figure things out and look at your policy and see if maybe there are any issues and how we can work with you. No promises made. At the end of the day, we're just trying to see, especially the elderly in this community, that are facing massive increases in their insurance, along with three percent taxes. And just this resident alone, and I'm going to tell you a quick story what this resident told me. She has an increase in her maintenance, because of the new reserve legislation in the State of Florida, new reserve requirements. She also has an increase in her maintenance because of the insurance, and now the insurance company is requiring her, even though her roof is not more than ten years old, to completely change her roof or they won't approve it. That's an \$80-plus-thousand-dollar roof. She has to get an equity line to get that. So, it's three major, major financial hits in one year that are basically causing a lot of these elderly individuals to have to make decisions whether they take a vacation, where do they eat, do they run their air conditioning, do they turn the lights off. These are situations where you are seeing maintenance costs on a monthly basis, sometimes double, even triple for these buildings, and she lives in a small building in the North Gables. So, this is an example of somebody if we can help these individuals by looking at their policies and finding ways to lower those policies. It's tomorrow, October 25th, from 9 to 11 a.m. I welcome anyone to please join us. It will be with Senator Ileana Garcia, we'll be having here, just come to Coral Gables City Hall and come to the Mayor's office. The third and final
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thing is, I'd like to thank my father for being here. My father is, as you know, a very busy man, a physician, who has given his life, 40 years of service as a doctor and its always a pleasure when you surprise me and you come here, because it brings a smile to my face. So, I want to say thank you for not only visiting me here, but always being a major supporter of my dedication to the city, my family, my friends, and every endeavor that I forth come. So, thank you and I love you. With that being said, have a happy holiday, have a beautiful, beautiful holiday. Stay safe, enjoy Coral Gables and we love you and God bless you.