

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-2
January 28, 2025
Police and Fire Headquarters
2151 Salzedo Street, 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, Alberto Parjus
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Assistant City Manager, Joe Gomez

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item H-2 [12:18 p.m.]

Update on City Hall

Mayor Lago: Moving onto the final item on the agenda, H-2.

City Manager Parjus: Mr. Mayor, if I have a moment to say something. Thank you. Earlier today, I was appointed as City Manager. Thank you for the privilege. Mayor Lago, Vice Mayor Anderson, Commissioner Castro, Commissioner Fernandez, Commissioner Menendez, City Attorney Suarez, City Clerk Urquia. It was immense pride and profound gratitude that I assume the role of City Manager. I am both humbled and honored to embark on this...alongside each of you the City Beautiful. Having been part of the Coral Gables team for the past three years, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and professionalism that thrives with our city administration and employees. I am especially proud to work alongside a dedicated team and pledge to continue to work in the spirit of collaboration with every member of the Commission, my colleagues, our residents, our businesses to continue to foster an environment of excellence and integrity. My dedicated service and administrator of the public sector will guide us with informed decisions that ensure financial stability and prosperity for our community. Together, we will continue to uphold

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Coral Gables as a worldclass destination for residents, businesses and visitors. We celebrate 100 years of rich history, let us also look forward with optimism to the opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we can build upon our past achievements and steer Coral Gables toward another 100 years, filled with promise and potential. Thank you once again to this Commission for your trust and support. I'm eager to move forward shoulder to shoulder with each of you, as we write the next chapter in the legacy of Coral Gables. Thank you.

Commissioner Castro: Thank you.

Commissioner Menendez: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Moving unto item H-2.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Honorable Mayor Lago, Vice Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, Joe Gomez, Assistant City Manager. I'm just going to provide a brief update on the status of City Hall. So currently, regarding the structural repairs, we have the shoring set up for column 49, which is the exterior column, which is outside. You've all seen the shoring with the fencing around it. We also have column 24, which is the column at the conference room, the assessment has been completed. Plans are currently being sent to us. We are going to be reviewing those plans in the next few days with our team, with our Building Department, and that will require some repairs of the base of that column. The good news is that the second floor in the mezzanine, the column looks like its in pretty good condition. However, the base of that column is in pretty poor condition, so its going to require interior shoring, that way we don't damage any of the external face of the building. We also have the shoring in place for the north perimeter beam on the second floor, which is the shoring that's currently in place at the City Manager's office, as well as the CIP office, and that is the perimeter being supported by the radio beams. Those plans have also been received for us to be able to review. And there is one more area that the construction consultant would...under the leadership of Doug Wood, found which is the west entrance, the lintel and the header on the door, there has been a separation there, so they are also recommending some structural repairs. So those are currently in place and like I said, we'll be reviewing those plans to determine the path to move forward. Regarding the buildout of the Minorca Parking Garage, for the Commission offices, our consultant has submitted the pricing sent to Thorton, the contractor, to be able to get a price to be able to do the buildout for the phase one, which would be the Commission offices when the time comes to relocate. And then at some point, we would be looking at phase two of that area, which is currently where the Passport office resides once it moves. There are different options there that we'll be exploring with the City Manager. I did want to mention one thing, there was a report on concrete testing that I just wanted to clarify. The concrete testing report that was done back in April of 2022, and that was specifically isolated to the conference room on the first floor. The consultant Ardaman and Associates, did extensive testing on two samples of the concrete, and at the end of the conclusion of that is that concrete in that particular

area is in poor condition. Its been subject to what is called carbonation, which is accelerated the deterioration of the reinforcement. However, as part of the next phase of the work with R. J. Heisenbottle, we are going to go ahead and do additional testing throughout the building, because that's already isolated, so we want to be sure, in terms of the source of the material and all that. This is a very specific spot. We want to be sure that we collect samples throughout the City Hall. And then finally, we are moving forward with the negotiations with R. J. Heisenbottle and his team. Pleased to report that they've always submitted their rates. We are in the process of finalizing that and we are going to be meeting with their team next week to actually negotiate elements of the scope of work. In terms of the phase one assessment and phase two of the design, and we are going to move forward. We expect the notice to proceed some time this month with R. J. Heisenbottle's team and we'll move forward on there. That's my report. I'll be happy to address any questions.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I just want, through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Thank you for putting this on. It was an item that I asked Mr. Gomez to give us a summary of. I'm going to ask you when you get to the next stage with more testing, etc., that we get an update. I also want to thank you for meeting with me. I think it was five engineers that we met with to reevaluate the type of shoring that was going to be put on the west wall, because it really wasn't necessary to penetrate the wall until we really looked underneath the skin on the interior of the conference room, to see the condition of that column, and I appreciate your thoroughness in that. We came up with a solution that wasn't going to require the damage and penetration of the building and causing even additional work and water intrusion in the future. So, I'm glad we're moving forward. I think the next phase will be additional testing, correct me if I'm wrong, of the concrete throughout the building.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Yes ma'am.

Vice Mayor Anderson: And of course, the negotiations with R. J. Heisenbottle on moving forward with the restoration work. Thank you again. Looking forward to your next report.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Thank you.

Commissioner Castro: My liaisons are still in the building. I want to make sure that it is a safe environment for them. Is the air quality exam...

Assistant City Manager Gomez: We did issue a purchase order, and I believe that that – Ardaman and Associates, I believe was contracted or PSI, one of the two firms to do the air quality testing. I'll be able to provide you an update at the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Castro: Thank you.

Commissioner Fernandez: When you mention the lintel over the west entrance, that's the entrance everybody uses to access the building, correct.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: The west entrance.

Commissioner Fernandez: That's the one facing the 427 Building.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, the issue that we have is basically, the doorway everybody uses to access the building.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: It requires structural repairs that they've identified at this point, but again, they are coming up with the repair plans once we know the extent of what we need to do, we can do those very quickly.

Commissioner Fernandez: Can we stop using that entrance to the building and maybe shift folks back to the south entrance that used to be allowed to access the building, closer to the entrance to the former Manager's office and the Clerk's office?

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Let me just clarify. Doug, thank you for that clarification. It's the door facing Coral Way, not the 427.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, the south door.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Okay – which has been closed off.

City Clerk Urquia: Not south – north.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: To the north.

Commissioner Fernandez: The north which is the employee entrance.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: No, nobody uses that door.

Commissioner Fernandez: Right, but historically was the employee entrance.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Yes, that's correct sir.

Commissioner Fernandez: Which has had – there is spalling there. That area is in really poor shape. That's close to my office and that staircase is quite precarious.

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Mayor Lago: Thank you, sir.

Assistant City Manager Gomez: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Anything else for the good of the order.