

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-1
June 11, 2019
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-1 [a.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida authorizing the City Manager to establish and implement a Civic Internship Program, known as the “City of Coral Gables Page Program” for 15-18-year-old students, for the purpose of introducing high school students to local government, policymaking and public service and to begin the Summer of 2019. (Sponsored by Vice Mayor Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I’d like to go on with item G-1, Coral Gables Page Program, Vice Mayor Lago.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you Mayor. I hand it off to our City Attorney, she can give a quick brief overview of what my vision is of this program and why I think its going to lay a foundation for our future leaders we have some of them here today.

City Attorney Ramos: Item G-1 is A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida authorizing the City Manager to establish and implement a Civic Internship

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Program, known as the “City of Coral Gables Page Program” for 15-18 year-old students, for the purpose of introducing high school students to local government, policymaking and public service and to begin the summer we are in now. The three students who really came up with this, really two students initially, presented it before the City of Miami Commission and then one who was added for our presentation today would like to address you and explain to you the importance of the program, and then I’ll tell you what staff has done to be able to implement it going forward this summer.

Vice Mayor Lago: Gentlemen. So, while they come up here, I was fortunate enough to be at a City of Miami Commission meeting the other day looking at some other legislation that was being discussed; and I talked to the City Attorney and her husband who were there while they were discussing this Page Program. The City of Coral Gables for years, and I know our Commission has had interns who had been involved on multiple fronts from high school students, who are there during the summer, really getting an understanding of what it would be potentially to be a City Attorney, to be an attorney, some have even worked with our engineering department, some have worked with our City management, learning at an executive level what it would take to run an office. Doesn’t have to be in the public sector, but hopefully we are trying to enter people and give them a lot of exposure in regard to what it would be to come and work in the public sector. So, these three gentlemen here just want to give you an idea of what the program or what the vision is behind the program and how this will shape tomorrow’s future leaders.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: State your name and the floor is yours.

Carlos Morales: My name is Carlos Morales.

Marcelo Morales: My name is Marcelo Morales.

Andres Ramos: My name is Andres Ramos.

Carlos Morales: Good morning Honorable Mayor and Commissioners, my name is Carlos Morales and along with my brother Marcelo Morales and our friend Andres Ramos, we are here to support item G-1 regarding the establishment of the City of Coral Gables Page Program. We just finished getting this program passed at the City of Miami last month. Thank you, Commissioner Lago, for agreeing to sponsor this item due to your passion for educating and mentoring students in our community. We are extremely excited to see this program move forward in the City. With the help of this Commission we can teach students about local government in this City.

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Andres Ramos: Thank you. I'm Andres Ramos, I'm an upcoming 10th grader at Belen Jesuit and I'm also a strong supported of a page program, especially at the local level. Students will no longer have to travel to Tallahassee to simply learn about government, when they can just learn about government right here. The local page program will also allow students to learn about the important role that local government plays in each and everyone of its citizens and will allow them to see firsthand the local legislative process. We hope with your leadership and vision; this local page program will spread to other cities as well. And thank you for your support.

Vice Mayor Lago: Great work gentlemen – great work.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. I'm all for it. I think it's a wonderful idea, but I'd like to ask a question on how the pages will be chosen and who would choose them and what the application process is, how many?- and I'm all for it, I'm just questioning the process.

Vice Mayor Lago: That's a very valid question and I don't have an answer for that exactly.

City Attorney Ramos: We can find out through the HR department. The idea is for these to be one to two-week programs, so they will be short, they will be scattered throughout the summer, so there's only one page at a time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: They apply because they supposedly find out that there's this program.

City Attorney Ramos: There are some requirements. This summer is going to be basically whoever knocks on the front door, because we've gotten a late start. Next summer the idea is that we'll have an application process, a time period in which to apply. The requirements we put in place, that you need to have a letter of recommendation from the school principal or a teacher; you need to have a 3.0 in conduct and academic.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Ages?

City Attorney Ramos: 15 to 18 just as the center page program; and of course, parents have to sign a waiver and an application that they will submit. So, it will be a little bit more formal next year; this year will be less formal as we are just getting started.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Very good. Thank you. I'm all for it and we need a resolution to approve the program.

Vice Mayor Lago: So moved.

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Vice Mayor Lago you moved.

Commissioner Keon: Second it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the role please.

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much gentlemen, its approved. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you for your support.

Commissioner Mena: Thank you guys.

Commissioner Fors: Before we move unto the next item, just as an aside, I wanted to introduce everybody to Emily Gonzalez, who is a rising Junior at Coral Gables High and speaking of people knocking at our door and wanting to serve as interns here in the City, she knocked on my door before Commissioner Lago had proposed this page program, so I'm hoping that she can also serve as one of our ground level pages during this summer while we are going to be doing it informally.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Of course.

Vice Mayor Lago: It would be a privilege to have her here.

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

Vice Mayor Lago: Welcome.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Welcome.

[End: 11:22:14 a.m.]

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