

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item 3**  
**September 15, 2020**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli**  
**Vice Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Commissioner Pat Keon**  
**Commissioner Michael Mena**  
**Commissioner Jorge Fors**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Attorney, Miriam Ramos**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Fire Chief, Marcos De La Rosa**  
**Assistant to the City Manager, Solanch Lopez**

**Public Speaker(s)**

---

Agenda Item 3

Discussion regarding format of future City Commission Meetings.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Hello, Mr. Urquia. I think we have a quorum, so why don't we call the meeting to order.

City Clerk Urquia: We do have a quorum, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do we?

---

City Commission Meeting  
September 15, 2020  
Agenda Item 3 - Discussion regarding format of future City Commission Meetings.

City Clerk Urquia: And we're ready to begin.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. The special City Commission meeting today, September 15, having to do with our Zoning Code -- and I would like to -- I'd like to -- once I get my agenda -- start the meeting. Do you want to call the roll or -- Billy?

City Clerk Urquia: Give me a second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. We have -- I would like to take up Item 3 on the agenda first because we are in the process of certification of our fire department -- recertification, and the Fire Chief and the City Manager have to attend those meetings. So, Chief, you want to give a presentation on Item 3?

Commissioner Mena: Mayor, I apologize. If I could just very quickly just let you know, I have a conflict at 9:30 that I'm probably going to need to step out for, for a few moments, and then dial back in. I just wanted to let you know in advance and confirm that we still have a quorum even if I step out during that time period.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner. And I think we will have a quorum, so thank you very much for (INAUDIBLE). Billy.

City Attorney Ramos: Mayor, while the Chief gets ready, once the Chief presents, then there's two related items, number 4 and 5, depending on what the Commission decides to do. I drafted rules of procedure for either hybrid meetings...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: Or in-person meetings during the pendency of the pandemic.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Perfect, perfect. Chief? Mr. City Manager, you want to start with the presentation?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I believe the Chief has a PowerPoint presentation...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, good.

City Manager Iglesias: Concerning that and...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good.

City Manager Iglesias: I'm not sure if he's having problems getting on. Mr. City Clerk, is the Chief having issues getting on, and also, Chief Stolzenberg?

City Clerk Urquia: The Chief is not on right now, Mr. Manager. We do -- he did send us a PowerPoint presentation and we have it ready. We're contacting him right now to see if he's able to log in.

City Manager Iglesias: Thank you. He may have an issue logging in. If not, Mayor, then we should maybe proceed with the agenda items. I believe...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The thing is that the other items, 1 and 2, are so lengthy that if the Chief is going to be in need of leaving us, maybe he won't be back to -- he won't be allowed. Billy, you want to check on his availability?

City Clerk Urquia: We're doing that right now, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, he was having logging in issues. He just contacted us right now.

City Clerk Urquia: He's coming on right now, sir.

City Manager Iglesias: He was having logging in issues, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Great.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: Good morning, everyone. Sorry about that. I was having a problem with the link.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: Are we ready, Mayor?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Chief.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I had muted myself. Yes, we are ready.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: Okay. Good morning, everyone. This is a presentation as to the Commission's request to explore possibilities and avenues towards reopening to live Commission meetings. Next slide, please.

Commissioner Keon: Why do I have no audio?

Assistant to the City Manager Lopez: Billy, I think the Chief has been muted.

City Clerk Urquia: Chief, you muted yourself.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: There you go. Sorry, guys. And maintain the virtual meetings. Next slide. So, just as a recap, City Hall remains closed to the public. Emergency orders are ongoing that reflect those changes, and many businesses are subject to gathering restrictions of 50 percent, for example, of the restaurants. And we all understand and recognize that this is subject to change, but as of now, that's where our community resides or reflects. Next slide. So we did an assessment of Miami-Dade County and where cities are. The cities -- most cities are -- remain at 100 percent virtual. There's only Hialeah Gardens, Sweetwater and Florida City that are doing some form of in-person meetings within their commissions. Next slide. So our options are no change, which is we remain in a virtual meetings as we are at this point; City Commission and staff only, so it would be a hybrid where our staff would be able to present their items in person and the City Commission would be in person, but public speaking would continue to be from an electronic standpoint or virtual standpoint; or we can develop a plan that begins to limit public or in-person attendance to the Commission meetings. Those are the three options that we identified that would be available to us. Next slide. Next -- thank you. So, regardless of which way we go, there are some guiding principles that remain in place; the constant disinfection of high-touch areas, public bathrooms, ensure proper ventilation, full cleaning and disinfecting of all facilities once they're closed. Next slide. If we were to go with allowing folks into City Hall, obviously, all attendees would have to be screened prior to entering, like we do now with our employees. Occupants must wear masks at all times. There would be a limited amount of folks in City Hall to achieve social distancing, and we would maximize social distancing by using physical barriers where needed. Next slide. So department heads would be present. On their item is one of the options, as I said that we discussed. If the residents would be allowed inside, we would have them pre-register online, almost like an electronic speaker card, so that they would have a set appointment to speak on that item. So, most of the items would have to be time certain, and then you would have an appointment as to -- if you would like to speak in person, as to when you would be allowed in to speak, so that way we can achieve social distancing and have -- be able to space out individuals that they can come up, speak, and then once they speak on their item, then they would have to exit City Hall to avoid

congregation and allow for maximizing the amount of folks that could come up and speak. In between...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let me ask a question. If they would wait outside City Hall for their turn to speak, they would come into City Hall, they would speak and then they would be escorted out again. Is that correct?

Fire Chief De La Rosa: Correct, correct.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: So, what I was referring to, Mayor, is that it doesn't have to be a one by one. We're looking at an option where maybe we bring up three or four speakers at the same time just to move the process along, achieving for social distancing. And then once they spoke, then they would have to exit the building and allow the next person to come up and speak. The podium would have to be disinfected between speakers, and we would use physical barriers there as well. This is an option to start to introduce and allow folks to present in front of Commission in person, but we will still encourage the participation of our residents and the public through Zoom and online options because of the fact that we still have limited access to City Hall. Next step -- next question -- excuse me, next slide. There'll be visual reminders to leave space between each other. We'll encourage everyone to stay six feet apart. That would also include signage to queue folks to where they need to go and clearing a clear entry and exit to avoid bottlenecks. And you've seen this in some of the stores and facilities that have already put this into place. And we would use staff to help manage the flow. Next slide.

City Clerk Urquia: Chief, the computer just froze on us. Give us a second.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: Yeah. You got it. Next slide, thank you. Mayor and members of the Commission, this is a representation that we put together to show how we can achieve social

spacing of the Commission and principle staff while we have in-person Commission meetings. So by moving the Manager's seat and the City Attorney and the City Clerk off the dais, then we can move Commissioners to achieve the social distancing. The yellow on the dais represents physical barriers that we would have there to enhance the social distancing. And obviously, everyone in the room would have to wear a mask. Next slide. Members of the public would be allowed in a handful at a time, where they can now wait outside of the chambers in the seating that's provided at this point to their point to speak. That means that there's only one speaker inside the Commission chamber at a time. And that allows us to be able to have the one way in, one way out rotation and achieve the opportunity to disinfect in between each speaker. If there was a -- the seating inside the Commission would be reserved in the event that we need a department head or staff member that is also speaking on the item to remain in chambers. But all other department heads would not be present in the Commission until their item comes up. Next slide. So this is a recap as we began. These are the options that we're presenting today. Virtual meetings is where we're at right now, as of March 31. One option would be the initial phase, which would be City Commission and staff in-person and our residents would remain on an electronic speaking forum. Or the third option would be limited public in-person attendance. These are the three options that we're presenting today. I did speak to City of Miami who's having the same discussions that we're having. And what I was told was at least for September and initial October meetings, they're looking at what is our -- an optional -- what we're calling the initial phase, which is City and staff and having public comment remaining virtual. That's where they're at, as of yesterday, that they started to have their preliminary meetings. Next slide. So, if you were to choose an option where staff is presented in the Commission chambers, we could probably facilitate that at our next Commission meeting as well as having all of you in-person meetings, and we could use that as a trial run. If we wanted the option to move towards allowing for in-person resident speaking, then our target date would be October 13 meeting. The reason for that is, is that it allows us to work out the process that we described previously from the pre-registration to how we would manage the one way in and one way out of Commission. Next slide. I believe it's -- now I'm up to questions or comments as to what we presented and what options you folks see that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Chief, let me ask a question. The only difference between the limited -- and I'm talking about the intermediate step that you proposed -- and what we're doing today is that we -- the Commissioners, the City Manager, the City Attorney and Billy would look at each other faces, but the public would still be virtual. Is that correct?

Fire Chief De La Rosa: In addition to -- your answer is correct, with the only caveat is, is that residents -- or excuse me, staff would also be in-person with regards to their particular item. So, whatever item was there, if you needed to be briefed by a staff member, then our City staff would be present as well.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Because I don't have any particular need to look at the faces of our Vice Mayor, Commissioners Mena, Keon and Fors. I think that we either admit the public or we continue as we are. Otherwise, it's just very complicated and it doesn't achieve anything in terms of communication to the public.

City Attorney Ramos: Mayor, I do need to mention right now the Governor's order suspending the in-room quorum requirement is the only thing that allows us to meet in this format that we're meeting right now, fully virtual, is set to expire October 1. If he does not extend that, we're going to be forced into a room one way or the other...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: For purposes of the Commission being present. It does not regulate how the public or staff attends, but it does regulate how the Commission attends.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Fors: Mr. Mayor, I would prefer, as a matter of preference, to meet in the hybrid version and see your face, as well as Commissioner Keon, Lago and Mena. However, I'm also not



passionate about it and I defer to those on the Commission that may have health concerns and safety concerns about doing so. But as a matter of preference, in a vacuum, I would prefer to at least meet in person, the Commission, if we decide to go down that road.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yeah, Mayor, if I may. I confer with Commissioner For's comments wholeheartedly.

Commissioner Keon: Mayor, this is Commissioner Keon. I agree with Commissioner Fors also. You know what I'd like to try is for us to try and speak with masks on. I don't know -- I know sometimes it's difficult to hear someone when they speak with -- through a mask, so I don't know -- I -- how well that will transmit over audio, or I'd like to maybe give some thought to that and if you think that it's no problem, then I don't have any problem meeting in person either.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Well, I have...

Commissioner Mena: I don't have anything...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No strong feelings one way or the other.

Commissioner Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: But as long as we, you know, keep safety and such. But I'd like to bring the public in as soon as possible.

Commissioner Mena: I agree.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And if we're not going to bring the public in, then let's have one more meeting like we're doing. And -- or maybe we can try and, you know, in Spanish (INAUDIBLE), a test run having it, you know, for the next meeting. I don't know. I mean, I...

Commissioner Mena: Yeah. I like that idea, Mayor. I was going to echo that as well. I think even if nothing else, it's sort of a dry run for what it will be like with the new setup, and it might give the Chief and the Manager some better perspective on, you know, what the spacing is like and how everything operates, you know. And maybe that's helpful, I don't know. I defer to them on that, but I agree that we should try to get people in as soon as possible because, otherwise, I agree with you. I don't really see the benefit of -- if it's just us of not having -- if people aren't there.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: So, I would like for somebody to make a motion saying that we will have the third option that the Chief presented to us, the hybrid meeting with us sitting in the dais looking at each other and bringing in the public one by one and staff, as needed, in order to make in-person presentations, and let's see how that works.

City Attorney Ramos: So, as a direction...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Would somebody move it?

Commissioner Keon: I'll move it.

City Attorney Ramos: Okay, and that is to bring in the public, no hybrid, starting September 22, correct?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

City Attorney Ramos: Right, then after this motion, I'll ask for a motion on number 5, adopting those rules.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: May I make a...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Of course. It's your show.

Fire Chief De La Rosa: We were looking at the October meeting for in-person to allow us to put the process in place with regards to the registration for the residents that wanted to speak in person and to devise the one way, in one way out. The September 22 meeting, we had suggested doing the dry run with the staff, so if we want to go towards directly into the third option, which is allowing the residents in, then we respectfully request the following Commission meeting, which is the first in October, I believe.

City Manager Iglesias: I think, Mayor, what we were looking at was checking the Commission chambers, making sure that everything works and that setup works on the 22nd, using a virtual side -- or the virtual side for the public, and then going for the full meeting on October 13. So, we could do like a pilot meeting or a trial meeting on the 22nd based on that, and then go for the October 13 for everyone, which I think that's what the Commission is choosing right now.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Does anybody have any objections to having this one step and then going full on October?

Commissioner Mena: Nope.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Because that's what the Chief recommends and that's the prudent thing, then let's try that. Is that okay?

Commissioner Keon: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: And that's why we recommended that on October 23, that it would give us a try -- on October 13, excuse me, if that -- if we have this trial on the 22nd, and then the next step on the following Commission meeting, which would be on the 13th.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

City Attorney Ramos: So...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is there a motion to this?

City Attorney Ramos: In making a motion...

Vice Mayor Lago: Commissioner Keon made the motion.

City Attorney Ramos: Mayor, I just want to know -- we have a budget hearing the evening of the 22nd, so we should include that in the motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Vice Mayor Lago has made a motion. Is there a second?

Vice Mayor Lago: I second Commissioner Keon's motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: To do the one-step...

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. All those in favor, say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Opposed, likewise. Alright, Miriam, you got it.

City Attorney Ramos: Okay.