

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-2
June 28, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Deputy City Attorney, Cristina Suarez

Arts and Cultural Arts Specialist, Catherine Cathers

Public Speaker(s)

Geannina Burgos, Vice Chair of Cultural Development Board

Maria Cruz

Agenda Item H-2 [Start: 12:35 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission approving Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Cultural Grant recipients and setting in place a funding mechanism contingent on the City's approved budget. (Unanimously recommended by the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 7 to 0).

Mayor Lago: H-2

Deputy City Attorney Suarez: H-2 is a Resolution of the City Commission approving Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Cultural Grant recipients and setting in place a funding mechanism contingent on the City's approved budget.

Ms. Cathers: Good morning, Catherine Cathers again. So other responsibilities of the city's Cultural Development Board are to recommend to the City Commission the annual allocation of

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

cultural grant funding. I want to thank our members of the Cultural Development Board who has the roll of reviewing and scoring each application. I'd also like to thank our cultural partners, the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce and Arts and Business Council of Miami, who provide important professional development opportunities and supports our grantees. On May 24th the Cultural Development Board reviewed and scored 35 applications for the allocation of City of Coral Gables Cultural Grant Funding. One application was required by the Coral Gables Museum which is funded separately. Proposed funding of 34 applicants and their scores, including the Museum have been provided as Exhibit A, attached to the proposed resolution. Last year the allocated funding was \$191,228, with gradual increases that have been frozen since 2020 due to the pandemic, and that means that this amount has been the same for the last three fiscal years. The Cultural Development Board respectfully made a motion recommending an increase of five percent which has been submitted for funding consideration as part of the budget process has not been approved at this time. The requested increase would be \$9,561, bringing the total budget for the grant to \$200,789. Currently, the FY23 Budget Estimate maintains the \$191,228 amount. Through the Cultural Development Board's recommendation staff is respectfully requesting that the increase be approved. And we have a couple of slides summarizing the impact of the program benefit to Coral Gables residents and visitors. So, this is just some of the impact of the number of events that are presented here in the Gables. Over 1,000 – 1,297 are the estimated number of events with 426 of those being free, and again, the number of organizations represented being 35. There are also some economic impact numbers that just convey basically what the rate of return is for the city and the benefit to our businesses and residents. There are expenditures for organizations, almost \$2 million dollars expenditures by audiences in our local businesses, over \$8 million dollars, job supported 317, household income generated and also local government revenue estimates of \$448,294. And those are generated through the Arts and Economic Prosperity Calculator, which is through Americans for the Arts, and it's based-on analysis of average of similarly populated communities. The board is recommending funding for these organizations which you see here, and they represent a diverse range of the arts, including musical theater, film, dance, opera, literary arts, performance, poetry, gardens, and museums. We have Vice Chair Geannina Burgos here today, to speak on behalf of the board and to respond to any questions from the Commission.

Vice Chair Burgos: Thank you Catherine. Thank you, Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Manager, City Attorney and the Commissioners. As you know, this is a labor of love for the board. We look through these grants very particularly and we try to bring best quality of programming here in the city. It's something that we are very proud of. We know that the cultural arts events here in the city are important to the community and to benefit, not just economically the community but just the arts in general. I'm here to answer any questions you may have regarding the budget request. Funding for the arts is always something that's needed more and more every year, so it's something

that we requested as well in a motion. Any questions you may have here, I'm available to answer on behalf of the board.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. First off, just thank the board for their commitment, obviously to the city and to all these great organizations. Can you put back the list of the entities that were granted funding.

Ms. Cathers: Yes. Can we have the PowerPoint back up. So, this is the list of the organizations. The one in the bold at the bottom is what we call our Coral Gables based organizations. They are not the only organizations that are based in Coral Gables, but they are the ones where their primary focus is the arts. Their operating budget is over \$500,000, and that's the only function that they have is arts programming. So, the organizations above represent programs that all take place in Coral Gables. None of the funding goes towards programming outside of Coral Gables and you'll notice a few on here are nationally recognized organizations, such as Seraphic Fire and Chopin Foundation for the Arts. Even Area Performance Gallery, who used to be in the Gables, unfortunately had to move, but they provide programming for all residents, but they are doing it in Crystal Academy, as well as programming here in City Hall that this funding goes towards. So, it has quite a diversity and quite a level of impact.

Mayor Lago: How are we keeping tabs of when a grant is given that all the monies is spent here in Coral Gables. How are we keeping tabs that events are occurring, because I want to be – every year I struggle with this, and this is a big struggle for me because I'm not keeping tabs on what other cities are doing. Like I would love to know what the City of Miami is doing, West Miami, South Miami, unincorporated Dade, not unincorporated Dade, but more like other municipalities where they are first off, they are giving these grants and if they are giving these grants, are they giving these grants to entities that are in Coral Gables.

Ms. Cathers: Yes.

Mayor Lago: That are based in Coral Gables.

Ms. Cathers: Yes. Some of the programming, their funding is matched by those other grants.

Mayor Lago: What other cities are doing that?

Ms. Cathers: So, the county of Miami-Dade County, City of Miami Beach, I'm not sure if Doral has a grant program.

Ms. Burgos: Department of Cultural Affairs in the County.

Mayor Lago: Does Miami Beach give a cultural grant to the Coral Gables Museum?

Ms. Cathers: I don't know if they do, but...

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

Ms. Burgos: I'm not sure if that's a great example, Mayor, only because Coral Gables Museum has exhibits that happen there in the museum itself, as opposed to like for example a Seraphic Fire. So Seraphic Fire is a national organization that brings productions into this city and other cities throughout the county. I think maybe asking a question in a similar way, does Florida Grant Opera get funded by City of Miami Beach or does one of the other organizations that travels with its productions.

Mayor Lago: I'm a huge fan of the arts. I travel for art fairs, I think it's important, big fan of the museum. I will support the arts. This is a lot of money, and I'm just caught, as we deal with budgets, I'm not in favor of five percent increase this year. I know it's only \$9,000, but \$9,000 here, \$10,000 there, \$15,000, \$20,000, adds up. Just like when we are talking about the two previous artists - \$5,000, I would have voted no. If you said it was \$2,000, its fine. Let's get the best idea and let's concentrate on having the best artist. Just do one piece of art that we can maintain for perpetuity and do the right thing. I'm always – I want to vote no. I want to vote no because I see so much Miami, Miami, Miami, South Florida, South Florida. I don't see enough Coral Gables. Again, I know Seraphic Fire does an event here, but I just see a lot of money leaving the City of Coral Gables and I want to make sure that we are getting the best bang for our buck.

Ms. Cathers: So, we do have a final report, so there is accountability, not only do the board members do they visit these events and attend the programs, but I do myself.

Mayor Lago: Has anybody on this Commission reviewed that, or no?

Vice Mayor Mena: Reviewed what, I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: That accountability report.

Vice Mayor Mena: No. I haven't.

Ms. Cathers: We have a final report. It actually mirrors the application that was included with the materials as well. So, then we compare the final report, what are the actual, what actually happened compared to what they proposed to happen. We require a documentation of recognition of the city. We also require their attendance, that sort of thing. We also require bank statements and invoices for everything that they've paid for. It is a one-to-one match; they do have to match it with the minimum 50-50 match, and a lot of these are very robust. So Seraphic Fire, for example, is a very robust series. It's not just one piece that's in the Gables. Some of the smaller grant requests are for single events, but we have many that are for multiple events. And an organization such as Miami Chamber Music Society, they probably do, I'm guessing, I don't know for sure, but I would guess that if they are doing programming on Miami Beach, they are also requesting for funding for Miami Beach to do their programs there.

Vice Mayor Mena: And by the way, while we discuss this, if you don't mind keeping the list up, just because it's sort of the point of discussion, it's easier for us to see it. So, I agree and disagree with what you said, in the following way.

Mayor Lago: That's why I appreciate you.

Vice Mayor Mena: I agree that I can't out of principal agree to increase the budget for this item this year, because I'm looking, staff budget on a variety of issues that we talked about at our recent budget hearing and asking them to make cuts in a lot of tough places. And so, we've got to be consistent, I think, in that mindset, so there's that, and I know it's not a huge sum of money, so we'll survive. On the other point, like I think bringing an organization even if it's not a Coral Gables based organization to Coral Gables for the benefit of Coral Gables residents to have an event or something, is justified. So, I can understand that. It's like if we said, you know on an Art in Public Places thing, like let's only do a Coral Gables artist. We want to bring the best quality stuff to the city, so to me it's important that the event be in the city at a minimum, which you confirmed.

Ms. Burgos: They all are. All the events are in the city.

Vice Mayor Mena: So that gives me – obviously if it's also a Coral Gable entity would be better, but I'm for bringing high quality organizations into the city for the benefit of our residents. So, I'm okay with that from that perspective.

Mayor Lago: Let me give you an example. For example, the five cultural events that we have funded for the City of Coral Gables was supposed to be five, this year we were only able to do two, hope to go to five next year, we have a budgeted amount of \$100,000 a year. That's an entire weekend event Columbia v. Mexico. Next year hopefully we'll go to four, then maybe three or five. We are being very thoughtful and very methodical on how we curate these events. Were those only for consuls, the 20 consuls that are in the City of Coral Gables. I'm not going out there and getting, for example, a different consul that's located in Brickell if I'm doing an event here in the city. I won't. We are only allowing the 20 and we are growing now, because we have other consuls that we are courting and we are in the process right now of bringing them here, but that's my only issue. I would love nothing more to focus in on the entities that are based here in Coral Gables, so hopefully give them as much room as possible to see them be as successful as possible.

Commissioner Menendez: So, I know Vice Mayor, I think asked for the screen, but we didn't get the screen back.

Ms. Cathers: Can we get the PowerPoint back up please.

Commissioner Menendez: Let me work from the beginning. Where organizations apply for the grant, what's the ratio of Coral Gables organizations versus non-Coral Gables organizations applying for or pursuing?

Deputy City Attorney Suarez: Can we just clarify. I think it might be helpful for the Commission to clarify that there are two kinds of categories for this funding. So, one category would be Coral Gables based organizations and the grant can be used for their operating expense.

Ms. Burgos: Yes. All operating expenses. Those are the bolded ones.

Deputy City Attorney Suarez: You do not have to be a Coral Gables based organization, but the programming must be in Coral Gables.

Ms. Burgos: That is correct.

Deputy City Attorney Suarez: And my understanding is generally they need to say, this is the confirmed programming on such and such date. If they don't have those details, it is also described in their application that they don't have the confirmed details yet. So that might be helpful for you all to kind of understand.

Commissioner Menendez: I'm still interested to see how many Coral Gables based organizations.

Commissioner Fors: Six.

Ms. Cathers: Six – those are the large organizations that are art organizations that they are stand-alone, location.

Vice Mayor Mena: As opposed to what?

Ms. Cathers: They have physical – as opposed to an organization that is a non-profit organization that may be functioning out an office or they don't have an operating budget over \$500,000, so they are smaller.

Vice Mayor Mena: You're saying that that type of entity that happens to have an office in Coral Gables.

Ms. Cathers: So, there is certain criteria that they have to meet.

Vice Mayor Mena: Isn't applying for the first category of grants, if they are doing an event in Coral Gables, they would be applying for that. I understand what you're saying.

Ms. Burgos: Yes. So, the first category is over half a million, right, and located within the City of Coral Gables, so that's why you have Actor's Playhouse, Coral Gables Art Cinema, the Museum, right.

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

Vice Mayor Mena: Coral Gables Art Cinema and Coral Gables Museum can use grant money for their operating because they are exclusively basically operating in Coral Gables.

Ms. Burgos: Correct. Correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: As opposed to an entity that may have an office in Coral Gables but maybe 90 percent of their work, hypothetically could be outside of Coral Gables.

Ms. Burgos: Correct.

Ms. Cathers: So those are program based. Those are for specific programs as the City Attorney said. To answer your question, Commissioner, this year and it fluctuates every year, this year 13 of the 35 organizations have their residence in Coral Gables, so it's about 37 percent.

Vice Mayor Mena: Were there Coral Gables based entities that were turned down for Coral Gables based events?

Ms. Burgos: No.

Ms. Cathers: No.

Commissioner Menendez: So, my follow-up question, well I have two follow-up questions. One is, why is it just 13, are there more organizations in Coral Gables that could arguably qualify for these types of funds that perhaps aren't applying or don't know about it? And my related question, I know some local schools have put on musicals, put on shows, do those qualify? I'm trying to figure out your universe of organizations. I know a lot of these are high-end organizations, high-end events, but there are also community-based events that are mom and pop and grandmother, but they are musicals and there are things.

Ms. Cathers: Yes. There are criteria in there. There are some programs that the fund does not fund and one of those is school programs, workshops, those are the main ones that come up. Awards – we don't fund award money, cash prizes. Similar things that you see on other...

Commissioner Menendez: Why? I'm sure there is a good reason, but why not?

Mayor Lago: I have an example; Thanks for the Arts get a grant?

Ms. Cathers: I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: Thanks for the Art.

Ms. Cathers: They did not apply this year; however, they do have some of the grantees are doing programming at this application.

Mayor Lago: Why didn't they apply? Do you know?

Ms. Cathers: I don't know. I know that they are working closely with one of the organizations that did apply, so they may not just have had their own programming far enough along in place. They are aware of the program, and we have a close relationship with them. Another thing to bring up is that part of the application, they do have to have a letter of commitment from the venue that they are doing their programs in. So right now, out of the – we have many venues that our grantees use throughout the Gables and 50 programs are at these different venues that has been listed by the grantees. So that's another benefit, not only to the arts organizations, because some of those programs happen at the Museum or the Art Cinema, but they are also happening at Congregational Church, Methodist Church, Sanctuary of the Arts...

Commissioner Menendez: Do we find ourselves year after year more or less the same organizations coming back again and again? Is it the same universe?

Ms. Burgos: Generally, right.

Ms. Cathers: Yes. Many times, and there are ones that haven't been back for many years, and then we are always trying to, of course increase the pool of organizations and that's been one of the directives of the city to staff. For example, O Miami, which is a very prominent organization, never done anything in Coral Gables. Last year was the first year and they started small, so they are seeing how their program does in Coral Gables and will hopefully expand it. So, we are always reaching out to other organizations.

Mayor Lago: Does anybody else have any other questions or any other items you want to address?

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes. I was hoping you could explain Coral Gables Branch Library to me, that's the county basically.

Ms. Cathers: They use a fiscal sponsor. So, they – now its Friends of Miami-Dade County, but all the funding for programs at our branch.

Ms. Burgos: Coral Gables Library.

Vice Mayor Mena: But that one's a little funky to me, to be honest with you, because the county operates the library, right.

Ms. Cathers: Yes – because they probably wouldn't do certain funding if they didn't have enough. They still have to pay for their funding.

Mayor Lago: So, what is the size of the grant? What do they range?

Ms. Cathers: They range from, just a minute.

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

Vice Mayor Mena: I guess my point is, if you told me, this is probably not a great example, if you told me Seraphic Fire was asking for funds to do an event at the Coral Gables Branch Library, why is Coral Gables Branch Library asking for a grant, because to me, the county operates the library, they should be responsible for the programming.

Ms. Cathers: They bring in artists as well. So, you mentioned Seraphic Fire, I know this work with Dance Now and other dance and fine art organizations to come in and so specialized programs that they wouldn't do typically. So, they still have to fund it outside of their county.

Ms. Burgos: It's like a similar question for like a museum that's connected to the university, right. So, you have the university funding the...and then you have the museum itself for the art, so it's part of a larger budget, operating budget, they still have to find the funding through the particular art program for that.

Vice Mayor Mena: But to me on that one, and I don't know anything about the organization, what their plans are, so I'm speaking off of that...to be fair, but again, if there was an entity providing the programming asking for a grant for an event in Coral Gables, like the rest of them, I'm comfortable with that, but the library...

Ms. Burgos: Because they are like subcontracting, they are hiring artists to come in and do programming at their venue, which in this case is the Branch Library.

Vice Mayor Mena: But we don't know what it is.

Ms. Cathers: Well, they tell us in the application.

Ms. Burgos: In the application what the programming is and what they are going to bring in and who the artists are and all of those things.

Ms. Cathers: I'm sorry, I want to answer the other question. So, the smallest award this year with the \$191,228 is approximately \$2,100 and \$8,700 is the largest grant.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, \$2,100 is the lowest; \$8,700 is the highest.

Ms. Burgos: Does that include the operating ones for the...

Ms. Cathers: Yes. \$8,700 is the...which is within those Coral Gables based. Nobody has that in the programming one. The highest one in the programming one is 55, 58...

Mayor Lago: Let me take control. Mr. Clerk do we have any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes sir, we do.

Mayor Lago: Are there any further comments from the Commission? - any further concerns that needs to be addressed?

Commissioner Menendez: Could you refresh my memory. I remember like a year ago there was an issue about Little Carver. Is this the same grant funding?

Mayor Lago: Is this the same issue where they wanted to have a food festival and they weren't granted the funding?

Commissioner Anderson: It is.

Mayor Lago: Did they apply again this year? I don't know.

Commissioner Menendez: Again, you said schools are not part of the equation.

Ms. Cathers: Correct. So, the funding has been and of course the Commission can change any of the guidelines at any time, but right now it is for public programs, they are open and accessible to the public, and the school programs, and I did attend that event, by the way. School programs tend to be only for students and parents and families.

Commissioner Menendez: But if there is a school program, a musical, let's say I went to Beauty and the Beast recently, a couple of months ago, beautiful. They got the licensing rights from Disney to put on a full production and they sold tickets and it was open to the public. So is there a way that we can try to go back, if they do meet the criteria, because right now it just seems that we just automatically assume that school programs are closed to the public, some may be open.

Mayor Lago: What I'm also confused about, Commissioner is, we are not allowing a school that is located in the City of Coral Gables which has a certain amount of individuals that go to that school that are Coral Gables residents, but we are allowing a public branch library in the city, that again, I guess to say, outside of my two kids, I don't know if anybody else here who goes to the library. I think my daughters, they go, and they go to the library, and I imagine there are people in this community go to the library, just like there are people who attend Carver and all the different schools, but we are never getting 100 percent, say look, there are Coral Gables residents that go to the school or 100 percent residents that go to the library. We are diverse. We have people who come in and out of the city every single day; they go to work here, they go to eat, they go to shop, and they stop at the library, they drop their kids off at school, they go to where they live. So, my point is, I don't see why Little Carver cannot have an event that's based on food or whatever they wanted to do and at least be in consideration for a grant. I don't know if there are any other questions. I'd like to hear because we have a major item that we need to address that was supposed to be time certain 11:30, that's going to take a while to hear and I'm not going to take a lunch before we hear that item. I want to hear public comment, if possible, please.

City Clerk Urquia: Its Ms. Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Ms. Cruz: I am so grateful today to hear all this conversation, because I've been on this. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. First of all, I would like to, when you see the summary, we should have something that says how many times, how many years we've been funding, because their concept polling where people interested in a program, we can help them start, but we shouldn't be maintaining them forever and ever more, unless there is a specific reason. If you look at the list from this year and the list from the last year and the year before and the year before, the major money goes to the same people almost all the time, almost all the time, that's number one. Number two, when you look at that list you see how many free programs are offered. The number of free programs that you saw on the screen show very few of them have lots of free programs, some have one program, some have two, some have 100 percent of free programs. I think that should count, because if they are doing out of 400 programs, they only do 40 free, and then there is one that as 80 and has 80 free, you know there is some value to that. Now, how do you know that Coral Gables residents are taking advantage of these programs and I'm thinking the kinds of things that the university does with the free tickets, because you know what, free doesn't mean only for residents of Coral Gables, but if there was a program where the residents of Coral Gables could access free tickets to some of these events then your money will be well spent. That's the second one. The third one, the library really blew me out of the water, because we all pay county taxes, we all pay library taxes. How many other places do the city support the programs that the library offers through our tax money anyway? You see what I'm saying? Okay. The last one, I think, let me look at my notes. I didn't understand that the museum is funded separately, because they had requested money and then I see zero, so I didn't know how that works, but their number of free programs are included in the free programs, so I didn't understand that. And this issue of not allowing the school to participate is a big issue, because school programs, believe it or not, Coral Gables High, I still do not have anybody there, but I will, my oldest granddaughter, they have drama programs, they have sports programs, they have all kinds of programs. Why couldn't their art programs qualify to get assistance. Their drama programs are not for the school kids, it's for the community, so is the Carver thing.

Vice Mayor Mena: Isn't that the same logic as the library, to your point?

Ms. Cruz: Listen...

Vice Mayor Mena: My point is, because I agree with your point on the library, as I just stated. We pay taxes...

Ms. Cruz: But the School Board doesn't support those programs, they have to raise the money. If you're a drama program...

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

Vice Mayor Mena: Right. I'm agreeing with you on the library but playing devil's advocate, I presume the library would say, what funding we get is for Z, Y and Z, but doesn't cover this programming.

Ms. Cruz: My answer to that is do all the cities have to provide for the extra programs that the libraries do? – and I'm sure to tell you that the answer is no, it comes from Dade County money. The problem is that we are seen as wealthy and we are supposed to pay for everything, okay, the library is the big issue with me, okay. But the difference between the library and the schools is that if your child is in a drama program at the school, the School Board pays for the teacher, everything else you all have to provide the money, sell the tickets, do whatever. So why can't we support them?

Mayor Lago: I understand. Anything else?

Ms. Cruz: Wait. Wait.

Mayor Lago: We have a long agenda today.

Ms. Cruz: I agree. I'm very happy that you brought it up today. I think you need to be able to support the schools and we need to know how many years we've been funding a specific program, so we know that its time for them to raise some more money.

Vice Mayor Mena: On the schools – Look, the issue with the schools is whether the event at issue is a school event or is a community event.

Ms. Cruz: Evening event.

Vice Mayor Mena: Because all of these are community events that are open to everybody in the community.

Ms. Cruz: Um huh.

Ms. Cathers: Just to clarify.

Vice Mayor Mena: If a school event is for everybody in the community to go to, that is marketed as such, then I have no problem with that. But if its effectively a PTA event for just that community of the school that really just parents go to, then that's a little different.

Ms. Cruz: I understand.

Mayor Lago: We are never going to get out of here today. I don't want to hear later, if I don't apply Robert's Rules, I'm about to do it, I'm just giving everybody warning. There is a free-for-all here on the Commission constantly. I'm about to apply the rules. Don't complain later. Now, would you like to finish your public comment.

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

Ms. Cruz: I'm done.

Mayor Lago: You're done. Perfect.

Ms. Cruz: I'm done.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Menendez: I want to make a motion, if I may, if I'm allowed to.

Mayor Lago: Vice Mayor, are you done with your comments?

Vice Mayor Mena: Well, I don't know if we reached resolution on the two underlying issues, right. I'm done with my comments, but I'm willing to...

Commissioner Menendez: I'd like to proffer a motion that schools be treated like any other organization. If the school meets all the other qualifications for the public, then they should be given the same opportunity as any other organization, that's my point.

Mayor Lago: We are going to do Robert's Rules.

Ms. Burgos: Sure.

Mayor Lago: The only way we are going to hold the court here. Any of you would like to second that motion?

Commissioner Fors: The answer is that they would be treated as a community event.

Commissioner Menendez: Schools just can't fly...

Mayor Lago: Sorry. Madam City Attorney.

Deputy City Attorney Suarez: I think if that is something the Commissioner wants to push forward, maybe that could be brought at another meeting, because I don't think there is right now any school that's asking for funding. So maybe that item can be brought on the next agenda.

Mayor Lago: This is what I'm going to do. Mr. Vice Mayor, I'm going to defer this item, defer this item. I'm going to have, I'm going to request that the Commissioner, please, I'm going to make a motion to defer, along with my deferral I'm also asking for Commissioner Menendez to please work on a resolution that addresses the school issue and bring this back in the next Commission meeting. Can I get a second?

Commissioner Fors: Second.

Mayor Lago: Can I get a roll call vote.

*City Commission Meeting
June 28, 2022*

Vice Mayor Mena: Sorry. Is there any problem with that, that we should be aware of?

Ms. Burgos: I'm sorry Mayor, I would just ask that, not that we disagree, but if you would meet with us at some point when you're putting that resolution together to look at what the actual requirements are on the application, so that there is no misunderstanding as to what actually is required, as opposed to what maybe is perceived as required to apply for these grants. There are definitions in the application.

Commissioner Menendez: As long as there is a level playing field, any entity organization, if they meet the criteria, they are eligible, but I don't want to even indirectly exclude any entity. I just want you're an entity, you've got to meet the criteria, you have a shot. That's all.

Mayor Lago: Through the Chair. Through the Chair. Through the Chairman.

Vice Mayor Mena: Mr. Clerk if we could take the vote, please.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Chair, if I may, just one second. To your comment, I have open door Fridays every Friday. You can come by at 2 o'clock and see me, I'll be there till 6 or 7 o'clock. If that does not fit your schedule, I can meet with you for a coffee on Saturday or Sunday, if you'd like, like I always do. If that doesn't meet your schedule, we can do it on Monday first thing in the morning.

Ms. Burgos: Sounds good.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Chair, I'm done. You're running the meeting.

Vice Mayor Mena: Perfect. No, I'm kidding. Listen, I will say this, I'm going to respect the request to defer, because I respect that. I'm okay otherwise. I don't like the library, I would take that out and I don't agree, not that I don't like the library, let me clarify that. I don't like the idea of a cultural grant for a county facility that has a county budget, I have a little bit of a problem with that. I would take that out. I don't agree with the increase in the budget overall, because of what I said earlier, and I'm fine to defer. I feel like there are a lot of items on today's agenda, one of the reasons its long is because we have a lot of deferrals from prior meetings. I think we've got to like internally to talk about the agenda and the process for what we put on the agenda, because there are a lot of things on and then we end up deferring things. So, I'm ready to proceed with this, but if you want a deferral, I respect that 100 percent and I'm willing to defer.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Chair, if I may. I'm ready to vote on it today, very simple. It's a no vote. I've been meaning to do a no vote for some time now over the last few years, because this has grown and I feel like we need to focus in on City of Coral Gables entities, and I feel now we are seeing certain things, for example, like the library, the Vice Mayor Chair brought up and I think we are on a slippery slope, we are on a slippery slope, but we are holding Little Carver accountable when they are an entity that's in the school, they do great things and we should give them the same

runway that we give certain entities that are not even located in the city. I don't have a problem of deferring today, but if we vote, I'm voting no. I just want to give you a heads up.

Vice Mayor Mena: There's a motion on the floor to defer this.

Commissioner Fors: And I second.

Vice Mayor Mena: And a second.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Ms. Burgos: Thank you.