



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
October 10, 2023

ITEM TITLE:

Resolution. A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida repealing Resolution No. 2023-203 to allow public comment on all Commission discussion items. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

BRIEF HISTORY:

Section 2-83(a) of the City Code “recognizes the importance of protecting the right of all citizens to express opinions on the operation of city government and encourages citizen participation in the local government process. The commission also recognizes the necessity for conducting orderly and efficient meetings in order to complete city business in a timely manner.” As a general matter, Florida Statutes § 286.0114(2) requires that “[m]embers of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a proposition before a board or commission and, similarly, the Miami-Dade County Citizens’ Bill of Rights provides for a “right to appear before . . . any municipal council . . . for the presentation, adjustment or determination of an issue, request or controversy within the jurisdiction of the governmental entity involved.”

The City Commission has traditionally allowed public comment on almost every item on the agenda, including during discussion items under Commission items and, moreover, in 2020, the City Commission established an “Open Public Comment” section on each City Commission agenda during which an individual may address the city commission on an item that is on the agenda or on a matter which is not on the agenda, but within the scope of the city commission’s jurisdiction, yet the Mayor continued to allow public comment on each agenda item. The Open Public Comment section satisfies the “reasonable opportunity to be heard” requirements of Florida Statutes § 286.0114(2) and the Miami-Dade County Citizens’ Bill of Rights.

Section 6 of the City Charter provides that “[t]he Mayor shall preside at the meetings of the Commission,” and the City Code grants the Mayor the authority, among other things, “[t]o serve as chair of the city commission including the authority to procedurally manage and administer commission meetings.” Recently, due to the extended length of Commission meetings and in furtherance of conducting city business in a timely manner, the Mayor announced that public comment will not be automatically allowed on items that are referred to as “discussion items,” including discussions, updates, presentations, or similar items on which the Commission will not take any official action, while still allowing for public comment prior to the City Commission taking action on each item that is an ordinance, resolution, or other official action, in addition to Open Public Comment.

While acknowledging the Mayor’s authority to preside over Commission meetings, the City Commission, pursuant to Resolution No. 2023-203, set forth a procedure for requesting that public comment be allowed on specific “discussion items” in advance of the Commission meeting.

The proposed resolution would repeal Resolution No. 2023-203 and clarify that public comment is allowed on all discussion items.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION: (If Applicable)

No.	Amount	Source of Funds
N/a	N/a	N/a

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 1. Draft Resolution**