

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items F-9, H-3 & H-4 are related
March 10, 2026
Public Safety Building, CMR
2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Commissioner Melissa Castro
Commissioner Ariel Fernandez
Commissioner Richard D. Lara

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Community Recreation Director, Fred Couceyro

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-9 [Start: 2:10 p.m.]

F-9: Presentation on the Granada Golf Course and phase two of the Coral Gables Golf and Country Club. (Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

H-3: A Resolution of the City Commission amending the Community Recreation fee schedule pursuant to the city's established five-year fee planning structure; continuing the five-year fee cycle through Fiscal Years 2027-2031; providing for structured fee adjustments; establishing a veterans and active military discount at the Granada Golf Course; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date.

H-4: A Resolution of the City Commission accepting the recommendation of the City Manager to authorize a bid waiver for Granada Golf Course maintenance services and authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Bright View Holdings LLC for a period of one year in the estimated amount of \$969,478.00, pursuant to Section 2-691 of the City's Procurement Code.

Mayor Lago: Moving on to F-9 which is also H-3 and H-4.

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City Attorney Suarez: Mayor, if you'd like I can read H-3 and H-4.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Attorney Suarez: H-3 is a resolution of the City Commission amending the Community Recreation fee schedule pursuant to the city's established five-year fee planning structure continuing the five-year fee cycle through Fiscal Years 2027 to 2031; providing for structured fee adjustments establishing a veterans and active military discount the Granada Golf Course; providing for severability and providing for an effective date. H-4 is a resolution of the City Commission accepting the recommendation of the City Manager to authorize a bid waiver for Granada Golf course maintenance services and authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Bright View Holdings LLC, for a period of one year in the estimated amount of \$969,478 pursuant to Section 2-691 of the City's Procurement Code.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Sir.

Community Recreation Director: Good afternoon, for the record Fred Couceyro, Community Recreation Director. Thank you for hearing us today. Earlier in the meeting we talked about Granada Golf Course being on the historic trail and you know the significance that the course has for the community. It's not only a golf course, as everyone knows, it's a community meeting spot, it's almost like a campus there. We have Birdie Bistro, across the street is the Country Club, Le Parc. It's a walking area. So, it was kind of mentioned earlier, it's become a hub for the city. Real quick information as we discussed. It was opened in 1923. It's the oldest operating nine-hole course in Florida. What you may not know is it's also really busy. We had 67,000 rounds over the past year, which is high for any golf course and for a nine-hole course, which is a small footprint, it is a lot. We have 86 golf course members, and those golf course members do play up to five, six times a week if they can. The member play exceeded 14,000 annual rounds played last year. So, demand is what we're talking about is one of the issues that we're dealing with in terms of the optimal play capacity and how we're going to maintain course quality. For us with over 67,000 annual rounds, we see that we need to enhance our maintenance and we need to make operational adjustments to our capacity, to our fees, and to our membership structure, in order to get to something where we can manage the course and get it up to the conditions that we want to get it up to. We do recommend to look at that one-year service with an outside contractor and really continue to move past that year, go to an RFP and find an outside contractor. We feel that the way operations are handled now it's more significant for us to be able to go with the contractor instead of trying to continue to do it in-house with some of the difficulties that that we encounter; and with the fees, as you're going to see, we also wanted to include a new fee which is the 50 percent off discount for the veterans and the active military personnel. So really quickly, what we're seeing right now out on the course there's a lot of stress on the greens and the T-boxes. We don't have a lot of recovery time; the course is crowded we got a lot of people playing there all the time. We

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are seeing a decline in the quality of the course. So, we need to address the capacity by looking at stretching out the T-times, adjusting the pace of play and kind of increasing our maintenance investment and going with an outside company that has, you know, the capacity to deal with the course, and also to adjust the membership structures. For us, the last comprehensive course renovation was in 2014. 2014 was when we went in, we did the course. Just for reference, the Biltmore has had in 2008 and 09, they had one and they had another course renovation in 2018, 2019. So, for a course that gets a lot of play in South Florida, you know we would love to see that we could go 15 years between renovations, but down here you'll see that it sometimes doesn't make it to that time. For us we're entering into year 12 here, so we're getting there. As we look and what we're trying to do now is implement the maintenance to try to extend that window. We want to elevate Granada to the Country Club quality standards and kind of start with the phase two that we presented to the city when we started with the Country Club. We've worked through phase one, we're doing pretty well, and now we start looking at extended memberships and other things. With Bright View we want to do this one-year period and then go to RFP and look at continuing to use an outside company that'll come in. They'll have an agronomic program, they have different techniques in terms of their fertilization, they're going to vertica, they're going to airify more. So those are the things that they'll be able to provide with their additional resources. As we said, the total cost includes the annual contract, which is \$818,000, and then it's a T-renovation program that we're going to do, which is \$150,000, which will also rectify all the Tees, and we'll have brand new Tees as part of this effort. That's an annual increase of about 250. We were anticipating looking at this, so we did add some of these funds already into this new budget, which we'll be using, but it's not all of it, there's still a lot more that we have to take over, especially for the Capital 150. So Bright View, quick information about them. They are the largest landscape construction maintenance company in America. They have 45 years' experience in outsourcing golf courses. They maintain the Biltmore Golf Course, which is important for operational. They can share resources; they're right down the street. I think that's a very attractive option for us so that they can pull their resources and if we need anything they have that to draw on. There's Palm Beach National, which I believe was voted the number one public course in America, which they maintain, so they do have some nice courses. They have that agronomic oversight that I'm talking about, and they have shown to be able to grow turf and have consistent turf quality. So, one of the things that we're looking at and in bringing in this maintenance and this additional cost is we're looking at adjusting our fees. We haven't adjusted our fees immensely over the years, it's really been five percent over every other year and currently our rates people will tell you are very low. This proposal will increase it, so we won't be the lowest anymore, but as you can see we showed them up there for residents current fee is 22, our proposed fee increase is to 30; for all the non-resident rates we were before the Commission on a fee amendment in previous years and we had to we agreed to go to a 30 percent increase. It used to be 25 and then we went to 30 percent for non-residents over the resident price, so that's reflected here. Our twilight fee will go from 19 to 27, with the requisite increase for the non-residents; ride and save, this goes from 38 to 45, that

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includes the cart for certain weekdays; the replays, they went from 19 to 27; juniors, we didn't go up that high, we tried to keep it a lot lower went from 11 to 13; and the golf cart, we went up one dollar and that was basically, we did have new carts in 2024 and those costs increased and we hadn't we hadn't raised the rates in five years. So, we wanted to do that as well. Now one of the things in the fee structure that we talked about. You know currently, we do have the membership and the membership is unlimited golf it was the current rate was about \$931 for residents. We're looking at now transitioning into that Golf Country Club golf membership and having a membership where if you're going to be a member of the golf course, you're actually going to be a member of the country club as well. So, we're looking at instituting a new golf membership that won't exceed 100 members, it'll include the country club amenities within it, each member will get 30 free annual rounds of golf and then any additional rounds unlimited they'll have a \$5 discount on the fees. They will have that priority T-time access, which is important and the costs are on the screen; the resident singles would be \$2100, that's really a little bit of increase from the current \$931, plus what a single country club membership is, so you get them all together, and then that's the two-person membership cost. Key proponent of our program is this veteran and military discount program. We want to make sure that we provide discounted T-time opportunities for active military personnel and veterans um. All those eligible receive a 50 percent off discount on the greens fees and that's in whatever residency category they are, whether they're resident or non-resident. We will require proper identification, and the discount will be provided at the time of purchase, and we'll work with our Pro Shop staff to be aware of that and work with our veterans and our current active military personnel. So that's in a nutshell really quick. I'm available for questions.

Mayor Lago: All right. Thank you. So as you can see our fees are a little outdated and we've been getting some complaints lately in regards to maintenance and it's pretty obvious that no matter what we throw at it in regards to maintenance and I'm not a golfer, I'm going to be honest with you I've never golfed, but when you have a facility that has that much wear and tear, unless you're playing on artificial turf, you're not going to be able to maintain that grass. It's got to be watered, it's got to be fertilized, and it has to be you know, let it rest so it can grow back, similar to an athlete. An athlete doesn't go out every single day and run sprints. They run sprints, they rest, they have a rest day, two rest days. This course doesn't have rest days and it's only nine holes, correct.

Community Recreation Director: Correct.

Mayor Lago: So, if it was that it was 18, maybe you can rotate, but you can't even rotate that. So, there's a lot of wear and tear here and you're doing the best that you can. So, it's a tough decision, it's a tough decision, but we have to move forward, and we have to find and do what's in the best interest of the golf course.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor.

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Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, I had a conversation with Mr. Thompson, the Manager and Director and that was one of the suggestions that I made, you know, let's try to piggyback off of the Biltmore and see if that way we can get a better rate and see where our fees are, because if we haven't updated our fees in so many years we're probably way behind where we should be, and you know you add to it the 67,000 rounds, you also have major rainstorms that flood the golf course and that takes a toll on the condition of the golf course as well. And that was by design that is the natural reservoir for water in the city to ensure there's no flooding everywhere else. So, it's something that we really need to factor in, and I think we're not going crazy with the new rates. They are still very reasonable for a nine-hole golf course. Hopefully with these changes you're also going to be able to improve the conditions, which will also improve the quality of golf that you're going to be able to play, and I drive by there all the time. I mean, unless it's raining there's tons of people out there playing regardless of the time of day, and you have the kids that are there in the afternoons doing their training in the putting green. So, the use is there, but it's something that's going to need to increase these fees in order to be able to maintain a property. So, I'm in favor of it. I'll be happy to move the item.

Vice Mayor Anderson I'll second it.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor. Quick question to Fred. So, in addition to, as Commissioner Fernandez says, he goes by the golf course all the time. I'm there all the time like in the evening for like the big walk around the golf course, and I see people playing in the dark of night even. Are those people who are actually just playing on their own there or is that part of a paid session.

Community Recreation Director: So yes and no. In some cases, they get the last tee times out, but I can tell you that there's some people that go out there at night and we have people at the Country Club that will call, and we'll ask to see if they can get removed but it's tough. There's no fences around there. It's wide open you know. That is one of the one of the troubles that my staff has. They'll tell me it's like, oh last night this that you know so, and you know if people see it, we encourage anyone that sees it to call in or if you want to call the country club and the country club can call in, it's fine you know because country club's there till late. But it is a difficulty that we do have. It's one of those problems that we're constantly dealing with.

Commissioner Lara: Sure, sure, but it's actually mind-boggling because I mean it could be, it could be eight thirty, nine o'clock at night. I can't see my hand sometimes in front of my face. They're playing golf.

Community Recreation Director: I don't know how you play.

Commissioner Lara: And it's not even a lit ball I don't think.
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Mayor Lago: For the love of the game.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor. I think one of the biggest issues is the people who are there jogging like you don't see the ball that could hit them.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Exactly.

Mayor Lago: So can we have a motion on H-3.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We do.

City Clerk Urquia: We have a motion.

Mayor Lago: Any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: No, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: All right.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes

Commissioner Lara: Yes

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

Mayor Lago: Let's do H-2 right now.

City Clerk Urquia: I'm sorry, Mr. Mayor, we also need a motion on H-4.

Mayor Lago: H-4, I apologize.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll second.

Mayor Lago: Any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: No, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Lara: Yes

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Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes