

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-5
August 27, 2024
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Melissa Castro

Commissioner Ariel Fernandez

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Amos Rojas, Jr.

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item F-5 [12:41 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission promoting fiscal resilience and directing the City Manager to include in the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, certain revisions from the Budget Estimate, including allocating certain funding toward the assessment, drawings, and plans for structural repairs at City Hall. (Sponsored by Vice Mayor Anderson)

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item F-5. Thank you everyone for being here and voicing your opinions.

City Attorney Suarez: F-5 is a Resolution of the City Commission promoting fiscal resilience and directing the City Manager to include in the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, certain revisions from the Budget Estimate, including allocating certain funding toward the assessment, drawings, and plans for structural repairs at City Hall.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, Mayor and Commissioners, I brought this resolution with...in mind. After July 1st we had some additional revenues that were recognized in our city budget and those funds by and large were put into adding new positions in our city over and above the new positions that were already in the budget and discussed and thoroughly analyzed in our prior budget as well as the current budget. I also shared with you a copy of the structural engineering report that came out on July 31st. I didn't get to see it until after the first week of, or some time in the first week of August, and the thought process here is, number one, we should not be adding permanent costs in

our budget on positions that are additional positions that we can, as we have maintained our services as they are. I carefully went through and discussed with each one of our various departments where there were needs. I looked at the truck logs, as well for our garbage employees being mindful of the fact of the exposure to heat and the periods of times that we've used temporary employees to relieve some of that stress on employees. For instance, you have truck logs where you start in the morning at 7 and they are done by 11, 12, 1 o'clock, and temporary employees relieve some of those folks out there, the sanitation workers that are running. But I did include, you know, critical positions that were over and above the July 1st, prior to the July 1st estimates, such as an individual to be the truck driver where we do have a shortage and service available there. We have some critical needs to take care of on City Hall. The structural engineering report outlined some of those critical needs. Our historic buildings have been needing these repairs for a long time. Monies were not in the budget to allow for many of the repairs that were needed to do the extensive repairs that this Commission has been able to do, thankfully due to the sale of some TDR's. We were able to allocate money to the museum. We were able to allocate significant monies to Actor's Playhouse, to the Water Tower, to the Gondola Building and all these types of structures and put some additional money into City Hall, but that's not sufficient to take care of the type of structural work that we need to do on this building. The most recent report indicates that the second-floor concrete beams and slabs and spaces are experiencing spauling. We are going to need shoring poles in there for the next year. This is the immediate action that must be taken by our Commission in order to preserve our gem of our city, our City Hall, the historic building that George Merrick had brought for us and needs attention because the concrete the way it was mixed back in the 1920s is not the way concrete is mixed now. You had batches in the water that was used, etc. We need to take care of this Grand Dame of ours. It states in here, due to the degree of deterioration in two spans of the perimeter beam, which supports the radial beams provide that we need temporary shoring to the exterior ends of two radial beams indicated in the attached sketch, which are ironically right above this room.

Commissioner Fernandez: Actually, under us. They are under me right now.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Under this room. Okay. So we can go down to the first floor. So, I'm glad you went through the report. There are sacrifices that will need to be made elsewhere in our budget in order to be able to afford to hire the right architect and this is not to the lowest bidder. This is more like what we did with the Fink Studio. It has to be somebody that is specialized in dealing with historic buildings and restoration work. Any engineering drawings that need to be done. This proposal is to take the \$835,787 that will be saved by not adding additional hiring on our budget other than the additional positions that we've already done and put it back into City Hall. So, to avoid some of the statements that I've heard before that we're cutting, we're not cutting. No existing position of employees will be cut. We're indeed adding positions. So, in Section 2 of the resolution it indicates that we're adding the fulltime Police CIC monitor and adding the part-time position and I've had a discussion with the Police Chief regarding that. Sitting in front of a monitor for eight hours is not something that most people can do with the attention span necessary. So the

compromise is being made to have a part-timer in there, along with a fulltime position for the CIC monitor position. And the second item is on Code Enforcement. The funding shall remain for an additional position being added, an additional headcount being added to our budget for a new Code Enforcement Field Supervisor, because we only have one right now and we have the nights and weekends to cover. That was the critical need that we needed. Let's see how we do for this coming year with that additional added position, and we can make future decisions going forward. The Sign Shop, I know its really nice to have an additional employee there. We've managed with what we've had before. The building here is more important. Adding fulltime employees with part-time employees is more than just the cost of the employee. We're not going to be able to use those employees to shore up this building. We have to do that with the proper engineering and architectural work. We're leaving the position, adding a position in for Solid Waste Worker Operator 2, that's the person that drives the garbage trucks. That's a managerial-type position as well, so those solid waste workers that drive those trucks typically they are worker their holidays, they are typically working vacation time, and that's why I felt that that was more of a critical need. Temporary workers can fill in because its less of a skilled area where you have to have the particular CDL license, I think that's required to drive the garbage trucks, and that's where we need to put the money on a position. And on Parking Enforcement, we've been working with the part-time positions. I've talked to staff about what advertising has been done to fill those part-time positions, because I know that when I was going to college a job like this would have been fantastic because I could still maintain my studies. It's a part-time position and I could roll in on through. I think we can survive with what we have and do a better job of recruitment just like we need to do in other areas in our city. No changes are being made for the 15 new fulltime positions or other positions in the draft budget. Those will remain. There are other sacrifices that will be made as well, including instead of putting \$300,000 in downtown holiday decorations, it would be \$100,000. The BID used to pay for this