

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
City Attorney Pocket Item  
October 24, 2017  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli  
Vice Mayor Pat Keon  
Commissioner Vince Lago  
Commissioner Frank Quesada  
Commissioner Michael Mena**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark  
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen  
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman  
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

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City Attorney Pocket Item: [2:45:24 p.m.]

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor I have a pocket item. This actually was provided to me by Commissioner Lago, it relates to the MPO, the TPO, the Transportation Planning Organization. Commissioner Lago has a resolution endorsing and supporting the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) Plan. I reviewed the whereas clauses and basically it recognizes that the TPO governing board has reviewed and unanimously endorsed a SMART Plan for this County; and Commissioner Lago is asking that this Commission also do so. I would turn it over to him; he is the sponsor of the item.

Commissioner Lago: It's a simple resolution that for some reason I don't know why we didn't handle it when you had the Director and Chairman Bovo here giving us a presentation. It's procedural in nature and just basically states that the City of Coral Gables as a member of the TPO is 100 percent behind the commencement of a SMART Plan by one of the main corridors.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can you describe the SMART Plan?

Commissioner Lago: You have about 30 minutes or no?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: So, basically the SMART Plan right now you are potentially talking about four or five billion dollars mass transportation plan which is being rolled out. I think personally it's going to be more, but the issues that we are basically encountering as per my first meeting is the funding strategy and getting all our ducks in a row to make sure that we meet the federal guidelines, which probably for about 20-25 years when I was in high school one of the main issues that we had here in the City that the Commission, the County Commission which makes up 13 of the 23-24 members of the TPO, could not get on the same page in reference to delivering on one of the corridors, which so sorely needed the attention. Everybody on the TPO was battling; everybody wanted it in their own neighborhood. But, for the first time through the leadership of Commissioner Bovo, Chairman Bovo, the entire TPO and County Commission has gotten behind one of the main corridors, which is the southbound corridor which heads all the way down to Homestead, which is an extension of the Dadeland stop. So, with that being said, I was joking about 30 minutes, the rough synopsis is that the TPO has designed a framework financially how to deliver on that southbound corridor without having to go back and get the half penny money, which was removed in 2008 as a result of the downturn in the economy. So, what we are doing here today is, at the last TPO meeting, we outlined and we finalized the agreement as a TPO, all the members to make sure that we prioritize the southbound lane and we get it funded within the next two years, so we can commence construction and design on that project.

Commissioner Mena: Southbound is what exactly?

Commissioner Lago: Southbound is the one that runs parallel with U.S.-1 all the way down to Homestead.

Vice Mayor Keon: It's the bus lane.

Commissioner Lago: Yes, it's the bus lane, which instead of being overhead it's going to be on the ground level which is much cheaper.

Commissioner Mena: And, it goes from where to Homestead? - from the end of the Metrorail?

Commissioner Lago: Yes – all the way to Dadeland Station. And, the great thing about it is that there's been a discussion back and forth with the Governor, excuse me, not the Governor, the County Mayor in reference to DRT, rail, but the TPO has remained focused on delivering this corridor, and I believe, along with many of the members of the TPO that if we get one corridor

started, I think we'll deliver on the other four quarters; and its interesting, because I've been doing a little bit of research in the background and the TPO has never been so straightforward and dedicated to delivering at least something when it comes to mass transportation; and I think the main reason of it has to do with the simple fact that people are just exhausted with transportation and the lack of transportation in Miami-Dade County. This is a simple resolution just saying that the City of Coral Gables stands behind this SMART Plan.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Very good. Thank you very much.

City Attorney Leen: It requires a motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Requires a motion.

Vice Mayor Keon: I'll move.

Commissioner Quesada: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Commissioner Lago: And, if I could just give you one last point since you asked for an update on TPO and I'll give you, every month I'll give you, as long as we have a meeting on TPO, I'll give you an update. One of interesting things that was voted on in my first meeting was presented by Mayor Oliver Gilbert, who you all are aware, a very nice gentleman, he has an extensive background in regards to transportation, and he's an attorney. He proposed something, which is going to shake up the makeup of the TPO. Usually the TPO Chairman has always been the Chairman of the County Commission. We as a TPO approved that every two years you'll have one County member be the Chairman of the TPO and the following two years you'll have a Chairman of the TPO will be one of the member cities which are eight. So, I think it will give a balance of power and it will give a different flavor to the TPO and it will meet the needs of not only the County, but also the municipalities, which are paying into the TPO for the first time to the tune of about \$20,000 a year, and those monies are going to be used, on my last point, 100

percent is going to be dedicated, a lot of those monies are going to be dedicated toward lobbying the federal government, which has been – we haven't really focused on that issue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: OK. Thank you.

City Attorney Leen: And Mr. Mayor lastly, I'd like to request an Executive Session in the event a lawsuit is filed in the City of Coral Gables with Florida Power and Light Company. We will go forward and try to resolve the matter, but if we file the lawsuit I will be requesting an Executive Session.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You will be requesting it now or you will be requesting it in the future?

City Attorney Leen: Well, I'm requesting it now, but I will not schedule it unless there is a motion filed consistent with the Sunshine Law.

[End: 2:51:12 p.m.]