

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-1
February 25, 2025
Police and Fire Headquarters
2151 Salzedo Street, 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, Alberto Parjus
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Arts and Cultural Coordinator, Catherine Cathers

Public Speaker(s)

Carlos Rafael Rivera

Agenda Item G-1 [11:38 a.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission approving the commissioning of an original musical score for use by the city and for integration with the city's centennial inspired virtual/digital experience, Gables GO!, in partnership with the University of Miami and Frost Symphony Orchestra; and authorizing the city manager or their designee and City Attorney to negotiate an agreement with the parties (unanimously recommended by the Cultural Development Board approval/denial vote: 6 to 0).

Mayor Lago: Moving onto time certain 11 a.m., G-1.

City Attorney Suarez: G-1 is a Resolution of the City Commission approving the commissioning of an original musical score for use by the city and for integration with the city's centennial inspired virtual/digital experience, Gables GO!, in partnership with the University of Miami and Frost Symphony Orchestra; and authorizing the city manager or their designee and City Attorney to negotiate an agreement with the parties.

Arts and Cultural Coordinator: Good morning, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, Catherine Cathers, Arts and Cultural Coordinator with the city. We're starting this morning's presentation

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with an overview of Gables Go to provide some context and then lead into the details for this resolution. If we can have the presentation, please. So, the City Commission has consistently championed the arts and fostered innovation leading to the creation of a world-class public art collection and the city's recognition as an award-winning, globally renowned smart city. In honor of the city's centennial, and in collaboration between Historical Resources and Cultural Arts and the Innovation and Technology Departments a digital virtual path or map, titled "Gables Go" is being developed for 30-plus cultural sites highlighting the city's history, identity and artworks. So just to go over some of the terms so it makes, perhaps a little bit more sense. Extended reality or XR is an umbrella term that describes a range of technologies that combine the physical and digital worlds. XR includes AR, augmented reality, which is a real-time use of information in the form of text, graphics, audio and other virtual enhancements integrated with real world objects. VR, virtual reality is a computer-generated environment that simulates reality and allows users to interact with it in real time. So, AR enhances the real world with digital elements, while VR creates a completely virtual environment. Through dedicated web-based application, each site will be accessible at home or on the go through the Gables Go web page, on site, and through your phone. Here's an overview of the cultural sites that we are looking at, and a map that shows a geographic range throughout the city. Sites were selected based on their range of significance and interest and some are well known sites, while others are quiet gems. So, we wanted to also have some sites that people may not be as familiar with. Each site includes the selection of experiences, such as images, text, holograms, interactive information-sharing gathering, etc. which leads us to the city score. While content like images and information may preexist, music that is site-specific an alliance with the aesthetic of Coral Gables requires the expertise of an artist skilled in composing musical scores that resonate both literally and figuratively and can facilitate moving that composition into the virtual world. So, I think its helpful to understand what this means and what's involved. So, commissioning a score; the score is the original music that's paired with the visuals and the musical composition is a process of creating that piece of music or the finished piece itself. Part of that process is the act of writing and notating a piece of music that involves includes the creation of the work itself through research, select instrumentation, orchestration, arranging and transcribing the notes, rehearsals and more. The finished piece of music can range from simple to complex and includes publishing the work, licensing, performance, recording, etc. So, I just wanted to really give a sense of the complexity of this project overall. The concept for commissioning a city score is to compose that original musical score in honor of the city's centennial that will play at different cultural sites creating a unique atmosphere for each location, and while this project is inspired by the centennial, it is something that we hope will live on for a long time. The original composition will apply integrated live data to prompt a unique and innovative experience each time that experience is activated. The track will dynamically modify in real time based on up-to-the-minute information, such as foot traffic, weather, time of day, making the music feel alive, responsive, similar but always a little different. This innovative approach blends art and technology ensuring each visit offers a fresh and immersive auditory experience that reflects the energy of the moment. So, some of the proposed themes that we've been looking at are a spiritual nature and environment, historic, opulent grandeur, and you'll see that some of these sites we've already worked on conceptually pairing within those themes and have different feelings or motifs that will go along with each of those themes. Here we have the themes that are on the left and then the live data on the right and how they might influence each of those themes at each of the locations. We are proposing this as a partnership with the University of Miami, Frost School of Music. Dean Berg

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has agreed to partner on this project, and we would be exploring the following items which is composition support, recording, mixing, overall assistance in the production of it, student led initiatives, such as publishing rights, licensing, digital file preparation which would include the pro tools, public performance of the final composition, marketing, etc. And then Carlos Rafael Rivera who is with us today, and I'll invite up just to say a few words, would serve as the lead for this project and composer. He is the Chair and Associate Professor at the University of Miami Frost School of Music in media, scoring and production and you can see he has an extensive background in pairing music composition with digital and new technology which he addresses as part of his professorship at the University. So, I would like to call up Carlos introduce him and then answer any questions that you may have.

Mayor Lago: Good morning, sir. Thank you for being here with us.

Mr. Carlos Rivera: Good morning. What a privilege to be here. As she said, my name is Carlos Rafael Rivera. I'm a composer and as part of the University of Miami we are thrilled to participate in this exciting Commission for the City of Coral Gables to compose an interactive score with VR and AR integration. This would ideally become the city's interactive musical companion and if you grow up playing video games you may know that some of the things that we're talking about happen to be related to the things like when you go explore a new world in the video game. Well, this would be the score for Coral Gables itself and depending on where you go, how you interact with the environment, you will hear music that's appropriate to it. Also, to think about the city is celebrating itself with music and its about time, especially at 100 years now. So, the idea is that we'd be coordinating recording sessions with the Frost Symphony musicians under Maestro George Schwartz and students, as well as manage the licensing. We additionally, the project would be including a live performance by the Frost Symphony and the City of Coral Gables in the follow up 2025 to celebrate the culmination of this. So, I just look forward to collaborating with you and thank you so very much for your time. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, sir.

Arts and Cultural Coordinator: Any questions.

Mayor Lago: No. I think its great. I think its another opportunity for people to enjoy the centennial and we continue to put layer on layer on layer and people can really be exposed to what makes the City of Coral Gables exceptional. I think it's a great idea.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I think its wonderful that there are people musically talented because I'm not, so I appreciate your efforts to do this and happy to move it. I'm sure there is lots of support here on this Commission for this.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes
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Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Arts and Cultural Coordinator: Thank you so much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. I appreciate you being here with us.