

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item D-1
September 14, 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
Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
Deputy City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Finance Director, Diana Gomez
Public Works Director, Ed Santamaria**

Public Speaker(s)

**Charles Knight
Maria Cruz
Daisy Fuller
Juan Carlos Diaz Padron
Terrence Salt
Sylvia (INAUDIBLE)
Lourdes Sanchez
Gema Pinon
Carlos Sardinias
Eric Garcia
Eric Valderama
Toni Diaz**

City Commission Meeting
September 14, 2017
Agenda Item D-1 - Update and discussion regarding Hurricane clean up.

Vivian Fernandez
State Representative Daisy Baez
Emilio Lopez
Adi Asavaid
Isabel Sardinias
Jose Munoz

Agenda Item D-1 [0:00:00 p.m.]

Update and discussion regarding Hurricane clean up.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have a quorum. And we have Commissioner Frank Quesada on the line.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: He is participating by phone, and then when he wants to talk, he's going to text me, and that's why I have my phone out, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, great. First, the invocation, and I will give the invocation, since we don't have a pastor. Dear Lord, thank you very much for our survival in these difficult times. We are thankful for your blessings, your kindness and may you illuminate this Commission to do the right thing, and our residents to be tolerant of what is happening and be aware that a hurricane just came over us, which could have been much worse, but that we were spared the severity that other areas are. Bless us, our Lord. Thank you. And now, our pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Lago, could you lead it?

(AT THIS TIME, THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE WAS RECITED.)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The first item of business is a hurricane update and report. And I have -- and I'm sure we all have received many, many...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor. I'm sorry for interrupting.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

City Attorney Leen: Do you mind if I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please do.

City Attorney Leen: The Mayor -- before the Mayor makes his remarks, I just want to make sure everyone understands what's happening today. There was a September 12 Commission meeting, which was cancelled, because we're in a state of emergency by the emergency powers of the Mayor, he set a special meeting for today, starting at 3 o'clock, which is where we are. He is going to hear a report on the hurricane response, and he's allowed members of the public to speak for one minute regarding that. Please fill out your forms. The reason why it can only be on minute is we then have a number of time-sensitive items from the last Commission meeting, which have been continued. Those are Items F-3, F-4, F-6 and I-1, from the prior Commission meeting, as well as a couple additional add-on items, one relating to a FEMA resolution that needs to be adopted, and one relating to appointment of special masters -- two, actually, relating to appointment of special masters. There will also be a brief discussion regarding the status of annexation. In addition to that, at 4:30, there is a required special assessment hearing that needs to begin on several special assessments that have been publicly noticed. And then at 5:01, the City will go into its budget hearing that's statutorily required, so the City has to proceed with that. So, that is why the Mayor is hearing this matter first. Every other item from the Commission meeting on September 12 has been continued to the September 26 Commission meeting. And with that, I would turn it back to you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Mr. City Attorney. I'm not going to say what's happened to us, because we're all very much aware of the severity of the storm. But we suffered a lot. We suffered a lot whereas we are a canopy city. Unfortunately, part of our canopy is -- are

figus trees. I, in 1993, before many of you were born, I was mayor, and I -- we replanted 3,000 trees, replacing the ficus that fell down with live oaks. And, those that we did not replace because they had not fallen down fell down this time. We have -- or I had -- and I know many of my fellow Commissioners have received complaints about how we were cutting down trees that looked healthy. We have -- or we had many, many trimming crews out in the city and we've had it for a long time, two crews, Madam City Attorney. Madam City Manager.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm sorry. I'm moving some staff (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm moving some staff out...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oh, okay. But, we have had permanent crews trimming trees in Coral Gables...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Six crews, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We have six crews all year long trimming.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Six trimming crews in Coral Gables yearlong, and look what happened to us. I wonder what would have happened if those crews had not been out there. The County, which is many, many times our size, 20 times our size, had one trimming crew; we had six. The ficus fell. Some ficus fell on electric wires. And so, 90 percent of the City did not have electricity. Today, it's 40 percent. And by Saturday, I'm told, it'll be restored. Pickup garbage. We are picking up garbage Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Friday and Saturday -- if Friday or Thursday are your days, it'll be picked up today or tomorrow. And those that are not picked up,

it will be Saturday. We are picking that up and giving that priority over recyclables or over branches, et cetera, because we have no electricity. Food, et cetera, in freezers, in like our iceboxes, (INAUDIBLE) spoils and it is put out in the garbage and we're picking that up as a priority. FPL has done a fine job in the recuperation of restoring of power. And, -- but I have comments on FPL, which I will speak about after I call Mr. -- the representative of FPL, wherever he is.

City Attorney Leen: He's over here, sir. He's here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Would you like to come and speak to us about FPL and its effort? And then please stay up, because I would like to make comments that I already have spoken to you about. But please, come up and give us a report. And Charles King -- Charles Knight, I'm sorry, from FPL speaking. Yes, Commissioner.

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may. I was just notified. Madam City Manager, the video stream is not working online so...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Because we don't have fiber due to the storm, we're taking the -- recording minutes, and we're -- but we're not able to go live.

Commissioner Lago: Perfect, okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead, Mr. Knight.

Charles Knight: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Honorable Mayor, Commissioners, Madam Manager, Mr. City Attorney. My name is Charles Knight, Area Manager of External Affairs, 4200 West Flagler Street, Miami, Florida. As I think almost all of us know, Hurricane Irma was unprecedented by almost every measure; its size, destructive power and slow movement. Every inch of FPL's 27,000 square miles in 35 counties of our service territory have been impacted by

the storm. We have a restoration workforce of more than 21,000, one of the largest in the history of our country, responding to the worst storm in our company's history. In fact, we have more than a thousand restoration workers, including 400 vegetation workers, working out of our Central Dade staging site that supports the City of Coral Gables. We anticipate that the 45 percent of our customers in Coral Gables who have not yet been restored will get their power back on by the end of this weekend. However, many will have their lights back on well before that time. The exception would be to the areas that have received severe damage and cannot safely receive electricity. The top critical infrastructure facilities in the City are up; City Hall, courts, hospitals, fire stations and police. By the end of today, all of the main feeder lines that serve the city will be restored. And now we're working on the secondary lines, what we call the lateral lines that serve the neighborhoods and businesses of this city. Today, two FPL special crews are working side-by-side with Coral Gables Fire-Rescue to locations where trees are blocking roads and wires, powerlines, are tangled in those trees, to safely address those situations and allow the road-clearing crews for the city to do their good work. As many of us know, the majority -- the vast majority of the power outages in Coral Gables are due to trees and vegetation. But rest assured, we will continue to work 24 hours a day until every last customer has their lights back on. And just to put this in the context, we have restoration workers from more than 28 states and Canada here to help us. The great thing about the utility industry is that we come to each other's aid and assistance in difficult times. As we work to restore power to customers impacted by the storm, we urge any customers who have electricity-dependent needs and are without power to call 911 in a life-threatening situation. Check availability and capabilities of local shelters. They may have AC, medical supplies, staffing services to assist people with special needs. And, as we have urged all customers before, during and after the storm, continue to have a plan for backup equipment and power to help get you through the restoration period. Thank you very much for the opportunity to address this Commission. My colleague (INAUDIBLE) and I will be here to take notes, to answer questions, provide support in any way that we can. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Charles. I have some comments that I would like to make. And I'd like to recognize our state representative. How are you?

Commissioner Lago: Thank you for being here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you for being here. I'm very disappoint -- I congratulate you for the efforts on restoration, but I have many comments regarding these efforts and also what led us to this juncture. A year ago -- a year and three months ago, you got a 23 percent rate increase -- hello?

Vice Mayor Keon: That was Frank, I think.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What?

Vice Mayor Keon: Is that Frank? That's Frank...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: No.

Vice Mayor Keon: Quesada doing that?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: He's going to text me when he...

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Wants to speak. He's listening, but he is going to wait.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let me go on. You received a 23 percent rate increase -- a 23 percent increase based on the good service you had provided to the city, how good you worked for the city. A rate increase that was supported -- the only person that supported it apart from your

lobbyist was what, a former mayor of ours. But be that as it may, I think your infrastructure commitment in the City of Coral Gables has been pathetic. I have -- I've driven around...

(APPLAUSE)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please, no clapping. That -- I have driven around the city for the last three mornings, and I have seen broken poles. 5601 -- I think I called you or I called the City -- 5601 Granada, the intersection of Granada and Coral Way, the entrance to Gables Estates. Broken poles. That means that those poles were not replaced when they should have been replaced. We are blamed for fallen trees on lines that could not be replaced or whatever, and FPL kept telling people that it was our fault, because we had to cut the tree before the lines were -- the lines in which the trees rested were replaced, which it's the exact opposite. We're not going to risk anyone's life cutting down a tree that is touching a line without FPL doing that. And finally, I understand, you dedicated specialized people to us this morning, today. I am very, very disappointed by our infrastructure. And, I'm going to lead an effort to -- for us to find alternatives, if we can, for the distribution of the power that you supply the city with. It is pathetic, in my opinion. And, maybe if you spent more time and more money with keeping our needs in mind versus lobbyists or Tallahassee, the contributions to the Public Service Commission or to legislators, we wouldn't be in this situation. I'm sorry to say this, but I think your efforts have been pathetic. Thank you, sir.

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I would like to recognize members of the public that wish to speak. You will have one minute to speak, please, because we have -- you can see that we have a full room. And...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Mr. Mayor, if we can ask one question...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, ma'am.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Of Charles Knight before he sits down?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, please, Charles. I'm sorry.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And I know that there'll be other questions, and I know that the public has important questions. In your notes, you said that the City would receive -- would be fully restored by the end of the weekend, except for those areas where severe damage is -- where there is severe damage. Can you geographically identify for us where that severe damage is so that our residents can prepare for that, rather than hoping that they will be one of those that will be fully restored? If there's knowledge where it is, we need to get that knowledge out.

Mr. Knight: Okay. It's an excellent question.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: It can be after the meeting, but I just know that that is something that the Commission will want to know.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, but I -- if I may, Mayor, just for one second. I think the Mayor touched on a very important issue a lot of the residents that are here today may not be aware of. I wasn't aware of it, so I'll be honest with you, and that was the issue of specialized crews. A lot of the people that are in the room today do not have power, because they fall into that category where we lack specialized crews. And, those crews are -- have to be provided by FPL or an outside agency, and it deals with the entanglement -- am I correct? -- the entanglement of certain wires in the larger trees, where FPL does not want to touch it. So, we found out about that, what, two days ago, or was that a day ago?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I found out about the need for a -- request -- well, first of all, we requested...

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Specialized crews. We found out that it was really and EOC issue. We pushed for EOC. We put additional pressure on FPL, and we were then notified this morning that those specialized crews are here. But, it was not without severe intense pressure to make sure that they arrived.

Commissioner Lago: That was around the time that you called me and asked me to reach out...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Lago: In the County. To me, I think that's a failure on our part, and I take some responsibility for that. Because for FPL not to make us aware that they won't touch certain lines five days after the hurricane has happened -- and I'm finding out about it -- I wish I would have known about it five days ago, and I would have reached out to the County...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm sorry, but I heard they were blaming us...

Commissioner Lago: I know.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: For them not touching those lines, blaming us, which is worse.

Commissioner Lago: So, what I'm saying is, I think those are examples of issues -- lack of communication, where instead of blaming other people for why things aren't getting resolved and why you can't attack a certain problem that's sitting out there, a low-hanging fruit, now we have two groups. We should have not two groups. We should have ten groups dealing with these issues here in Coral Gables. I mean, again, like we said before, the people here pay an immense amount of taxes. They deserve that type of service. And to say now, after five days,

we're starting to have these two crews dealing with these specialized concerns, I think we fall short. I think we fall short. And we should have addressed it before.

Commissioner Mena: We -- you know, we have local companies like MasTec -- Coral Gables-headquartered MasTec...

Commissioner Lago: Multibillion dollar companies.

Commissioner Mena: Hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people and trucks on standby. And I got to be honest with you, I've driven around the whole city the last few days, and I'm not seeing as many trucks as I'd like to see out there. And so...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Mena: Until...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please, please.

Commissioner Mena: You know, and one thing -- you know, we get a lot of communication...

City Attorney Leen: Keep order, keep order.

Commissioner Mena: We get a lot of communications from our residents saying that. And look, somebody could have the bad luck that nobody's passed by their house, but I've been all around the city and I just haven't seen the presence and the manpower that I would like to see out there. Then, you know, I'm reading online, you know, other cities -- Key Biscayne, my understanding is only 5 percent of people don't have power right now. And I'm trying to understand why Coral Gables is the sort of black sheep here. Why are we the ones in 50 percent?

Commissioner Lago: And the easy thing there is just to blame it on the trees.

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Commissioner Lago: But...

Commissioner Mena: But listen, my -- I have family that lives outside of Coral Gables with no tree debris or virtually no tree debris, and they don't have power either. So, there's going to be causes for every instance, I get that. I understand -- you made the point about the enormity of this storm throughout the state, about the tug on your resources. We all understand that. Nobody's trying to be unreasonable. But, we have an entire community without power. And, when there's finger-pointing going on instead of manpower and resources being put out there to deal with it, it doesn't solve problems. We need to get to the business of solving people's problems, not pointing fingers. And I spoke to you earlier, and I told you my chief concern. I've gotten, in the last 24 hours -- we all have -- constant stream of communication from residents. FPL says I don't have power because you, the City, have not cleared the trees. I've driven around the entire city. If I can drive around the city, your trucks can drive around the city. We need to get resources out there -- and we have local companies ready and willing to roll out the resources, so we need to get this done.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, but...

Commissioner Mena: And...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Excuse me. The problem is not getting to the trees. The problem is that we are not going to touch those trees until their specialized crews remove those wires from the trees. And, they only dedicated those crews to us today.

Commissioner Mena: A major problem.

Commissioner Lago: So that's like...

Commissioner Mena: Absolutely.

Commissioner Lago: Like I was...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Today.

Commissioner Lago: So, we've basically spent four days pointing fingers at each other and they saying that it was our fault. And again, it's very easy to point the finger at somebody or a city. But at the end of the day, you got to get out there, roll your sleeves up and get the job done.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Why don't we listen to the public, and then we'll make comments...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And then...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You know, a few of us for comments. Let's listen to the public.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I understand, sir. Commissioner Quesada has emailed and, as a reminder, he is in the hospital with his father-in-law.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, I know that, yeah.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Who had had a heart attack. Otherwise, he would have made...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: The effort of -- he would have been here. He asked a couple of questions, if I may. Please ask whether the cities with underground lines have also experienced power outages for the same amount of time. That's one question. And then he has two other ones, if I may. So, the question of undergrounding and the restoration experience for those that have underground line citywide.

Mr. Knight: Okay, another excellent question, Madam Manager. I don't have specific information on restoration times for cities that have underground infrastructure. I can certainly get you that information, but I don't have that information readily available.

Commissioner Lago: I mean, I could answer it for you, and I don't work for FPL. I mean, the answer is no, obviously. Meaning, when you have -- that's the purpose why everybody spends those big dollars to go underground. I mean, it just makes sense, correct? I mean...

Mr. Knight: Well, yes, Commissioner. You're correct. I would say underground infrastructure - - and again, this perhaps is a conversation for another day, when we're not in a restoration situation. But, there are trade-offs with overhead and underground service.

Commissioner Lago: Well, I'm going to have -- just so you're -- I'm going to have that -- I want to have the discussion later amongst my colleagues.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, let's have it later.

Commissioner Lago: Very briefly, but I want to bring it up and have -- make a request of staff in reference to underground. Every person that I've touched over the last four days when I've walked through the city has requested a simple answer -- a simple request. Why are we not undergrounding or why are we not finding out how we can underground the lines in the city. So, that's going to be a discussion for later, but I want you to be prepared for it.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's have it later, but let's hear from the public at this point.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Commissioner Lago, Commissioner Quesada joins you with that. He has another question. But, if you all are going to take that at a later time, I'll postpone...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's take it at a later time.

Commissioner Lago: After the public.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, thank you, Charles.

Mr. Knight: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Maria Cruz, first person to come.

City Attorney Leen: Just a reminder...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You have one minute, Ms. Cruz.

City Attorney Leen: One minute each and it's not because what you say is not important. It's because we literally have to move on to something at 4:30 that's also important, not as important, but it's statutorily required.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It's statutorily required.

Maria Cruz: I'll go very fast.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead, Ms. Cruz. Welcome.

Ms. Cruz: Very fast. Well, first of all, I understand that FPL hasn't worked up to speed. But you know what; FPL is not the only one at fault here. What this city, what these residents have been complaining about is not just FPL. We have zones in this city that were flood identified, yet this city did not come through with sand for anyone, sandbags. People were told that they were living in flood zones. This city did not do anything about it; one. Number two, there are people that do not have electricity today, and guess what? Very, very needy elderly, people with special needs. This City has not done almost anything, except for Commissioner Lago, who's been around trying to get ice anywhere he can find it. Where have we taken care of those people? When and how? You know, I'm tired. I know this is Coral Gables, but you know what? Coral Gables can take care of their people.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Cruz: And we're not Hialeah (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Ms. Cruz. We understand that. Thank you. Next, Daisy Fuller.

Vice Mayor Keon: Can I respond to the one issue with regard to a flood zone, though? Any place that was -- I live in a flood zone. Sand bags would have done you no good in the most significant flood zones. There was a storm surge of about four feet in those areas that are low-lying areas along our coast of our city. There is -- you had to evacuate and you had to make plans, knowing you live in a flood zone. You need to make plans to move, to get out, to move your cars, and to move -- that is a responsibility that each and every one of us as residents needs to assume for ourselves. No amount of sandbags would have affected the people that suffered from the storm surge related to this storm.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Daisy Fuller.

Daisy Fuller: Hello, good morning.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning, ma'am.

Commissioner Lago: Good afternoon.

Commissioner Mena: Good afternoon.

Ms. Fuller: I live in the historic...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good afternoon.

Ms. Fuller: Golden Gate area of Coral Gables. The area that I'm here about this morning, we have no electricity/power between Jefferson...

City Clerk Foeman: Excuse me, Ms. Fuller. Could you give your name and address for the record?

Ms. Fuller: My address is 221 Grant Drive...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Grant Drive.

Ms. Fuller: Coral Gables, Florida. We have no power. We have told the Florida Power & Light Company that we have no power. We have people in our area that are health -- have major health issues and they tried to send this lady's mother to a nursing home. And we told them that we have no power. They said they've documented that we have power. We have no power. All

the areas around (INAUDIBLE) 14 houses -- homes, have power. We want to know why we don't have power. And, we have a transformer sitting in a tree that put out the power since Friday, before the storm even hit. So, what is the problem here? And people are very angry this morning, because the heat is really unbearable right now. I think we've been very patient with Florida Power & Light. We've told them the problem. Don't tell us it's pending and you've already been out there. And, we're telling you there's a transformer in a tree that's putting out the power. So, what can be done?

City Attorney Leen: Thank you, Ms. Fuller.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: What -- do you know the location? Can you give me an idea of the location...?

Ms. Fuller: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: For the transformer?

Ms. Fuller: 215 Grant Drive. There's a transformer that puts out the lights six times a year. The people will tell you six times that tree -- the pole and the transformer, it's in the tree.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, Ms. Fuller.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: (INAUDIBLE) has that information...

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: And a picture.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah. He's...

City Attorney Leen: Please...

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, Ms. Fuller.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

City Attorney Leen: As the Mayor indicated, please remember to say your name and address, and as the Clerk did, because they're writing it down. So, if you've lost power, they'll be able to help restore it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Juan Carlos Diaz Padron, please.

Juan Carlos Diaz Padron: Good afternoon, Commission. You know a couple of things I want to say. Number one...

City Attorney Leen: Name and address, name and address.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Address.

Juan Carlos Diaz Padron: Juan Carlos Diaz Padron, 1520 Algardi Avenue.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Mr. Diaz Padron: Thank you, Mayor, and thank you, Commissioner Vince Lago, for being on social media, sending updates post-Irma and pre-Irma. It was very useful. Even today, the reason I found out about this meeting was through Commissioner Vince Lago through Twitter. Very dissatisfied that the City did not send an email letting us know of the special Commission meeting, and even through the City's Twitter account. I've been -- this has been my bible through the storm, not only to communicate with friends and family, but to also check the FPL App. A ticket has been created. Seven hundred and thirty-five people are affected. Not a single -- and we talked about it today. Not a single truck has passed by. So, they don't know if we need special crew or no crew. We don't know if it's just a flip of a switch. But without seeing anybody, my ticket is just created. And, I believe that there are several other steps that need to be taken before this ticket is closed. When it comes to the pathetic infrastructure, Mayor, I wholeheartedly agree with you. Throughout the year, I wake up; my lights in the kitchen are flickering. What does that mean? I lost power when I was sleeping. The infrastructure is just not there and we deserve better.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Mr. Padron.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I agree with you, yeah.

(APPLAUSE)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I have somebody here named Rock Salt, 1435 Miller Road. Mr. Salt.

Terrence Salt: My name is Terrence "Rock" Salt, at 1435 Miller Road, in Coral Gables. After Hurricane Andrew, I led the Corps of Engineers effort to clean up from that. And, I know when you get an issue of this scale of a recovery, all of the normal systems you have don't work so well and you have to really invent everything from scratch. And, I wanted to say how much I

appreciate the work that is going. I'm learning stuff here that wasn't good news about the fuss over the lines. That wasn't good news. But, I came really just to say thank you. I join my colleagues with the frustration. We don't have power either. But, I did want to acknowledge that this is a hard job, and that you are -- and that folks are working. I'm impressed with the efforts that's going on. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, sir.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, sir.

Commissioner Mena: Thank you.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, Mr. Mayor, as our residents speak, if they can go closer to the mike only because Commissioner Quesada's also trying to listen. And while the audience can listen, it's a little harder for him, but he's trying hard.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Sylvia (INAUDIBLE), 1137 Astoria Avenue.

Sylvia (INAUDIBLE): Happy to be here. I hope we never use again the black sheep, because I think that is negative. I work on -- as deputy director with Andrew, and the key component is not killing the trees. It's opening the canopy. That requires regular maintenance, which I think is totally flawed. Many of them are back from 1923. Giving water and ice is important and doesn't necessarily mean that we will be labeled as living in Hialeah. I have the greatest respect for Hialeah and every other municipality. At some point, we have to handle the -- putting the lines underground. Short and sweet. (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Sylvia. Lourdes Sanchez, 66 Campina Court.

Lourdes Sanchez: Good afternoon, Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good afternoon.

Ms. Sanchez: And Commissioners. I have come here with my neighbors. My home is at 66 Campina Court. And all of my neighbors in the Campina, as well as Ponce de Leon area, have been affected by this, and we have not seen a truck pass by. I have a transformer in the back of my yard and wires in the back of my yard. I own Society Cleaners, which is on 8th Street and Ponce de Leon, and that power was restored immediately, as was most of 8th Street. I feel that since we have been a part of the City of Coral Gables for -- well, my father before me -- for over 50 years that we would have our power back certainly faster than even the 8th Street area. But nothing has been done. I have seen no trucks at all in our area. And I have already -- well, all our refrigerators and all of our things have been...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That's gone, yeah.

Ms. Sanchez: Are gone. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, ma'am.

Vice Mayor Keon: Can I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Ask one question? Is there power to any of Coral Gables north of 8th Street?

Unidentified Speaker: No.

Vice Mayor Keon: The entire neighborhood is out.

Ms. Sanchez: The one -- on one side of Ponce de Leon is lit.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Ms. Sanchez: Our side of Ponce de Leon...

Vice Mayor Keon: You're west or east of...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The side is the east side...

Ms. Sanchez: The east side...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE), okay.

Ms. Sanchez: Is on.

Vice Mayor Keon: The east side is on.

Ms. Sanchez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: The...

Unidentified Speaker: No, the east side is not on.

Vice Mayor Keon: She's on the east side of Ponce.

Unidentified Speaker: The east side is not on.

Vice Mayor Keon: No.

Unidentified Speaker: The west side is on.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Keon: The west side is on, so it's...

Unidentified Speaker: An island is -- I live on a little island.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, I know where it is.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Alright, the next is Gema Pinon, 339 Alesio Avenue.

Gema Pinon: Good afternoon...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good afternoon.

Ms. Pinon: Mr. Mayor and Commissioners. Thank you for your leadership. Thank you, Vince, for calling me and letting me -- or texting me and letting me know about the meeting today.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, can you get closer to the microphone? I can't hear you very well.

Ms. Pinon: Is that better?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Ms. Pinon: Okay. I commend you, Mr. Mayor, for your comments about Florida Power & Light. I, too, have not seen one single truck. And Mr. Knight, with all due respect to you, you cannot call 911 because we do not have any service. And, I understand that FPL shares lines with AT&T. So, I think that one of the things we need to do is better planning, not being so reactive, but being proactive, planning for hurricanes. I think the underground cables are an excellent idea. And also, alternative sources of energy, whether it's with solar panels or another company that can be competitive with FPL. Because, basically, FPL holds us hostage, and it's not the City's fault. The Commission has done an excellent job. I agree with you. It's not about the trees. I mean, you could probably do a better job pruning them. But thank you very much for your leadership.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Ms. Pinon. Thank you. Next is Carlos Sardinas, 48 Fonseca Avenue. That's a nice shirt.

Carlos Sardinas: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Is that Barcelona?

Mr. Sardinas: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Commissioners, City Attorney, Mr. Knight. My name is Carlos Sardinas. I live at 48 Fonseca Avenue, in North Gables, for the past 30 years. My wife and I have owned that house for a long period of time. We've survived several hurricanes. It's always the same deal. Andrew, we spent three weeks without power; Wilma, two weeks. At this point, we haven't had power since the hurricane, and we've been told that there's no specific time period. It is dark. It's dangerous. We had to call the police yesterday, last night, (INAUDIBLE) situation. Thank God our police officers came in quickly and took care of the matter, but it's dangerous out there. It's pitch black. We can't see anything, and

we're suffering. We have not seen a single truck in the area. There's no hope yet as to when we might get power. And I agree with most of the people here complaining about we are the red-haired stepchild of the Gables. North Gables takes them -- it takes us forever to have the power restored. And our ticket number, sir, is 3093.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir.

(APPLAUSE)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please. Eric Garcia, 530 Santander.

Eric Garcia: Good afternoon, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commission. My name is Eric Garcia, 530 Santander Avenue. This city has a lot of tradition. I understand the history. We're not in 1920. We should have a Twitter that's active, tweeting daily, in minutes. The police should not be able to go to Cathy Swanson to authorize a tweet. The micromanaging of the police department is old. This incident alone has shown me that the micromanaging is enough. You know, the police department weren't allowed to make proper decisions, and there's no reason why they should be at streetlights directing traffic. We should have power there. We need them for special issues. And also, you know, the past hurricanes were a faster response. I really don't understand why, you know, this is taking so long. You're just handcuffing our police department. They need -- you don't need to report to Cathy Swanson. They're not doing their job. The assistants are not doing their job -- Fernandez or Iglesias are not doing their job. You know, the police department -- this is the best police department...

City Attorney Leen: Time.

Mr. Garcia: In South Florida.

City Attorney Leen: Time.

Mr. Garcia: And they're directing street traffic and that shouldn't be happening.

City Attorney Leen: You're out of time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, sir. Alright, Eric Valderama, who doesn't live in Coral Gables. Mr. Valderama.

Eric Valderama: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Commission. Thank you for this opportunity. I'm here -- we're representing MCM, at 6201 Southwest 70th Street. And I'm here from a point of support. I've heard a lot of the complaints and the issues, and there's many. But also, we're here to support. Us, as a construction company, have plenty of heavy equipment, plenty of personnel on staff, ready to go. We are FEMA certified. We are not part of the procurement that has been put out in part of the past, but if there is a need to expedite and to get a lot of the roads cleaned from the right-of-the-way and to staging areas, we are here on staff ready and willing, available to help out. So, I'm trying to see what kind of vehicle that there is for us to be able to help support. We're helping Florida Department of Transportation, as an example, has put out some, like an emergency solicitation that they did in a 48-hour kind of window and they opened it up for other opportunities to put out there. And, maybe that's an avenue that the City of Coral Gables may want to consider. But in all instances, we're here to help.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much for your offer, sir.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Toni (INAUDIBLE) Diaz, 6604 San Vicente Street.

Toni Diaz: Hi.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good morning -- or good afternoon.

Ms. Diaz: Hi. Good afternoon. Thank you for hearing me. Excuse my appearance. I have no electricity. I'm a registered nurse.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Join the club.

Ms. Diaz: And my husband is a physician. And we live in our house at 6604 San Vicente. The 25-year-old oak fell on top of our house. We had to call -- well, our neighbors got Rescue to come and cut us out, so that my husband can get to work. It's a mess there. We also have power in the back of our house. The lines are all over the street. It's a fight of who's going to cut the tree first or who's going to fix the line first. I see a lot of things going on, but nothing's really happening. I haven't seen trucks. I haven't seen water. There's no electricity. There's no cell communication. And it's very dark and it's very dangerous. So, I came in -- out of respect for myself and my community. If they could prioritize even the tree cutting or getting the -- FPL out there where -- some of the trees are not in the streets. They're on top of the houses, and people can't get in or out, so that's another issue. And I thank you for hearing me. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. Diaz: Thank you, Mr. Lago.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Excuse me...

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Ma'am.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Ms. Diaz: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Raquel Elejabarrieta, when you have an opportunity, if you would speak to her, because we are addressing the issues where City trees have fallen on homes and we have a way to assist. So, if you don't mind, when -- before you go, if you speak to her. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anybody else wants to speak and offer to help on community issues? Give them -- yeah, give them your -- Mr. City Clerk. Anybody else wants to speak?

Vivian Fernandez: Hi. Good afternoon. My name is Vivian Fernandez. I live at 1515 Algardi. Today, I went from the Biltmore all the way to Blue Road, on Alhambra, since I live right off of Alhambra, looking for trucks at 11:30 in the morning. I did not encounter one FPL or any other (INAUDIBLE) or whatever truck. They're just not in the area, and that's -- and our streets -- and in that area, just south of Bird Road, there aren't that many trees. In our street, there are no big trees down, you know -- it's just a -- probably just a matter of flicking that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm sorry, give me your address again.

Ms. Fernandez: 1515 Algardi.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: 1515 Algardi.

Ms. Fernandez: Okay. On Algardi, on the 1500 block of Algardi, I mean, it's an easy fix, but nobody's around. Okay, thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, ma'am.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Anybody else wants to speak?

Unidentified Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Unidentified Speaker: Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, come on.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, name and -- give it to the City Clerk. No, give it to the City Clerk.

Unidentified Speaker: I haven't even filled it out yet.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please give it to the City Clerk. Okay, yeah. I would like to bring up our very distinguished Daisy Baez, please. Daisy, how are you? Our state representative and very distinguished, and we're very happy that you're here. Thank you very, very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

State Representative Baez: Thank you, Mayor, City Manager, and Commissioners. I just wanted to be here to offer support on any issues that we may be able to collaborate with in the State House regarding recovery efforts. I just also want to commend all of you for the great work you have done trying to keep the recovery efforts moving forward. I would also like to see a little bit more of an aggressive effort to improve solar services or solar access in the city,

because many of these residents will probably fair better if we had, you know, an easier time of getting solar in the City of Coral Gables. So, again, count on my support, count on my assistance. Anything that I can do for the City, I'm here for you. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Daisy, thank you very much. And, I know that we count -- with a friend in Tallahassee, and thank you for your support, which has been consistent and constant. Thank you.

State Representative Baez: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Very much. Alright. Emilio Lopez.

Emilio Lopez: Good afternoon.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Hey, Emilio.

Mr. Lopez: Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: 4100 Salzedo Street.

Mr. Lopez: Salzedo, Merrick Park. I hear people about not having -- not seeing trucks. At 9:15 this morning, we went by -- I took a left on Bird to go south towards -- went right by Coral Gables High School. There were 20, 25 trucks there; 20 people standing around with nothing to do, so I don't get it. On the one hand, we don't have trucks and we got 20 -- it looked like -- orange trucks lining all the way almost from the -- from Le Jeune almost to Havana Harry's. What are they doing there? I don't understand. So, I just think we have a lot of work to do, coordination, it seems to be lacking across many dimensions. So, just wanted to share that with you guys.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Emilio. Adi Asavaid. Yes, sir. Hi.

Adi Asavaid: Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Adi Asavaid. I'm at 1439 Garcia Avenue. I've got three points to make. Some of them have already been made. The first point, I want to thank Coral Gables. By Tuesday evening, everything was clear. You could go drive anywhere and all the roads were clear. Second thing is what everybody has said. There are no trucks. I don't see lines coming up. But, a third point I want to make is why does Coral Gables have so many new trees planted, which have all fallen down and not taking care of pruning the older, big trees? That's my question to the Coral Gables Commission. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Let me address that. The trees that fell down are not new trees. The trees that fell down were trees planted in 1926 by our founder, George Merrick, who wanted a quick canopy, and he planted ficus trees, which don't have roots -- deep roots. They spread out, and those are the ones that fell. You will see the huge trees that fell, but...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Isabel Sardinias. There you go.

Isabel Sardinias: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you so much for hearing all of us. 38 Fonseca Avenue. I have lived there with my husband, (INAUDIBLE), for 30 years. I want to say that I have seen hundreds of trucks -- not FPL, and I'm sorry. They have been from all over the United States, at the dog track. They are not working 24/7. We have seen them two nights ago. They were all vacant, resting at night, waiting. I want to know -- I believe that it's a management thing that they don't -- someone is not knowing how to get the orders to these

workers; go out and do this and do that. We have spoken to a few people out of state, and they have told us about the bureaucracy, how much that they have to wait for FPL to give them the permission, the go-ahead, and they have come from very far. They have come from Indiana, from New York, from all over the states, and left their families. And they're willing to work, but they have to wait for FPL to give them the order. We have people that have had open-heart surgeries in our neighborhood and they have no power, no electricity. Thank you...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Ms. Sardinas: Very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Jose Munoz, 4501 University Drive.

Jose Munoz: Good afternoon. First, I want to thank Commissioner Lago, Commissioner Mena, and the Manager for responding to some of the emails I sent out yesterday and this morning. A couple of points I want to make, because you guys have heard a lot of the same thing over and over today again. I guess the trees that are on the powerlines, I really want to understand why we need Miami-Dade Emergency Operations or someone like that to come and, you know, take care of those trees. Why is it that the City itself cannot procure a contractor to be able to handle that removal? I mean, if you drive around -- and if we're relying on the County, quite frankly, if you drive in some parts of the County, a lot of parts of the County still have trees in the middle of the street. So, if we're going to rely on the County for those removals, I think we're in a tough spot, and we've got a long road ahead of us. The second thing -- and to your point, Mayor -- we have a lot of these old ficus trees that were, in 1926 -- I know we're trying to protect our canopy, but let's -- I think, let's just go ahead and get rid of those trees. I mean...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let me tell you something. In -- and stop the clock. In 1993, when I become mayor the first time, we planted 3,000 live oaks, replacing the thousands or hundreds of ficus trees that fell down, and the ones that they didn't replant at that time fell down this time. So, we're going to do that. Go ahead.

Mr. Munoz: Appreciate that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Start the clock again.

Mr. Munoz: And then just, I hope, as playing a little Monday morning quarterback, like all of us are, is that for the next time this happens, for next year, that we have some contracts in place to be able to address this a lot better. Learn from the experience.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Any other -- anyone else wants to speak? No one else? None? Thank you very, very much. I'd like to make a comment or respond to all of you. And, I would like to have the Commission -- and I'll make the motion, if I'm allowed. I'll pass the gavel, but I (INAUDIBLE)...

Vice Mayor Keon: Pass that gavel.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I would like for somebody to make the motion to ask our City Attorney to look into enforcement actions against FPL. It is, I think, a disgrace that our infrastructure has deteriorated to the point that it has. I think that it is a disgrace that they have not kept up with us and with the needs for Coral Gables. And I hear comments about, you know, north of 8th Street,

no trucks north of 8th Street, Algardi, other streets. And I think that I would like to have the Commission instruct our City Attorney to look into enforcement actions against FPL.

Vice Mayor Keon: Do I have a second to that motion?

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Do we have a second?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: All those in favor?

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Quesada.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Commissioner Quesada second. He wanted to second it.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: I wanted to...

Vice Mayor Keon: All in favor, aye. Could I just say -- Are you done? Just a couple words.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: In the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm sorry. That passed, right?

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Keon: And this is to FPL and Charles Knight. And you know, I know that you are only an employer but -- the employee that's here to listen to what we have to say, but I ask you sincerely to go back to the people that run FPL and tell them that we are tired of being dependent on a monopoly for power in this state that is not -- that does not -- and a Public Service Commission that does not force FPL to behave or to have the policies and procedures in place to ensure that when there is problems along this line -- along our lines and our grid, that they are taken care of. Ms. Fuller came and showed you a picture of a transformer that is buried in a tree. How do you not go out and fix that? How do you not go out and fix that? Somebody has to have told you. Somebody has gone out numerous times to fix that electricity. And you know what; the damn transformer still stays in the tree. How can you do that?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: In reference to Gables Estates.

Vice Mayor Keon: The same thing, the same thing.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: 5601 Granada.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yeah. I mean, these are problems that you deal with on a regular basis. Where is your quality control? Where are your processes? Where are your people? Where are your systems? You spent millions of dollars to defeat...

Commissioner Lago: Solar.

Vice Mayor Keon: The solar bill. Millions of dollars to try and defeat the dollar bill that, thankfully, passed. You weren't successful. Take those millions of dollars and put them back into your company and run a company that doesn't run as a monopoly and is answerable to no one.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Vice Mayor.

(APPLAUSE)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Lago.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Commissioner -- I'm sorry.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Commissioner -- may I say what Commissioner Quesada...

Commissioner Lago: Of course.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Just...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Texted me? He wants to make sure that FPL understands how much people suffer when we don't get a reasonable price from FPL for undergrounding.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, so...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, he joins you in your concept...

Commissioner Lago: That's what I wanted to...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: On undergrounding, sir.

Commissioner Lago: That's what I'm -- I'm happy that Commissioner Quesada made those comments because I've been giving a lot of thought lately, and I think the Mayor's comments and the Vice Mayor's comments were strong enough in reference to FPL. My comments are going to be more geared towards -- everybody here knows that I have solar in my house, and the benefits of solar and what this city has done to make solar as easy as possible to attain in South Florida. I think we are the premier city when it comes to allowing people to have solar in their house. I mean, we've removed all permit fees for solar. We expedited all permits in relations to solar, but we still have the big giant, FPL, fighting us every step that we can. So...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can FPL shut down your server?

Commissioner Lago: Yeah. Right now -- I mean, yeah. Right now, I don't have electricity because I don't have the backup battery yet, which has been -- which hasn't been allowed to be sold in the state of Florida yet. There's a lot of legal wrangling and...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, yeah.

Commissioner Lago: There's a lot of, you know, lobbying efforts going on.

Vice Mayor Keon: (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Lago: Just like with the tiles, the solar tiles from Tesla. It's the same situation. They haven't been able to get the approvals in the state of Florida. I don't want to get into hypothetical like reasons or -- but we all know why a lot of things are occurring. I really think that we, as the City, we, as a Commission, we need to pass a resolution today. And that resolution has to be one that asks our staff and gives our City Manager the latitude to hire an outside consultant to look at undergrounding our existing lines. I have been doing some research over the last few days. Again, I have nothing else to do. So, during that time, I've been doing a little research with the help of Martha, and we found out that there are a few cities that have undergrounded their lines already in Miami-Dade County. I have a resolution from North Bay Village. I know it's a small community, but they did it. We also have, you know, different articles of municipalities in Miami-Dade County, in Broward, which have taken those steps, like Coconut Creek. Again, undergrounding the lines is an essential part of our future. We need to upgrade our infrastructure. Like the Mayor mentioned in the beginning, FPL received a 23 percent rate hike approval over the next four years. Where's all that money?

Unidentified Speaker: Exactly.

Commissioner Lago: Where's all that money going to go? Are they going to increase infrastructure? I mean, I know they're increasing, obviously, profits, but if we're going to be held accountable as elected officials, we need to hold FPL accountable, and that's the bottom line. Because when I receive a phone call -- and I know that every single person on this Commission has received them -- when I receive a phone call from an elderly, 103-year-old woman, who hasn't had electricity and is living in heat...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Oxygen, yeah.

Commissioner Lago: And her issue is oxygen -- for five days -- and I visit her, you know my heart breaks that I can't resolve her issue for her. We're all -- I mean, who doesn't feel, you know, broken when you reach out to somebody and they have an issue that you can't resolve and

it's all out of your -- it's basically out of your hands. No matter how powerful you are or the elected official that you are, you have no power in this instance.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you make a motion?

Commissioner Lago: So, I'd like to make a motion to have the Manager and staff do the necessary research, hire an outside consultant, so we can get a real grasp and an understanding of what is the undergrounding cost. In other cities that have done this, it's been paid three ways. I want to be very...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: You have a second already, sir.

Commissioner Lago: Okay. I want to be...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: With Commissioner Quesada.

Commissioner Lago: Upfront. I want to be upfront, because every person that I visited over the last few days in their homes, they've all asked me the same thing. Hey, what's up with undergrounding? Can we do it? There's a cost that will be borne to the residents -- okay, let's be honest -- to the City, and FPL will pay a portion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I agree with you a hundred percent. And, the motion has been made and...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And seconded by Commissioner Quesada.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes. Second by Commissioner Quesada. Will you call the roll, please?

Commissioner Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

Commissioner Lago: May I say...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I would like to make a comment on that. And I'm glad that we passed that motion. But even without undergrounding, the level of support for our existing distribution network, our existing lines is -- has been pathetic.

Commissioner Lago: Can I give you one more example? There is -- and I wish Chelsea was here because she's out of town, and maybe Martha remembers her name. There's a resident in the city -- and maybe your staff knows -- that her power goes out -- she lives next to Venetian Pool. Her power goes out every month for like two or three days at a time. I mean, that's unacceptable. That's unacceptable. But I mean, we can talk about those examples for days. I want to just say thank you to two different entities and one person who have really come to bat for the City. I want to thank Lyft. And if you're listening today, the residents or anybody -- Lyft came through where if you need transportation, anyone in the City of Coral Gables, they'll pay for it. It's complimentary. So, we want to give thanks to Lyft. I also want to thank Commissioner Rebeca Sosa, who will be...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Commissioner Lago: Donating 200 bags of ice tomorrow. She'll be providing the logistics for that and, you know, maybe some of my Commissioners can help me and we'll hand those out to people who are in need, especially in the North Gables, so thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner...

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor -- one point before we continue. You had directed, before the meeting, based on your emergency powers that Commissioner Quesada could participate by phone.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, of course.

City Attorney Leen: I want to be clear for the record. But, it would be useful to ratify that by the Commission with a motion, second and...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes. Is there a motion?

Vice Mayor Keon: So moved.

Commissioner Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second. All those in favor, say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

City Attorney Leen: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner Mena, you have the last word.

Commissioner Mena: I'll be brief because I think we've covered just about every aspect of this. I just want to make a note that we've had a lot of residents from the North Gables area. I live a block from Sunset. I don't have power either. People on Old Cutler Bay (sic), Gables Estates; they don't have power either. People that live near the University of Miami didn't have power until, I think, this morning.

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Commissioner Lago: Oh, and by the way, can I interrupt you one second, Commissioner? Just to make it even worse, to exacerbate the situation, I have two young girls. I didn't have power on Friday. We were the first residents in Coral Gables to lose power, along with Maria, who lives a block away from me.

Commissioner Mena: So, it's been...

Commissioner Lago: It's been a while.

Commissioner Mena: It's been, you know, across the city; condos, houses, you name it. There's not really any exception...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: He says he doesn't have power either.

Commissioner Mena: Commissioner Quesada doesn't have power either. So, we're all frustrated. We all share your frustration, I assure you. And, we're working as hard as we can to try to get this resolved however possible. I think there's two aspects to that. I think there's dealing with what we're dealing with right now, but I think it's important that when we're done dealing with what we're dealing with right now, that we really take an introspective look at how all of this went and see how we can improve going forward. I think Mr. Munoz said earlier -- made that note earlier. It's important for us to not forget about these issues, so that we're not in

the same position, God forbid, a month from now, but a year from now or two years from now or whenever it is. So, you know, thank you all for your participation. One last note, you know, there was a comment made by a gentleman earlier, Mr. Diaz Padron, about the City's efforts on social media. You know, I don't know how it was on Twitter or not, but I can tell you that on all other forms of media, emails, Facebook, there's been a lot of information proliferated as best we can. We're always open to additional ways to do that. It's hard when people don't have power. But, to the extent you don't, I really encourage you to follow us on all forms of social media, because our staff has done a really good job of, I think, posting on Facebook in particular, Twitter, et cetera. We can always do better, always, but please make sure you follow us, because there's a lot of helpful information on there that you might not otherwise be aware of during a situation like this.

Vice Mayor Keon: Can we also ask...?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Commissioner Mena.

Vice Mayor Keon: Can we ask the Manager to respond to this issue of crews removing debris?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Sure, we can give a...

Vice Mayor Keon: Just why.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: If a tree does not have a powerline in the middle of the street -- those are the ones that are remaining. If you don't mind, I can have Peter Iglesias and Ed Santamaria give you a full, all-out what we're doing with debris. We have 170,000 cubic...

Commissioner Lago: Yards.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: 170,000 cubic yards of debris now. We allow one usually, one cubic yard for residents to put out in their pile. So, we have 170,000 cubic yards before things start coming from the backyard. So, gentlemen, if you could give them a condensed version of where we are with debris.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Very condensed. We have to move on to...

Vice Mayor Keon: I mean, I understand that we...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The regular Commission meeting.

Vice Mayor Keon: Have a plan in place and we have FEMA contractors and whatever else. But, there is a suggestion here that we add additional contractors. That's what I'm asking you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Okay, then I could...

Vice Mayor Keon: What is the issue of us...?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I can answer that...

Vice Mayor Keon: Doing additional contractors?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Diana, can you come forward with the process of -- and the City Attorney has also sought outside legal counsel, knowledgeable in FEMA requirements. In order to add outside contractors that may be FEMA approved elsewhere, what requirements have to be met first in order to receive reimbursement?

Finance Director Gomez: So...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We haven't slowed the process.

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: But that's a question that I'm asking.

Finance Director Gomez: So, FEMA requires that the contractors that we use have been -- have gone through a competitive process with the City. We have a -- we have done a competitive process years ago, and we have a contract -- we have contracts in place with AshBritt and Ceres for debris management and debris removal. If it has been determined that emergency exists beyond that because they cannot provide the level of service that is needed or something is causing some kind of life-threatening situation, then you can go and try to do an emergency procurement. But, until we have exhausted all of the contracts that we have in place, we should not be going to look elsewhere because then we jeopardize our FEMA reimbursement.

Vice Mayor Keon: We will not likely be...

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

Vice Mayor Keon: Reimbursed, and so that will come out of our reserves.

City Attorney Leen: Well, I'd like to add to that.

Vice Mayor Keon: And it won't be (INAUDIBLE), okay.

Commissioner Mena: But...

City Attorney Leen: I'd like to add to that, and then obviously, the Commission -- it's obviously a policy decision, ultimately. But I'd like to add one thing. The whole purpose of these regulations is to have in place before the disaster procurement contracts in place so that we get, and ultimately, FEMA, gets the best deal. I mean, that's the purpose of these regulations. So, they prefer a competitive solicitation before the fact. In situations where that proves to be inadequate -- and usually, you would have your monitor, who is Witt O'Brien in this case -- but your monitor make a determination that there's not adequate resources available, based on the procurement we've made, then we can do an emergency solicitation. But, that wouldn't necessarily be just hiring one company.

Vice Mayor Keon: Right.

City Attorney Leen: We would ask them to provide us bids on an expedited basis, and we would do our best to do an emergency procurement, like we would do any other emergency procurement. So, it's not just going out and hiring one. These regulations are here just for that purpose, to prevent one company from being able to come in. So, I just want to make everyone aware of that. Now, the Commission always, as a policy, the right to decide to risk FEMA reimbursement on a particular procurement. But just understand, that can be a lot of money.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

City Attorney Leen: That can be a lot of money, so you just have to think about that.

Vice Mayor Keon: Alright, then are the contractors that we have in place, do they have the resources to do the work that needs to be done here, or do we need to add additional contractors?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Let me say something also. That this does not prevent those additional contractors to work as a subcontractor for our contractor.

Vice Mayor Keon: For your current contractor?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Vice Mayor Keon: So, they should go to the current contractor to subcontract if we feel there's need. Do you feel that the...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: And that is what (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Keon: People that are in place -- do we have adequate people in place and contracts in place to address the issues within the City?

Public Works Director Santamaria: We do.

Vice Mayor Keon: We do.

Public Works Director Santamaria: This is about 75 percent of Wilma, in terms of volume.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Public Works Director Santamaria: It's really not a major event.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Public Works Director Santamaria: It may be a big mess, but it could have been a lot worse. So, we feel...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, it's not a major event.

Vice Mayor Keon: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: But, for example, what Vice Mayor said, the entrance to Gables Estates, you know, there are fallen transformers. There's fallen trees, et cetera, and nobody has done anything about it.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Mr. Mayor, that's a different portion of our work. That involves the initial push to road clearing. And...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no. But, there's a transformer on -- lines there...

Public Works Director Santamaria: Yes, sir.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And...

Public Works Director Santamaria: I understand.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And also, fallen branches on (INAUDIBLE)...

Vice Mayor Keon: But, don't -- we have to have FPL co-working with us...

Public Works Director Santamaria: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Keon: To deal with those.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Keon: So, anybody else we would hire wouldn't -- would not affect those issues.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We're grateful that the special resources have come forward. We're not going to let them out. They're going to be ours. We have a lot of things that we need their attention to. Those 12 trees that are holding up so much of the City's restoration and then those kinds of projects that have also been addressed. If it has transformer or electric with it, we are not allowed to do it. But, now that we have those two special resource teams, we'll be able to get a lot of progress going.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: (INAUDIBLE) not allowed to do, but it has to be done. And Mr...

Commissioner Lago: Mayor, if I may, since we have both...

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Go ahead.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner, just to be thoroughly clear. If a tree has a downed wire, we cannot touch it until we are assured that that wire is not live and we don't electrocute...

Vice Mayor Keon: That's what we said.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I agree, but that has to be taken care of by FPL.

Commissioner Lago: I want to...

Vice Mayor Keon: That has to be taken care of by FPL.

Commissioner Lago: I want to get beyond that because -- since Vice Mayor Keon brought this up, I want to put this on the record to make sure that everybody understands what's going on.

When is the official cleanup going to begin of all the tree branches and all the debris that's been pushed to the side on the roads?

Public Works Director Santamaria: We have 70 hours to do the initial push, which means clearing the roads. Right now, the vast majority of City streets, from edge of pavement to edge of pavement, have been cleared.

Commissioner Lago: So, why don't we start picking up debris?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Because we still have other components to do. Those 13 large trees that are entangled with electrical wires still remain to be done. And also, we have a lot more flexibility in terms of being reimbursed (INAUDIBLE) materials when we're still in the 70-hour phase. We are not going to start hauling debris until that 70-hour phase is over, because that's going to complicate...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When will that be?

Commissioner Lago: But why? Why would that complicate it?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Because we do not have an approved site yet. We do not have everyone mobilized...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Excuse me.

Commissioner Lago: But I thought you do have...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Excuse me.

Commissioner Lago: I thought you...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We have areas that we have shown FEMA that FEMA has signed off on...

Public Works Director Santamaria: I'm sorry, certified site, not approved. We do have approved sites.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, when will that be?

Commissioner Lago: I'm a little...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Then that's...

Commissioner Lago: Confused because...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: That sounds (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah, I really...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: When will that be?

Public Works Director Santamaria: I don't mean...

Commissioner Lago: Hold on, Ed. Just give me a second.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Go ahead, sir.

Commissioner Lago: Give me a second, okay. Let me speak for a second, okay, one second. So, we have a site...

Public Works Director Santamaria: We do.

Commissioner Lago: Per the Manager.

Public Works Director Santamaria: We have three, at least.

Commissioner Lago: Okay, but two seconds ago, we didn't have a site. So, now we do have a site.

Public Works Director Santamaria: No, certified. We don't have certified sites yet.

Commissioner Lago: Alright, certified.

Vice Mayor Keon: They're approved, but not certified.

Commissioner Lago: They're approved, but they're not certified.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Correct.

Commissioner Lago: Okay, but we have a site. So, if we took material to this site and we left it there, we would be fine because they're approved and they will be certified, whatever the necessary document...

Public Works Director Santamaria: Correct.

Commissioner Lago: That's being worked through will get handled. Okay, that's one thing. Number two, I think what's going on -- and I've talked to the residents. They're asking when are

we going to start hauling debris away. Do we already have our contractor in place, which is AshBritt -- do they have the necessary machinery in place to handle the 170,000...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner...

Commissioner Lago: Cubic yards?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner, let me explain to you what we're doing today. We are using the 72nd Avenue site. That site has -- we have cleared all the new site of every piece of equipment. We have two football fields worth of storage. That site works very well, because trucks come in through 72nd Avenue. We have an area for the trucks to go and empty and get more trees. We have another area where the grinded material can go out of. We are getting a 6,000 cubic yard chipper/grinder for that site. That site has been -- we have three preapproved sites. By certification -- FEMA comes in -- the mitigation people certify the site. They have to certify the trucks. They actually measure our trucks...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay, but when will that be?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: That's happening on Saturday.

Commissioner Mena: Do we have enough monitors to do that?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Are you sure that's happening Saturday?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Yes, that's happening Saturday.

Commissioner Lago: But let me ask you a question.

Commissioner Mena: I'm sorry. Is that a yes?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Yes, it is a yes.

Commissioner Mena: Okay, because I -- respectfully, I'm hearing that we don't -- it's a bit of a struggle on that front.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Commissioner Mena: From people that are involved in the pickup. And I'm trying to understand -- so, I want to be clear. When you say we have -- there's two contractors here. There's AshBritt and whoever they subcontract, but there's also...

Public Works Director Santamaria: Witt O'Brien.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Witt O'Brien

Commissioner Mena: What's the name?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Witt O'Brien.

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: That's the third party.

Commissioner Mena: How many monitors do we need from them? Where are they? Are they here? Are they ready to move? What's the status of it?

Public Works Director Santamaria: The monitors are mobilizing, and we're going to be training additional monitors on Saturday.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We're doing a backup just in case. The doubled redundancy in the program...

Commissioner Mena: (INAUDIBLE) but why...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: So, can we say that this will start Monday? Can we say the pickup...?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Sir, we are hoping to actually start on Sunday.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: But why? Why can't we start today?

Commissioner Mena: Why?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Because once you do that...

Commissioner Lago: Why couldn't we start yesterday?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Because once you do that, you're out of that 70-hour period. That stops.

Commissioner Lago: So, we (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Then -- well, let us pick the garbage first.

Commissioner Lago: No, I mean, that's fine.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: But, that has nothing -- one thing has nothing to do with the other.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think so, yeah.

Commissioner Lago: If we're using a private outside consultant by the name of AshBritt, who you told me -- from the last time I heard, their heavy machinery was coming on Saturday and Sunday, so it's not here then, or it is here? Is it...

Public Works Director Santamaria: It will be here the first...

Commissioner Lago: Okay, so now we're getting -- so, it's not here then.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I'm sorry. Commissioner Quesada is reminding me that the conversation is very valuable, but when you speak all at the same time, it's hard for him to hear it.

Commissioner Lago: Okay, perfect. So, the machinery is not here. It's coming down Saturday and Sunday from the panhandle, correct? That was my last point. Now, I don't understand why we can't start hauling the material. If we have the monitors in place to the 72nd Street to our public -- excuse me, our Solid Waste location, where the monitors can review the 45 cubic yard containers, provide all the necessary information. They basically memorialize it and it moves forward, so we can get FEMA approval. Why are we waiting until Sunday or Monday for this stuff to start being hauled? That's -- I don't understand. It doesn't make -- to me, it doesn't make sense. Are we short? Do -- why are we training more monitors if we have enough monitors?

Commissioner Mena: Right.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: But you said that AshBritt is not here?

Public Works Director Santamaria: AshBritt is here, and they've been...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is here.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Before the storm.

Commissioner Lago: But, then why did I hear that Saturday and Sunday was (INAUDIBLE)...

Public Works Director Santamaria: Because that's Witt O'Brien. That's the debris management contractor. There's two parts here.

Vice Mayor Keon: It's not so easy.

Public Works Director Santamaria: There's two parts here. There's...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Sir...

Commissioner Lago: So, why don't they start hauling then?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Commissioner, we need to have a certified site before we can start hauling and we do not have a certified...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And that will be...

Commissioner Lago: But let me ask you a question. Then how did -- like this is my question for you, then. This is another -- then, I guess, UM must be doing it wrong because UM -- in front of

my house on San Amaro -- has taken out all those giant ficus trees. They're using the Lee Lincoln site, and they have FEMA certified employees at Lee Lincoln basically handling all their debris.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Commissioner...

Commissioner Lago: How are they doing it?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Because their 70 hours -- they don't need the 70 hours, we do. We have 242 centerline miles of roadway in the city that we need to push clear.

Commissioner Lago: But you (INAUDIBLE) -- but we've done that already.

Public Works Director Santamaria: We have done that with the exception of the large trees.

Commissioner Lago: Okay, but -- but why -- so, you -- what you're trying to do is you're trying to let the 70 hours expire, so then you can move on to the next phase?

Public Works Director Santamaria: No. It's not a matter of letting it expire.

Commissioner Lago: Is it about money, or what is it about?

Public Works Director Santamaria: No. It's not a matter of that at all. It's a matter of getting the resources in place, including the certified cite -- and the timing of it works perfectly. We're going to have 20 trucks, 20 Public Works trucks available to start hauling on Sunday.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And as you...

Commissioner Lago: And I'm sorry. I apologize, but I mean, to me -- and I'm in this business, so -- I mean, I'm in the construction business and I get calls from contractors every single day that tell me -- who I sent them your way and they are now working for the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, City of Miami Police, University of Miami. They got hired.

Public Works Director Santamaria: We have...

Commissioner Lago: And people are already clearing -- go to Little Gables. Little Gables is clear. How is Little Gables clear and we're not clear? I don't understand. Do they have better monitors than us? Do they have a certified site? I'm just -- I just want an answer, so when a resident comes up to me and says, hey, it's Monday or Tuesday and we still haven't gotten cleaned, but Coconut Grove is being cleaned. Little Gables is clean. Pinecrest is clean. I need to have an answer.

Vice Mayor Keon: None of them are clean.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Commissioner...

Commissioner Lago: No, Little Gables is clean. Swing by. But I'm asking you, if we sit here for another four days with our -- holding our hands without starting moving debris, I don't understand.

Public Works Director Santamaria: I would...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Can I just ask a -- so, I'm really glad that Mr. Munoz suggested that the ficus have outlived its beauty, because how long did the -- how long does an average ficus in the road take to cut?

Public Works Director Santamaria: About four to six hours.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: How long did the one at 5500 Le Jeune take to cut?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: A day and a half.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: A day and a half.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: It was huge.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, and that's -- how many crews -- how many people working on it?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: We started half a day with one crew, and then came back and did another six, seven hours with two crews.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, the 13 or 12 trees that still need to be addressed -- and I'm grateful for the special resources that have now been added. We are right behind them, so that as they remove those electric wires, our crews are cutting it up and pushing it to the side, correct?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Correct.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And so, when we look at -- you know, it's hard to believe that this storm -- the first time all clear was -- daybreak was Monday. And so, what you're saying is that Witt O'Brien will be here. We have a backup validator that we have how many chippers?

Public Works Director Santamaria: We have two and three -- another one that's coming that's being procured right now. We're sending a PO.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And, that will be in two football field sizes of debris collection. And, then the size of the pickup -- the Public Works trucks that you talked about, how do they compare to the size of the pickup -- the Public Works trucks that we have?

Public Works Director Santamaria: They're all large trucks. So, our trucks are larger typically than what contractors use, but they're 42 cubic yard trucks minimum.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Forty-two cubic yards. And you've identified two, which you have shown me, two immediate sites, and we have a third, as backup, which we would rather not use because of proximity to single-family, correct?

Public Works Director Santamaria: That's correct, ma'am.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And so, the idea here is that once we get that -- it's been approved by FEMA, but it needs to be certified by FEMA. And yes, sir, there is bureaucracy, but I will tell you that it is not a local bureaucracy that is being dealt with. Then once they have certified, Witt O'Brien is in place, then all the hauling begins. And, we'll have how many trucks and for how long a period?

Public Works Director Santamaria: Initially, starting on Saturday, we'll have 20 trucks certified, and then we will ramp up the trucks. Our hope is to have 30 to 50 additional trucks certified by Monday.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: All under the FEMA-approved guidelines

Public Works Director Santamaria: Correct.

Commissioner Mena: So, I mean, I still want to understand -- you mentioned that we have a contractor who provides monitors, but we're training monitors on Saturday. I'm trying to understand...

Public Works Director Santamaria: This is in an abundance of caution, Commissioner. We don't want any failures in the system.

Commissioner Mena: Absolutely.

Public Works Director Santamaria: This is in an abundance of caution. The industry right now is very, very stressed. There was an incident in Houston, and this incident has affected the entire state just about. So, out of an abundance of caution, to make sure that we have the adequate resources on hand, we're training additional monitors.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: It is the first time in recorded history that we have ever had two Category 4 hurricanes back to back -- history of measurement of hurricanes. And so, when he talks about stressed systems, Harvey is still being pulled out of recovery, and in comes Irma, and Irma chooses to take the entire state of Florida with her.

Commissioner Mena: But we're -- yeah, but we're talking about measuring a truck.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Commissioner Mena: And getting the trash in the truck and taking it and grinding it. I mean, I understand that. But my understanding is we have enough trucks, and I know we have enough trucks locally. So, that's not the issue. So, it's a matter of getting through the process associated with FEMA certification, essentially.

Public Works Director Santamaria: That's correct.

Commissioner Mena: And so, again, I'm just a little concerned, because I'm hearing that -- and if you're telling me it's in an abundance of caution, that's one thing. But is it, because -- in other words, do you have enough people for the 20 trucks that you described, but not enough for the additional 30 or 50 that you're contemplating or is this belts and suspenders?

Public Works Director Santamaria: No. The 20 trucks will be certified on Saturday.

Commissioner Mena: The 20 trucks.

Public Works Director Santamaria: The 20 trucks.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And they will start Sunday.

Commissioner Mena: But what about the rest?

Public Works Director Santamaria: The other additional trucks will be certified starting on Sunday. But, we have the resources to certify those trucks.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: May I clarify something Commissioner Lago?

Commissioner Lago: Okay.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: First, the hurricane came through on Monday. Monday you got rescue and recon. Number one, all your rescue and recon is being able to get through the streets for emergencies. That's number one. It's getting through the street or (INAUDIBLE) 240 miles of street. That was done in a day and a half. Since that time today, our priority is to get the pavement width done so that, one, we can better get Fire and Police through the streets. Two, we can collect garbage, which was a huge issue in the last storm. In addition to that, this

additional clearing is going to help us with our trash operations, because our trucks can use all the streets very effectively. Our arterials, our collectors and our local streets. The more efficient we are, the better we do the job.

Commissioner Mena: And let me...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: Excuse me, sir.

Commissioner Mena: You've done a terrific job clearing the streets.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: The better we do the job

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Peter. And 150 team members are clearing the streets now.

Commissioner Mena: Absolutely.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, it's not that we're on a wait and see. We have 150 City employees and AshBritt together clearing the street as we speak.

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: AshBritt has been embedded in the streets since the very beginning. We are maximizing our efficiency to get the trucks here. Now, our 72nd Avenue site works extremely well. We have completely cleared that site, two football fields. The logistics of that site work extremely well. AshBritt will be here Saturday to certify -- finish certifying the site. There are certain FEMA requirements. We have to put towers up. They have to be able to look inside the trucks. It's not just taking a look. We have to put towers in, towers out. We have to physically know what's going in and out of that site. They have to -- we have to certify additional people, because we want to make sure that our operation -- we will have extended operation. We plan on working at least 13, 14 hours a day. So, we want to have staff rotating through. So, we are allowed to train certain people, so we are training additional people on

Saturday to rotate people through and make sure that we work 24/7. We want to work 24/7. We want to be -- we want -- there's an old saying. Be quick, but don't hurry. Because you want to be smooth. You want to go in; you want to do your job effectively. Working haphazardly does not help us. We have to be organized and we have to follow our plan. Now, the certification of that site is very important. Just not showing up there saying it's certified. We have to have all (INAUDIBLE) in place, and then they will certify additional personnel. We have to certify our trucks. They don't -- FEMA has been taken for a ride many, many times (INAUDIBLE), and they don't want to do that anymore. So, we are getting our 20 trucks and starting to haul with our trucks that are doing trash.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And you're sure that AshBritt has the resources, the capacity to serve our needs?

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: The director has met with them this morning and has assured that. Just in case, we have a second company that will be there on Saturday to -- and we are maintaining them through the beginning of the operation in case there is a glitch with O'Brien.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Let me...

Assistant City Manager Iglesias: So, I'm saying that this -- we -- then, once we get our 72nd Avenue site operational, which is a fantastic facility for that -- and anybody -- all the contractors we've had have -- and consultants have agreed with that. (INAUDIBLE) the site on 8th Street (INAUDIBLE). That will be our second site. We want to start that site to have -- facilitate the north side of the city. We wanted -- this is a plan that we have. We want to be good. We want to be coordinated, and we want to do it as quickly as possible, and this is what we're doing, Commissioner.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. Unless there's something else, we had...

Vice Mayor Keon: Do we have a projected cost of what we anticipate the cleanup will be that we will be looking for reimbursement from FEMA for? Any idea?

Public Works Director Santamaria: It's at least \$5 million.

Vice Mayor Keon: It's at least \$5 million.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How much?

Public Works Director Santamaria: At least \$5 million.

Vice Mayor Keon: At least five million.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Five million.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Yeah, with the hauling operations, it's...

Vice Mayor Keon: And everything else.

Public Works Director Santamaria: Going to be a lot more money.

Vice Mayor Keon: That's a significant amount of money that we need to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Of course, it is.

Vice Mayor Keon: Ensure that we do it and we do it right, and we do it within the rules and the regulations that are set down, as long as you believe that it will be done timely.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I -- unless there's something else, I would like to move on. We have a Commission meeting, which should have started at 4, or whatever it is.

Vice Mayor Keon: That's fine.

City Attorney Leen: Mr. Mayor, that clock is five minutes slow.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I know, but it is 4:27 now.

Commissioner Lago: We didn't get a date on the expected time to complete...

City Attorney Leen: Eight minutes slow.

Commissioner Lago: The cleanup.

City Attorney Leen: We have three minutes until we have to start the next...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let me...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: A projected time that cleanup will be finished?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: The expected time that cleanup will be finished in this process under the scenarios that we've identified using the two and possibly the third site, if necessary. So, if we use the third site included with -- that abuts the single-family because of the interest in expediting, what is the amount of time to cleanup, and how much time did it take

when you -- although, you weren't here, how much time did it take for Wilma? Because I've heard from Andrew time and Wilma time that we're actually ahead of schedule.

Public Works Director Santamaria: We are ahead of schedule. I believe Wilma's operation took months to address.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: A month?

Commissioner Lago: My question is very simple. What is the timeframe to clean this up?

Public Works Director Santamaria: The first initial major portion of the city, which will mean that a lot of debris will be picked up, is about three weeks.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Now, what happens, sir, as you know, they end up clearing out their backyards, which we want. We want landscape debris from Irma. And so, the first move is what they're -- we're seeing now, but people will continue to clean up their backyard and push it out there, and we're going to continue to clean it up.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: I just want to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's go on.

Commissioner Lago: I want to put something on the record.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Lago: Just one last thing, please, if I may. I want to put this on the record and be very clear. I think it's a big mistake what we're doing. And, I think that we have very qualified entities in South Florida that can aid and assist the City of Coral Gables and do an incredible job through services. I think putting all our eggs with AshBritt is a big mistake, a very big mistake. I think that we, as a city, can do much better. And, I have a responsibility to the residents of this community to make sure that I'm a vocal proponent of doing everything in my power, as an elected official, to ensure that we put the safety of the residents and their livelihoods first. And, I think that we're making a significant mistake by just allowing one company, which, by the way, to be clear, I don't have the most confidence in this company that we picked; that's number one. And number two, sitting on our hands until Monday to commence cleaning out debris I think is another big mistake. And I know that we want to be, like Vice Mayor Keon stated, we want to be as clear as possible. We want to be careful, so that we don't miss out on potentially \$5 million of FEMA reimbursement. I think it's about 90 percent of that \$5 million, so you're talking about \$450,000 -- \$4,500,000, excuse me. But, I think that we could do much better.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

Commissioner Lago: And I think starting next week is a mistake.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I agree with you, but I'm going to call this meeting adjourned.

City Attorney Leen: Recessed, recessed.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Recessed. And we have to start at 5:30, which is in about two minutes from now, with our statutory compulsory...

City Attorney Leen: Yes.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Meeting.

City Attorney Leen: So, Mr. Mayor, we have four special...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

City Attorney Leen: Assessments that will be heard right now.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: And Commissioner Quesada is going to continue to join us.
Sir, am I experiencing a recess here?

City Attorney Leen: No, no. We're...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: I just want to make sure that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioners, let's be back here in five minutes, alright.