

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item C-3
June 12, 2018
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
Assistant City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Police Chief, Ed Hudak

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item K-1 [9:40 a.m.]
Status on Police talks (the boil).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Next item on the agenda is status of police talks (the boil). And I wanted to talk about our city first. And we have a wonderful city. Safety -- we are probably the safest city in South Florida. Our crime has been going down for the last few years cumulatively. Our finances are solid, AAA. Livability -- we have the most livable city in Miami-Dade County, at least. Trees, water features, parks, public areas, open spaces. Notwithstanding what we heard

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today from one resident, we have an ethical government. We have an efficient government. We have the same number of employees today that we had when I was Mayor 18 years ago. We have a wonderful, wonderful city, I repeat, and yet, this reminds me of Robert Redford. You all know who Robert Redford was, a very handsome person, the epitome of handsomeness 30 years ago or whatever. And it reminds me of Robert Redford, but I put a boil, a two-inch boil in Robert Redford's head and all you can look at is the boil in Robert Redford's head. And that boil is our police department, the status of our -- the management of our police department, the relations between our Assistant City Manager, our City Manager, and our Chief of Police. That is a boil, and that has been going on for two years before my time and since I was elected in April of '17, that has been going on. The City Manager didn't want to make the Chief chief. She wanted two chiefs. Finally, public pressure and a letter from Craig Leen, our City Attorney, saying that we couldn't have two police chiefs made him a police chief. We had the very embarrassing, shameful investigation, \$50,000 investigation into a party he attended, where everyone in that party said that there was no issue in the party, because he was invited and they were happy for him to be there. It cost us \$50,000. And, in spite of his having -- the investigation having shown that nothing happened at the party and that there were no sex toys at the party, our City Manager issued a reprimand, which she withdrew at the next meeting, where we had over 100 people here and 35 people talking about this. On the other hand, there's an undercurrent here of dissatisfaction in the police department. The police -- we have a very, very popular police chief, not because he's a nice guy -- although, he is -- but because he is perceived as having made crime -- being a factor in having made crime go down and people have confidence in him. And insofar as safety, confidence in the police and in the police chief is one of the most important things. We have to deal with this issue. We have to deal with this issue, and this takes the City Manager and this takes the Police Chief, and this takes the Assistant City Manager. Our City Manager tells us that she has had -- been having conversations with the police chief for the last three Commission meetings, before the Commission meeting, and that things are progressing fine, satisfactorily. That the Assistant City Manager is going to move out of the police floor in the police department, and that the police chief has control of the promotions. Do these -- does this solve the problem? Does this solve the relationship problem

between the Chief, the City Manager, and the Assistant City Manager? I don't know. The FDLE, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, has our police chief as the chief with a picture of his probably taken a long time ago because it's a handsome picture. But he has it as the chief, but as a contact in Tallahassee, we have the Assistant City Manager as the contact and he is a sworn officer. Now, do these moves -- moving the Assistant City Manager out of the police floor, et cetera, do they solve the problem? I don't know whether it solves the problem or not, but that's exactly what I'm talking about. I want a statement by the Police Chief, by the City Manager, and by the Assistant City Manager, a public statement that all parties can work together towards the future, towards an even brighter future in the City of Coral Gables. And let's put this boil, this nonsense behind us. We have to stop this. We really, really have to stop this. The City Manager -- Madam City Manager, you have to stop the hostilities. He is our chief of police. That investigation was an absurd investigation, and the reprimand was unspeakably absurd. He is respected. He is trusted. And Mr. Chief of Police, Mr. Fernandez is a sworn officer. He is here. He is very responsible too for our drop in crime. He is responsible for our CCTV, and he has done a wonderful job, in my opinion, and I think that I speak for the Commission. What more is needed? What more is needed to satisfy Chief, City Manager and the Assistant City Manager that we can work together? I would like not only for the City Manager to talk with them, but I would like to see a result of those conversations, a result where the Chief stands here and says, I am satisfied that we can go forth and the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager say, I am satisfied that we're going to work together from now on and all our difficulties have been solved. I would like to call -- I would like to request -- I would like to invite the three of them, the Assistant City Manager, the Chief of Police, and more important, our very fine, wonderful City Manager, who is responsible for, in an ethical manner, guiding the City. I would like for them to meet. I'd like for them to meet -- and imitating Mayor Cason with the Somerset Academy, I'd like for them to meet now and come back with a solution, having each one of them state "I am satisfied." If the Chief of Police says I'm afraid of this meeting because I'm going to be fired. No, you're not going to be fired. You're not going to be fired, because we'll make sure that this is a serious meeting and that everybody gets together. I'd like to hear from Commissioner Lago, Commissioner Keon, Vice Mayor, Commissioner Mena on

this because we have to get this problem behind us. And we are not going to take public comments. This is not a public hearing. These are Mayor's comments, so we're not going to take public comments.

Commissioner Keon: Go ahead.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: No, no. I mean, the Vice Mayor. I have my comments. I'll reserve them until the end. I'll allow my colleagues to make their comments first, out of respect.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah. I called them (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Lago: And I know that you don't want public comment. I know you don't want public comment, but...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We're not (INAUDIBLE)

Commissioner Lago: But I'm a firm believer in democracy.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm not going to recognize (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Lago: I think that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I control the agenda.

Commissioner Lago: I think...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'm not going to...

Commissioner Lago: And that's fine. I don't have a problem.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Commissioner Lago: You can control the agenda, but I think it's important that we tell people that, you know, if you do come down here, you should be allowed to speak. And that's -- I'm of that belief. Alright, in reference to my comments, it's simple. I think the Chief needs to be able to control his own department. And the Chief right now is answering to a person, by the way, which, in my memo, June 1, I stated was a good hire and thank god we didn't make a mistake in regards to our memo. So, I just want to put that on the record because, you know, we're going back and forth in reference to my own personal opinion. And Mr. Fernandez knows it very, very clearly -- I've stated I think it was a great hire. I think he has -- he does an exceptional job and he brings a lot to the table. But, I think what we need to have is we need to have a police department which answers to one person, and that is to Ed Hudak. And then Ed Hudak needs to answer to the City Manager. I think that employees -- and there are employees right now under Mr. Hudak who do not answer to the Chief. When they disagree with the Chief -- and I have several examples -- they run to Mr. Fernandez or they run to the City Manager and disobey and are insubordinate. It happens. It is what it is. I will not accept that in my own -- in the private sector, and I don't think we should. That's not the way to run a business. It's inefficient. You know, what are we asking from Ed? We have two gentlemen here. We have Frank Fernandez and we have Ed Hudak. It's our responsibility to make sure that this issue is corrected once and for all. It is this Commission's responsibility. This Commission has to make this decision and we need to move forward. If we are unhappy, I don't want to kick the can down the curb anymore. I'm ready to make a decision. I'm ready to have the chief be autonomous. Frank can continue working here in the city, providing the services that he's providing, which are -- he's doing an exceptional job on many fronts, but I believe the Chief needs to stand on his own two feet. In reference to your meeting, I disagree, and I'll tell you why. The CM -- the City Manager wrote a excoriating reprimand in regards to the police chief, which was clear in the fact that she

believed that he is not capable to do his job. She rescinded that document, obviously, because of public pressure. I think we're in a situation where how can you expect the Chief to sit in a room with both of his bosses and try to get along with someone who basically has a horrific opinion of them and believes that they can't do the job and they're not capable of doing the job. You know, I just think that we, as a Commission, need to make this decision. We can't expect the City Manager to make the decision, because you've asked this -- for this how many times?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Many times.

Commissioner Lago: Many times. Has it been done? No, it has not been done. It just keeps being pushed down and pushed down. And again, this is easy. The Commission needs to take a stand. I'm ready to make a stand. If my colleagues are, I'll support you. We've tried it one way. It hasn't worked out. Let's move in another direction.

Commissioner Mena: What's the decision you're asking for?

Commissioner Lago: I'm asking for us, like I said before, to let Ed Hudak be the chief of police, move Frank Fernandez away from being a direct -- the Chief should not be answering directly to Ed Hudak (sic). The Chief should be answering directly to the City Manager.

Commissioner Mena: That's -- okay.

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

Commissioner Mena: I just want to be clear on...

Commissioner Lago: Yeah.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: So, I have a presentation on this issue, if the Commission would like it. If they want to postpone...

Commissioner Lago: Madam City Manager...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Of course.

Commissioner Lago: Let us have a conversation amongst the Commission, and then you can give your comments at the end.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah. Go ahead, Commissioner Mena -- Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, if it's okay with you, Mr. Mayor. So, your overall theme -- you know, what I saw when you put the boil on there, I thought it was going to be more inflammatory in nature. It's actually kind of funny the way you phrased it. And I -- you know, and I agree with the theme -- what your request is, that they all got to work together. I mean, I don't think any of us up here can deny that. So, yeah, I'm fully supportive of that. I'm fully supportive of them getting it together and absolutely having that conversation and try to work it out and for the three of them to come out and say that they are satisfied with what that relationship is. So, the overall theme of that, I completely agree with. You know, I just -- to put it in some context -- because I try to think about what's going on here in sort of the way I see it in my private side of life. You know, I oversee about 30 attorneys and I have a partner that I work with that we have to have clear direction. If I give one task to one of those attorneys and my partner gives a different task, then that person doesn't know what to do. And, I think that's a little bit of the problem that we've fallen into here in the City. And, I really think it's the fault of this own Commission. I think the biggest problem that we need to rectify here is if there is any kind -- there's always going to be disagreements. This is a big organization. We're all never going to fully agree on anything, but we're always going to fully agree that we want to keep this City moving forward in a positive fashion. We just really need to be careful that we are not

empowering the situation where there are many different voices. And, I think what the Mayor is proposing makes sense because I think why we've got into this situation, even though crime is lower than it's ever been -- you know, I've said it before and I'll say it -- and I really think it's because of the competition that we've had between Frank Fernandez and Ed Hudak trying to outdo each other, and really, the City's benefited from that in the crime numbers. And, what's happened is by having not a central point of focus of communication of who the leadership is causing -- has caused this problem. And, I don't think there's any ill intent by the different people that are jockeying to have -- to be that voice at all. I don't think there are any bad guys in this at all. I just think that everyone has a different agenda and has a different goal. So, Mr. Mayor, to your point, your goal, you brought it up, you know, I'm fully supportive of that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, them getting together and absolutely agreeing on what is the right path moving forward. But I think us, as a Commission, just got to keep that in mind that if we are empowering people that are not going through the way that this government has been set up, it's going to continue to cause problems.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have tried -- I'm sorry.

Commissioner Lago: Go ahead.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have tried in the past to issue instructions, to do whatever. This is a way for them to meet and solve the problem and come here and say we did solve it or we can't solve it, and then we will take a step further. But...

Vice Mayor Quesada: You know what I would like to do, if it's okay? And, we did this once before -- I think I was the one who appointed it -- to have a Commission liaison at that meeting. And I would suggest for it to be Commissioner Mena. Just think about it. It doesn't have to

happen at that meeting -- to have a -- one of the elected officials present at that meeting and that conversation.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'd like to have that meeting today, now. Go ahead, Commissioner Mena.

Commissioner Lago: Can I just add one thing?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Commissioner Lago: I'm sorry to interrupt you. I think it's a great idea by Vice Mayor Quesada, but I want to be careful we have...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It's my idea.

Commissioner Lago: Well, the appointment of Commissioner Mena to be the liaison. I think it's a great idea. We've done it before in the past and it's worked out when we've had major contentious issues here in the city. What I want to be careful of is just having another meeting, because how many meetings have we had?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no, no. That's why I say...

Commissioner Lago: I support you on this. I support -- but I want to put it on the record -- I want to put it on the record how many meetings have we already had? I think it's been about four meetings between the CM, the ACM, and the Chief of Police.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I have met with the City Manager...

Commissioner Lago: And I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: A half a dozen times.

Commissioner Lago: And, I just -- I don't want to just have another meeting because don't forget, we're going to be gone for an entire month now.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And that's why I want, after this discussion is finished, if you approve, for them to meet in my office, in a neutral place, and come up with a solution for this, whether it takes 15 minutes or half an hour or they say we can't reach a solution. But I want it done today, because this is a huge boil in the forehead of Coral Gables, and we have to get rid of it. We have a wonderful city, wonderful Commissioners, all ethical, notwithstanding some -- an accusation today. Commissioner Keon.

Commissioner Keon: No, I support you and I agree with you also. And I truly believe that we should, as an elected body, set policy and stay out of personnel issues in large part. There may become a time when there is a role for us within the personnel issues, but I think, largely, that is the domain of a manager, regardless of who that manager is. In this City, for as long as I can remember -- and I've been here a long time -- the police chief has always reported to an Assistant City Manager, always, so that's not a change. The difference is that now you have an Assistant City Manager who has knowledge of the subject. That is different than maybe what it had been before. That's also true of Peter Iglesias as an Assistant City Manager and the departments that report to him. He has knowledge of those...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Can I...

Commissioner Keon: Great knowledge of those. So, I think that that...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Since my time...

Commissioner Keon: Is important...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Since my time here many years ago...

Commissioner Keon: Yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Before you were here...

Commissioner Keon: No, I'm talking about before...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no, no...

Commissioner Keon: Just a memory, yeah.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The Chief of Police has reported to David Brown or has reported to an Assistant City Manager.

Commissioner Keon: He has reported to an Assistant City Manager. But -- so, I mean...

Commissioner Lago: Not to the Man -- not to Assistant City Manager, to the Manager.

Commissioner Keon: Yes, he has reported...

Commissioner Lago: No, but you said the Assistant City Manager.

Commissioner Keon: He has reported -- they have reported to an Assistant City Manager.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Mr. Mayor, correct my recollection.

Commissioner Lago: That's what I want.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Is -- no, no. Hold on a second because I -- I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I just wanted to clarify this. My understanding has always been -- even when I was working for Commissioner Kerdyk, back in the day, was that there was an Assistant City Manager overseeing those departments as well. So, each one of the City Managers oversees a different group of departments...

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Vice Mayor Quesada: So, maybe there wasn't as much interaction with that Assistant City Manager, but technically, it was allowed, so...

Commissioner Mena: It wasn't a sworn officer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner...

Commissioner Keon: No.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, it wasn't a sworn officer.

Commissioner Mena: That's the difference.

Commissioner Keon: No. Well...

Commissioner Mena: It wasn't a sworn officer.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Commissioner -- Vice Mayor.

Commissioner Keon: But. the difference is now you have people that have knowledge of -- or subject matter knowledge. Whether that's good or bad, you know, that's a decision that the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Respectfully...

Commissioner Keon: City Manager has made. I really...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Respectfully...

Commissioner Keon: But what I do ask, Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: This is exactly what I -- the type of discussion that I don't want to have.

Commissioner Keon: Okay, but...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I want them to have it...

Commissioner Keon: I do.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And then come back...

Commissioner Keon: But that's why I'm saying to you, I support what you have to say, but I also would ask and we should expect that every time something doesn't go the way someone wants it, that, you know, a benefactor isn't found that puts \$250,000 into a -- and hires a political strategist and creates a, you know, uproar in the City when things don't go the way that an individual wants them to go.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Precisely.

Commissioner Keon: That needs to stop. That politics needs to stop.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam...

Commissioner Keon: And things need to be decided in a civil manner, through an administrative process.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Madam City Commissioner, I -- that's exactly what I'm calling for. And if there's...

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Objections...

Commissioner Keon: And I do. I -- that's -- I support you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: If there's no objection, we will adjourn the meeting for ten minutes for...

Commissioner Mena: Can I -- can I say something?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, of course. And you will be a part of this.

Commissioner Mena: Thank you. We can't stay out of this personnel issue.

Commissioner Keon: We can.

Commissioner Mena: We just can't.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Precisely.

Commissioner Mena: No, we can't. We can't any longer.

Commissioner Keon: We can.

Commissioner Mena: It's been something that's been festering for some time now and I agree with you in principle. I don't want to get involved in personnel issues. But obviously, this has reached a point where we don't have a choice.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have to do (INAUDIBLE)

Commissioner Mena: And so, I agree with the Mayor's comments. I understand there have been various meetings already, but I think the point really that you're trying to make is we need a conclusion to those meetings and we need to see results and suggested and fundamental and tangible changes, not just we're going to work together. What are we going to do differently to make this work? I understand the point that Vice Mayor Quesada was making about sort of the competition, but I don't agree on that point in the sense that I think it's a very precarious situation with a lot of risks when you have people, as Commissioner Lago described, who -- some people are loyal to one person and some people are loyal to the other person. You hear about all the insubordination. That's not a good situation for the...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It isn't.

Commissioner Mena: Police Department. We're thankful that we have great people in our police department who, nevertheless, have kept our community safe and done an outstanding job of doing what is their principal job, and I think we can't lose sight of that in the midst of all this. But I also think we need to be realistic. And you know, I hear what Commissioner Lago's saying. We've had a lot of discussions on this, and I'm going to be perfectly clear. I think what

he's suggesting needs to be part of the conversation that the Mayor's asking for and we need to at least discuss that possibility.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah, let's...

Commissioner Mena: So, come back to us with real tangible changes, no later than the next meeting.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no. Let's do it today.

Commissioner Mena: Sure.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's do it today. We can't -- next meeting is a month. Let's do it today. We have -- we're being televised. Let's do it today. And if you stand up and lead, I hope the City Manager, the Assistant City Manager and the Chief follow you to my office and you can meet there.

Commissioner Mena: I'm happy to be the one who does it, because I was nominated by Vice Mayor Quesada.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You volunteered, and you will be known...

Commissioner Mena: But I'm going to be perfectly honest with you. You're the Mayor, and I think if anybody should be in that meeting...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no, no.

Commissioner Mena: It should be you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think...

Commissioner Mena: But I will do it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think...

Commissioner Mena: I will do it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You will do it and you will be known forever in the City as -- forever as Michael Mena, the boil slayer.

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Please...

City Attorney Ramos: Asking for Commissioner Mena to be the delegee for purpose of this meeting...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

City Attorney Ramos: I'm asking for a vote; please, to delegate him as such.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah. Let me just clarify what I was thinking is -- what I don't want as -- and I believe that they've met before, and I just don't want that conversation to be stagnant and there could be a feeling of that. It's really just, you know, sort of pushing the conversation. Or maybe you give them ten minutes on their own and then you go in after that. I mean, you can figure that out. But that's sort of the idea that I've had in mind. We've done this once before. I know there of us have done this once before, where we had a complex real estate development

project and we had nominated Commissioner Lago and we thought it was a situation that couldn't be resolved, and it actually worked out perfectly.

Commissioner Lago: That took -- but that took ten meetings.

Vice Mayor Quesada: It took -- well, it's...

Commissioner Lago: I'm just saying.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yeah, that should...

Commissioner Lago: It took ten meetings.

Vice Mayor Quesada: But it was...

Commissioner Lago: It took a while.

Vice Mayor Quesada: A situation that it was a quagmire for everyone involved and it worked out great. And, I think it was because they had a Commissioner in the room. Sometimes pushing, something just listening, just letting them...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Perfect.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Know and then...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: All those in favor of having Commissioner Mena...

Vice Mayor Quesada: I'll make the motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Be present...

City Attorney Ramos: You made the motion. Do we have a second?

Commissioner Lago: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: All those in favor?

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Opposed?

Commissioner Keon: I -- well, I...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Commissioner Keon: Would rather see Commissioner Quesada in there because of his length of service and his knowledge on this Commission and his familiarity...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And we appointed Commissioner Mena.

Commissioner Keon: With the facts. But you know what, that's -- I don't -- it makes no difference to me, actually.

Commissioner Lago: I'm more than willing to put myself in that meeting, if anybody -- I've had...

Commissioner Keon: I don't want to...

Commissioner Lago: Five years...

Commissioner Keon: Be in that meeting, so I can tell you...

Commissioner Lago: I've had five years of service.

Commissioner Keon: Right now, I don't want to be in the meeting, so...

Commissioner Lago: Well, I've had five years of service.

Commissioner Keon: So, I would...

Commissioner Lago: We have -- I have almost 40 employees.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I do, too, and you know...

Commissioner Lago: I understand how hierarchy works. This is not that difficult, and we should be able to...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Mr. Mayor...

Commissioner Lago: I'm fascinated...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I would like...

Commissioner Lago: How this is a...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Realistically...

Commissioner Lago: I'm fascinated how this is an amusing topic when we're basically dealing with probably one of the most serious issues this city has dealt with...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It is.

Commissioner Lago: In a long time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It is. And we...

Commissioner Lago: You know.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Some of us have been -- have taken a (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Lago: This is serious. This is a serious issue that needs to be dealt with today.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Mr. Mayor...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Please.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Realistically...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Quesada: They can start that conversation, but I think, realistically, we all know that in ten minutes doesn't necessarily mean they'll...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay. Then maybe...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Resolve much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Give them 20 minutes or 15 minutes or...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Maybe they set an outline or an agenda or...

Commissioner Mena: We need...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Some points.

Commissioner Mena: Guys, guys, listen. We need to get...

Commissioner Keon: It's not (INAUDIBLE)...

Commissioner Mena: We, as a body, need to give direction to the situation. I'm going to walk into a room and say what? Say, Chief Hudak, go out there and say that you're going to work with them no matter what?

Commissioner Keon: Right.

Commissioner Mena: I don't know if he's willing...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no, no.

Commissioner Mena: To say that or not.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, no.

Commissioner Mena: What am I going to say to them? So, we need to have a real conversation and give them direction. What do we want them to come out of the meeting with?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We want them to come out -- I said it. We want them to come out of the meeting saying we will work together and my issues are one, two, three, four and they have been satisfied or they haven't been satisfied and -- but I can work with the ones that have been satisfied or I can't work with the ones that, you know, they want. That's what we want. And, I can't tell you what the issues are because I know what some of the issues are. And you're a lawyer. You have experience. Please guide this...

Commissioner Keon: Don't negotiate.

City Attorney Ramos: Mr. Clerk did you...

Vice Mayor Quesada: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: Record the vote?

Vice Mayor Quesada: Wait, Commissioner Mena, the way I would phrase what...

City Clerk Foeman: Yes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: The goal is of the meeting is identify what are the true detailed sticking points...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And work them through.

Vice Mayor Quesada: And if they can be resolved or not.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yeah.

Commissioner Mena: Alright.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Because...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Quesada: Your feelings coming out of it are going to help us determine what that right direction is.

Commissioner Mena: Okay.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Go ahead. Leave.

Commissioner Keon: Go.

Commissioner Mena: Oh, well, then let's take a break.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's take a break. Chief, Madam City Manager, meet in my office.

(DISCUSSION CONTINUED)

Mayor Valdez-Fauli; Commissioner Mena, the floor is yours.

Vice Mayor Quesada: The floor is yours.

Commissioner Mena: Okay, so...

Commissioner Lago: Put the extra lights on you.

Commissioner Mena: I'm not sure how many -- how long we were gone. I guess...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Like two and a half hours.

Commissioner Mena: Maybe two and a half hours.

Commissioner Keon: Fifteen minutes.

Vice Mayor Quesada: It was about ten minutes.

Commissioner Mena: There were no breaks, so we were in there the whole time talking.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright.

Commissioner Mena: I think we had a very productive dialogue. I understand that there have been how many prior meetings recently, Madam City...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Four.

Commissioner Mena: Four prior meetings. I was told by the people in the room, all of them, that this was a more productive dialogue than some of those prior dialogues, so I think it was a productive exercise. We sat down -- and when I'm done, you know, setting forth some of the things that we discussed, I've asked both the City Manager and Chief Hudak to speak as well, because I think it's important that everybody hear from them. But here's where -- what we came up with for now. Chief Hudak and Assistant City Manager Frank Fernandez are going to sit down together and they're going to develop a very clear and precise outline of their roles and responsibilities, which they haven't actually done in the past. Obviously, they have an idea of

what those are, but they want to really sort of clarify where the lines are and where they end. And before I even get into that, I think it's important to say the following. One of the key things that came out of this is that there are clearly trust issues here, and we identified some of those and spoke about them in a very open and honest fashion. And, we've identified the fact that they need to be addressed and there's going to be some work to do here by everybody involved. They've both told me -- and I don't want to put words in their mouths -- they'll speak for themselves -- that based on the discussion we had, that they're committed to putting their best effort forward to try to overcome some of those issues and to move on from what's happened in the past because things have happened in the past. So, in the spirit of that, they've agreed to sit down and really come up with a clear, written defined roles and responsibilities between the two of them, so everybody's clear on that and so there's no sort of rumors about people in the department don't know who they're supposed to talk to about A or B. It will be clear, and it will be evolving. If there's something that somebody thinks should be added to it, we'll -- it'll come back to us and we'll have an opportunity, obviously, to chime in on that. They had already discussed in prior meetings -- but I wrote it down anyways, the fact that Assistant City Manager Fernandez's office is being moved to a different floor within the building, just so that everybody has some space and there's a little more clarity about, you know, what's going on there right now. They sit right next to each other, and we think that'll help a little bit as well. We talked about -- and actually, this came suggested separately by both Assistant City Manager Fernandez and Chief Hudak, but I think at the end, by Chief Hudak, about what was described as a climate survey. And, the idea being there's different perceptions about how people in the department feel about this arrangement. And, rather than relying on what people may have said to either one of them in passing or over the course of the last three years, they want to bring in an outside consultant to take an actual survey of the people in the department -- anonymous, obviously -- with a clear understanding that Chief Hudak will have input into that process and how it's executed, as of course, will the City Manager and Assistant City Manager, and that they'll report back to the Commission on some of the things that come out of that, I believe, with respect to this underlying issue. We also talked about the fact that -- because we thought it was a productive dialogue -- that we should keep it going and that, apparently, I should be present.

And so, we're going to agree to continue to sit down periodically and have me report back to the four of you. Depending on the timing of that, I can either do that in written format, in a memorandum, or at a meeting, depending on -- you know, now in the summer, there's only a meeting once a month, so it's a little trickier.

Commissioner Lago: Whatever's easier for you.

Commissioner Mena: No, but I think this is something that we all have to be a part of, so I want to make sure that you guys have all the information. So, we're going to agree to continue meeting regularly, and we'll see whether that's once a week or once a month, but to continue this dialogue because it was a productive dialogue. And, I have to say I genuinely came out of it with the belief that -- and this is a belief that I have for the first time in a while -- that everybody in the room wants to make this work. And I went in there, frankly, skeptical that that would be my takeaway. So, I think there was some really honest emotional discussion between everybody involved about some of the things that have happened in the past and the fact that we need to move forward. And so -- and the last thing I said to them is, you know, if people in town walk out of here thinking that Chief Hudak came up here and said something, because he was pressured to or forced to or because it's expected of him, I told him that's absolutely not the case. I would like him to come up in a moment and speak and say whatever he thinks. And if he wants to corroborate what I just said as what we talked about, but if he has some other feeling, he can say that too. But, people need to believe -- because it's the truth -- that based on the discussion we just had, he's willing to buy into trying to make things work, while continuing to sit down and talk about it, because this is not the type of thing that gets solved in a two-and-a-half hour meeting, and we all understand that. So, that's the gist of what we discussed and what we ultimately came up with at the end of the meeting. I'd like to give Chief Hudak an opportunity to come up and say something, and then, obviously, the City Manager as well.

Police Chief Hudak: One thing we unanimously agreed on that I was the boil, so I appreciate the Mayor. I had no idea what the boil was about until you gave...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: No, you're not the boil.

Police Chief Hudak: No, no, I know.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The boil is...

Police Chief Hudak: Listen, I have said this all along, and I've been -- for the 30 years and half of which I've been in front of you; this is the checks and balances of government. Sometimes it's not pretty. Sometimes it's ugly. But sometimes it is what we are supposed to be about. We have had a very productive meeting today. I got to say exactly what I felt, how I felt about certain things and what I think we need to do, both myself, the Director of Public Safety, the City Manager on my opinion to my bosses of what's going to make our department continue to do the great things it has since you all put me here and we continue to transition through. So, there's a lot of things said. I understand the passion on both sides of it. Police work and this department is very much of it. There are some things that have been said or attributed to me behind the scenes that is not necessarily the case. I think all of you know me. If I have something to say to you, I'm going to shoot straight. I think the Manager knows that. I know Frank knows that, and we will continue to go through the process. Again, at the end of the day, my position has been this is how we have structured our city between you all, the Manager. I've said before, I work for Frank Fernandez. I work for the City Manager. I'm responsible and accountable to all of you, and I have bought into this process of what you all have established to move forward, and I do appreciate the fact that Commissioner Mena sat down with us. And, I do believe -- I think we need to be very open and honest with ourselves to get better both as leaders, as well as for our employees. My anger and frustration that has come up -- and we've talked about this -- has been a disservice to what I've perceived to be to some of our employees, but that's kind of why I got into this job anyway. And you know, so I think we're working through that and I applaud the Commission for hearing out the women from the last time. We did have a conversation for the first time today about my reprimand, so we'll continue to work on that as far as discussions

going forward. Prior to today, we haven't had that discussion. So, I think we both understand the perspective of where we were coming from and my not addressing issues as well as some of the issues that were addressed by the Manager and my thoughts on it. So, I think it was a positive step. I don't think we're at the end, but I do -- I am optimistic that we can, one way or the other, work out where we're at. So, thank you.

Commissioner Mena: Thank you, Chief.

Commissioner Keon: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you, Chief. And you're not the boil.

Commissioner Mena: Madam City Manager.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Absolutely. And thank you, Chief Hudak, for the honesty and the candidness. Thank you, Director Fernandez -- Assistant City Manager for your commitment and your input in this. And, a lot of the passion was actually Commissioner Mena commented about how the good relationship that the two of them have and that I need to work better at a relationship with the Chief, and I have committed to doing that. And, I have also committed to giving my 100 percent on moving this process forward, because I believe in the productive results that will be able to be accomplished as a result of that. And I thanked Commissioner Mena for staying with it, because that will help us evolve to a concluded end. So, with that, I am committed to moving forward and I look forward to our next work that needs to be done.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And I want to thank everybody concerned, especially Commissioner Mena, who was thrust into this. I'm not sure you volunteered, but you were thrust into this by the Vice Mayor. And I really want to thank you, because this has been a festering issue in the City of Coral Gables and we have some very, very valuable people here. The Chief is trusted by

the residents and that is the most important factor in public safety. Yes, we can hire -- we can get the crooks and we can get the evildoers, but confidence in our police department as personified and as led by a chief is the most important part in our city feeling safe. And City Manager, I think she's a great city manager, and I look forward to these conversations continuing, as well as with Frank Fernandez, who has done a superb job in enhancing our public safety. I want to thank everybody concerned for making an effort, for talking, and especially, for Commissioner Mena. I'll get you a -- next time, a swab with alcohol so that we can (INAUDIBLE). Thank you very much, and we'll go on to the next.

Commissioner Keon: Yeah, blessed be the peacemaker.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Blessed be the peacemaker. Thank you very, very much. And we will take a 40-minute break, and we'll be back at 1:30. Thank you.