

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-1
January 26, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Jorge Fors

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Assistant City Attorney, Stephanie Throckmorton

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-1– [Start: 10:37 a.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission amending Ordinance 2015-17, as amended, to waive City permit fees for certain green and energy efficient improvements to certain residential properties. (Sponsored by Vice Mayor Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright, G-1, Commissioner Lago the next five are yours.

City Attorney Ramos: G-1 is a Resolution of the City Commission amending Ordinance 2015-17, as amended, to waive City permit fees for certain green and energy efficient improvements to certain residential properties. Ms. Throckmorton is available or Vice Mayor, if you wish for her to present the item.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes, she’s great, please. Ms. Throckmorton, how are you? Good morning. Thank you, first off to staff and also, I want to thank the residents. I had two residents in particular

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that came and spoke to me about this as a possibility. Basically, calling the question, and when I say calling the question, they asked me how committed are we as a city to addressing issues with sea level rise, sustainability and the environment. I want to thank the Manager's office, Mr. Santamaria, the Manager, the City Attorney, our Sustainability team for working on this so quickly, as always very responsive and I'm grateful for your attention. Madam Assistant City Attorney, please feel free to move forward.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: Thank you Commissioner. Mayor, Commissioners, this is an item that extends a waiver of City permit fees to additional green and environmentally friendly improvements to existing residential properties at the installation of certain water conservation devices, installation or replacement of LED lights and associated permit fees, installation of solar batteries, installation of insulation for existing uninsulated residences, improvements to sea walls to account for sea level rise and installation of drip irrigation systems and this goes along with the current waiver of city permit fees for installation of solar panels. So, this extends that waiver of city permit fees for those new improvements.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Just very briefly. I know the Mayor stepped out for one moment. I think this is a first step and the Manager and I were having a discussion, because obviously, we have to be very fiscally prudent right now in these tough difficult times. We did a deep dive with Suramy and her team, and I forgot to mention Suramy, I apologize for that, to really analyze and maybe Suramy wants to come up and talk a little bit about her efforts here, to really analyze how this will affect the bottom line of the city. This is a significant measure. You are talking about a few hundred thousand dollars that will go away from the General Fund that will not go into the General Fund, but we are making a commitment here, and this commitment is we are sending a message. We are sending a message to anybody who lives in our city right now that says, how serious is the City of Coral Gables about environmental stewardship? When you come to the city and you consider doing things that save water, that save electricity, and remodeling certain things in your home, we want to make sure its as easy as possible, its expedited and that the fees are minimized, so that you will consider entertaining these upgrades, which will not only benefit you reduce your electricity and water bill, but also help the environment with less consumption on our end. So, I want to start off with this legislation and see how it goes over the next year and then move into possibly window replacements and additional measures that will also impact the use of electricity and water consumption. But I think this is a good positive first step and then maybe we can amend it in the near future, depending on the significance the hit that we receive to our General Fund.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You make a motion?

Vice Mayor Lago: The motion is made. Thank you, Mayor.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Any comments? Will you call the roll please?

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Vice Mayor Lago: Again, I'd like to thank staff, our team, the two residents that came to me and talked to me about this a few months ago. Thank you for your commitment, I appreciate it. Thank you.