



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
February 25, 2020

ITEM TITLE:

A discussion regarding possible city-sponsorship of “La Feria de Abril” kick-off event to be held in May 2020. (Sponsored by Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli)

BRIEF HISTORY:

La Feria de Abril is one of the most significant festivals in Spain and takes place annually in Coral Gables’ sister city of Seville. The fair is known for its colorful decorative lanterns, striped tents, grand entrance way, horse and buggies and flamenco fashion. This traditional event began in 1847 as a cattle trading fair, but over the years it has become an internationally recognized celebration of flamenco, traditional Spanish food, and fun, often nominated as one of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO’s) intangible cultural heritage traditions.

On October 23, 2019, after an introduction made by the owner of La Dorada restaurant, the Economic Development Department met with Mr. David Padilla and Mr. Juan Tena regarding La Feria de Abril. Mr. Tena is the Managing Partner and Chief Communications Officer of RPZ Events and Mr. Padilla is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of the U.S. branch of Smart Libraries. At this meeting, Mr. Padilla and Mr. Tena discussed the idea of having La Feria de Abril on Giralda Plaza in Coral Gables and asked for the City’s support and financial sponsorship. The Economic Development Department gave the event organizers information about the City’s permitting process and requested a follow up meeting once a specific financial sponsorship was identified for the City’s consideration.

Subsequent meetings with staff and City administration occurred on January 17, 2020, January 30, 2020, and February 4, 2020. During these meetings, Mr. Padilla and Mr. Tena shared a revised presentation regarding the proposed La Feria de Abril event and requested a City sponsorship in the amount of \$284,000.00.

On February 11, 2020, La Feria de Abril was introduced to the City Commission by Mayor Valdes-Fauli. During the discussion, Commissioners asked about the event organizer’s experience, justification for the proposed budget, preparation of a schedule including milestones and tasks, and meetings with local stakeholders (i.e. Coral Gables BID and Chamber of Commerce). One of the major concerns from the Commission was the proposed timeframe for the event, with some expressing concerns regarding the schedule for organizing and implementing an event that could potentially become a signature project.

As a result of the discussions at the February 11th Commission Meeting, and after further discussions with staff, Mr. Padilla and Mr. Tena have revised their proposal and now wish to pursue a 2020 kick-off event to introduce La Feria de Abril to the City of Coral Gables, with a larger, festival-style event to take place in 2021.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 1. La Feria de Abril PowerPoint Presentation**
- 2. RPZ Events Presentation**
- 3. Smart Libraries Corporate Profile**
- 4. Mr. Juan Tena's biography**
- 5. Mr. David Padilla's biography**