

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-17
May 9, 2023
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Melissa Castro

Commissioner Ariel Fernandez

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Human Resources Director, Raquel Elejabarrieta

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-17

Discussion regarding the eliminating term limits for members of the Insurance and Risk Management Advisory Board. (Sponsored by Commissioner Fernandez)

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item G-17.

Commissioner Fernandez: G-17, Director Elejabarrieta is here. The Insurance and Risk Management Advisory Board has a very specific, I guess, target similar to the Board of Architects and it's hard to find people who are prepared. So, this came about in the conversation that we had about the need of maybe extending some of the term limits, because we would be losing two of our senior members of the board right now.

Mayor Lago: So, may I add something. I disagree with it. Do we have any boards at all in the city that we have the ability to have unlimited terms or extended terms, any boards?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes sir.

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*Agenda Item G-17 – Discussion regarding eliminating term limits for members
Of the Insurance and Risk Management Advisory Board*

[Date]

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Mayor Lago: Which boards are those?

City Clerk Urquia: Code Enforcement, Retirement, Construction Regulation.

City Attorney Suarez: I don't think its Construction Regulation, but...

City Clerk Urquia: No, Construction Regulation does.

City Attorney Suarez: It does. Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes.

Mayor Lago: What is the reason?

City Clerk Urquia: The Retirement Board because of the expertise of the people on those boards.

Mayor Lago: You know how many insurance professionals there are in South Florida? You know how many licensed architects there are in South Florida? Have you found that out? I did the research. There are 40,000 licensed insurance agents in South Florida. There are 2,000 registered architects, okay. You don't have to be a licensed insurance agent to be on this board, you don't, not a requirement. There is no license requirement. On the BOA there is a license requirement. So, anybody can sit on this board, anybody can sit on this board, because a license is not required. A person who works for an insurance company, a lawyer, a doctor, an engineer, an accountant, a person who you know can sit on that board. You don't have to be licensed. I would like for all boards to have mandatory requirements where people can serve for a certain time. That's it. Maybe the only one would be BOA, because only 2,000 registered architects.

Commissioner Fernandez: But that's more than enough.

Mayor Lago: I think that when you have tens of thousands of people who can serve on this board who are licensed, along with the requirements and not be licensed, I think what we're doing here, I don't think it looks right. I think we're doing favors for people who want to continue serving on a board, because their time is up and it's time to move on from that board. That's just my opinion, or why don't we make it so that, if we're going to be very restrictive on the time, we are going to allow people to serve indefinitely on these boards, then we can just make it requirements that they be licensed, or they'd have some sort of requirements on that. What do you think?

Commissioner Fernandez: Well, let's have her answer to the need.

Director Elejabarrieta: So, this is as you know, mostly for the property insurance. So, the city has a total insured value of over \$350 million. Specialization and the knowledge that you need for property insurance is not your typical insurance agent specializes in. We go out to the domestic market and the international market to obtain our insurance on the property side, and on the liability

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side, they are self-insured, so there's a little bit more complexity when it comes to that side. We do have two members that have been termed out and those are the two members that have the background, well, all of them have the background, right, but there are two members that are being termed out this year at the end of this month, who have some specialization and some information and the background among the city's property insurance program that would like to continue.

Mayor Lago: Let me ask you a question. Are all the members on that board licensed?

Director Elejabarrieta: I'm not sure what license...

Mayor Lago: There's only two people on that board that are licensed. So, everybody else is not licensed. There's an opportunity for people to go out and find people on that board who will serve on it. I have never heard in my ten years of being here that we can't find people for this board. I've heard that we can't find people for the BOA, that's an issue. You've never brought it to my attention to tell me that in insurance that we didn't have people that didn't want to serve on that board. I've had lines of people who have told me that they are willing to serve on the insurance board. I think we should be very careful when we extend people, because I have people who serve on boards who are terming out that I'm not renewing them or asking for an exception, because I think that we want to find new people to serve on boards and we want to circulate them on different boards. And if you have people that have been serving for 20 years, 30 years, I think it's time that they move on to a different board. The only board that I know that we've had any issues here, and I've been the longest serving Commissioner here is at the BOA. Mr. Manager, have you heard of any issues of people telling...

City Manager Iglesias: BOA is our most difficult board.

Mayor Lago: I haven't heard of an issue here. And by the way, when you talk about boards, I did my research on boards. We have 30-plus boards here in the city, a litany, and I've never had an issue finding somebody to serve on a board.

Commissioner Menendez: I just have a quick question for the City Attorney, since in my prior life I was an Assistant City Attorney and I know on some occasions in other places, I don't know about in this situation, with a four-fifths vote you can override certain different things within a code, within a Charter. Does that exist in this situation?

City Attorney Suarez: This provision regarding term limitation for board members does not provide for that. So, it would require a code change to just like we have certain boards the City Clerk listed that are exempt from that provision, we would require a code change to exempt this particular board.

Commissioner Menendez: Good to know. Thank you.

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City Clerk Urquia: Commissioner, we do that for residency requirements or if you're in the last year of your term and you want the board members term to coincide with yours if they started halfway, the Commission does have the power to do that, but however, not to start a new term when they've already exceeded.

City Attorney Suarez: Correct.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay. So, my two cents, because I have a board member on my board that's termed out, but they are still interested in participating with the board. They can always attend the meetings. They can always provide public comment and provide their input there and still be a valuable participant in the meeting and share their wealth of knowledge that they've gained with the rest of the board.

Commissioner Fernandez: Sorry, Madam Director.