

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Items H-4, F-12 thru F-15 are related**  
**April 14, 2026**  
**Public Safety Building, CMR**  
**2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Assistant City Manager, Carolina Vester**  
**Parks and Recreation Director, Fred Couceyro**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Steve Elmore**  
**Peter Izaguirre**

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Agenda Items H-4, F-12 thru F-15 are related

F-12: A Resolution of the City Commission directing staff to explore a league-based discount structure comparable to that of other golf facilities. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

F-13: A Resolution of the City Commission formally recognizing the City's ongoing relations with the Greenway Women's Golf Association, Inc. and the Coral Gables Women's Golf and Bridge Association, Inc. and directing staff to continue to set aside certain tee -times for members of those associations. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

F-14: A Resolution of the City Commission amending the Community Recreation Fee Schedule to provide for a Coral Gables Resident Senior Discount at Granada Golf Course. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

F-15: A Resolution of the City Commission amending the Community Recreation Fee Schedule to provide for a one-year Transition and Evaluation Program allowing the

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continuation of Annual Golf Memberships at the Granada Golf Course in place as of March 10, 2026; providing for updated rates; and providing for reporting of data at the conclusion of the one-year period. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

H-4: Update on the Coral Gables Golf & Country Club Golf Membership.

Mayor Lago: So, H-4 along with items F-11 through F-12 excuse me F12, F-13, F-14 and F15 all right.

Assistant City Manager Vester: Can we have the presentation up please.

Mayor Lago: Yes

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor. I have a statement I just want to clarify concerning golf. This discussion before the Commission today is ultimately about how we responsibly manage a public asset so that it remains accessible, sustainable for the entire community. Granada Golf course is a historic nine-hole municipal course with responsibilities to preserve it and ensure fair and consistent access to the current model without a balance. Small group of accounts for this account for disproportionate share of use, at the same time the broader public pays more and has less access to tee times. This is an equity issue it's also a management issue. The course is operating beyond sustainable levels. That increase where it raises maintenance costs and impacts overall conditions. The same time operating costs are increasing faster than revenues that creates ongoing pressure on the General Fund that is not sustainable. The Commission has adopted changes that address these issues directly. The annual round cap improves access and reduces overuse. It maintains member benefits including priority booking and discount to play, it also aligns with standard practices for municipal courses. Retaining the existing memberships would maintain the current imbalance, it would limit access for the users in conflict with the policy direction already established. There is also a need to formalize how outside groups use the course. Use of public assets should be structured consistently and tied to clear public benefit.

[Note: Audio difficulties]

Parks and Recreation Director:... for long-term sustainability but back on March 10<sup>th</sup> when we presented the fee structure, you see on the slide there, we increased the fees the main ones to look at that are discussed are our previous fee was \$22 for tee time and it was increased to \$30, and the non-resident tee time was \$28 to \$39. We tried to when we did our funds, we looked at the increases, and we looked at keeping that 30 percent non-resident premium for that. We do maintain a five-year schedule, but we did change this based on what we were looking at for our maintenance operation change. So, part of that fee proposal was adopted is we looked at the club membership. So breaking it down a little bit what we did is, we had a golf membership that was just golf, what we looked at if you looked at tying it in as we wanted to do with our phase two development when we presented our Country Club Management proposal a few years back, to start to combine those memberships. The Country Club it would be the membership would have all the Country Club

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benefits and then in terms of golf benefits you'd have a maximum of 30 complimentary rounds per year, that was with cart and then an additional five dollar discount each additional round played, and you would also have a seven-day priority tee time. With the current fees that were presented, it was \$921, the new adopted fee went to \$2,100 for residents, \$2,730 for non-residents. When you take out the Country Club value you can see what the net golf fee was, which was \$1,050 and \$1,380 for the non-residents, and then the couples' ones you can see there as well. That 1,050, if you look at the 30 complimentary rounds of what it's costs for a ride and save, which is including the cart, it kind of gets you there, and then you have the five dollar discount, and you have the priority tee time as well, and you have all of the different amenities of the Country Club, including discounts that are part of that with LeParc and everything else. When we were looking at this, we also looked at our round usage. So, in our round usage you can see there there's a lot of categories that are tied in with our fees, which is our normal resident, non-resident tee time; there's our twilight; our ride and save which includes the cart during the weekdays; then there's our member rounds and then there's our board and employee rounds. So if you look at what the average was in the last two fiscal years 24 and 25, our resident tee times made up 21,000 rounds, the non-resident was 4,000 rounds, and then you're looking at resident, twilight was 8,900, the ride and save resident was 9,900, so the majority of our rounds were the resident variety of the different categories. Our member rounds, which is of the 86 members average over the two years, approximately 16,278 rounds, and our board and employee comp rounds were 1,037. So, if you look at it, the chart to my left is looking at all the different categories and the resident tee time was the highest percentage of use, which was 31 percent, but then the next level was our member rounds, which were 23.6 of all the rounds were played by members. So, if you look at the chart to the right, all the paid tee times, twilight, junior, everything comprised about 74.9 percent; the member rounds were 23.6; and then you look at the final category board, employee's 1.5 percent. So, 86 members accounted for 16,278 rounds, which is close to 24 percent of total course usage. So, if you look at the revenue breakdown that we looked at, our average of the last two fiscal years revenue that we got from the memberships was 88,000, whereas the tee times and the different categories was 1.155 million, our revenue from our carts was 120,000, so there's our total. So you can see, you know, the annual in comparison and comparing that to the annual expenses, the expenses for just taking care of the grass, the maintenance part was 926, when we factor in all the other operating expenses which is the Pro Shop, the maintenance shop, all the different costs that we have and then the increase in costs that we have for Bright View and also the tee renovation projects. So you're looking at a significant increase where that 1.364 is not going to meet it. Now if you look at the sales revenue impact, which is what we're looking at, you know 84 percent is all the tee times; the golf memberships make up 6.5 percent of the revenue, which compares to 24 percent of the total rounds that are played, so you get 24 percent of the total rounds are played versus 6.5 percent of revenue. Our cart rentals are 8.9 percent of revenue. So, the membership has the lowest contributor on the chart of the city revenue, but it does have one quarter of the total course usage, so it's something that we have to look at. So, when you look at breaking that down further, the city golf membership costs per round, the average of the two years approximately \$5.41 per round when you factor in the total amount of rounds versus the members that we had. So, the members were averaging about \$5.41 per round to play a round of golf.

Mayor Lago: May I ask you a question, Mr. Director?

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Parks and Recreation Director: Yes sir.

Mayor Lago: So, I want to memorialize that \$5.41. Can you give me one example, one example of a golf course where people pay \$5 dollars a round.

Parks and Recreation Director: No. I'm not aware. I can't say.

Mayor Lago: How about \$10 dollars

Parks and Recreation Director: Not in south Florida that I know of.

Mayor Lago: You took my point; you took my point.

Parks and Recreation Director: Sorry, my apologies.

Mayor Lago: How much are we losing a year?

Parks and Recreation Director: Well, this coming year we'll lose close to \$600,000 with all of our new improvements and our new maintenance.

Mayor Lago: So, they're clamoring, rightfully so, it's a very important golf course, it's important facility, they're clamoring for increased maintenance increased quality, but we have an issue obviously with revenue. We had the same situation at Venetian Pool

Assistant City Manager Vester: Venetian Pool, yes.

Mayor Lago: We spent millions of dollars on renovations, what did we do? - we raised the rates. We still continue to prioritize the residents with lower rates, but we had to raise the rates

Parks and Recreation Director: Yep.

Mayor Lago: We had the same situation at the Coral Gables Country Club where certain members that I'm not going to mention what Coral Gables residents came here and said, you know, save the Di Donatos save the Di Donatos, let them stay. How much are we making a year on the gym memberships from the Coral Gables Country Club

City Manager Iglesias: \$50,000 Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Once we caught the Di Donatos stealing the computers out the back door. I received that phone call I was in New York in a meeting and our then City Attorney Miriam Ramos called us and said, or Cristina was there says, we just caught them stealing the computers out the back door, along with some wine, remember, am I correct or no.

City Manager Iglesias: You are correct Mayor.

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Mayor Lago: Okay they left. What were the Di Donatos doing in regards to the gym so that it could make it seem as if they were only making \$50,000 to pay the City of Coral Gables, what were they doing?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, what they were doing is they were leasing it to the nephew for \$50,000 and they had 1,200 to 1,300 members.

Mayor Lago: How much were they making a year>

City Manager Iglesias: \$1.2 to \$1.3 million.

Mayor Lago: How long was this going on for?

City Manager Iglesias: For years, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: We lost easily over 10 million dollars, okay. We had a long conversation, some members here in the Commission fought tooth and nail, said there was no way, no way that the little shop could afford to pay a reasonable rent, remember we talked about that, members of this Commission.

Assistant City Manager Vester: Yep.

Mayor Lago: How much are we making a month now on the on the little shop after the renovations that we pay for the city, taxpayers, who are here, they pay for it .

Assistant City Manager Vester: For LeParc café, we do about \$22 to \$24,000 a month.

Mayor Lago: Who makes that?

Assistant City Manager Vester: The city does, its a revenue share.

Mayor Lago: So, when you add the 20 let's say \$25,000 a month that's \$300,000 a year, plus the \$1.4 from the gym we're at \$1.7 million dollars of money that belongs to the residents. How much deferred maintenance was in the Coral Gables Country Club? How many millions would you say?

Assistant City Manager Vester: Save that for our last slide.

Mayor Lago: I'm jumping the gun, I apologize. So, my point is this, my point is this, trust me, I'm all for it. I don't golf, I don't golf, I have family members that golf that are part of this group, by the way, so I've heard at family dinner when they've told me, you know, can I have a conversation with you about this, trust me. I hear it, I understand it, but at the end of the day, we have to be fiduciaries on behalf of this community, we have to, especially now, you saw me do it right now

with the insurance. Let's not take that insurance and spend it on something else, let's put it away, why, because we're going to see a significant tax revenue reduction over the next two years because everybody's going to vote potentially in favor of a tax reduction Homestead. So, we'll be impacted. We don't know if it's going to be \$5 million, or it could be, how much, \$30 million, \$40 million, we don't know yet, we're waiting for the Governor. So, I want to be clear, because this has gone from a financial decision to an emotional decision and I understand this is important to everybody and I don't want to take golf away from anybody, but we have to also understand that we're losing millions of dollars here in this golf course, and we have to be very careful, very careful what we what we're doing. This is a decision that the Commission has to make together, cannot be politicized like the RTZ and like all the things that we politicize here, we have to be very careful very, careful what we do here, because the decisions that we do here like the COLA affects the city for the next 10 years, okay. Yes sir.

Assistant City Manager Vester: If we can have the slide back.

Parks and Recreation Director: So, as we were discussing so the average cost per round for the membership over the last two fiscal years approximately \$5.41 per round, in comparison to the publicly accessible tee-time cost per round, which was approximately \$22 and \$30.

Mayor Lago: Let me put it into context for you. Go to your app and ask to order a Starbucks coffee right now, right now, to have it delivered here, it's \$7 dollars, just think about that, \$7 dollars to order a Starbucks coffee and you drink that coffee in 30 minutes. How long does it take you to play a round of golf?

Parks and Recreation Director: Two hours for nine holes.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Parks and Recreation Director: So, there's also a discussion about the non-city membership. There are a few independent associations that are at the Granada Golf Course, there's three of them that that we found are the Granada Golf Association, the Greenway Women's Golf Association, and the Women's Golf and Bridge Club. These are associations that have had relationships with Granada Golf Course well beyond all of our service time here, 1960, 1964, 1936, and they do have varying numbers of members between 35 to 60. The member benefits, they are priority access to certain tee-times. They do pay their greens fees. A couple of the associations do use a conference room there. They collect dues and the dues are used for various expenses, in some cases handicap fees. We did ask all the associations, I did ask for all the information to look at what all the associations entail; the Granada Golf Association did tell us that they had over the years of collecting their money that they had donated over \$500,000 to different charitable organizations, so we did get that. We tried to look at and see if there was a formal agreement or a documented arrangement, we went through the City Clerk, and we did record searches. I asked all the

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associations to see if they had anything, maybe because this was long ago, but we really couldn't find anything formal, maybe there is something out there, but we couldn't find it.

Mayor Lago: So let me ask you a question, okay. You just saw me negotiate right now with Publix to the tune of one last minute negotiation to the tune of \$1.4 million dollars and that money is earmarked for a trust for Historic Preservation. I know for a fact that if I brought here to this Commission and I said, I'd like to earmark that money for a charity outside of the City of Coral Gables. I don't think I will get the support of the Commission, pretty sure I wouldn't. I don't think I'll get one vote here and that's okay and I expect that. Do we have any financials?- do we have any audited financials?- do we have any checks? So this organization runs a non-for-profit golf tournament or a non-for-profit event on a facility that's owned by the city that we maintained that we're losing \$600,000 dollars a year and then the money is diverted to charities outside the City of Coral Gables. I just want to understand and put that on the record to make sure that I'm correct because I'm concerned about that yes or no.

Parks and Recreation Director: We do not have any financial records at this time. We had asked for any records that they could provide us, so we haven't gotten any at this point.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We had a similar situation with the Coral Gables Garden Club and back of the napkin or someone's conversation for use of a room at the Biltmore Hotel. We finally memorialized it in writing and it didn't give you a right to have a room, it's if a room is available type of arrangement. You have to find some other space, but now it's in writing and there's an insurance requirement which never existed before, okay, and you know like a golf association that does good things for the community, so does the Garden Club and you know predominantly the things that it does is in the City of Coral Gables, but it also does some things outside the City of Coral Gables that are beneficial for the environment, for the schools, etc. I am going to have some questions for you regarding reserving time. I'm having a little fun here with the website just to give you a heads up on how to reserve time and a phone number to call and how far in advance you can you can reserve some time, but I'll reserve those questions for later.

Parks and Recreation Director: So, as we looked at the memberships and we tried to benchmark with comparable municipal courses, we came up with a few; Winter Park is one that is a nine hole course and we were looking at that as a comparison. You know and speaking with the director there they have a total rounds played at 50,000, which is significantly less than Granada, which is 68,000. They have 300 active members and those 300 active members they play 12,000 rounds, so they do have 24 percent of the rounds, but it's 300 members, so it's 300 membership rates and

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their charge is a little higher than what we had before the new adoption, so there's about 1300, so you have 300 of them take up 12,000 rounds. So, the rounds per member are significantly less. Briar Bay and Miami Beach, their models are more of a, they use the patron card, so there's different models, it's not an unlimited round model that we looked at. So, the unlimited round model seems to be a bit of an outlier unless you go into country club different setups that are more private courses. So, I'm looking at the model scenario Granada right now for the members. It has a high capacity share and a high consumption; high amount of rounds per member and also it's a pretty high percentage; whereas for instance Briar Bay has a high percentage, but it's a low number of rounds per member; the same with Winter Park, Miami Beach is kind of low on both sides and that's using the patron card. So what we're trying to do with the 30 round cap is trying to eliminate some of that use, you know reclaim some of that member held capacity, increase the public access, because it's not all member unlimited rounds, we can expand the membership base, and we can also look at its reduced where we can lower those rounds down from that 68,000. Our current usage with 86 members it's 189 rounds per member with that 24.6 capacity impact, with the existing member count of 86 and 30 rounds per member, it would be 25, 80 total member rounds, and then if you do a balance model with 300 members at the 30 rounds per member that's 9,000 rounds, so that's 13.6 percent capacity, it lowers your capacity sum. If you go to a full capacity model of 500 members and you do the 30 rounds per member that brings you back up to 15,000 rounds which is 22.6. So, the member accounts for almost a quarter of the usage, so those 86 members do use the course at a much higher rate. When we were looking at what we were looking at recommended rounds, we were looking at that 50,000 annual rounds. I did -- we did speak with a consultant from the National Golf Foundation, who had done some work on Granada previously and you know we came back to him to look at, are we on the right track here, and you know we did get a letter from him as after we looked at all the information for a nine hole course, especially of our size, anything over 50,000 rounds would signify overuse and would really result in deterioration of the course. When we shared those findings with Brightview, who is our new maintenance provider, they confirmed the recommendation, and they hold National Golf Foundation in the highest regard as the authority and that's what they're going to follow. So that's where we are with those, with that number, that's where we got to that number. So based on that and the industry standards we're exceeding those standards by about 36 percent and that comes into a lot of things. declining turf conditions. Our last major renovation was 12 years ago. It results in higher maintenance costs to obviously reduce player experience if the course is not in the condition that we can, and deterioration accelerates. As we hit that 67, 68, 70,000, 70,000 rounds, it does accumulate, the discussion as well. Everything was going well, but it accumulates, time after time after time, when you start hitting that number, you start looking at the conditions; and then our last thing as we've talked about is the equity. We have a small group that makes up 25 almost 25 percent of course usage. So our financial reality -- approximately \$1.33 million - was our total revenue in FY25. What we're looking at for our cost, which is not only the maintenance, but it's the whole grounds, the operation of it all, and our improvements that we're trying to do on

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with tee renovations, we're looking at approximately \$1.95 million, that's not going to cover, we're not going to cover what we have and we have to look at how we move forward with the revenue generation and if we have the majority of our rounds or not unlimited \$5 dollars around then we have the ability to have further revenue generation. So we were talking about earlier, this is the capital picture of what we're looking at now and into the future for that whole area, which is the Country Club facility, the golf course facility, and the tennis facility, which makes up that entire campus. Up to date, we have already had \$5,896,572.06, that's already invested in what we have to date in those different projects. We have a bunch of investments in queue, both at the Country Club facility, the golf course, and the tennis facility, that's an additional \$7.4 million dollars; and then in looking at future capital investment needs, we're looking at in the future up to \$15.5 million dollars. So total capital city investment when it's all said and done will be \$28.8 million dollars and that includes a lot of different things, whether it's the country club you're looking at the pool, the windows, you're going to have to do future air conditioning issues, the tennis facility is going to need most likely a new building eventually, and you know the stuff at the golf course where we're looking at which, we have to fix the entire maintenance barn, we're still working on the shelters, we got some other grounds and we're going to have some other projects. So that is a complete picture of what we presented in terms of the golf course. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Well, we got you another 1.4 today. Every little bit counts.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Mayor. Before you sit down.

Mayor Lago: Yes ma'am.

Vice Mayor Anderson: because I reserve some questions, but of course it has to be a historic facility that you're doing maintenance on

Assistant City Manager Vester: And it is.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, it is, it is. Regarding reserving time. I see that there is a phone number that can be called, I haven't tried to call it, so it asked staff to test it, so folks that don't know how to use these fancy phones or have it programmed on their flip phone to call to reserve tee times. My real question goes into how far in advance you can reserve the time and pay for the time, because if I wanted to reserve a time for Monday right now, next Monday, I can't, okay, you can't, and that makes it difficult for people to plan.

Parks and Recreation Director: So, we have a five-day priority, so it's a five-day advanced tee time that's what you can do. Now with the new membership proposal for those members, they would get seven-day priority so you...

[Note for the record: Audio difficulties]

Parks and Recreation Director: So yeah, the new membership would give you the seven days priority, so the members could get those extra two days that's what we tied in to add value to that membership.

Vice Mayor Anderson: What kind of members are we talking about?

Parks and Recreation Director: The membership that was adopted at the last which was the new golf course membership that was the 30 rounds, and it had a seven-day priority.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay, so if we're talking about you know the historic individuals that have been part of the 86 or the Women's Club, the two different women's clubs, you know, how can they reserve in advance to be able to have if they want Monday's tee times. We have four people together or we have two people together and we want to reserve this time, how far in advance can they reserve a time?

Parks and Recreation Director: Well, currently those tee times are reserved for them; the Monday, the Friday, and the Saturday and Sunday for those three associations we discussed. They're always set, so they have those tee times, they don't have to...yeah, so those are set.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I'm trying to understand why we have a disagreement here. If they're set why do we have a disagreement.

Assistant City Manager Vester: So, they serve almost like a room block, right, these associations, if we're correctly speaking about the three associations, they have a room block that's exclusive to the members of that association. So, a patron that might want to call in advance or reserve in advance they never have the ability to hit any of those times because they have a permanent room block.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay, so if I'm a member and I don't play golf nor do I have the time if I wanted to right now to play golf or pickleball or any of those things and I want to plan for next week and I'm a member, okay, I can reserve the time, correct.

Assistant City Manager Vester: With the new restructured membership one of the benefits was the seven days in advance priority, so they can actually be almost like a priority bracket before and general public could go and play.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay, and if these groups right now wanted to reserve the time, what would they have to do?

Assistant City Manager Vester: If they do not get the room block from the association benefit you're saying.

Parks and Recreation Director: Currently they have it set, it's already in the books. If that was different then they would have to wait for the five days, but right now those days, those tee times are already attributed to those associations and they're in place they're always in place.

Assistant City Manager Vester: I'll give you an example from the Biltmore when we spoke to the Biltmore staff, they had at one point a couple of associations and part of the benefit of having those associations was to garner a certain demographic player like a women's group when there were not many female players. Their business model has also changed and what they have done is for those members they've had the option to fold in to become an actual member, right, so not an association member, but a golf member so that they can have access to some of those benefits.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay, so is that what the staff is proposing that they be that these groups be folded into membership.

Assistant City Manager Vester: Well, the restructuring that was presented at the last Commission was basically there was no more associations as there's what we have found staff there is no documentation of a relationship, a formal relationship, so if the Commission wishes to look at a formal relationship staff can explore that, but right now there is no formal relationship with essence we were no longer honoring those past benefits.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay and the past benefits were what, the block time.

Assistant City Manager Vester: A block time for different brackets for different associations, but basically Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday mornings no general member of the public ever had the opportunity to play and that's something I want to voice because there's two sides of every coin and I've had residents reach out and say, what is going on here, why can I never play in the mornings. So that's a comment that came up.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Also, the planning aspect of it, you're not able to do it on the website, are you able to do it telephonically?

Assistant City Manager Vester: You can make a reservation over the phone, reach the Pro Shop right now. Right now, just to set clear the staff that manages the Pro Shop is not Community Recreation or city staff that is part of an agreement with the Biltmore, so the Pro Shop staff is staffed by the Biltmore, and they have their software both POS and reservation software. Their reservation software does not require payment so you can go online and reserve without making a payment or you can call the Pro Shop and make a reservation within the allowable time and then you pay when you arrive at the Pro Shop, unless you are paying previously paid membership user you didn't pay for the greens fee or the tee time.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So to block a time I don't have to pay.

Assistant City Manager Vester: Nope, not right now.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Not right now. I don't know if that's equitable though for individuals. I think you should have to pay because there's going to be times when people cannot show up, real concerned about the wear and tear on the course because of the over usage. I'm very concerned about the amount of deficit that we're running because it's not equitable to residents in general but also would like to see for seniors etc. that we offer something, you know, especially those that have issues with affordability. Has staff looked at that?

Assistant City Manager Vester: What was presented at the last meeting was, you know we looked at both the military, active military and veterans as a discount, because that was proposed. Generally the demographic is older, we have older players on the golf course, so typically you don't have a senior discount. We can explore if you want to benchmark other facilities, we could do that. Primarily we looked at having the resident/non-resident rate and of course what was added at the last meeting was the military and veterans discount.

Vice Mayor Anderson: All right. Go ahead.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, I had a lengthy conversation yesterday with the ACM and the City Manager. I wanted to see if we could find a middle ground that still allows for us to cover our expenses as a city, but offers a package or a membership for the people who have been part of these groups for an extended period of time and what I explained to staff was, and it was just a numbers game. If you're getting 30 rounds for the \$2,100 and you're getting the additional round of \$25, in essence 100 rounds is going to cost you \$38.75 around, which is much more than you just go and pay the \$30 for a regular round of golf. So in talking to the Manager and the ACM we came up with a potential solution which would be a golf membership, like is offered at Riviera. Riviera has golf only memberships for their club. This would be a golf only membership that would give you 100 rounds of golf, so it's not the 189 it's 100 rounds of golf, in essence you're probably playing two rounds a week because people travel, and it would be a \$2,500 dollar membership. So you're paying \$2,500 for the 100 rounds, you're in essence playing \$25 a round, so you are getting a benefit for being a member. We're reducing the number of rounds that are being played and this would be specifically for the people that are being affected by these rate hikes, so the ones who are members of these organizations at the current moment. I think if we're forcing people to join the Country Club in order to get a membership, the 30 rounds of golf really doesn't make sense for them to join, because a lot of them will not use the benefits of the Country Club. Whereas members of the Country Club might see an advantage to the 30 rounds of golf, which they're currently not playing and getting the discount going forward. In this case it would

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be the \$2,500 for your 100 rounds, additional rounds would be at the regular rate, and we would give you for those first 100 rounds your ability for pre-booking on those first 100 rounds. So that was kind of a solution. It would be subject to continued increases on potential fees going forward, because if we do have these increased costs year over year not knowing where we'll be in two years or in a year with the property taxes, we may have to find a way to cover 100 percent of the cost the city can no longer continue to subsidize the cost of the golf course. So I wanted to put that out there as a potential, I guess bridging the gap solution that'll kind of alleviate some of the burden that we're placing on our regular golfers which are using the golf course, because we are saying that they're using the golf course 24 percent of the time, but there also are our regular golfers and I think we need to take that into account. This would also only be applicable to Coral Gables residents.

Mayor Lago: Okay. If I may just one second. Mr. Clerk how many individuals do we have in the public comment.

City Clerk Urquia: At this we believe we only have three Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Let's listen to public comment because they've been waiting long enough. I want to make sure they get heard.

City Clerk Urquia: So, the first speaker I have here Steve Elmore.

Mr. Elmore: Good afternoon and thank you for giving us this time to speak to you about this Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Mr. Elmore: Vice Mayor, Commissioners. My name is Steve Elmore, I reside at 621 Navarre now for the past 43 years, 42 of those years I've played golf at Granada Golf Course. My wife grew up on the Granada Golf Course, her father was a golf pro there, I ran the golf tournament at Doral for the PGA Tour for 30 years. I'm very familiar with golf and what it entails. There's several issues that are in front of you today and you've chosen to group them all together and talk about this. So what I want to do first is I want to distance ourselves from some of the conversations that have gone forward that have carried a great deal of angst. I'm here representing the Granada Golf Association. You've heard all about us. If you want qualifications of what we do, if you want proof of what we are we'll be happy to provide that to you, but we really didn't think that was necessary. We've been an organization that operated at Granada Golf Course and in the city now since the 60s. We've done numerous things to benefit residents of this city, as well as organizations that are in the city for those years. We have stood strong supporting the Granada Golf Course through good times and bad. The past two years have been very difficult and for that there's no blame, there's only a way to move forward and I would like to thank the Commission for taking the time at the last meeting to take the first steps in this direction. Since Troy Hall was our Superintendent and

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left our conditions at the golf course have depreciated significantly, no surprise to anyone. Why?- there are a number of reasons why. We could go on for hours and decide this. None of that is germane to what we're here for today. We are here Pete and I, to talk about the Granada Golf Association and explain to you what we're asking for. During the day at the golf course you have approximately eight hours, you have tee times every nine minutes, so you're talking about eight tee times per hour. The Granada Golf Association uses seven tee times on Saturday morning, four tee times on Sunday morning. We have adjusted the time of those tee times over the years to accommodate the golf course. We take up times where there hasn't been a desire. We moved from 10 o'clock to now 8:10 on Saturday morning to fill a void, okay. We are not poaching revenue from the city. We have 60 members; of those 60 members which are held at 60 because we only have 7 tee times, which means I can only accommodate that many groups during the day, okay, so everybody doesn't get to play and doesn't get the ability to participate every weekend. We have four annual members. In the past we've had quite a few more, they come and they go. I did with last months, the last rate change I went to the membership and I asked them two questions. I said, if these rates stay the same will you continue to participate as much as you do now? The answer was no. So you've made headway there. You're trying to reduce the amount of play on the golf course, you've accomplished that through our organization at least. The second question I asked them was, if you were presented with a membership for \$2,100, which includes a membership to the club, will you become an annual member? They all said no. So again, you have reached a partial goal in what you're trying to accomplish. There is too much play at Granada, that goes without saying. There are many reasons why there's too much play, but before Covid you had none of these problems, okay, and you need to understand that this will be cyclic, it will happen again. The Granada Golf Course is not going to make you money. It's never going to be where you don't pay anything for it, okay. The people that play are going to pay, there's no doubt about that. Are they paying too much?- are they not paying enough? I don't know. I'm not here to talk about that. I'm trying to preserve an organization that has been here since the 60s doing things for this city and the groups in this city. All we're asking for is 7 tee times on Saturday morning, four on Sunday. In the summer we may not even use those. On Monday morning I sent out a notice to our membership and I say, do you want to play Saturday or Sunday or both? They answer me back. By Tuesday afternoon I have everyone slotted for the weekend. By Thursday, if I don't use the times that are given to our organization I give them back, so we're not costing you any money in any way shape or form. We're paying for the use of the golf course. We want to do that. Yes, we use the banquet room once a month, we can do that outside. We do that for Rita. Rita at the old Burger Bob's, now The Bistro, takes care of all our lunches, All of our monies and our monies are very -- it costs \$75 to join our group for a year; \$40 of that goes to the Biltmore for your golf handicap, the rest of it is what we use for operating funds so that we can have events so that we can raise more money to give away the charity. So I ask you to be careful as you move forward and understand that we're residents here for the most part that have been doing this in the city for years, we're not looking for a handout, we're not looking for anybody to pat us on the back. We're

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just looking to be an organization that stays together, that is a community organization, that enjoys living in the City of Coral Gables. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Mr. Izaguirre: Good afternoon, my name is Peter Izaguirre. I am the President of the Granada Golf Association for the past 24 years. It's only two points that I want to make that came up before which were not necessarily wrong, but they weren't presented the right way to Vice Mayor Anderson's question about how these groups included the ladies, the senior citizens that were presented before. How did they get to get their group to play on Friday, I believe it was Friday and Monday if these tee times are taken away. They cannot call the golf course, they can only do it online. The golf course does not take tee times on the telephone. Number two, it's been said that people call, and they say we can never play in the morning, it's a little bit of an exaggeration. We only use 42 minutes of tee times on Saturday and half that on Sunday, so it's not like we're taking the morning, we're taking 42 minutes on Sunday and about 24 minutes on Saturday at 24 minutes on Sunday. The second point is based on what Commissioner Fernandez said about the membership for golf only. I'm a member at the gym, okay, and I have a little bit of a problem the way this was put together. It's been discrimination, discrimination against golfers, because if you move here from Nebraska yesterday and you want to join the gym at the Country Club for the Country Club atmosphere it'll cost you \$900 dollars, but if you move here from Nebraska you just want to play golf, you don't want to go to the gym, you have to join the gym, you have no choice, you have to join the gym even though you're not going to use the gym. I use the gym three times a week. I go Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. I don't know of any golfers, I have never seen a golfer from Granada in the gym. I'm not saying there isn't, it's possible they're using different times that I have, but I would venture to say that maybe 10 percent of the golfers are going to the gym. So again, I don't have a problem with the membership. I will join the membership. I don't have a problem with what they're charging. I understand. I was a business businessman for 45 years. I just retired a year ago, but I have documentation here as to when Granada was established which was August 31<sup>st</sup>, August 31, 1960, not in the 60s, 1960. As I've sent some emails to some of or all of the Commissioners recently, I keep hearing that we donated the money that we donated was donated outside Coral Gables. Charlie Homes for Children was disbanded 30 years ago, so I don't know if I can find those records, but we donated over \$500,000 to Charlie and they were a Coral Gables organization. They were headquarters in Coral Gables. I was on the Board of Charlie and we used to meet in the building behind the Little Flower, so this is not something I'm making up. I'd be crazy to do that in this venue here. We donate to the Coral Gables Community Foundation every year for the past 15 or 20 years. If you go to the Gala that the Coral Gables Community Foundation does at the Biltmore every year, the wine that you drank came from us. I was in the liquor business for 45 years and in the auspice of the GGA and the foundation that I had we donated the wine for the Gala every year for the past 10 or 15 years. There are other things that the organization does and again, if those tee times goes away, all of this is going to go away, because

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the organization cannot exist without those tee times. We do a lunch for the green keepers, the city employees every year in December, we buy them all lunch, its done by Rita at the Bistro. We did do a few charitable donations to Belen High School. We sponsor their golf team. These are things that we've done over the years. We don't stick with one charity and we don't do the same charity every year, but we sponsor the Belen golf team, we sponsor the FIU ladies' team for two years and we we've done the Coral Gables Fire Department Toy Drive a few times in the past few years. So again, as Steve stated before, our only concern is tee times, very minimal, if you think about it, and I think that the overall contribution that the Granada Golf Association does, it's far higher than that the results otherwise. Thank you very much for your time.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker, Mr. Mayor is going to be on Zoom. I have Amy Grinham.

Amy Hayes: Amy Hayes yes. Hi, thank you for the opportunity to speak today about the Granada Golf Course membership.

[Note for the record: Audio difficulties]

Ms. Hayes: Can you hear me? Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: She is unmuted but she's not coming through.

Ms. Hayes: Can you hear me?

Mayor Lago: We'll come back to her.

City Clerk Urquia: I have one more on Zoom. Its going to be Donna Fails. See if this one works.

Ms. Fails: Hi, I'm Donna Fails.

City Clerk Urquia: Good afternoon, ma'am, you're unmuted.

Ms. Fails: I am unmuted. Hi, I'm Donna Fails.

City Clerk Urquia: I can see her microphone moving which means she's speaking, but the sound is not coming through.

Mayor Lago: We'll try to come back, try to come back after.

Ms. Fails: Don't know what to do.

City Clerk Urquia: I'm being told that she can be heard on Zoom, however she's not coming into the room.

Ms. Fails: I can't tell if I'm coming in.

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Mayor Lago: Just for the record, let's make sure we put it on the record. The first speaker spoke for seven minutes, and the second speaker spoke for six minutes and 22 seconds. Anything else. All right, then we'll close the public comment until somebody I guess is available to be able to join us. Any other comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes. Are we going to go through every item so we can address each item separately or is this part of the update?

Mayor Lago: Well, I think what's best is to have a conversation amongst the Commission. You have put four or five items on the agenda that are completely different, and I think that the Commission should speak about what we think is appropriate before we start passing any resolutions or changes to the proposal that the staff has put forward.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. Well that being said then I'll go ahead and I'll make a comment about Commissioner Fernandez what he was proposing and what really what I'm going to ask him is to like hear me out when that item does come about, because I did keep those things into consideration and really what I was presenting was a pilot program just for a year because since there has been so many a significant increase in 40 percent and I did increase the non-resident significantly, still makes sense they're still getting a discount and I put guardrails so that right now it's 156 rounds that they're actually playing, remember according to the data that the city is giving me they don't have specific data, if you read the resolution it'll be more detailed and I presume that with the guardrails that I'm putting for that membership, each member should be playing around 100 to 120 and then after that the city can go ahead and evaluate the data not assume not on assumptions, especially we're going to make something so permanent and change policy from one day to another. I think it's prudent to actually make policy changes with accurate numbers not just assumptions.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: If I may, I just want to address that. Madam ACM we heard from Commissioner Castro that we're making assumptions that we're not using actual data, is that correct?

Assistant City Manager Vester: Everything that was presented was an actual data collected from the last two years.

Mayor Lago: And who collected that data?

Assistant City Manager Vester: That is reporting from the POS system that was given to us by the Biltmore and put together by myself and the director of the department.

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Mayor Lago: If I may. We have to be very careful of the things that we say here, because I know you have worked on that for the last three weeks very diligently, because we went over it multiple times you and I, along with the Manager, thank you for that. Thank you for your hard work. Mr. Manager, would you like to make a point.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes Mayor. Thank you. What we have is a golf course that cannot pay for itself, at best. If we look at 50,000 rounds at \$30 that's \$1.5 million dollars and that's what the at \$30 that's the maximum that this golf course can generate from the rounds played. We've got one almost \$2 million dollars in cost to run the golf course, so as a minimum there'll be a General Fund hit for half a million dollars, so the more money that we remove the more money we must take from the General Fund, but even 50,000 rounds that's what this golf course can sustain because there's a nine hole golf course and that's been shown in the presentation that that's the capacity of this nine hole course at \$30 dollars, which is what we're charging now for residents that's \$1.5 million dollars, so those are the real numbers, those are the real numbers.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Let the manager just finished one second. Are you done, sir?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes Mayor, thank you.

Mayor Lago: Go ahead Commissioner.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. Let me go ahead and correct the record when I was talking about data. Yes, you have accurate data, but it's not specific data as I am asking in this resolution according to the actual pattern of behavior of how golf members are playing. Now when I say there's not accurate data and assumptions is because there is an increase of 40 percent which is a significant increase in one year and there's a loss and there's also another difference that we cancel the membership for golfing. So that being said, and with what I'm proposing which is a pilot program there's a lot of different variables that come into play, right. So when I say we're making assumptions it's because it hasn't happened yet, it's because we're not following the same procedures as we are following before so we cannot use that data accurately to predict the future okay. Now...

Assistant City Manager Vester: We did present several modeled scenarios.

Commissioner Castro: Now with a 40 percent increase we're going to have a change in behavior, okay, because not everybody is going to play at the same rate because 40 percent is a very big increase. We need to take that into account, not only that with the pilot program I'm proposing. I'm proposing minimum maximum three rounds per week with no rollovers. Now the reality of life is that nobody is going to play three rounds per week every single day, days that are raining, days that you're on vacation, days that you're sick. So automatically those 156 rounds are going to go

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down, that's why I put guardrails, there's no rollovers per week on those rounds. So I'm asking for the opportunity to give it a chance to evaluate the real numbers the real data of these members for a year, we owe it to them, okay, not to stop a membership abruptly. After we have that you guys can bring the data back to the Commission and if we can tweak it or discontinue it depending on the feasibility or viability of that data then we can do that and it'll be up to the Commission, but I really don't think it's going to make a big impact. I think it's going to work out that's my hypothesis, however the numbers speak the truth.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: The current use is 189 rounds.

Mayor Lago: I know, I was going to tell you that.

City Manager Iglesias: Versus 150. There will be a reduction of 39, automatic reduction of 39 rounds a year. So I...

Mayor Lago: Can you repeat that because we're talking about hypothesis and we're talking about you know all types of -- can you repeat that. These are factual numbers; these are factual numbers.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes Mayor. The actual number of usages for the average for the past two years has been 189 rounds.

Mayor Lago: That's the average.

City Manager Iglesias: The average per year and if we are going to reduce it to an average of 150, it's not even going to go lower, it's very difficult because it's three rounds per year per week and most of the golfers are averaging more than three rounds.

Mayor Lago: So those are those are the facts, those are the numbers it's not it's not a hypothesis or testing ideas and a scientific experiment. These are the actual numbers, we have data here, am I wrong. Pete says it's not, tell me where it's not the numbers.

Assistant City Manager Vester: As I explained in an email previously to the Commissioner, the only data we were not able to provide was specifically to each specific member their usage patterns. We do have data which was presented on usage and like the Manager said, they're averaging close to four to five rounds a week. So, I understand what the Commissioner saying that if you consider it like a membership to a gym, maybe not everybody goes to the gym, right, but we're talking about these specific members. We already understand what their trends are, these are not new members coming in that might have a different demographic, they might not be retired,

they might be working, and they might not have the ability to go three times a week, four times a week. We already know the habits of our current members.

Mayor Lago: Again, listen let me be very clear one second. This is no skin off my back. I don't play golf, okay, and I have people in my family that are members of your organization. I'm only upsetting people by making the right decision the tough decision here. I know. I know it's tough. I know but the idea is this, when you go in a gym, for example, the gym that I go to, you pay a flat rate and the flat rate gives you access to the CrossFit gym and it gives you access to the gym. I don't use the gym that often. I do a CrossFit, but they won't sell me just a gym membership if I want a CrossFit membership, it's a bundle, that's the way it comes. It's a flat rate, \$200 and something dollars a month. I've told them but I don't want to use the gym membership, can you reduce it by \$50 dollars, can you -- no Vince, that's the way it is. So, you have to make a choice. If you want to be involved in that organization you have to pay for the bundle rate to use the CrossFit gym and to use the gym, that's the way it is, and I choose to do that because I want to be part of that facility, because I like that facility. I like the people who are there. I like the quality. I like the location and it's a good opportunity for me. But look, I want to be very clear about what we're discussing today. This is not about golf for me, okay, and I have the utmost respect for the golfers and everyone who decides to do that, okay. This is about fairness. Right now we have a situation where 86 individuals are using nearly one quarter of all the rounds played at Granada Golf Course, 76 are residents, 10 are non-residents, while contributing only about 6.5 percent of the revenue. Meanwhile, the rest of our residents, families, seniors, young individuals are paying significantly more and getting significantly less access. That is not equitable and frankly it's indefensible. What that means in plain terms is that the entire city is subsidizing a very small group of high frequency users. Every resident who pays taxes, every family who wants a weekend tee time, every young person trying to learn the game they're all effectively paying the price for an outdated system that no longer works and now let's not lose sight of the bigger picture. Granada is a historic, public golf course envisioned by George Merrick as a community asset. Let me repeat that. A community asset. The current model has allowed overuse, limited access, and created a structural imbalance that is impacting the condition of the course and the city's finances. We are operating far beyond recommended capacity, as you can see by the presentation, it's not my recommendation, it's the professionals' recommendations, and we're headed towards higher costs and declining quality if we do nothing. The changes that this Commission already approved are about restoring balance, fair access, responsible use, and financial sustainability. The idea of grandfathering this inequity by continuing to allow unlimited use for a select few simply locks in a system that is unfair to everyone else. We were not elected to preserve special privileges. We were elected to serve the entire community. This is a public asset. It should be accessible, fair, and sustainable for everyone not just for those who have benefited the most for a system that is clearly out of alignment. I have never played golf. I have never played tennis. I have never used pickleball. I've never had any of those benefits while I've had the privilege and honor to serve for 13 years.

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Sometimes -- I've never used the gym. Again, I use my own resources. At the end of the day, we have to make tough decisions as elected officials here and I would love nothing more to make 76 individuals six months, God willing, if elections are changed in November, six months before an election. I'll be a hero and I'll be supported, but that's not why I was brought here and that's why I was not elected. We're here to make tough decisions and do what's financially correct. So I stand by the adopted changes, and I urge this Commission to do the same. Am I willing to tweak things a little bit here and there?- not a problem, but the idea, the idea that we're going to continue in the same path and we're going to continue putting this amount of pressure and subsidizing this golf course to the tune of \$600,000 dollars a year, there's no way of doing it. It doesn't make sense. If you told me that we had an 18 hole golf course and that we had other amenities that we could figure out some way to get more people on the golf course and spread the use across it, or bring in more revenue, we can't bring more revenue, we can't charge more than what \$30 for people to use the golf course.

City Manager Iglesias: Currently for residents its \$30 dollars.

Mayor Lago: We can't. There's really no way, no one's going to use it, so we have to find that balance to make sure we give preferential treatment to residents, whether it be maybe with preferred tee times to a certain extent, but all the residents should be able to use the tee times. Whether you're a doctor, for example, like my father, he likes to play golf and the only time that he can play golf is on a Saturday in the morning before he has to go to the hospital. My father can't play golf and that's, you know, people have times that they can do things. So I understand and I would protect this also if I was a member here, but we have to be equitable and we have to understand that there is a community that we represent and it's not a personal vendetta against 86 people, it's that financially we have to address these issues, just like we addressed them at the Venetian Pool, just like we addressed them at the Coral Gables Country Club, just like we addressed them at Burger Bob's, just like we addressed them at the at the little restaurant over and over and over, we've had to tackle these issues and this is one that needs to be addressed one way or another.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: So, I'm going to go ahead and clear the record a little when you were talking about numbers so maybe I could get a better clearer understanding for my colleagues what I referred to. Number one, each player pays at different ways, in different ways. They have different -- once a week maybe there's a player that golf or that plays five times a week, okay, but when I went ahead and the number that the city is giving me 189 is an average, okay, it's an average.

Assistant City Manager Vester: The average is over the actual usage over two years. It's not like an estimated average; it's a mathematical average.

Commissioner Castro: Right but let me go ahead and explain something okay. That means every golfer plays different but the average you're giving me is in conjunction of the whole membership right, because when I asked you for data and I asked and I asked the City Manager for data and Fred for data telling me exactly how every member is playing so that I can evaluate that data and the pattern of behaviors in which they are playing, so I can come up with better policy, you guys told me that you couldn't do that, so the average came exactly from all the members, the 86 members together. Now, correct me if I'm wrong, this is what you guys told me.

Assistant City Manager Vester: What I explained to you in an email was I don't have specific data on each individual member, right, so I don't have usage patterns on member A versus member B. I can tell you based on the total number of members and the actual amount played over two fiscal years and averaged out to give you one number over a period of two years of data collected, I have given you an accurate number.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Commissioner Castro: I'm so sorry City Manager, let me go ahead and finish my point, okay. The 189 is an average, basically divided by the 86, is what you're going to tell me, correct. Now what I'm telling you is that that information is not sufficient for me, that's why the resolution said we need to evaluate this data in a more pattern way of behavior of these golfers, so that we can see the trend and so that we can find a balance between what's profitable for the city and what is also a balance for the golfers. Right now, we don't have that data, we just have an average, and every golfer does not play at the same the same days and the same amounts. There are golfers that play one day and there might be golfers that who knows plays seven days, okay, but we're averaging that number it's not a very accurate number to come up with good policy, okay. Now what I'm asking is it's not to reverse policy. This is just a one-year pilot to evaluate the policy that was just passed. We need real numbers moving forward. I understand we have accurate data for what we have not detailed according to the membership from the past. I'm not discussing that but moving forward we just made major multiple major changes at once; the 40 percent, we eliminated memberships, we change operations, we have zero real data on the impact. I think we need to measure first and decide later, okay. Excuse me Mayor, I'm still not done. About fiscal responsibility and I know that's really where we are headed right now that it's not sufficient, the money that we're getting for the golf course I have to defer to that. I think the city could give the golfers a year to determine if what I'm putting in place and I'm even willing to you know compromise if Commissioner Fernandez wants to come up with something that maybe you think it's a little more equitable I'm willing to do something to move forward but to take a balanced approach. Just getting rid of the golf membership from one day to another without transitioning is

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very unfair, especially since our mission statement is the health and priority of our senior citizens. So we need to test, measure, and adjust.

Mayor Lago: You're done.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: But before Mr. Manager, okay. Everything she said right now is completely and utterly wrong, okay. Let's be honest with ourselves, this is on the record, okay. How many members are part of this organization?

Assistant City Manager Vester: Which organization,

Mayor Lago: The organization – 86, correct.

Assistant City Manager Vester: Right. So, the paying Granada golf memberships and I just want to make sure again so we differentiate the two rights. We have three associations that pay an association fee and then we have a group of members and just for the record, I want to clear up, the city did not eliminate the golf membership. I want to make that very, very clear. There's still a golf membership. It was restructured, which was always presented as part of the acquisition of the operational plan for the Country Club four years ago to this some of the changing Commission, but the Mayor was here and we presented.

Mayor Lago: Its called responsible, you have to be responsible, you have to address issues. You cannot continue to hand out bundles of money here and expect the city to be solvent, okay. It doesn't work that way. That's what they did before I got here and we got ourselves into significant financial issues with the benefits and a lot of things that were given out here to the point that they had to go back and take it from the police and firefighters here and all hell broke loose. I'd like to address her comments because they're completely and utterly off basis and we went in like 50 circles and you confused half of the planet, okay. Madame ACM, please explain the numbers that you worked on for over a month, please explain that we do have accurate numbers that we do have all the information to make a decision. Please.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Go ahead.

City Manager Iglesias: I'm sorry Mayor, but I have a little experience in statistical analysis.

Mayor Lago: I know. I know you do.

City Manager Iglesias: When you have a two-year sample of 86 and you have the fact that it's used almost over 34,000 times in the two-year sample size, you have 86, such a low number and you have an average of 189 that's a hugely accurate statistical sample. I wish I had something like that for hurricanes, I really do, it would be fantastic, but we don't.

Mayor Lago: And that's why you sense the frustration where there's someone to my right trying to justify that we don't have numbers when what you're saying right now we have incredibly accurate numbers.

City Manager Iglesias: It's very accurate because our statistical sample is very low, our average is over two years, and our average is 16,500 rounds per year and an average of 189 rounds. So that statistical sample is very accurate and to go back and look at each statistical member would be just an anomaly and that's really -- you rarely have anything like that in science, so this is a strong sample size. It's a very good average. It's based on two years' huge numbers and 86 players. It tells you that those 86 players play a lot and that's because the sample size generates that much data so it's a very accurate sample that you can look at this from an individual member and peek things out is not statistically correct and it just wouldn't yield any statistical issues.

Mayor Lago: And by the way even if you did look at individuals in that 86-sample size, even if you did one individual you had one person playing 500 times, another person's 300 times, and you had the numbers, it doesn't matter at the end of the day. It's all the rounds combined because there's a subsample of 86 people that cannot grow. Those individuals have preferred tee times, pay \$920 dollars and they have unlimited golf. So, at the end of the day, it doesn't matter if one person's playing a thousand times or another person's playing 300 times, the entire sample of 86 people are playing this amount of golf. You can't – excuse me sir, with all due respect, if you'd like to say something everyone's more entitled to speak, but let's not scream from the grandstands. Now let's address, I'm sorry sir.

Unidentified Speaker: My apologies.

Mayor Lago: No worries at all please. I'll be willing to bring you up if you'd like. Let me address this statement. I think it's appropriate, I think it's appropriate since you did make that statement. Are there preferred tee times for these individuals.

Assistant City Manager Vester: For these associations the membership as it was previous, did not as adopted, we were including that as a benefit.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, we do have preferred tee times.

Assistant City Manager Vester: As adopted it was with seven days' notice they would have preferred our priority access.

Commissioner Fernandez: Would the Commission indulge in giving me five minutes to take. There's something I want to look into and then I have a few comments. Can we take a five-minute break.

Mayor Lago: No problem.

Commissioner Fernandez: Take a five-minute break. Okay. I appreciate it.

Mayor Lago: No problem.

[Note for the record: The Commission took a brief break and then resumed the meeting]

City Clerk Urquia: Okay, Mr. Mayor, we're back. So basically, we all know we're having a lot of technical difficulties today. We're not going to be able to bring audio back from Zoom.

Mayor Lago: Can we do something; can we do something? Let's just do something here. Let's do this right, okay? This is not going to work out. I have a lot of items that I want to talk about. So, it's a lot of, let me deal with this for a second. I'm asking you. I know that we have a lot of, I'm willing to defer the rest of the agenda. Can I bring this back in May? Because we can't, we have so many technical difficulties, and we're just going back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll second that.

Mayor Lago: I don't want to, trust me. I have a lot of items that I've been working on with staff, major items, but we, if it's not the microphones that are back on right now, it's the TV, we can't get people, we can't get people who want to give public comment on. You know, there's a lot of things that are going on. I just don't want later to say we rushed through something, and then people say I wasn't able to get public comment. What do my colleagues think about that?

Commissioner Fernandez: Mr. Mayor, actually, what I was coming back to ask is that we defer these items so that we can really figure out what all these different groups are, how many members they actually have, because I think our number of 86 isn't even the actual number. I think we're off on that number. There may be more members. So, what I was going to ask for was to defer this item to the May meeting so that I would like to sit down with each of these groups and see what each of their expectations have been and see if there is a potential for something that we can come up with. And if it's not something we can come up with, then we'll figure it out at that point. But what I was going to ask for is that we defer this item to the May commission meeting so that we can properly have more conversations with the folks who are the stakeholders on this item.

Mayor Lago: Are we back? Is this back? Are we back now? So, this is back? Yes. Because we've been dealing with this for the last four hours and I want people to know on the record that we've been battling with this. And it's not staff's fault; it's just we have a glitch in the matrix. I mean, I'm fine to move forward, but if this continues, it's going to be a problem. Can we get, excuse me one

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second. Let me just address the issues. Now, can we, right now that we have a moment, can we get the two individuals that we're trying to get on the phone, can we get them on the phone?

City Clerk Urquia: No, sir. We cannot bring audio from Zoom.

Mayor Lago: You told me you wanted to get somebody on a cell phone call. Correct, yes.

City Clerk Urquia: Commissioner Castro was gonna call someone on the phone and basically hold the phone.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, that's fine. That's what I'm talking about.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay.

[Note for the record: Commissioner Castro called speaker on her cell phone to make her comments]

Commissioner Castro: Hi. Hi, Dawn. You are on the microphone, and they are hearing you right now. This is public comment.

Speaker: [Audio is not clear. Technical difficulties]

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, I did wanna say, I did have two people on Zoom who were not able to speak, and they did email me their comments and to have them read into the record, if you would allow it.

Mayor Lago: Yes, please. And then we'll close. Let's close the public comment and let's move forward. Go ahead.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay, so the first speaker was Donna Falls. Says, I want to piggyback on the last two speakers. We're only talking about seven tee times on Monday morning, one hour for the GWGA. We pay to play. For many of us, that is the only time we play. The organizations have been in existence for over 60 years. These organizations are what make a community. Please continue to protect these tee times. The second speaker was Amy Hayes.

Commissioner Fernandez: I'm sorry, Mr. Mayor. I didn't hear the number, Mr. Clerk, the number of tee times.

City Clerk Urquia: Seven tee times on Monday morning.

Commissioner Fernandez: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: The second speaker was Amy Hayes. Says, I've been a member since 2021 and I typically play four to eight times a month and my husband plays even less. How did he get your

statistics? The golf course keeps the member records in a notebook, and nothing is computerized. How do you know how many rounds each member plays? Did you audit T-Wire, the only booking system? Also, couples are considered one membership even though there are two people. If I book a time for four people and I am a member, how do you know who plays with me and if there are also members? Your data is inaccurate. I understand the need for higher green fees, but the course is in horrific shape. I would like to remain a member, but I cannot justify paying double for a course in its current state. Half of the greens are unplayable. I suggest closing down the course for a period of time and also spacing out the tee times to every 15 minutes. The course is an embarrassment in its current state. I would say the worst condition of any course I have ever played. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Madam ACM, we have to discuss these points because they keep repeating that our facts are not correct. We need to make sure that just because someone says something, that's not the truth. Madam ACM, take it from the top.

Assistant City Manager Vester: So just to explain again. The Pro Shop is managed by the team from the Biltmore. T-Wire, what was mentioned, is the booking software and then they have a separate POS system. The reporting that we're going off is not on what was reserved or booked, but what was actually paid for. So they gave us the records of two fiscal years, that's where the numbers are coming from, on items purchased and paid for as well as comps.

Mayor Lago: So, we need to stop undermining the data. It's not going to work. It's not going to work. These are the numbers. These are the facts. These are real numbers. We got the real numbers, okay? Let's work together to find an answer but not undermining what the city's doing because that doesn't work well. That undermines everyone. That makes us look like we're incompetent. That makes us look that maybe we're taking money. That makes us look that we're being corrupt. Let's do things the right way. Let's address the issue. Let's find a system that works, but let's not say, oh, throw our hands up and say, no, no, no, this is bad data when it's not bad data. Second thing, will you address Commissioner Castro's statement that there's insufficient data based on the fact that we have 86 members and we have X amount of rounds and we divide it and obviously that gives us an average. If you had half that, if you have half that amount of members, you're still gonna get the average. If you had 25%, you still would get the average. So, it doesn't really matter. The point is that you have the amount of rounds through the work of our ACM and her team and you have the amount of members and you divide it and that's how you get your number. Please tell me if I'm wrong, enlighten us.

Assistant City Manager Vester: I think the Manager made it very clear.

Mayor Lago: But I want to go over again because they repeat it over and over again.

Assistant City Manager Vester: It's a small sample size. It was collected over two periods, two fiscal years. And let's say for in the scenario there were two very large inconsistencies, then I would say, okay, maybe we need to look at it in more depth. But they were pretty consistent, the two fiscal years. And again, it's an average of the total usage by year and by the amount of members. And I want to reiterate again, these are paying Granada Golf members that we're talking about, not the three associations. We are not tracking the usage of the associations because that is not managed by the City of Coral Gables.

Mayor Lago: Repeat that again. I think that that was something that touched our dear friend Pete over here because he agrees. Now he sees what we're talking about. Can you repeat that again, please?

Assistant City Manager Vester: All right. So, we're talking about a couple of different items. There's Granada Golf members, which is the amount of numbers that we've been talking about that is an amount that we're tracking through the report provided by the Biltmore staff. Then there's three separate associations who are paying green fees. They have a room block, which gives them the priority access to that room block. I call it a room block because that's how I see it simplified, a tee time that's exclusive to them. And they're paying their greens fees. I do not track those. The city does not track those. And we do not have those numbers because they're paying as part of the generic public. And if you see in the presentation we provided earlier, when we did the nice little pie chart, you'll see that their tee times are part of the total tee time that is from public access. They're not what we consider members to the Granada Golf Course.

Mayor Lago: It cannot be any clearer. So, we can try to confuse and jumble and make numbers up and say there's no data. The data is there. It's a fact. You have used statistics. It's there. We don't need to talk about hypothesis and all kinds of things and try to get real scientific. These are very, very simple numbers. It's there. Simple math. Simple math. Let's not get too complicated.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: I'm not done yet. So, very simple. We have to make a decision here. Do we uphold the current standards? Or do we try to do fuzzy math to accommodate everybody? What I'm trying to tell you is eventually you have to face the reality. You cannot have a golf course where the costs continue to go up like they are as a result of Brightview, which is a, from what I've heard from the mayor, I've heard people, I've asked golfers who've told me that they're a very serious outfit and that they do very well-established landscaping. They have serious contracts in golf courses. These are very, a serious outfit. You cannot spend the amount of money that we're spending to take this golf course to the level that it deserves and not be able to charge when, as I told you very clearly, you have 86 members, you have 86 members that are almost 30% of the use of this golf course. So, at the end of the day, we have to come to terms with what we're facing. I know we wanna kick the can down the curb and maybe deal with it a year from now, but that's another \$600,000 that

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the golf course loses. The same situation that we had with the Di Donados in the Coral Gables Country Club. I remember when we talked about this and the community came out, people were screaming at us about taking it away from the Di Donados, remember?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Remember that? They were screaming, how could you take it away from the Di Donados? They're a pillar of the community. And guess what? We found out, such a pillar of the community, that they were stealing from the city of Coral Gables. But I remember we had Javi Banos here, screaming here, screaming here, remember? Screaming here, saying, if you take it away, you know, we're going to take you away. So, yeah, facts, facts. Remember? You know, you know what's going on. You know very well. So, my point is this. We have to face the consequences of the situation that we're in right now. We got to find, I'm not saying it has to be a profit center, but let's at least break even. Let's at least break even. Let's be able to pay so that, like I've told you before, 86 people can enjoy the golf course. And they're part of this organization and they have unlimited use. But there has to be a moment where they give a little bit and we give a little bit. Let's get to the middle.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Commissioner Fernandez: So again, what I would ask is that we defer this item. I think no changes right now. I want to have a sit down with the different groups and understand how each group is operating before I vote on anything else because I think there's so many different components to this that work completely differently that there is no one size fits all for the different groups because they have different expectations and they operate completely differently. Some may be happy with the end solution, some may not. We have to figure out what it is that has been happening with each of these groups, or at least I do. So that's why I ask that we defer this item to the next meeting so that I can really grasp what has been going and see if even the proposal that I made earlier, if it makes sense or not.

Mayor Lago: So, let me respond to you on that front, okay? Number one, the work that the ACM, the DCM, and the manager did and your entire staff did is a very comprehensive, fact-based, data-driven document. I don't need more time, okay? What we're doing is kicking the can down the curb. I'm ready to address this issue right now, okay? That's number one. Number two, there's not going to be a solution to make everybody happy. I know it's election season and I know we want to make as many people happy as possible so we can get as many votes as we possibly can, but we have to face the consequences. We have to deal with this. We have no other choice. If we kick it for the can for another year, yeah, we buy another year. What happens? Everybody's happy, but at the end of the day, we're going to have to face it in a year for those who are here, okay? So at the end of the day, I say face the consequences now, deal with the issue, find common ground. The city has already put together a plan of action. When does this program expire?

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City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, it's expired.

Mayor Lago: Okay, and that's it, and we move on.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. That's it. Okay. I'm going to go ahead and I'm going to second your motion, but I'm also going to go ahead and add all the other resolutions that are there so we could take better consideration. Now, with all due respect, mayor, I really don't think you read my resolution fully.

Mayor Lago: I read them all.

Commissioner Castro: The grandfathered one.

Mayor Lago: I read them all, and I'm in opposition of that.

Commissioner Castro: Let me go ahead and finish. It is my opinion. If you did, you did, then maybe you didn't understand them, okay? The math, if you go through it, you would understand how the rounds would go down. Nobody's arguing that your average is 189 for past data. What I'm arguing is that moving forward, we need to collect new data that's more specific to the membership so that it can work for the city and it can work for the members, okay? So, when the mayor here is saying that I'm here trying to confuse I'm not saying your numbers are incorrect. However, I am saying that's the numbers, 189 for the past two years. Now, with what I'm proposing, the maximum, which is not going to happen if you read my legislation, because it's three rounds, no rollovers per week for 365 days, it's going to go down to 156. If nobody gets sick, if it's never raining, if you don't go on vacation, I mean, I estimate 100 to 110 rounds. Now, if you want to go ahead and, you know, since I went ahead and I seconded his motion, if you want to go ahead and take a little more time to evaluate those numbers a little more, you want to talk to the members, I am all for that. But let's not form any confusion between what the past data is and what the present data is, the assumption of what the present data would be, because we don't know, because there's a lot of variables that have changed. Not the same patterns of golfers are going to play with a 40% increase. Not the 86 members are going to opt in to this new membership that is not unlimited. The data of 189 was for unlimited golf. We don't have unlimited golf anymore with the new proposal. I think that's something you need to take in consideration. There's a lot of different variables here, and we need time to evaluate the numbers. A year, I think it's sufficient to then come back to the commission and say, okay, we lost this much, or we made this much, or we're even.

Mayor Lago: Very quickly, past data. What is the past data? She keeps harping about past data. What is past data? I would like just an answer, because I want to get to the point, and we have a motion and a second, and I want to move on. Past data, what is the past data? Two years, correct?

Assistant City Manager Vester: Correct.

Mayor Lago: Two fiscal years. When was the last day that you took the data? The last moment?

Assistant City Manager Vester: We did not count this fiscal year, so that was the two last fiscal years, because we're in mid-fiscal year.

Mayor Lago: Perfect, so past data. That's what you do. You count the past data that you have. You got to do it from fiscal year. It's pretty simple stuff. One second. And then when you talk about unlimited golf, these gentlemen here, the three gentlemen that are here, along with the individuals who called, they want to continue with their programs. They don't want to consider anything else. They want to continue with unlimited golf. We have a motion, we have a motion and a second on the floor, along with an adoption of all the things, all the items that the commissioner put on here. Mr. Clerk, after our vice mayor, I'd like to take a vote on that.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay, so I'm going to put a couple observations that I've gathered from listening, not only to the individuals that were present, but also the individuals that visited me during my office hours, or wrote me during, on emails. Majority of the folks, the most critical issue here is reserving tee times. And we can work on a system for those groups to have an arrangement with the city, have an agreement with the city to reserve the tee times, because the organizations and the camaraderie that exists between them goes around the tee times. The monetary aspect of it was not the priority issue, it was the tee times. So, I did a little research here, as you can do on the internet these days, and note the following numbers for the record going forward. Other cities, other nine-hole golf courses charge close to twice as much, if not more, for playing nine holes of golf. So based upon that, it's consistent with what I'm hearing, that it's the tee times that are critical to maintain what the organization's trying to accomplish. So we can go ahead with the deferral, but keep that in mind that the most important issue for the women's groups and for the association that's come forward here to speak today is preserving the tee times. And staff can work on that, just like I had to work on it for the Garden Club to have an agreement with the Biltmore Hotel that never, ever existed in the past. But there was a practice, and that's what happened here. Now we need to memorialize it. So, it's protected in the future, because it can be pulled away from you if you don't have an arrangement.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, we have, so again, I'm against a deferral, but we have a motion, a second on the floor. Let's think about, we have a long agenda left to do, and I'd like to get moving.

City Attorney Suarez: Mayor, just to clarify, my understanding is the motion is to defer items F-12, F-13, F-14, and F-15?

Mayor Lago: Correct.

Commissioner Castro: But before that, through the Mayor, Vice Mayor, if I can have your support on the tee times as it is, as is stated, I will amend that motion and take off that item.

Vice Mayor Anderson: What I'd like is, I'd like to give staff the opportunity to memorialize this in writing with the groups as to what the tee times are. I know that our staff respects the groups and will do what they can in the interim to make sure that they get the play time that they need, but to have this in writing right now on the fast and loose during the middle of the Commission meeting without giving staff the time to memorialize this, I think is something that is just not a wise decision at this time.

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor, this is why we should allow staff to handle this. This should not be politicized like it's here right now. This is not an issue that should be addressed. I know you're upset about it. I'm not.

Unidentified Speaker: No one else is.

Mayor Lago: The only one that's screaming from the grandstands is you.

Unidentified Speaker: I'm not screaming.

Mayor Lago: You are, you're raising your voice. No one else is screaming from the grandstands. It's disrespectful and it's actually immature. So, at the end of the day, you should conduct yourself like a professional when you come into this room because I have to conduct myself the same way with you. So, at the end of the day, you have an option. We have a deferral; we have a motion and a second. I think we should move forward, but at the end of the day, let's hear the votes.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. I'll continue with the deferral, and I won't go ahead and amend that just because I feel the probability that if it comes back, it's going to be a little better than now because as you can see, we're not going to have the votes.

Mayor Lago: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes, it's a deferral.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: No.

Mayor Lago: No