

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Non-Agenda Item
August 29, 2017
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Clerk of the Courts, Harvey Ruvin

Non-Agenda Item [9:48:54 a.m.]

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And now we have the honor, the distinct honor of having one of the finest and longest public servants here in Miami-Dade County, Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Courts and a very distinguished person, friend of the City, friend of mine, and friend of everybody. How are you?- Welcome.

County Clerk Ruvin: Mayor it's a delight to sit here in the City Beautiful and to look at the history, think about the history starting with Mr. Merrick above you...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Were you here then?

County Clerk Ruvin: Pardon?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Were you here then?

[Laughter]

County Clerk Ruvin: May be in a prior life. It is a great honor to be here and I have to tell you, I am so deeply appreciative of this great City and this particular City Council; Craig, your attorney has taken some real leadership steps here and wanted to be here, Madam Manager, and the great City Clerk as well. This was really done as a result of someone seeing the problem and trying to take the initiative to get it some help, so I really thank the City very much. I understand that this resolution, if it meets with your approval will go out to all the cities. We are very active now to trying to get the Dade League of Cities involved perhaps to get a resolution from them. I've been meeting with Commissioners, County Commissioners, I'm getting very good response. We are all geared to go to the September 7th initial meeting of the budget process for the County. That meeting, I'm going to be asking for a \$4 million bridge to get us to January, frankly, our outstanding Dade Delegation can help us get us a long term solution to this problem. We've got some really great people in our Delegation. What happened last year and actually for eight years we've been held, we've either been cut or held flat in the Clerk's office, and we are down to that bone now to where we can't cut any deeper into the court operation and that's why we've been forced now to look at centralizing the services that we had, decentralized out to all the districts, a great service to the public. I think it's very obvious that conditions out there on our streets did not promote the idea of adding another 600,000 vehicle trips to our already congested roads. So again, I want to thank you very much. My goal, I'm working with the Commission, sat down with the Mayor and I'm hopeful that by September 7th at that meeting we would have worked out something where I don't have to put into effect the layoff notices that went out yesterday.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Harvey, whatever we can do to help, please come to me, come to us, come to all of us individually, collectively, because I think it would be devastating for our residents and for many, many people to have to go, as you say, 600,000 extra trips and such, it provides a wonderful service. I was here when that courthouse was opened in the 90's, I guess.

County Clerk Ruvin: I remember that.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And it was very, very useful for our residents to have that facility there...and people living around us.

County Clerk Ruvin: Coral Gables Courthouse is an enormously important facility to us, very significant to me, because we opened that soon after I was elected in '92, and it actually was the development site for the project we call "Spirit" simultaneous paperless image retrieval technology, information technology, that was the first paperless court in the world right there in Coral Gables.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I remember. I lead the fight to have that here.

County Clerk Ruvin: I know you've got a lot of other business before you, and I'm just privileged that you've given me an opportunity to speak. Craig, I want to thank you again for the initiatives here.

City Attorney Leen: This item is being sponsored by the Mayor, by Commissioner Quesada, who raised this issue a couple days with me, a couple of days ago, and also Commissioner Mena, the three attorneys on the Commission. My office will also sponsor, we rarely sponsor policy items, but we will as well, and I'll be sending this to the County Attorney today, and then we'll be sending it to every City, the Mayor, etc...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Do you have a motion Commissioner Quesada?

Commissioner Quesada: Yes, I would. I spoke with State Legislators as well, I've reached out to the Florida Bar, I've reached out to, because I feel like we need to apply a lot of pressure to the State Legislators in the County, because it's unfortunate if you are not an attorney you don't really realize all the aspects of what goes into what the Clerk provides to the community. So I feel like it's our obligation as attorneys to inform and educate and apply pressure to restore this, so. With that being said, I'll make a motion.

City Attorney Leen: Let me read the resolution title, it's a resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, supporting District Courthouses, including Coral Gables District Court and supporting the Miami-Dade County Clerk's request for bridge funding.

Commissioner Mena: I'll second the motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Will you call the roll please.

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

County Clerk Ruvin: Thank you all. The word thank you seems hollow to me, I just deeply appreciate.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very, very much and you do great work and we need...

County Clerk Ruvin: Certain people that are now manning those front counters, those are the most trained people we have, they are cross trained into every discipline that come before them. They don't know whether the next person to step up to the county is going to want to get married or want to pay a fine, or they want to do something in recording, or something in other aspect. I feel we've got some momentum now that we don't have to put these 70 families in jeopardy, so thank you so much. I'll continue to work and hopefully we can pull this out. This will be a major milestone in that effort. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much Harvey. Thank you.

Commissioner Lago: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you for bringing it to our attention, Commissioner Quesada.

Commissioner Quesada: What's that?

Vice Mayor Keon: Thank you for bringing it to our attention. Thank you.

[End: 9:55:04 a.m.]