

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Items G-1**  
**January 28, 2020**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli**  
**Vice Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.**  
**Commissioner Pat Keon**  
**Commissioner Michael Mena**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Attorney, Miriam Ramos**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Assistant Director Economic Development, Belkys Perez**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Ralph de la Portilla**

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Agenda Item G-1 [9:34:40 a.m.]

Update regarding the Coral Gables Census Working Committee  
(Sponsored by Commissioner Mena)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: And now we have a time certain item, 9:30, G-1, update regarding the Coral Gables Census Working Committee.

Commissioner Mena: Belkys here? So, I just wanted to update you all briefly. Yesterday we had the first meeting of our ad hoc committee task force on our Census efforts for this coming year. We had a good turnout. We started a booth at the Farmer's Market; Coral Gables TV has already put together a piece to push out on social media about the importance of the Census, and I've asked Belkys to just put together and present you all with a brief presentation of what we have in mind. I think we have a really good group. We have people from the University of Miami, Sarah Artecona who is here, we have people from our sort of international group Carolina Rendero, there are

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people from staff. The idea being finding different avenues to push out information regarding the Census, which is obviously very important in a variety of respects, which Belkys will get into now with respect to funding, representation, etc. So, I'll turn it over to Belkys so she can present you all with her presentation and then if you guys have any comments or thoughts, we obviously welcome them.

Ms. Perez: I also want to mention, as you said Sarah Artecona is on our committee, there are a couple of people here that are also on the committee and I also want to mention that Julian Perez, the Economic Development Director has also helped a lot, and we also have a representative from the Census which is our representative which is Rafael Diaz de la Portilla. So in starting, I want to talk a little bit about the Census, excuse me, Mark Trowbridge is on his way, he's running late, but he's on his way. The Census is done every ten years. It is mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The first time that we had a Census was in 1790. It is completely confidential. The Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, your home, or your business to even law enforcement, so that's how far it goes. And any of that information cannot be used against you in a court of law. The picture that you see here is of President Truman, he is with his wife and his daughter, and he is being interviewed by an enumerator at his Key West home, that's where he vacationed in 1950. So, as you see there is always a Florida connection. So why is this important to us? Well from a City perspective there is funding involved – federal funds, grants, supports to states, counties, cities, all of that is based on population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race, and other factors. There is more than \$675 billion dollars in federal funds that are allocated, in part by the Census for schools, hospitals, roads and public works and other vital programs. We apportionment the seats, there's 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and that gets divided up between the 50 states. There is also redistricting, so Florida like other states...the results of the Census to redraw district lines for the Congressional seats and state legislative seats to create districts that are equal in population. And then data for us as a City, this is very important. We would get information on average age, the occupation of residents, any influx of new residents, where are they coming from. Also, our population is very important right now, we need to pass that 50,000 mark, because that gives us access to continue to have that seat on the TPO, and also it gives us access to grants. So, preparing for the Census. These are IT slides and I wanted to point out that we have complied with three of the tasks that were given to us. So, the Local Update of Census Address Program, which is LUCA, is a program that we certify our addresses with Miami-Dade County, so that has been completed. There is a boundary annexation survey and that boundary annexation survey basically tells the census if we changed boundaries or moved them in any way, that hasn't happened, and so that's been completed; and then we also completed the construction program, which basically it tells you how many households, how many units living quarters were constructed or are going to be coming on line by census day, which April 1<sup>st</sup>. So, all of that has been completed by our IT Department. And then here's the timeline that the Census provided us. This was just to give you an idea of how many touch points they will be having as

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the Census. So, they'll have introduction mailing, which is really important for people for our residents to be looking at out for. There are also reminder letters, there is a postcard, there will be a postcard with the questionnaire, there will be another postcard. As you can see everything happens in May 13<sup>th</sup> is when enumerators will be visiting those households that do not respond. So, we want to make sure, its very important that people, our residents respond before May 13<sup>th</sup>. And you'll see that March 12<sup>th</sup> we'll start receiving those items at home. And then finally, December 31<sup>st</sup> there is a census report that is delivered to the President. So as a result, we've been working, as the Commissioner said, we've been working to make sure that we get the word out to residents. We have started a complete count working committee and its made up of someone from the Early Learning Coalition. We've got someone from the University of Miami, Sarah Artecona, we've got our internal staff that's going to help us push out the message, we have Public Affairs, we have IT, very important, we have Risk Management for Disability Affairs and things like that, and so, we have someone from the military as well. Since the beginning of the Farmer's Market, we've had a booth and the picture there shows you the booth. On Saturday I went, they need 300 applications, so jobs still necessary in our area, so we want to get the message out also that these are paying jobs, we need those people to apply as well. The Chamber of Commerce, obviously, a very important partner with us, and we will be doing communication outreach in partnership with the Community Foundation, in which I talked to Mary Snow yesterday, and she said to count her in. The Business Improvement District, non-governmental organizations, professional organizations, HOA's, schools, public and private. We have someone from the Public-School System on our committee as well. So, the City participation. This is a breakdown of what our participation has been in the past 20 years. So, for the 2000 Census we had a 78 percent participation. In the 2010 Census we went down to 76. So, we want to make sure that this time, we go higher than this. The average with Miami-Dade County, if you average all the cities in Miami-Dade County, we received an average participation rate of 72 percent. So, we need to do better. So, we are going to do our part to get people out there and make sure that they have all the information they need in order to fill out that pamphlet. When we don't count people, we leave money on the table. It is estimated that for every person that's not counted, we leave \$1,500 on the table for each person. So that's very important to keep in mind. With that I want to see if Rafael has a couple of words that he would like to, Oh Mark is here.

Mr. Trowbridge: Hi everybody, good morning, Mark Trowbridge from the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce. Thank you Belkys, thank you Commissioner Mena, Clerk, Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners and leaders. First and foremost, the Census will have been before you now a couple of times, its an essential count that we want to, as Belkys said, do better than we have done over the last two counts, in 2000 and 2010. I think we shared with our working committee last night that in the last count the City of Sweetwater had the best count in terms of percentage return followed by the City of Medley. So, we are going to do better than both of those, right? We want to be the best practice leader in terms of how municipalities engage with private sector and partner

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organizations in terms of the count. And so, under the leadership of Mike Mena, we worked since early December to put together a collaborative group, which I know Belkys shared with you some of those, but really representing both public sector involvement and private sector. Its awesome today to be presenting this program in front of a full house and so I want to thank all of those that are behind us to help us spread the word as well, on the importance of the census. And when Belkys tells you about leaving dollars on the table, those are dollars that come back for programs that are essential, not only at the municipal level, but for our public schools as well, Title 1 programs, free and reduced lunch programs are funded through those, and those are important not only to Coral Gables, but all of Miami-Dade County. And that \$1,500 per person by the way, is per year of the count. So, over a ten-year period you are looking at \$15,000 per person that we did not receive back in our community and in Coral Gables based on our count. So, we have not set a goal yet. We are talking about what we think we can do, but we certainly want to do better than the last two cycles, and we want to be the leader in terms of how municipalities are counted. So, we've begun that process, we have great folks at the table with ideas. I want to thank them for joining us last night and sharing what they are already doing, including University of Miami, most importantly for everybody that's here in the Chambers, that's watching, or will watch this, know that the communication is just going to continue in terms of what you are hearing, both from the federal government how they connect with you and then what we are trying to do here locally to remind you. It is strange to say that children under five are oftentimes the most undercounted. Our seniors, I want to thank Fred and their team for also making sure that we are activating to our senior center, and of course our folks who are former military, folks who are disabled and may need special accommodation. We are going to do everything in our power to make sure you are aware of how the census works, to make sure that you fill out your forms.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you, Mark, great effort, and thank you Commissioner.

Commissioner Mena: Ralph is here from the Census, just give him a minute.

Mr. de la Portilla: That was an amazing presentation, far better than anything I could possibly do. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, the Commission. I am Ralph de la Portilla, I'm a local Miami-Dade County resident, have been born and raised, and so I care about our communities here in Miami-Dade County. Now this is the third time the Census Bureau has a plan, appointed me, my third decennial census. I was also a field representative here locally in Miami-Dade County for about four years and I am your liaison. I am your bridge to the Census Bureau this time around, and so, I was just thrilled when your Economic Division Department here at Coral Gables went ahead and announced that they would like to start this initiative to promote this particular census. If nothing else, I'd like for everyone that's listening today here in the City Beautiful to know the mantra of the census which is, its easy, its safe, and its crucially important. OK. I cannot stress enough the confidentiality of this census and every census before this one, at least since we've been engaged

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in a mailout-mail back program, but again, this is the 24<sup>th</sup> decennial census for the United States and we've moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we do have that online option now. So, we are going to be inviting Coral Gables residents to connect online and to actually fill out the census for their household over the internet. So, we are excited about this, making it easier than ever, but again, its safer than ever. This information cannot be shared with any other government agency, individual. Its information that cannot be subpoenaed. In fact, the most recent census that we can actually openly see the records is the 1940 census, because there is a 72-year law where we can actually disclose your census records. Good news – 2022 is coming up, that's the first time we are going to be able to actually view the 1950 census results household to household. Anyhow again, I can't congratulate the City of Coral Gables enough. Let's also remember that those participation rates don't mean that 20-sum odd percent aren't counted, OK. The 20-sum odd percent of those households that we did not receive a response from, that's when we get the knock on the door. So, if anything, if nothing else, please avoid the knock, OK. Let's fill that out as soon as you get that invitation in March and by the end of April wrap it up and send it back to us.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you sir.

Mr. de la Portilla: Thank you so much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you so much for the presentation. Thank you everybody.

[End: 9:48:49 a.m.]