

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-1**  
**October 30, 2012**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Jim Cason**

**Vice Mayor William H. Kerdyk, Jr.**

**Commissioner Maria Anderson**

**Commissioner Rafael “Ralph” Cabrera, Jr.**

**Commissioner Frank Quesada**

**City Staff**

**City Manager, Patrick Salerno**

**City Attorney, Craig E. Leen**

**City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman**

**Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

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F-1 [Start: 11:29:51 a.m.]

Resident Safety Concerns  
Commissioner Maria Anderson

Mayor Cason: F-1

Commissioner Anderson: These two items I’m bringing up in terms of conversation, yes separate, but the general tone of them is to figure out a way a solution, how would I say this?- it’s all in the good interest of the City. The residents’ concerns, we’ve all been receiving e-mails from folks on issues that they’ve had with crime in their neighborhoods, and on top of that I’ve had other who people come up to me and give me their own incidents, and maybe you all have received them as well. I have a listing of some of these, but my concern is that right now some of the perception in the City is that, and it may be true that crime may be on the rise, and there is another perception and I don’t want this to be a punitive measure on anybody or an indication to the Police that I don’t trust them, actually I do, but there is a misperception maybe that there is not enough Police presence in the neighborhoods, and people are starting to feel a little unsafe. One of my Board members last week, and it was followed by one of the neighbors on Palermo

where they had a subsequent incident of theft of cars, I've had an incident on Prospect where there was a break in at 5 in the afternoon, I've had an incident on Santa Maria Street, Zamora, different places that people who are friends of mine who live in the City have shared their concerns. So I wanted to kind of just toss it about and see what we can do to do something better, what can be done?- whether we have – I have a concern, crime for people it's a big deal and I bring it up to find a solution.

Commissioner Cabrera: I tell you – you hit the nail on the head. I agree with you. I'm not suggesting our Police Department is not doing their job. I'll tell you a quick story. On a Saturday afternoon I walked into a Latin American cafeteria on 57<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and I saw two of our young officers having coffee there and I spoke to them, and during their break they were talking about ways to do a better job of policing. So I don't think its them, I don't think it's their unwillingness to protect and to serve, but probably for the first time in 11 and three-quarter years I'm getting constant inquiries from people like you that are friends or their constituents that are saying hey, we've got more break-ins in our neighborhood than ever before, this is happening. So whether it's reality and/or perception the point is we are getting these inquiries and they are coming more often. I had an inquiry the other day from a resident that ultimately or subsequently spoke to the City Manager or spoke to him beforehand, I think the City Manager was more concerned if I had put him up to calling him, that wasn't the case. The issue is that we are getting inquiries from citizens, we are getting inquiries. Remember the days when we used to get updates from the Police Department, remember the days when we used to all get reports on the crime statistics, incidentally I'll say this publicly now, I recently learned that there are crime statistics reports that we all don't get so now I'm getting it, because I made a formal request to the Chief's office, and I think we should all be getting these reports, I don't know why we are not, but these reports are very telling as to what's going on from a crime standpoint and in some areas we are doing a phenomenal job of curbing crime, and then there are other areas where there is an opportunity for improvement like in everything else. Have you seen any of these crime reports?

Commissioner Anderson: No, I haven't.

Commissioner Cabrera: I'll tell you what?- I'm going to send you all a copy of one that I just started receiving two weeks ago at my request, and that way you can see it; it's well put together.

Mayor Cason: I've gotten a couple of e-mails recently on the same issue from Palermo and I think what they were specifically asking for was a response from Police when they asked for either a residential survey or a crime prevention survey or discussion with the neighbors, and I think there was a feeling maybe that they weren't getting timely – that was a particular one on Palermo.

Commissioner Anderson: That was one issue though, but the general perception, and I get this because I don't actually go out looking for them, but there is on house on Zamora that was broken into three times, I don't think it's about – I think in this instance they might have wanted a report, there were houses on Santa Maria Street where they were cleaned out, and there is stuff that's probably isn't reported, and I know one that wasn't reported because the folks don't like to do it because that's what they do, and there was a break-in into their vehicle because they had a video thing on their vehicle for their kids. I think that's a particular issue, but I think there is a bigger concern that presence and actual number and I think the only way by figuring out if there is a problem is taking a look at things.

Mayor Cason: You all have any – Mr. Manager?

Commissioner Quesada: The one or two instances, the e-mails I've gotten, I followed up with Interim Chief Masington, and I've been very happy with the way they've approached it, the responses...I just want to say I'm happy with the job that the responses I've gotten to those.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes, I forwarded them along as well to Chief Masington, but you know if there is anything that catches people's eye, and I bring it up; look, I'm going to be gone soon, but I know for sure whatever happens on your street is what people remember and it's a big deal, so if there is an issue of misperception let's correct the misperception, maybe we need the Chief come and speak to us and talk to us, there may be challenges that he is having, I don't know, I'm putting that out there and there may be ways to solve this proactively and positively, because as I said when I started this particular item it's to find a solution, I'm not out to place blame on anybody on Police or anybody, it's just a fact of life, and it could be that we can may be solve and allay some concerns by more crime watch meetings, more statistics, having the Police Chief maybe give an update uncensored, glean and uncensored update on issues so that way we can deal with it, that's all I really wanted, I mean if you are all amenable I'd like to see if we can have the Police Chief come.

Commissioner Cabrera: Well the other thing is, you hit the nail on the head, crime watch; crime watch has been around for so many years and I had the opportunity to attend their meetings about a week or so ago, and you know they are willing and able to engage these neighborhoods on their efforts to better educate, better inform, I mean Chief Kiel and members of the Police and Fire Departments are always available to do that kind of stuff and I'm not sure – you know on the Santa Maria case I referred Mrs. Penalver.

Commissioner Anderson: Actually it was a different one.

Commissioner Cabrera: It was a different one.

Commissioner Anderson: OK, we have a different incident.

Commissioner Cabrera: But they had a neighborhood crime watch meeting, you know they feel a little bit more comfortable, but at the same time they continue to voice those concerns.

Mayor Cason: I think if people have a crime they certainly should report it because otherwise there is no way the Police can see if there is a pattern, some people will, some won't, but they really should.

Commissioner Anderson: I totally agree, but some people are picky that way. I didn't have knowledge, this was a secondhand information; and look, I think the issues, I think what's very positive about it if we address it, it's a positive thing people know that we are concerned and I would encourage us to take a positive stand and get information. There may be people who don't know that we have certain resources available and maybe that's what we can have if we can get the Police Chief maybe at the next meeting to come forward.

Commissioner Cabrera: Here, I just found the weekly crime statistics report, and I'm going to go ahead and send it to all of you.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: OK.

Commissioner Anderson: The issues I bring forward, I don't bring them forward with anything other than a good intention. I don't have – when I'm mad I'll let people know it, and that was find, but I'm not out to do anything to hurt anybody, and I want to make sure that whatever is put on the record, you know that, I don't want you to get any misinformation because I don't want that to happen, that you get misinformation about my intentions because I know that does happen.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: Let me just say, nobody wants to play with crime, that's something that breaks all barriers or anything, that's something that we want to make sure that gets resolved. As you know we haven't had a bad day until something really goes wrong on the crime issue.

Commissioner Anderson: And that's my intent. So if can get the Police Chief.

Vice Mayor Kerdyk: I'm with you a hundred percent.

Commissioner Anderson: If we can get the Police Chief to come forward that works for me.

[End: 11:39:52 a.m.]