

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-1
October 14, 2025
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz
Katherine Shehadeh

Agenda Item F-1 [Start: 12:02 p.m.]

Discussion regarding banner, City Hall colors, interfaith event, community unity, and promoting peace. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

Mayor Lago: Moving on to City Commission items, F-1.

Commissioner Castro: F-1 is a discussion regarding Banner City Hall Colors, Interfaith Event, Community Unity, and Promoting Peace. This one's sponsored by me. I put this item on the agenda because I had a lot of residents reach out to me. Once again, I called the City Manager, and he gave me an update on what was happening. I mean, I think the major concern here was that why wasn't City Hall being lighted. And then there was another event for October 27th. And I know that there was no consensus between some faith organizations. So, I wanted to open it up for discussion to see where we all stand on that on October 27th. I know the Orthodox probably wanted to step back a little until maybe the war was over. I don't know where the rest of my colleagues

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stand on this, but I think giving some clear guidance to at least residents that are hearing now would be beneficial.

Mayor Lago: If I may. So today we welcome the news of the safe release of Israeli hostages at a moment of relief in a region too often marked by conflict and suffering. I wanted to thank President Donald Trump for his role in successfully negotiating their release, along with both sides of the aisle that played major roles. His leadership and persistence helped bring these families back together. As we reflect on the timing of this development, just days after the two-year anniversary of the horrific October 7th attacks, we recognize the intense public attention may have contributed to the pressure to reach a breakthrough. Let this be more than a moment of celebration. Let this be a turning point. We call for a lasting peace in the region, one that upholds the dignity, safety, and future of all people. President Trump's efforts show that diplomacy, backed by resolve, can change any life. We continue to stand with all innocent civilians caught in the crossfire for lasting peace in the Middle East. And as I've spoken to the Manager when I brought this forward originally, I think October 7th is an appropriate time. We're waiting for an end. We've spoken to multiple factions of the Jewish community. They're in full agreement with October 27th. We welcome all members of our community. It's an interfaith event. Let us celebrate. Let us remember the lives that were lost that day as a result of the murderous activities by Hamas. But let us also use this opportunity to celebrate. Celebrate those lives. Celebrate the hostages that were released. Celebrate the opportunity for peace. So, I think October 27th is, again, I don't want to get caught up in lights or banners. That, to me, again, is not going to really resolve the issue or bring any further discussion except for more soundbites for social media. Let us have an event and let us have an opportunity to celebrate. To celebrate the fact that a two-year conflict was resolved and that we now have the freedom of all the remaining hostages. I wish we would've gotten back the 251 that were recently taken, but they were murdered along with the other 1,200 individuals that were killed that tragic day on October 7th. But now is the time to remember their lives, but also to never forget. Like, we never forget the Holocaust. Never forget what occurred on October 7th. So, I would like for my colleagues to support that we have an interfaith event on October 7th. We welcome all denominations. We also welcome people that maybe don't support or have faith, don't believe in God. They're agnostic. I have no issues with that. I welcome people, people who want to celebrate peace. So, I'd like for my colleagues to have faith and trust in the Manager and his team to invite everyone. You can be copied on that if you'd like and maybe put something out in the community that is along those lines. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I think it's an excellent opportunity on October 27th. The advice and comments that I heard from faith organizations were to wait until after the fighting stopped. We have that opportunity now. I think it's time to bring our community together and celebrate the fact that the fighting has stopped, and hopefully it will remain that way for the rest of eternity.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think this really shows you how much the world can change in three weeks. Three weeks ago, we didn't think peace was a possibility. And yesterday we had a historic peace agreement that was signed by two sides that have been fighting for many, many years. And the President's leadership on this and Secretary Rubio's leadership on this has been a testament to America's desire to find solutions and find peace in the world. I think the only thing I would say is better communication on these things would be beneficial for all of us. A lot of the planning and banner, was the banner going to go up, was the banner not going to go up, was the lighting going to happen, was it not going to happen? There were too many question marks through the process. I think we can streamline that. I have faith in our team in streamlining that process going forward and making sure that there's better communication on that. I had spoken to the Manager. I think we spoke about it last Commission meeting about maybe having a calendar where we can see the days of the year and what City Hall is being lit for. I think that will help as well. Do we have a consensus from the community on October 27th? Because I think when we spoke yesterday, Mr. Manager, there was still some doubt on whether that date was possible.

City Manager Iglesias: I think certain members of the Jewish faith did not want it until the war stopped. I believe the war stopped. And I think that really clarifies that issue. So, there was conflict between the Orthodox and the Reform, not really conflict, just a different understanding and I think this resolves it.

Commissioner Fernandez: This is an opportunity to celebrate peace and celebrate the lives of those who were lost during this process and bring our community together.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor?

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes. So, I love what I'm hearing from this Commission. However, the Mayor did go on a radio station and made this about politics. And at the end of the day, this is not about politics. This is about us knowing how to lead. This is about us representing every resident in Coral Gables. We all have our personal beliefs, but sometimes we need to keep our personal beliefs and make sure that we are representing everybody in this city, no matter how we feel personally. And I have tried very hard not to display my personal beliefs or who I support. And I think this Commission really needs to stay conscious of that we're here to represent, and it does not matter if it's a minority or not, every single resident. So, this is not about politics. This is not about religion or personal beliefs. It's about respecting the process. It's about honoring the will of residents. It was two times that residents came to this Commission asking us to please stay neutral. And I think this Commission made the best decision, most of us, in taking part in that. The Mayor,

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unfortunately, did not uphold the same standards of conduct and accountability. And one of the reasons that I got reached out to so much was because of a post he made. Despite us coming into consensus and saying, okay, this is what we're going to do, he went ahead, go ahead and share the picture, City Clerk. Okay, he went ahead and made this in his personal account. He posted this on his personal account. And then he went ahead, go ahead and the next picture. He went ahead and he put a flag, and that's fine. That's on you. But then to go ahead and tag your PAC, other PACs, magazines. And I didn't have an issue with this. It was actually residents that felt very, very insulted. At the end of the day, I do not want to cause division within our community. There's enough division as there is on this dais. And I'm just saying this, let's move forward and let's work together because these are very touchy subjects. And I think we need to be very strategic when we address these types of issues.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor. Commissioner Castro, on September 10, when this resolution was put forth by the Mayor in his first iteration, you left the chambers. You walked outside. And you abdicated, in my view, your duties as an elected official. Because I think for you, the kitchen was too hot, and you decided to walk out rather than have your voice heard or conduct yourself as an elected official in participating in the discourse. You returned only after I expressed my concerns with things like community unity and whether we're representing one Coral Gables. You returned and didn't say a word during the September 10 discussion that was had amongst the four Commissioners. So, I applaud the four Commissioners for each voicing their opinion. And in particular, my three colleagues, you excluded, rethought their position after I spoke and said that they wanted to pursue a path of unity to best represent the community. For you to sit here and say to the Mayor that you're finger-wagging and saying that he's turning it into a political show is the height of chutzpah, because that's what you're doing right now. In case you forget, fortunately, we have a record of what happened on September 10. Mr. Clerk, would you play the video, please?

City Clerk Urquia: Cable TV, please.

[Video Presentation]

Commissioner Lara: Everybody here on the Commission that's made their position clear. I want everyone to know that I'm probably one of the most staunchest supporters of the State of Israel, and not now, but as long as I've had a political view going back. I was a history major also in college, and I have my closest friends in the world are people that host regularly state leaders in their homes with respect to Israel, and with respect to the relentless assault that's happening in the Middle East, where they are surrounded by countries that seem to singularly exist to annihilate the State of Israel, which I staunchly oppose, and support them in every possible way. But I must say that while there are many ways, and we've already taken some to show support for the victims of what occurred on October 7, which was horrendous, heinous, unforgivable, and indefensible in every possible way, we also must remember that we sit here as the elected leaders of a community

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made up of all types of people with different viewpoints, different religious points, different political views, and I'm not comfortable with, and I don't want to be misunderstood. I understand, Mayor, that your resolution is directed specifically to a recognition of the tragedy of October 7, but I believe that in raising the State of Israel flag, which is in a current conflict that's being played out really on the world stage, it would likely be viewed optically by several and vocal residents as an act of division and an act of conflict where the municipal mission of us as the Commissioners and the City of Coral Gables don't have it now. Today, we don't have this divisiveness. Today, we don't have this conflict because we're not raising a foreign state flag. We should, and I would encourage that we take other steps to show support for the victims of October 7, but in raising a flag of the State of Israel, or if we raised, I may say it in a different way, if we were to raise the flag of Russia or the flag of the Ukraine in that current conflict, the city would be stepping into what could be viewed and viewed incorrectly as being taking sides in a political and military conflict, which I do not believe is the mission of a municipality in trying to further the interests of the business of the residents of Coral Gables. None of what I'm saying should or can be taken as being anything other than fully in support of all efforts to bring attention to and seek the eradication of violence, of killing, of harm to the innocents, the innocent victims in the Middle East. And there's in no way a disparagement of what happened on October 7, or in the memory of those that not only gave up their lives innocently, but those who are still being held hostage. I think that I want to take the time to honor them in a way that doesn't result potentially in being divisive in our city or to create conflict. So, we could take one, and I'd love to have a conversation about it. There's another way that we could show due respect and due care for what happened on October 7, short of raising a foreign state flag. I don't believe that we have precedent in the city for having done that, but we may be wading into what could be misinterpreted as a political statement, even though all of us here have said this is clearly not a political statement. But these are my concerns, and I'm open to further discussion over that.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Commissioner Lara, would you believe that lowering the American flag?

[End Video Presentation]

Commissioner Lara: So, you'll see, as soon as I concluded my comments, your chair remained empty. It was empty when we started, Commissioner Castro. And then only after the four of us continued with our discussion in a different direction did you return to your chair and remain silent. I don't believe this is the time for you to be pontificating and clearly trying to turn this into a political show when that would be hypocritical, when what we should be doing is come together for one Coral Gables and draw the consensus not only amongst all of the residents, but amongst those who sit here doing our job as elected Commissioners.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. I appreciate your comments, Commissioner Lara. I had to use the bathroom, and that's what I went to go do. And it's a shame that you're interpreting

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it in a very different way. I wasn't the one who turned this into a political scene. Actually, I don't know if you listened to the radio interview the Mayor gave. He actually misrepresented the facts in an enormous way, and he made it political. In fact, what he said was that Commissioner Fernandez and I were the ones who turned this political, when in fact Commissioner Fernandez was the one who supported the Mayor. He didn't mind to even mention you. He changed the narrative completely and made this political. But, I mean, out of respect, I'm going to refrain from the rest of my comments.

Commissioner Fernandez: If I may.

Mayor Lago: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Fernandez: I really did not listen to the interview. I heard about it from residents. I heard that I was being blamed for the fact that the flag didn't go up, that I was being blamed for the fact that the City Hall wasn't lit. And like Commissioner Castro said, I stood as strong with the Mayor as probably anybody else up here on that issue. We need to move past all the electoral issues from the past. This is an opportunity. The world just came together on this issue. Let's come together. Let's put everything behind us. I think even Ms. Cruz said that during her public comments earlier today, and I think it surprised a lot of people that those comments were uttered. Let's move on. We are Coral Gables, like you said. You know, we have an opportunity to shine, continue to shine, because we've always shone. 100 years, Coral Gables has been the place where everybody has wanted to come. Let's move on past it. Enough finger-pointing, enough finger-wagging. We don't need any of that. I have tried to work as collegially as I have since April, and I think I have agreed, and in fact, there are people out there in the community who are saying, I'm Vince Lago 2.0, because I'm with the Mayor more than anybody else. That's not the point. We're making decisions up here that's for the best of the community. That's every single decision that we make on this agenda, whether it's a short agenda like ours today or a long agenda like last Commission meeting, that's what we're called to do. Let's put those differences aside. Let's move on. If we go on radio, let's not disparage each other. I make that commitment up here to all of you today. On the record, I am not, in fact, that's why I did not give a statement to any members of the media who reached out asking me about the comments that were made about me. I didn't think it was necessary. It wasn't. If it was said, I didn't even hear it, because to me, it doesn't matter. I'm here today, I'm here to do the people's work, and that's my commitment. That's it. Those are my two cents.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll just follow up, and I say, we have the opportunity to bring our community together. Let's do it. Let's do it. Let's not try to make a spectacle out of something that shouldn't be a spectacle.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Just a quick few points. There were three or four articles on social media that were done by Political Cortadito. I was reached out again and stated very clearly, if you start putting, if you put me on payroll and you pay me every month, I will stop writing articles about you. I will not put her, Elaine Del Valle on payroll. Be very clear. Coral Gables Gazette, the same thing. I will not advertise with them, so there will not be any payroll. I will not comply. I received dozens of phone calls from people who were incredibly supportive of my position. The flag in my office will stay up to the 27th. It is a beautiful American flag and an Israeli flag, and I unequivocally support Israel. Mr. Manager, I look forward to the event on the 27th. You were very clear with all of us, and you told me very clearly, Vince, we no longer have the support to do blue and white. They're offering white, blue, and red. I said, perfect, whatever my colleagues want. Yes, no, yes or no, sir?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes Mayor.

Mayor Lago: You kept me informed. Again, I can't speak with my colleagues that we're violating the Sunshine Law, and I know that you spoke to my colleagues because you told me four of them wanted the following. We no longer have the ability to do blue and white. I said, perfect, we move on. I've been more than complimentary. I wanted the flag. I didn't get the flag. I wanted it to do blue and white. I didn't get blue and white. All I've done is bend to ensure that we can have an event that paid homage and respect to over 1,000 people that were murdered by Hamas, the second largest death total since the Holocaust. And as an individual who's a Catholic, I have a personal responsibility to go out there and say what's right and what's wrong. So, if people's opinions, if they're hurt by my opinions, I have to be very firm and stand with what I believe is right. So, I have been more than easy in regard to trying to have an event that makes my colleagues happy. If you read from first to second reading, which is obviously not covered in our dear friend, Political Cortadito or the Gazette's blogs because they want to paint me into something that again will hopefully transition or translate into an electoral win. It has failed over and over and over again. It'll fail this time again because people don't trust those entities. They know they're pay for play. They're extortionists. So, they can keep writing all the articles and saying all the crazy things they say on social media. Just look at social media, zero clicks, zero likes. At the end of the day, it doesn't translate into victories. So, I will continue to do what I think is in the best interest of the city, the entire city. And like I did between first and second reading, I was more than reasonable in my position. Nothing went the way that I wanted except that we're going to have an interfaith event, which I think is something extraordinary. And I welcome everyone in the community to please join us. So, I think we've spoken enough about this.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: If I may. Mr. Manager, we have the date of the 27th. I think that complies with everyone's request. I would like for members of the Commission to provide their guidance on what

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they would like to see that day. I think we've workshopped this enough and I think we can't lose focus with the intent. The intent is a simple one. And that is to pay respect and homage to the many lives that were lost on October 7th and after over a two-year period when you had over 251 hostages. And if I'm correct, which I think I may be wrong, I think less than 50 were returned home. That is staggering. Okay. Staggering. So, with that being said, Mr. Clerk, we'll move on to the next item.

Commissioner Castro: No, no, this is my item, excuse me. Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: But I think we've exhausted this already.

Commissioner Castro: I understand, but this is my item. I appreciate that. Thank you. I have two quick questions. I just learned from the Mayor that there were four of us that were in agreeance with the red light being added. Why, if there were four of us agreeing, was that not done?

City Manager Iglesias: There was not, there was talk about the red light, there was talk about the blue and white light.

Mayor Lago: If I may, Mr. Manager, I'm sorry to interrupt.

Commissioner Castro: I have two questions.

Mayor Lago: If I may, let me interrupt. It wasn't done because the event hasn't happened yet. We're going to do it the day of the event. That's what we discussed.

Commissioner Castro: It was October 7th when we were going to do it. Correct me if I'm wrong.

Mayor Lago: When I brought this up as the original sponsor of the item, it was to do it the day of the event. And the event was being pushed back, brought forward, it was still being negotiated. Again, let's move on. We're going to have a beautiful event on the 27th. Let's move on. It'll be an interfaith event. Everyone will be included, and I think it'll be something exceptional.

Commissioner Castro: My second question. My second question is, you're talking about pay for play, and you're telling me that they're telling you too, I mean, nobody's ever approached me in my life, but who knows, maybe it is true. Is there a record of what you're saying?

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, next item.

Commissioner Castro: I am asking a question. Is there a record of people trying to pay you, like the Gazette and Political Cortadito, and you keep on blaming them for pay for play? Because I could tell you right now, nobody has ever done that to me. So, is there a record? You just stated something in the record right now, saying that they're telling you that you need to pay, and that

they have reached out to you. How have they reached out to you, and show the record of how they're asking you for money?

Mayor Lago: Elaine De Valle has called me, and has told me that if I pay, she will stop writing about me. She has hounded me on text. She has hounded me on phone calls, and she has called me, and she has said, if you pay me on a monthly basis, and put me on retainer for your campaign, I will stop writing negative articles about you. Let's move on. We have enough. You're not running the meeting. Mr. Clerk, item F-2, please.

Commissioner Castro: I'm still talking. Please don't interrupt. Billy, please provide me a record, a public record of the text messages of Elaine that I want to see where she's asking him for money.

Mayor Lago: Let me correct the Commissioner, because that's what she wants. She would not be dumb enough to put it in text. She's a very smart lady who puts it, who says it to you on the phone, and is very clear with her intentions. We're moving on from the agenda, okay? Item F-2.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I just wanted to be clear. For the 27th, we'll have an interfaith event. It's a Commission, interfaith event. We have the banner done, and is that the Commission's will?

Mayor Lago: Again, it was a vote of the Commission. That was the one that the Vice Mayor had presented, and we had selected one of the items, correct?

City Manager Iglesias: Do we want the lights also?

Mayor Lago: Again, it's up to the Commission. I requested blue and white.

City Manager Iglesias: Could I just be clear what our intent is on the 27th.

Commissioner Fernandez: If I may. We should move forward with what we had already proposed for October 7th. If the new date is October 27th, I would say whatever we agreed on before, except we had apparently a consensus to agree to red, white, and blue instead of blue and white, and I think we definitely have to celebrate our country. We were instrumental in this process, so I think that's-

City Manager Iglesias: So just to be clear, we want October 27th, interfaith event. We have the banner done, and we'll light the city red, white, and blue.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor?

Mayor Lago: If I may, please. If that's the will of the Commission.

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Commissioner Lara: All right, so I so move that we amend the last decision of the Commission motion to amend to make the colors of City Hall for the October 27th event red, white, and blue.

Mayor Lago: Do we have a second?

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll second.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

Commissioner Castro: Can I go ahead and add one more thing?

Mayor Lago: Let's just get a vote on this. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, I have a public comment on this item.

Mayor Lago: We're not taking public comment.

City Clerk Urquia: The Commission is taking action.

Mayor Lago: All right, here we go, public comment.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor, really quick-

Mayor Lago: After we do that, let's have public comment. Stop, please. I know you're trying to get a soundbite for, I know you're trying to get a soundbite, but please.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll ask a relevant question when we're done.

Mayor Lago: Okay, Mr. Clerk, let's have public comment.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz.

Mrs. Cruz: Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. Sometimes thinking makes things difficult. Last time we were here, I believe that this Commission voted to have the City Hall bathed in white and blue. The banners were done, and then the date was set, and then lo and behold, it didn't happen that day. Since the Commission had voted, I'm here to ask, was there an emergency meeting that I missed and the things were changed, or who made the decision to change it without the Commission voting? It's a question, because I believe that since the Commission had voted, that was done, and people asked, and I said, I don't know. Maybe I missed an emergency meeting. Maybe they were asked by phone. I don't know how it happened, but the Commission was overruled on what they had decided, and I need to answer the people that question me, because we were waiting to see what was going to happen, and all we saw was people with Israeli flags, and we saw the flag on the window, but that was not what the Commission decided, so questions arose. So how did the plan get changed?

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Mayor Lago: Finish, please.

Mrs. Cruz: No, I'm done. I just want to know how the plan was changed.

Mayor Lago: Then you can sit down, please, if you're finished, or if you have one other 57 seconds, if you'd like to.

Mrs. Cruz: Well, I would like, like other people that spoke and had answers from the dais, I'm entitled to also get answers.

Mayor Lago: All right, moving on, Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Close to public comment. So, we have a motion and a second.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah, through the Mayor, before we finish this motion.

Mayor Lago: I think we're done with the comment already. I think that you have to respect that I'm running a meeting.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, I have one more comment on Zoom.

Mayor Lago: Okay, comment, go ahead.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Katherine Shehadeh, I believe is her name, and I'll go ahead and ask Ms. Catherine to go ahead and unmute her computer. Give me one second, please.

Ms. Shehadeh: Okay, hello, this is Katherine Shehadeh, 1133 North Greenway Drive.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Ms. Shehadeh: I just wanted to speak kind of going off of also what Mrs. Cruz just raised in the question she asked, that I do hope the Commission will consider and respond to if it's also typical practice, I guess, after the Commission reaches a decision, which I'm not sure, because this is not the area of law that I've practice in, but whether it's typical for members of the Commission or the Mayor or any public officials to post jointly with officials from foreign countries that run counter to things that were already considered and commented on very extensively by residents in this community. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Okay, Mr. Clerk, anything else?

City Clerk Urquia: No, sir, thank you.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Mayor.

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Mayor Lago: Yes, ma'am.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Couple of things. One is a simple timing issue, what time of day, because we all have schedules. And the other is, Ms. Shehadeh, I was reached out to by individuals that informed me that the best thing to do is to wait until after the war started, because if we start addressing it as we had planned, and with the colors that we had planned, that's why the red got added to it, that we were going to have protests in front of City Hall. And the last thing we wanted to have is more division and divide in our community. And I took the recommendation that I had received from this individual who's been trying to work on bringing community together for a long time, I shared it with the City Manager, the concerns over protests being held in front of our City Hall, and then the Manager did it with it, probably as the Manager always does, and consult with the other members of the Commission with the information I had obtained. So, timing. And the reason I bring it up is because I have other things on my calendar too. What time was October 27th events planned for?

City Manager Iglesias: We will work that with Communications.

Mayor Lago: What time works for you?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Well, I have a...

City Manager Iglesias: We discussed, I believe, six o'clock on October 7th.

Mayor Lago: Would you like us to change it? What works for you?

Vice Mayor Anderson: I have a meeting at six o'clock, but not that I can't not miss a meeting.

Mayor Lago: You want to start at 5.30?

Vice Mayor Anderson: We'll start at 5.30, yeah.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor. The discussion was to allow people to get to the event after work, and that's why six o'clock was chosen, but this can be done with the will of the Commission.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I can miss the meeting.

Mayor Lago: I don't have a problem moving it to 5.30, let people start trickling in, and we can start within 15 minutes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Listen, I'll miss the meeting. I want people to have time to get here and park and walk.

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Community unity and promoting peace*

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Commissioner Fernandez: I think we have parent meetings at school as well, that night.

Vice Mayor Anderson: That night?

Commissioner Fernandez: I think parent meetings are, they're 6.30 or 7.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: If I may.

Commissioner Castro: Wait, wait, wait, you just let everybody talk. Please.

Mayor Lago: You've been sharing your... I would like to -- this has gone way too long. It's way too long. Again, let me run the meeting. Let me run the meeting. This is simple. The Manager came to speak with me and said, Vince, we do not have consensus as we agreed upon to light the city blue and white. I said, no problem. What do my colleagues want? They want to add red. I said, perfect. Literally, that day, we found out that certain members of the Jewish community could not make the meeting and that the meeting will be punted to another day. So, that's where we stand today. There's no conspiracy theory. The city, it was going to be red, white, and blue, much to what I did not want. At the end of the day, it makes complete sense, like the Commissioner said, after the incredible work by the Secretary of State and the President of the United States, along with the Vice President and their entire cabinet. So, moving forward, this is simple. I know we're trying to get headlines and more publicity on, you know, this is a very dull meeting, so we got to get something to continue to bash the Mayor on, obviously, the Gazette and the pay-for-play specialist, Political Cortadito. They wrote three articles about something as ridiculous as this. That goes to show you, that shows you a lot about the interests and the monetary implications for that blog. So, moving forward, I think we have a wonderful opportunity to come together on 27th, invite the community, move forward, and thank God, thank God for those hostages that were released. Two years of one of the worst conflicts in existence comes to an end. I think it's a beautiful thing.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor. At 5.30, and we will do the Commissioner's will at 5.30.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Okay.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Let's move on to item F-2.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Item F-2 please.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

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Mayor Lago: Commissioner, please.

Commissioner Castro: No, no, stop. Respect, okay?

Mayor Lago: 15-minute break.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, wait, before you move up, I do have a motion and a second.

Mayor Lago: 15-minute break.

Commissioner Castro: Well, I'm going to continue to talk. You're not going to let everybody talk and then not let me, I'm sorry. That's ridiculous.

[Commission took a break and resumed meeting in 15 minutes]

Mayor Lago: All right, Mr. Clerk, ready?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Castro: Once again, through the Mayor. Once again, through the Mayor. This is my item. I've asked to be acknowledged several times. You have dismissed me, and you have acknowledged other people. I would say this is some type of discrimination. I am here to represent the residents of Coral Gables, and they have reached out to me with concerns about the banner and the October 7th being on the banner and I wanted some clarification on that. That is it. Thank you for listening to me.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, we have a motion and a second on the item.

Mayor Lago: Please move forward.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes, just have one question for the Manager because I asked that question, I never got an answer. I thought we had agreed on the banner without the date October 7th on it.

City Manager Iglesias: I believe it does not have the date October 7th.

Commissioner Fernandez: Okay, all right.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

City Commission Meeting

Mayor Lago: Yes. Mr. Clerk, will you do me a favor, please?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Mayor Lago: Will you provide for the Commission and make it a public record the dialogue that was for this item on F-1? I'd like to count how many times the sponsor spoke during this item because nobody was refrained from speaking. Everybody had the opportunity to speak and have their comments put on the record. Thank you very much. Moving on to item F-2.