



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
May 8, 2018

ITEM TITLE:

Congratulations to Elsa Fuentes who holds the title Internal Audit and Grants Coordinator, recipient of the "Employee of the Month Award," for the month of May, 2018.

BRIEF HISTORY:

The nomination was submitted by Keith Kleiman who stated the following:

“Elsy Fuentes has been with the City for 28.5 years; 27 of which were spent working in Finance's Accounting Division. The last 1.5 years Elsy has been working in Finance's Budget Division as the City's Internal Audit and Grants Coordinator. We selected Elsy for this position because of the incredible dedication and work ethic she displayed while working in the Accounting Division. As is normal during each budget season, Budget staff relies heavily on the Accounting Division to supply spur of the moment answers as well as ad-hoc analyses. Elsy was always willing and able to answer our questions and to prepare whatever was necessary to help the Budget staff. For this reason, as well as her accounting background, soft spoke manner, and interest in exploring the Budget side of the Finance Department, we selected her to fill the Internal Audit and Grants Coordinator position.

In the last 1.5 years since Elsy accepted the position she has exceeded our expectations. And then came Irma! Unexpected to all of us were the effects as well as aftereffects that Hurricane Irma would have on the City and specifically the workload within Finance.

Over the last several years the City has worked extremely hard to bring its emergency reserve to the 25% threshold it is at now. Irma's estimated cost to the City stands at approximately \$19M; a direct hit to that reserve. If the reimbursement process is handled correctly, the City is qualified to receive reimbursement for the vast majority of these costs. However, the reimbursement process is an extremely arduous task and any misstep could cost the City greatly.

Elsy has personally taken on this process with a level of dedication that is just exemplary. Working with FEMA and Miami-Dade County requires undue patience. Elsy has developed solid relationships with staff from both entities which will in the end, greatly help the City's reimbursement efforts. These personal relationships are what Elsy is all about. She has developed them with most departments as well as she leads them through internal audit follow ups, grant proposals and applications, and right now, most importantly in obtaining Irma-related documentation for the reimbursement process. Hopefully the City will receive as close to full Irma-related reimbursement from FEMA and the State as possible. I am going to say this very plainly, if we do well with our reimbursement, it will be directly due to the care, integrity and shear hard work that Elsy has put into this effort.”

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 1. Employee of the Month Notification Letter**