

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-1
February 23, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena
Commissioner Jorge Fors

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Hugo V. Alvarez

Agenda Item G-1 [Start: 9:30 a.m.]

Appearance by Hugo V. Alvarez, President of the Coral Gables Bar Association, regarding creation of an Ex-Officio Board Member for sitting member of Coral Gables City Commission in the spirit of increasing collaboration between the City and the Bar for the benefit of the community, and appointment of Commissioner Jorge L. Fors, Jr. to the position. (Sponsored by Commissioner Jorge L. Fors, Jr.)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Now at 9:30 we have appearance of Hugo Alvarez, President of the Coral Gables Bar Association and Commissioner Fors.

Commissioner Fors: [Inaudible]

Mr. Alvarez: Good morning Mr. Mayor and members of the Commission and City Administration, thank you for allowing me to be here. My name is Hugo Alvarez, I'm the current President of the
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Coral Gables Bar Association and shareholder at the Coral Gables law firm of Hector and Koliokoff. And I want to thank Mr. Fors for providing us the opportunity here. As the President of the Coral Gables Bar Association, we have a lot of small business owners and a lot of attorneys that both work and live in the City of Coral Gables, and feel that this is just a natural reach out to the city in an effort to provide more services to the city. Certainly the Coral Gables Bar Association by its mission is looking to benefit the city, looking to benefit a lot of small business owners and a lot of lawyers that work in the city, and this is a natural link between both our organization and the city. In addition to that, especially in this time that we are all going through with the pandemic, there is certainly an opportunity and a need for the occasional pro-bono lawyer, the occasional city resident may need certain legal services that quite candidly they cannot afford, and we can certainly be an outreach for the city in an effort to perhaps care some of the city residents with some lawyers can certainly help in that capacity. So, the Coral Gables Bar Association is excited to do this and work with the city in an effort to benefit and improve all the city residents by way of the Coral Gables Bar Association that have been around for a long time. So, we are excited and thank you for the opportunity.

Commissioner Fors: Thank you Hugo. And its true, I forget the date, but the Bar Association has been around for I don't know how many decades.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I can tell you something. In the 80's we used to have this type of association with the Coral Gables Bar and it was very productive. Thank you for the initiative.

Commissioner Fors: There you go. Of course, thank you. One thing that I'm most excited about is the possibility of, as Mr. Alvarez mentioned, I was talking with the City Attorney with is the possibility of perhaps a small group from their group who can lend low level, not too involved legal service to some of our residents who show up and especially perhaps some of our elderly residents that are having legal issues, whether it be with Code Enforcement, etc. that really don't understand what's happening; and a program whereby these Coral Gables attorneys could help those people would be fantastic. Although it doesn't come up as often, but when it does, it would be great to set that up. So, I'll work with Hugo on that, hopefully we can come back with something.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you very much for the initiative.

Vice Mayor Lago: Good job Commissioner.