

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-7
May 31, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-7 [Start: 5:40 p.m.]

A discussion regarding quarterly reports on the condition of city buildings.
(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Item G-7. I'll be very brief. I would like to thank the City Manager, Zeida, our Asset Manager, and city staff for their commitment to ensuring that our city's assets are meeting the terms of their leasing agreements. The reason I've added this item to the agenda is to ensure that our city assets are not only protected but monitored on a regular basis. Presently, I do not believe we are keeping detailed audits of the condition of our properties. I would like to request for staff to begin maintaining a quarterly report. This report should include a list of all the properties the city leases/owns and should be updated on a quarterly basis. Any maintenance concerns or items that should be adhered to per the lease agreement, should be noted on this report as action items needing to be addressed by tenants. Let me explain to you the purpose of this request. Its only beneficial to the city because number one, allows us to properly record and maintain documentation of any concerns; number two, ensure that our assets are maintained to our city standards. In the long run, this will benefit the city and will allow us to protect and preserve our properties. I also would like to request for this report to be shared with my office, as well, so that I can review these reports. While I think we are doing a great job on many fronts, I think that as

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you've seen with certain bad actors that want to take advantage, they don't allow us into the facilities, they don't allow us into back rooms to see what's going on, case in point, the Country Club. I don't think anybody ever stepped into Burger Bob's to see what's actually going on in the back of Burger Bob's. To find out that the fire alarm was not working in the Country Club, anybody who is in construction knows that that is not Zeida's expertise, but I don't expect that to be her expertise. We need to have Zeida, who is our Asset Manager, along with somebody from the Construction Department who will visit some of these properties on a quarterly basis. I think at a minimum, we should maybe visit each property twice a year. I think its critically important, because when you start writing down these updates, cracks on the walls, uncleanly site, issues with the pool, we can document these and when we have to, go legal if we have to in the future, with any of our tenants, if we have to put somebody on notice, we have years of documentation which will show a path of non-compliance in regards to their agreement. So, Mr. Manager, if that is something that you think is appropriate, I would love to see how we can assist your team in making sure that these reports are done on a quarterly basis, twice a year, whatever you think is appropriate.

City Manager Iglesias: We can do them Mayor, some of them quarterly, some of them twice a year, if it's appropriate.

Mayor Lago: For example, we should be visiting the Biltmore on a quarterly basis.

City Manager Iglesias: I think some of the bigger projects and especially the ones that we don't own, specifically we should visit on a quarterly basis. Some of the ones that, for instance, parking garages things like this, that we are under bigger control, we can do maybe every six months, but we will do some of the major work every quarter, I think is a great idea.

Mayor Lago: And I'll give you an example, the Palace, 99-year lease; Merrick Park, 99-year lease; Biltmore, these are major city assets, like just because we own the land, they still should be maintained accordingly. We have a portion of that asset, and they are tied within the agreement with the city. So, I want to give our team, which is incredibly competent and does a great job, I want to give them all the assets and whatever resources they need to make sure that they can keep our tenants in line, to make sure that we don't get ourselves into situations that we have recently where just because we are not searching every back room that we encounter, for example, that the fire alarm doesn't work. Imagine if that historic building would have burnt down. And that's easy, you look at a fire panel, you know if its green or if its red. It was like that for years possibly.

City Manager Iglesias: We were going to assess that, but then the default happened and took care of the problem. We can certainly do it on a quarterly basis.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think it's a great idea. My only question for you is, and I think it's what you just said which is, work with the Manager on, instead of just saying quarterly for every asset, what makes sense.

Mayor Lago: Listen, twice a year, whatever it may be.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes. If you do it quarterly for every single asset, it's like a full department, you are going to need to dedicate.

Mayor Lago: You made a good point. Maybe you pick ten assets.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes, whatever, exactly. Pick the right ones.

Mayor Lago: Ten assets that, for example, you know that you don't need to go to the Fink Studio, because you have staff at the Fink Studio. We just did the Fink Studio. But for certain properties that we have leases with that we haven't reviewed, I think it's our obligation that we visit them. So maybe it has to be twice a year, some maybe four times a year, some once a year.

Vice Mayor Mena: And I think depending on what you find the first time you go, then that might dictate when you have to go back, because if you see things are in good shape, maybe you're comfortable, but if you see things are a mess, then you might have to go back in the next quarter or so. It's a good idea.

Commissioner Menendez: I have a question related to that. Another historic asset is the library, we own the land and I think its leased to the county. So, I guess properties like that where another government entity perhaps as lease can still do that, doesn't have to be a private entity.

City Manager Iglesias: We put quite a bit of money into that project. I think what we can do, Mayor, is the bigger assets go quarterly and some of the smaller assets that we have, maybe a little more comfortable and go twice a year.

Mayor Lago: Again, across the board, like you just gave an example, the library. If Zeida goes to visit the library and sees that they have issues in regard to ADA or issues that one of the police offices drive by and sees that they have issues with exterior lighting at night. Those are things that we can write the county, write the Mayor a letter and say listen, you need to address these issues because again, it's putting the city or our residents or our visitors in potential harm's way. Again, I would like for the Manager, potentially at the next Commission meeting to just give me a little guidance on how we can kind of get this done. Like the Vice Mayor said, it does not have to be prescribed. Some properties could be two times a year, some could be one, fine with me. Moving onto G-11.

City Manager Iglesias: And Mayor, I think some of the larger projects maybe quarterly, they are more important; some of the ones that we have more control, it can be on a twice a year basis. So we will get back to you. I think it's a great idea.

Commissioner Menendez: Forgive me, just for my own knowledge in terms of assets. Coral Gables Preparatory, Coral Gables Elementary, who owns that land?

City Attorney Ramos: Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Commissioner Menendez: That one they own. Thank you.

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