

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-7
September 13, 2023
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 Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Karelia Carbonell

Agenda Item F-7 [3:08 p.m.]

Discussion considering the naming of a City Park after Sallye Jude and Mayor Dorothy Thomson. (Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Item F-7. So, I'd like to see and I'd like the consideration of my colleagues on the Commission even though it's a typo, I would like to for you to consider the opportunity of naming a park and having staff look at what opportunities we have working with the Garden Club to find a suitable location for a park for Sallye Jude, that's number one; and number two, another park and opportunity after Mayor Dorothy Thomson. I don't need to give you, their resumes. Everybody knows who these individuals are, incredibly outstanding people. They've left an incredible legacy here in the city and I think that they would be right for a park naming, especially after everything they've done for the Commission. So, I'm asking that the Manager work with the Parks Department to essentially find a location that is suitable and bring it back to the Commission for our consideration, if it is the will of the Commission.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: I think it's an excellent idea.

Commissioner Castro: I think its an excellent idea if Mayor Dorothy Thomson obviously wants this to be done.

Vice Mayor Anderson: She does.

Commissioner Menendez: Absolutely well deserved. As part of the process, if you obviously engage Mayor Thomson, get feedback from her. She was here earlier, and I know she had appointments, but two very, very, very well-deserved residents as part of our history and we're blessed to have the opportunity to do something like this, but I just want to make sure we engage the parties.

Vice Mayor Anderson: She has a specific idea in her head. Don't ask me the name off the top of my head. She has a specific idea.

City Manager Iglesias: Does the Commission wish us to bring it back to the Commission or through the process?

Vice Mayor Anderson: I would say go through the process and figure out where – talk to the families, talk to the Garden Club about which parks and then bring it back to us. Save us a lot of phone calls.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think it's a great idea. The only other name that I think we should add to the list is Roxy Bolton. We were close to getting Lisbon Park named after Roxy back, I guess that was 12 years ago, 10 years ago, the Mayor was trying to get that done, but we didn't have support on the Commission to get it done at the time, but I think that's something else we should consider.

Parks Director Couceyro: We have a process; we can do that process through all of them. There are a few things that go through it – the guidelines going through, the advisory board, we can do that for all of them. We've done it before, we did it for Betsy Adams, we'd done it for quite a few, we did it for Barker. So, we've been able to do it.

Mayor Lago: So, can I get a motion.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll second.

City Clerk Urquia: So, before the vote, the Commission we have a member of the public requesting to speak on the item.

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Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Its Ms. Karelia Carbonell.

Mayor Lago: Karelia.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Carbonell.

Ms. Carbonell: Hi everyone. Yes, I'm here. Just give me one second so I can pull up what I'd like to say. Sorry, I didn't realize I was going to be right on.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We're moving fast today.

Ms. Carbonell: Really fast. You know what, I don't have to really read it, because first of all, I do thank the Mayor for bringing this wonderful idea and the ladies are very, very well deserved. I would never question that, and of course, a park is always a wonderful way to recognize individuals. I did send this to all of you, as far as my suggestions, and we have so many – at least we have a handful at this point, of women that either have already passed or are still active in our community, but are also well deserved, and so, I want you all to consider really as we are considering parks and green spaces, to consider an area where it could be a memorial park and a recognition garden all in one that we can recognize, you know, and again, comes to mind a few names, one that's very active still is Dolly McIntyre. Dolly McIntyre was the founder of, not only the Villagers, not only Dade Heritage Trust, but she co-founded the Florida Trust and she's still active in our community, and I believe that these are – she's a person that can benefit from a recognition while she's still active. The other women, obviously, just the recently passed Jeannett Slesnick, also Roxcy Bolton, you know, is one that she was a national icon. Our first female Commissioner is also somebody that – again, we should recognize and of course Arva Moore Parks, which there has been conversations about having a park named after Arva, but I am surprised that her name has not come up in a conversation officially and I know that there's people working on that. I know the Landmark Advisory Board was very much strongly encouraging this. So please consider, please consider as you all are thinking about spaces and green spaces, please consider something like that, that it could serve as a repository for these meritorious women. Not to – I mean men are also, obviously very meritorious in their own right, but since we're talking about women right now, please consider that. So, I thank you for that consideration.

Mayor Lago: Karelia, thank you very much. In regard to Roxcy, we've been trying for about a decade and I think that we have the Commission now to make it happen. She's been thrown into the mix, with all due respect, with the two individuals that I brought forward today. We have a lot of opportunities now, especially with a lot of the parks that are coming online in downtown that we're going to be adding, hopefully we'll find a location for everybody. The good thing is that

we're talking about women who've done a lot in this community and deserve the recognition. Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Mayor, I have to ask for one slight amendment that I forgot to include with Sallye Jude, Dr. Jude. The Jude family would like both of them in the park.

Mayor Lago: That's fine. Again, the more the merrier.

Commissioner Menendez: I just want to piggyback on what Karelia said. Perhaps for the Centennial, part of the Centennial celebration we can have some type of exhibit, maybe with the Museum, to highlight the women of the last hundred years that made an impact, going back to George Merrick days, because we look at modern times in terms of elected officials, but women that were part of the beginning of Coral Gables from that time and maybe have some kind of an exhibit to recognize the history of leadership through women in our community. Just an idea I want to piggyback on what Karelia said.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I think they are already on that.

Commissioner Menendez: Okay. Good.

Mayor Lago: So, we have a motion and a second.

City Clerk Urquia: All in favor.

All: Aye.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.