

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item C
April 14, 2026
Public Safety Building, CMR
2151 Salzedo Street, 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)

Ted Dieffenbacher
Connor Pemaville
Dawn Fine
Joan Valdez
Jean Connolly

Agenda Item C [Start: 11:10 a.m.]

Public Comment

Mayor Lago: Public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: First speaker this morning, Mr. Mayor, is Ted Dieffenbacher, I believe.

Mayor Lago: So, if I may, I just want to make sure that everyone is aware when you come up for public comment, we give you three minutes to speak about a city-related issue. And if you speak now, we ask you to not speak about the same issue when that item may come up again. But if you have to leave, for example, now and you can't make the item because it may be later on in the morning or in the afternoon. Please use the opportunity for this reasonable opportunity to speak on the issue. Good morning, sir. Thank you for being here with us.

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Mr. Dieffenbacher: I'll be very brief.

Mayor Lago: No, no, three minutes.

Mr. Dieffenbacher: Granada Golf Course is 101 years old. The oldest nine-hole course in Florida. It is beautiful, not just for golfers, but also for runners, dog walkers, bikers and community in general. Located in the heart of the city, it is visible to all who drive, walk or run by. Importantly, it is a community course whose proceeds go into the city and for whom all benefit. It is a place for great golfers, hackers, women's group, kids learning the game and even 80-year-olds like me. The Gables already has two 18-hole country clubs, very unusual for a town of 60,000, but affordable only to those who can afford it. But Granada is unique, a community course. Adjustments in all organizations are necessary from time to time, and they're taking place right now. But please don't try or inadvertently make it into a mini country club. Burger Bob's was popular for a reason. It served the community. Don't lose that vibe. Thank you, sir.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Next speaker, Mr. Mayor, is Connor Pemaville.

Mayor Lago: Good morning, sir.

Mr. Pemaville: Good morning, commission. I'll be pretty brief. Here this morning as a lifelong South Florida resident. I've lived in Coral Gables for most of my life, all that I can remember of it. And I'm here today to speak against the city police's cooperation with ICE through the 287G agreement. Since this agreement, many like it have taken effect in Florida. South Florida has become one of the nation's leading hotspots for immigration arrests under the Trump administration. It bothers me very greatly that this is taking place in the city that I call home and that the taxes I pay are going to support programs like this. Perhaps it's a naive request, but I would just like for this partnership to end and for Commission to do whatever they can to restore this trust in our law enforcement, because I feel that this doesn't make our community safer and erodes trust in law enforcement. So, thank you for your time.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, sir.

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

Mayor Lago: All right. We'll close the public comment section.

[Note: The Mayor reopened Public Comment to accommodate some speakers who arrived late]

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, before you move forward, you had a couple of speakers.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, I'm going to get back to that right now. Thank you, sir. Thank you for bringing to my attention, by the way. I appreciate it. We have a few speakers on the item on the public comment section. I didn't make it, so I'm just going to go back, open the public comment section. It's two speakers and we'll hear them out.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, sir. First speaker, Joan Valdez.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Valdez, please join us. You can either speak now or you can speak in.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Okay, perfect.

Ms. Joan Valdez: Hello. Good morning. Mayor, Mr. Mayor, commissioners.

Ms. Dawn Fine: Hi, I'm the second speaker, Dawn Fine, which is on the card. Thank you. I'm here on behalf of...

City Clerk Urquia: I apologize. If you could please state your name and address for the record before speaking.

Ms. Dawn Fine: Yes. Dawn Fine, 5300 Fairchild Way, Coral Gables, Florida, 33156.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Go ahead.

Ms. Dawn Fine: Thank you for allowing us to speak. I'm speaking on behalf about supporting Commissioner Castro's proposed F-12 through F-15 resolutions, excuse me, where these resolutions pertain to the Granada Golf Course. I'm one of the officers on the Granada Women's Golf Association. There are two women ladies golf associations, just to educate everyone, that currently have been, we just celebrated our 60th anniversary being at Granada. We were established in 1966, and we just celebrated our 60th anniversary last year with our special guest, former Mayor Don Slesnick, who spoke about his mother, Ann Slesnick Lidell, along with Kay Berenger, who started both the Granada and the Biltmore Women's League, as well as the Coral Gables Ladies Association Golf Association. We're here today, all of you members of mostly our senior citizens, but we're here to protect our tee times, which the ladies play for the last 60 years. On Mondays from eight to nine, we're talking about six tee times with slots for four players. And on Friday, I believe there's four tee times for the Coral Gables Golf Association women's, four slots for four players, 16. We pay green fees. We pay the increased green fees that they just implemented of April 1st. And the majority are senior citizens and retirees. And I believe one of the core values in the mission statement for City Beautiful is to promote the health and well-being of seniors. And these women, there's like 80-year-olds walking the course. And we are requesting that these tee times be protected. We don't have to call. They can't afford to join the Coral Gables Country Club at 2100 to have a request a tee time a week in advance. That's not going to happen. That would be an undue burden placed on approximately 85 members. So, we want to protect the

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limited tee times. It's at eight to nine in the morning on Monday morning. So, the city's getting the revenue, and everyone shows up. There's never been a case, maybe one woman, so they're not losing any money. I just want to read that we, you know, that the discount for senior, we want to be on par with the Biltmore, has a Women's Ladies League. So, we would like -- they get a discount on the fees. So, we would, what I want to say is that we understand that Granada has been on the low side of changing green fee, of charging green fees. However, a discount to show the members, whether they're Coral Gable resident, which a majority are or not, would be warranted to show how much the city values its senior citizens as it does its veterans by offering them a 50% discount. So currently the Biltmore offers the Women's League a 20 percent discount on nine holes and 30 percent on 18 holes. Those are the facts. I don't know why we don't understand why after 60 years of tradition and supporting this gem of a golf course for the community and for the Coral Gables residents and the seniors, why they would want to take away this great community building legacy.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Ms. Dawn Fine: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Ms. Dawn Fine: Now, Joan, do you have anything or Susan?

Ms. Joan Valdez: The only thing I want to put, I'm speaking to you on behalf of the seniors affected by the changes in fees and scheduling. It is tradition. I've been living in the City of Coral Gables since 1987, and I've probably been playing at Granada since well before that. It's tradition for the City of Coral Gables to give senior discounts at the movies, at restaurants, at the theaters, at entertainment and golf. And seniors are the backbone of this community. Many seniors are on fixed incomes, budgets, and we know that good health is the highest priority. Golf is an excellent way to stay healthy. Why? It's impact free for the most part, hard to get hurt on a golf course. Golf is an excellent way because it involves walking, fresh air. We were able to use the course during COVID. Socialization, most important. See this group? It's a small, it's a handful of women. We've become really friendly over the years. We support ourselves. We support each other during times of trouble. And it's no isolation. We go to the golf course on Monday mornings and Friday mornings and we have someone to talk to. So, I think you've been seeing articles about loneliness and isolation. It's a real thing. So, the City of Coral Gables has recognized seniors by building the AAC, the Adult Activity Center on Andalusia across from the Palace. And it has free parking. Trolleys go there. Freebies go there. People walk there. And in that facility, there are, there's all kinds of activities as well. Many seniors are not technically able to use iPhones, to use computers, to use anything really that's techy. How do I know? I used to teach iPhone skills at OLLI at the University of Miami. And many seniors got their iPhones as presents from their kids. And the kids said, Oh, stop using that flip phone. It's ridiculous. Use this. And of course they didn't know how. And I was, I taught them, I taught several, probably more than a hundred seniors at, at OLLI to

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use the iPhone. Why am I telling you this? Because you want to have people scheduling. The new rule, there's a scheduling problem that they have to schedule maybe one week before. You can't do it without a computer or an iPhone. And that's about it. I mean, I think, really, please consider our requests. Thank you very much. Good morning.

Ms. Susan Bloom: Just one more, just a little history on our-

Mayor Lago: What is your address?

Ms. Susan Bloom: I'm sorry. My name is Susan Bloom and I'm the Treasurer of the Greenway Women's Golf Association.

Mayor Lago: But what is your address? Your address, your home address?

Ms. Susan Bloom: 2645 South Bayshore Drive.

Mayor Lago: Sorry, what?

Ms. Susan Bloom: 2645 South Bayshore Drive.

Mayor Lago: Okay, perfect. Thank you.

Ms. Susan Bloom: Okay. So, we just celebrated our 60th anniversary last year with our special guest, former Mayor Don Slesnick. It's interesting to know that his mother in the 30s, 1936 to be exact, started this golf association, both at the Granada Women's League and at the Biltmore. He came to speak and spoke about, in memory of his mother, Anne Slesnick-Lidel, who was also a part of the Coral Gables Women's Golf Association and Bridge Club. So together with both of these associations, we're celebrating 60 and 90 years of history of women's golf. Thank you very much for listening to us today. Thank you very much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you for being here.

Ms. Bloom: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Ms. Jean Connelly: Just to say something quickly, my name is Jean Connelly, 100 Andalusia Avenue, Coral Gables. Since I retired from teaching, I played for 11 years, and I was astounded when I first got there that there were women who were in their 80s and their early 90s who are still playing golf. It's a very, very valuable asset to the adult community. I myself am 80 years old. I walk the course, and I am still in touch with one of my dear friends, Shirley Adams, whom I played golf with 97 years old. She is unable to play golf and regrets it deeply but always remembers dearly the way she was able to make friends and community and be of value to the community at Granada Golf Course. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Okay, we'll close the public comment.