

**0-City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-11
May 10, 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

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Police Chief, Ed Hudak

Public Speaker(s)

Joanne Meagher

Agenda Item G-11 [4:31 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission authorizing Neighborhood Safety Aides (NSAs) to continue assisting with code enforcement matters.

(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Okay, moving on to G-1.

Mayor Lago: Moving on to -- that was G-10 -- G-11, my item

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May 10, 2022

Agenda Item G-11 - Resolution of the City Commission authorizing Neighborhood Safety Aides (NSAs) to continue assisting with code enforcement matters.

City Attorney Ramos: A resolution of the City Commission authorizing Neighborhood Safety Aides to continue assisting with code enforcement matters.

Mayor Lago: So, I put this on the agenda. Very simply, I love my neighborhood safety aide. My guy is the best. He is on top of it. He speaks to all the residents. It's a wonderful, wonderful opportunity to really engage with the residents. But I see that he's even spoken to me sometimes about code enforcement issues and about potentially having the opportunity to not hand out tickets. He doesn't want to be deputized. But he says, "Vince, I could be a good resource. I'm driving the neighborhood, and if I see something egregious, I could notify staff." For example, if someone has their boat parked in the front of the yard, if someone's doing illegal construction on a Sunday or a Saturday, which we don't allow exterior -- on Sundays, we don't allow any construction at all. This is a good opportunity for the neighborhood safety aides to notify their department and Code Enforcement. And we can duplicate the efforts of code enforcement and just continue to work on things that are affecting our City, like the beautification of the City, the compliance of our City. So, I wanted to see if my colleagues on the Commission were interested. I don't want to deputize them. I don't want them handing out tickets. I just want them to basically assist in any way or form in our efforts to enforce the Code and make sure that people are complying in this community.

Commissioner Anderson: I think this is a win-win. It's a long time coming, and I'm in favor of it.

Commissioner Menendez: And I'm in favor too. I think authorizing them to do it, I know they'll still be under the management of our Administration to see how to make it work and make it the most efficient and effective way. So, from our perspective, to authorize the Administration to make this happen...

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: I think it's a great step.

Vice Mayor Mena: To what extent are -- in other words, this is not deputizing to give a ticket or anything like that.

Mayor Lago: No.

City Manager Iglesias: No.

Vice Mayor Mena: They would just be calling staff. To what extent is that already happening?

City Manager Iglesias: That is -- we have asked our neighborhood safety aides, when they see a policing issue, to call police. And when they see a code enforcement issue, to call code enforcement, so that's currently happening.

Mayor Lago: But I'll tell you what's not happening because I spoke to my neighborhood safety aide. They told me, listen, police does not want neighborhood safety aides to be engaged. So, you want to --? Chief, you want to come up?

Police Chief Hudak: Absolutely. I'll address that. I can address...

Mayor Lago: No, I mean -- but listen...

Police Chief Hudak: No, no, no. I just -- I think there's a (INAUDIBLE)...

Mayor Lago: I'm telling you what I've heard from the neighborhood safety aides.

Police Chief Hudak: And if the neighborhood safety aide portrayed it the way you did, that he said to you, then he's not doing his job as the SOPs. And I think that's where the Manager has

said, we are -- there's some unintended consequences here. And I think that's what I'm concerned about, is that I had an 84-year-old man going up to people with dogs without their leash. That's his job, but it is not intended at all to issue citations. If the NSA has said that and that he does not have access to the police department -- he's on our radio system. I can tell you of the 155 times we were on one neighborhood, the NSAs were calling in some of the issues that police and code enforcement respond to. My only concern about this -- and listen, we're going to do whatever you all decide. I just -- his -- the responsibilities in our SOP is -- and I quote from our Neighborhood Team Policing Unit. Understanding community problems and effectively engaging to solve them; two, attending the community meetings; three, proactively addressing active ongoing crime trends and traffic patterns, working special events and/or critical events, communicating with residents on a regular basis, and assisting in accomplishing all other departmental needs. So...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: My point is that I believe, to the Manager's point, this is what they're doing. I -- especially in Code Enforcement, I think this is some of an issue, and this is one of the unintended consequences.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so...

Unidentified Speaker: Okay.

Mayor Lago: (INAUDIBLE) you're done because I want to be very clear that -- I wasn't able to finish because of basically this transition. I saw the Clerk look over there, and then obviously, everything was moving in a different direction. So, let me address this very quickly. The neighborhood -- if we have -- if this is already happening, then I asked for a public records request of every single time that an NSA has submitted a list of code enforcement. The answer is zero. You don't have to do a public records request. The answer's zero because they haven't because

they're told not to do it, okay. So, let's get away from this. Let's discuss the issue at hand. I know they haven't because they haven't been doing it, and it's a resource that we have there. And all I'm saying -- and I preface my statement -- is I don't want to deputize them. I don't want them to confront anybody. I don't want them to knock on somebody's door. I just want them to on their phone say, "Hey, I found somebody working on a Sunday." Call staff or write an email, you know, someone is doing this. "Hey, they're running an illegal car wash on Urbino," you know, or they're doing this, or they're putting a roof on a property on a Sunday. Call the Code Enforcement Officer. You have these individuals working in our neighborhoods. They're very well-versed with all the residents, and I think it's an opportunity to double down on all these forces that we have working in the neighborhoods. They know the neighborhoods almost as good as the police officers do. Why not take advantage of this opportunity? Again, I'm not asking them to be deputized. I'm not asking them to step in for police officers. Remember when we got NSAs the first time? People were concerned are NSAs going to take over for police officers. Have they taken over from police officers? They never have. They work underneath the police. They're just another resource in this community that has aided us in having the best city we possibly can in Miami-Dade County. So, that's my simple point, you know. If there is a reason to not do this, I'd love to hear it, and I'm all ears.

Vice Mayor Mena: What is the unintended consequence that you...

Police Chief Hudak: Well, the unintended consequence...

Vice Mayor Mena: Are concerned about?

Police Chief Hudak: Is this. Right now, by State statute -- and this has really quelled the neighbor on neighbor dispute that we share -- or flare up, I should say, once in a while when they start using Code as a weapon against their neighbors. Because now, anonymous complaints cannot be acted on -- and I'll defer to the City Attorney -- if it's an anonymous complaint. The moment that that

complaint gets related to an NSA and that NSA calls Code Enforcement, we are going to move forward with code enforcement. Got it. So, that's going to put the Code Enforcement person in between a dispute that the Police Department should be handling.

Mayor Lago: But my question to you is, didn't you say that NSAs are already being used right now by police -- by Code Enforcement already?

Police Chief Hudak: Yes, sir, by their observations, so as...

Mayor Lago: But have they submitted a list of items on a weekly basis, you know, saying, "Look, these are code enforcement issues"?

Police Chief Hudak: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Because they told me -- they're telling me that they're not allowed to.

Police Chief Hudak: If that one person is doing that and because they're -- the Code -- the NSAs come under mine, we can open up an investigation if they're not doing their job or not informed (INAUDIBLE). But so far, in August 25th of 2021, when we got into the dumping violations, Code Enforcement was notified by the NSAs about a dumping and violation in progress. One code enforcement was then notified about furniture being disposed of in a trash pit. There were 33 notifications and educations of residents about proper disposal of cardboard recycling, submitted a GovQA request to fill in the trash pits and requested of the homeowners. They continued to work with those homeowners as far as breaking down -- when it came down to the recycling and cardboard boxes. One of their recommendations that came back up was also how do we assist elderly residents that say that they don't have the strength to break down the cardboard boxes. We also talked about handing out the flyers, as I stated earlier. In one neighborhood of the 155 incidents that police and our officers responded, about a half of those were coming from the Code

Enforcement officers that were regularly intermixing with the residents. During the moving of packages when we were using them to target the porch pirates, as we call it, they moved about 1,200 packages during the Christmastime by going up on the people's property. My only concern --and the unintended consequences is, look, we can have them do it, but these are non-sworn people that will have to learn the Code of what they observe. And if in fact they observe something, as this discussion goes on, Mayor, is that if they don't call it in, how do we want me -- how do you want me, as the Chief, to address them for not -- or looking the other way on a code enforcement? Because the people that are entitled to give warnings are the Code Enforcement officers, and there's seven of them...

Mayor Lago: I mean, that's...

Police Chief Hudak: For the whole city.

Mayor Lago: With all due respect, I mean, that's a lot of hypothetical there. I mean, how do you expect me to do something if they don't do it? I'll wait for that moment to happen. But you're telling me they are already doing code enforcement, and I understand they did packages, which is great. I understand that they did the issues with the education for cardboard boxes. I'm not asking them -- anybody to be deputized. I'm just asking them to engage with Code Enforcement and say, look, we have these issues in this neighborhood, and we're going to keep an eye out for it. What are the issues? Illegal dumping, trash being put on a swale, you know, two days early, or a day late, issues like that that I think are simple. Illegal construction happening on a Sunday. But I mean, if that's an issue that you're concerned about, I don't think there's anything malign or anything that could potentially hurt the City. I think it's just another set of eyes and ears focusing in on quality control.

Commissioner Fors: Is -- I'm trying to wrap my head around the issue here. Is it that --? Right now, our NSAs sort of informally assist with code enforcement issues, may call to advise Code

Enforcement about something, may not. And that what this resolution seeks to do is to make it a formal part of their job to report. Is that...

Police Chief Hudak: Well, the...

Commissioner Fors: To report those things?

Police Chief Hudak: Right now, the process for the NSA is to report anything is to the NTL, which is the neighborhood team leader, which has a cell phone for all of those neighbors. So, if the NSA witnesses something, they talk to a police official, and the police official -- as we do on Airbnbs and everything else -- will contact Code Enforcement. That's really their first warning. The idea of the NSAs is strictly to be eyes and ears to let us know and to assist if they see something. The NTLs, the neighborhood team leaders have the access to other department heads throughout the City to get speed humps done, to call -- and they sit on those meetings. I just think if the NTLs aren't doing their job, I'll address the NTLs and what they're doing. When we have -- when we use the NSAs on specific targets, whether it be the cardboard or the packages, or the dog parks and the leases, we've rearranged their schedules to be there, but we still want them in those neighborhoods. I just don't think -- I think the unintended consequence is to put them in any adversarial way that they're responsible for a code violation. So, some of the NSAs -- and they've been following this -- is like, so you want me to be nice to somebody, but the moment I call Code Enforcement, this person is going to get cited because of something I did. That kind of breaks down our goodwill ambassadors. And that's my point is, if they continue to do their job, as the Manager has stated on the record, that they are contacting our neighborhood team leaders, then those team dealers have a responsibility to make sure that Code is following up and working with Code. Mayor, if...

Mayor Lago: No, listen, if you -- I mean, again, I just see it as -- I see it as much simpler than that. I see it as, the day ends, the day ends -- like, I mean, listen, I'll give you an example. I drive

through our city. When I see a Code issue, a code enforcement issue, I'll write it down, and I'll send an email to Ms. Cabrera and copy my chief of staff on the issue. And I'll even copy the City Attorney, and I'll copy the City Manager. And I'll say, look, this is a code enforcement issue. Case in point, my neighbor a few blocks away from me, my own neighbor was closing their garage on a Sunday with brick, with bricks and mortar. I called Code Enforcement. I'm sorry. You know, it's a Sunday, and you have to have a carport or a garage in the City of Coral Gables. Code Enforcement came, and they dealt with the issue, and they had to repair and put back together the way the garage was. Should I have not called Code Enforcement? Should I have let it be because I don't want to lose a vote with a person who lives in the City? No, my responsibility, as an elected official and as a person who represents this community is I have to make sure that we comply, and that we hold up to the standards of the City Beautiful. Now, if you don't want to -- if you think it's not appropriate, I'm not asking to deputize.

Police Chief Hudak: No, I...

Mayor Lago: I just -- I'm literally talking about just maybe they get four or five things in a day, and they'll write an email at the end of day. Hey, listen, it was a great day on, you know, the following 15, 20 blocks and...

Vice Mayor Mena: Are you...?

Mayor Lago: I'm just writing -- I'm just sending you the following four issues that I saw. I saw illegal construction, I saw this, I saw that, and that's it. It's on the record. It's a public record. And you know, no one is confronting anybody. No one is doing anything. I just think it's a benefit. We have this great resource; we might as well use it. But if it's an issue -- I didn't think it was going to be this much of an issue. But if it's that much of an issue, you know, I'll pull back my resolution.

Commissioner Anderson: I think we actually have more of an issue with, you know, not doing anything about it because residents are complaining about littering. They're, you know, complaining about the eyesores around, and here we are just wasting a resource that can be the eyes and ears for these Code Enforcement officers who are extremely overworked. They can't possibly be in all these neighborhoods to see this. You're just relaying...

Police Chief Hudak: Well, they don't get calls, Commissioner.

Commissioner Anderson: You're relaying information. That's what it is; it's a relay. Here, here's a possible construction violation, or something like that. But in the meantime, the rest of the residents have to suffer.

Police Chief Hudak: I understand that, Commissioner.

Commissioner Anderson: There's...

Police Chief Hudak: My...

Commissioner Anderson: I have pictures of sofas been sitting out there for five days, you know. Should -- you know, should it not be information conveyed to Code Enforcement? Or should Code Enforcement now be required to go up and down every single street? You already have a person on the street there doing it. You're wasting time. You're wasting resources. This is not deputizing them to issue tickets. The decision is made by Code Enforcement as to what -- to how they handle it. It's information.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah. Is your --? I mean, I'm trying to understand your concern. I understand it -- I somewhat understand it. But are you worried that like, you're going to have neighbors using the NSA to...

Police Chief Hudak: Yes. That's part of it.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: They...

Mayor Lago: But they already use Code Enforcement.

Police Chief Hudak: They...

Mayor Lago: They use Code Enforcement. They call Code Enforcement.

Police Chief Hudak: And they do the Police Department too. Mayor, with all due respect...

Mayor Lago: They use me.

Police Chief Hudak: I understand that.

Mayor Lago: They call my office.

Police Chief Hudak: We all -- none of the NSAs that I have know the Code.

Vice Mayor Mena: That's a different issue.

Police Chief Hudak: That's -- they don't...

Vice Mayor Mena: Not to say...

Police Chief Hudak: They don't know what a Code violation is. We have never told them, if you see a dirty roof, you need to turn this in.

Mayor Lago: But I'm...

Police Chief Hudak: They...

Mayor Lago: But I'm talking about -- and I'm sorry to interrupt you -- but I'm talking simple things.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, but maybe...

Mayor Lago: Like garbage in my neighborhood gets picked up on a Tuesday. Garage is picked up on a Tuesday. You know that you're not allowed to put it out until Monday evening. Maybe they put it on a Sunday. It happens in my neighborhood all the time. When I drive through it, I'll see, and I will call Code Enforcement on people in my neighborhood. And they will learn, and they will get a -- they will get a warning, and then they're usually new people in the neighborhood. And we welcome them with a smile, but they have to learn the rules, because if you don't, then our city becomes like any other city. There's reasons there's rules. So, I -- listen, again, I did not expect this much conversation about something so benign. I thought it was -- that it would be something that would be welcome, but at the end of day, if it's something that police doesn't want, and it doesn't make sense...

Vice Mayor Mena: Does it make...

Mayor Lago: I'm more than willing to...

Vice Mayor Mena: Does it make sense to have --? Would it help if there was like a finite number of issues of priority, in other words, where you're not tasking this NSA with being an expert on the entire code.

Commissioner Fors: Being a Code Enforcement officer.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right, that it's just like, hey, look, you see cardboard in the swale, or you see work on the weekends, outdoor exterior work...

Police Chief Hudak: They don't work weekends, so they're Monday through Friday.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay.

Police Chief Hudak: So, that's -- yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Fair enough.

Police Chief Hudak: Unless -- and again, unless the Manager...

Vice Mayor Mena: Would it help if there was a discreet list of priority code enforcement issues that are simple? Like I don't -- I'm just asking if there's, you know, something that would alleviate your concern, where it's not, you know, a neighbor telling the NSA that their neighbor's building a playhouse in the back in the setback or something. You know what I mean? Like, I get that that is probably beyond the -- what we'd want...

Police Chief Hudak: Of the NSA.

Vice Mayor Mena: The NSA to do.

Police Chief Hudak: However, the NTL and the way the Neighborhood Team Policing Unit was structured is specifically these people have officers that are assigned to these exact same neighborhoods. And we give out the cellphone that is directly to that officer, that they can call it. And that officer works with Code Enforcement, Fire, whatever it may be.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think residents have that.

Police Chief Hudak: Residents have -- when they give out these cards, they get a card with the picture of their NS -- of their NTL and a cellphone number that we provide.

Vice Mayor Mena: But I think you're -- I think -- and I understand some of your concern. But I think you're very much focused on a resident reporting another resident through...

Police Chief Hudak: That's part of it, yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right. I think a lot of what I'm hearing described here is less that and more eyes and ears, more I'm driving, I see cardboard on the swale. Can't have that; call Code Enforcement. I'm driving. I see the trash is out three days early; call Code Enforcement, not so much neighbors reporting neighbors. But just, you know...

Mayor Lago: I see a boat parked in the front of a house...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Over a weekend, call Code Enforcement.

Vice Mayor Mena: To me, look...

Mayor Lago: Simple things that are just so obvious that don't require a person to understand the Code.

Vice Mayor Mena: I think this is an important issue. You know, would you --? And I know it's late in the day. I'm not -- I don't want to rush it. Do you want to defer, so we can have a more robust discussion on this next meeting?

Mayor Lago: Yeah, listen, I would love...

Vice Mayor Mena: Or you want to just...

Mayor Lago: What I would love to have is a plan brought back where we could encompass...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Five to ten issues that the NSAs could review and could be tasked with, which are very simple. I mean, literally, it has to be so simple. You're in the golf cart. You're looking to your left, you're looking to your right, and you see -- I'm not asking you to do anything complex, like where the roof is too dirty, or whether, I don't know, something is planted on the swale where it shouldn't be planted on the swale. I'm talking about simple things that are so obvious...

Vice Mayor Mena: Priority issues.

Mayor Lago: Priority issues.

Vice Mayor Mena: And maybe to alleviate your concern, maybe if they're getting a call from a neighbor about whatever, maybe their protocol should be, call the NTL.

Police Chief Hudak: That's done by radio so...

Vice Mayor Mena: Or whatever.

Police Chief Hudak: They don't have computers. They have radios, which we issue, and they're talking to the police dispatcher. So, when those issues -- they check out with community contacts, and then they'll talk to their assigned NTL, the neighborhood team leader, and they work that neighborhood, if you will, as a team.

City Manager Iglesias: They have currently been working on the cardboard, on the dumping of furniture, and things like that, which are -- putting out cardboard hangers and things like that, so...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, well, why don't you guys talk, work on a plan that...

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: And then let's talk about it some more in the next meeting.

Commissioner Menendez: We have the authority to, I guess, authorize. The Administration is one that implements. So, come back -- the Administrator come back with us with a plan on how it can be implemented, not stepping into the area that the Chief is concerned about, but still being effective in getting through what the Mayor wants to accomplish for the benefit of the community. So, just come back with us with a plan. We can review, discuss, and hopefully, we can authorize something that works for everyone.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: I have a member of the public requesting to speak on this, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Who would like to speak?

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Joanne Meagher.

Commissioner Fors: And by the way, it doesn't need to be answered today since we're going to continue this discussion in another day. But I'd like to hear more about the current NSAs' willingness to do it or not do it, because I'm assuming it's not something they exactly signed up for, right? This is in addition of their job description.

Police Chief Hudak: So, really, one of my concerns was brought up by an NSA who apparently knows enough of the Code to say the moment that I'm responsible, I've got to call, and that person has to get cited, and if somebody that they're very close to in the neighborhood. But there's a lot of violations that they can see it doesn't look like it, and they're concerned, so now is it on me? And that was the questions that I got from the last time we had a brief discussion on this at our department head meeting. So, they're concerned about -- they don't want to get, you know, ridiculed by residents because they want to be the warm and fuzzy, and I think that's their concern. As their boss, that's what has been raised to me is, you know, we're supposed to be the softer, gentler type and help them, and they do advise people on how to do things. If people choose not to listen, then the NTL, the police officer is either, hey, you do it, or we call Code. And then when we call Code, it's kind of like what we did with dogs and leashes and everything else. And the Manager's direction was clear. If the Police Department calls about a loud party, and it's after hours, Code Enforcement writes the ticket, and then the officer that night will show up. And we can handle that the same way with this other code enforcement stuff during the day. I do believe that we need to really come back with exactly what issues they will be responsible to do, because if they don't do it, in this person's case, if they're -- in this employee's case, if they were not telling

the NTL or trying to handle it themselves, then I have an issue with them going along with what the work rules are, and I'll address that.

Commissioner Fors: And the Mayor doesn't have to comment, but I think if you -- when you boil down to it, what the Mayor would really like is more Code Enforcement officers. Doesn't have the Code Enforcement -- or he hasn't been able to accomplish -- or we haven't been able to get that done for whatever reason, so we're going to this plan B.

Unidentified Speaker: I'll vote for that.

Commissioner Fors: But what we really want is more Code Enforcement officers.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, that too, but then there's certain things you just need eyes and ears out there for.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay, and if we have a finite list of what the top goals are, we'll make our city a much better place...

Police Chief Hudak: Absolutely.

Commissioner Anderson: To live.

Police Chief Hudak: I fully agree. And with the dogs and the dog leash and the dog parks, I think it's an evolving situation.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Police Chief Hudak: We work together with Code, and the NSAs, and the NTL. I think last meeting we were here, they were like, "Why are the cops out there?" Well, you know, you got to keep your dogs on a leash, and we got a lot of compliance from that, and I understand that. I just...

Commissioner Menendez: You're enforcing the Code.

Police Chief Hudak: We're enforcing the Code, but I don't think any of us were -- I mean, we could go back to the cat policy. Because we're a bird sanctuary, cats are supposed to have bells.

Mayor Lago: So, I think that we've pretty much discussed this issue, and I can see where everybody stands on this issue. And we'll bring it up at the next Commission meeting. Hopefully, there'll be a plan, and we can hopefully find an opportunity to engage.

City Manager Iglesias: We'll bring it next meeting with an implementation plan to clarify.

Mayor Lago: Alright. Thank you very much. We have one item left. Do you know how long it'll...?

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, we did have a member...

Mayor Lago: Oh, yes. Excuse me, I apologize. We have a member that would like to speak.

City Clerk Urquia: Joanne Meagher.

Mayor Lago: Hi.

Joanne Meagher: Hi.

Mayor Lago: Welcome back.

Ms. Meagher: No, I know you want to go.

Mayor Lago: Not at all.

Ms. Meagher: I just...

Mayor Lago: No, please, please.

Ms. Meagher: So...

Mayor Lago: I didn't know you were -- I had forgotten. I apologize.

Ms. Meagher: Yeah, that's fine. 1225 Valencia Avenue. I just wanted to say really quickly I definitely understand Chief Hudak's concerns. I was one of the lucky residents to go to Dave Smith's retirement luncheon, and he's an example of an NSA who -- and I know they're all this way, and they're embraced by their neighborhoods, and they have done an amazing job of creating that sense of smalltown unity and positivity. I think that's great. However, I also agree with you, Vice Mayor Mean, that this isn't necessarily about neighbors calling on neighbors. It's very easy to see when there's an egregious, you know, bridge of our Code. And I just wanted to mention really quickly one that just sickens me, one very recently. At least 30 pieces of furniture, not put out neatly so that -- or you know, on OfferUp, so that, you know, people can come and get them, but thrown out in such a violent manner that I still found three pieces out of them. But I actually had to lift up armoires to get to the drawers and things, and it started to rain. I actually was able to talk to the resident and asked if she had called to get someone to, you know, pick these things up. And she said, "Oh, I called all over the place, and no one will take it." And I said, "Well, are

you working with the City? Because you will get fined." I mean, it was literally just, you know, like a city block full of furniture. And she said, "Yes, the City is coming to pick them up -- pick it up." I was there the day that that truck -- two trucks it took...

Mayor Lago: And she was charged...

Ms. Meagher: With the claws.

Mayor Lago: By the way, she was charged for that.

Ms. Meagher: Yes, yes, yes. She paid for it.

Mayor Lago: She was charged.

Ms. Meagher: Yeah, but two trucks to -- or a truck and a half to pick it up. And I thought, what a huge, huge travesty that this -- all this furniture was usable. And then we had someone who just -- you know, their house burned down in Coral Gables. They probably could have benefited from some of this furniture. So, what I'm wondering -- and now it's all in the landfill. And I'm wondering -- and I know it's not the responsibility of the truck drivers to decide what is usable and what isn't. But is there a way for us, as we have continued to communicate to people about the Break the Box -- and I -- by the way, I also do understand that, for older people, sometimes it is difficult. I tried to break a box of a tennis ball thing, and the glue is so hard, it took me 15 minutes to do it, so I understand that. But is there a way for us to put on our City website, you know, on the -- I love the "I want to..." section. I want to donate furniture, or I want to get rid of this, and then we have a list of resources of organizations that take -- to take that. Because you know, I would love to say -- and if it were me, I would have gotten a truck, and I would have delivered it to a lot of different places, but a lot of people aren't willing to do that. They just want it out of their house. But you know, if we can educate them a little bit more as to these are the places that

will take your stuff. You don't have to call 30 different places because it is difficult. It takes work to try to get a couch donated and all these different things.

Commissioner Anderson: I...

Ms. Meagher: People tell you they won't do it. I was just wondering if maybe we can help educate.

Mayor Lago: I think it's a great idea.

Commissioner Anderson: One of the things that I've done -- and I had to clean out my father's house of all kinds of stuff. All the stuff that was usable, I put on OfferUp to give away, next-door neighbors.

Ms. Meagher: Right. And I suggested that to her, but it was too late at that point.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah. When COVID started, I put some stuff up on -- you know, to give it away. Our next-door neighbors, I put it out for people to pick up, and they picked it up on a particular time on a schedule, and that was it.

Ms. Meagher: Yeah, but people are -- I think we just tend to...

Commissioner Anderson: It's education.

Ms. Meagher: Continue to just educate people as to these are the options you have, you know, instead of just...

Commissioner Anderson: Our Sustainability Board...

Ms. Meagher: Throwing it out.

Commissioner Anderson: I think could help out a lot with that.

Ms. Meagher: I'm sorry?

Commissioner Anderson: Our Sustainability Board.

Ms. Meagher: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: Because again, we're reusing something as opposed to allowing it to go to waste.

Ms. Meagher: Right. So, thank you.

Vice Mayor Mena: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. So, we'll bring it back at the next Commission meeting.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Mayor. It's better to do it a little earlier.

Mayor Lago: Okay.