

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item E-11
May 20, 2025
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 Richard D. Lara**

City Staff

**Acting City Manager, Joe L. Gomez
City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

Public Speaker(s)

**Andrew Lopez, Director of Motor Services, Tax Collector Office
Maria Cruz**

Agenda Item E-11 [11:55 a.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission authorizing the City to enter into an office lease with the Miami-Dade County Office of the Tax Collector with regard to the City-owned property located at 224 Minorca Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33134 for a period of five (5) years and with two (2) additional five-year renewal options, at the City's discretion.

Mayor Lago: Moving onto item E-11 and then we're going to take a five-minute break.

City Attorney Suarez: E-11 is an Ordinance of the City Commission authorizing the City to enter into an office lease with the Miami-Dade County Office of the Tax Collector with regard to the City-owned property located at 224 Minorca Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33134 for a period of five

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(5) years and with two (2) additional five-year renewal options, at the City's discretion. This item requires a four-fifths vote.

Mayor Lago: So, if I may. Thank you, Madam City Attorney. Do we have staff that would like to do a presentation?

City Attorney Suarez: So, Mayor, the terms of the lease, we have a lease in substantial form attached to the item. The term of the lease is for a five-year term with two five-year renewal options at the city's discretion. I will defer to the Manager on the rent terms.

Acting City Manager Gomez: Thank you Madam City Attorney. The rent terms for the initial year, the rent will be at \$62 per square foot, that includes the cost of the build-out that was there for the Passport office. Year two, the lease, the square footage will go down to \$47 per square foot, and then after that subsequent years it will be an increase of three percent for the remainder of the five years, and then obviously two five-year renewal options. And thank you Madam City Attorney, and also the lease of ten parking spaces in the Minorca Parking Garage.

City Attorney Suarez: And Mayor, if I may, we have a couple little points that we are still working out the language with the Tax Collector's Office that we're confident we'll get resolved prior to second reading.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Sir, thank you for being here with us, the Tax Collector couldn't be here, it's an honor to have you. I'd also like to thank Manny for all your hard work, sorry I don't call you Mr. Orbis. I wanted to thank you. You've been incredibly diligent and responsive, the Tax Collector and this is something that I've been working with the Tax Collector for some time. I'm proud to sponsor this item. I want to recognize you, if I may, if I may, and I apologize. I want to recognize our Clerk which has done an amazing job in the Passport Office, and this is just, again another layer and opportunity for residents to be residents first. Not have to go all the way down to the county to be able to address all these issues front and center in their own backyard. So, I'm really proud of this, because if we can just replicate what the Clerk is doing already, it's amazing. I get so many calls about the Clerk's work and the Passport Agency and how easy it is and expeditious it is. So, I know you guys are doing a great job and this is something that I think a lot of residents are really going to look forward to, and if I may. I went to an event the other day that the Tax Collector did, okay, and I hadn't realized that my license was expiring in a month. So, they had a mobile license truck. I was able to renew my license, pay the forty-something dollars, I think it was like \$46, I think, renew it on the spot. It took me less than, I think, 15, 20 minutes. Now that is service. That is impressive and I want to commend your office and the Tax Collector for that.

Mr. Lopez: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, honorable Commissioners, my name is Andrew Lopez, I'm the Director of Motor Services for the Office of the Tax Collector. We are very excited about this opportunity. We've been working with Mr. Urquia, I apologize, on this project and we are very excited to deliver the high quality of service that the residents of Coral Gables have come to expect from the government. So, I wanted to thank you, and we hope that you support this item. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, do we have any public comment.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

City Clerk Urquia: Mrs. Maria Cruz.

Mrs. Cruz: Good morning again, Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I started saying that there had to be something good today and there is something good. Let me tell you, I have heard so many good things about what Mr. Fernandez is doing in the Tax Collector's Office that I have people calling from Homestead to see how they can get to him because the offices in Homestead or Kendall are still under the state and they are being asked to pay \$200 to get an appointment. So, I texted Mr. Fernandez, he said, get me their names and their phone numbers, we'll call them. The service he's providing is incredible and we should have some people like that in this Commission. Thank you.

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

Mayor Lago: Alright. I'll entertain a motion.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll second.

Mayor Lago: Do we have any comments starting with the person with our Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Its exciting that we're actually going to be able to get the services right here in our own city. So, thank you for making this effort to bring the services to us. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Any other further comments.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes, Mr. Mayor. Just want to say thank you for wanting to open an office here in the City Beautiful. I think this is a perfect location. Its going to provide a great service to our residents. I remember walking this space with the City Clerk when they first opened the Passport Office, and he was already looking at what he could do with the space afterwards. So,

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I appreciate he is bringing that idea up in the past so that we can be here today executing this, and I look forward to opening that office and making sure our residents are getting the service that they deserve.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Chair.

Mayor Lago: Yes ma'am.

Commissioner Castro: I am very, very happy with the work ethic Dariel Fernandez has and I'm welcoming him here in the city, however, I want to emphasize and keep in mind that we do make this part of the equation of a development, we are going to review today or vote on today, because this is on the same, the Tax Collector is on the same location where this development is coming and traffic might be, this might not be taken into account, I would say. Besides that, I am very happy to have you guys.

Mayor Lago: Alright.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes

Commissioner Lara: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)