

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-5
June 8, 2021
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

Mayor's Assistant, Chelsea Granell

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-5 [1:10 p.m.]

A discussion regarding the City of Coral Gables' Page Internship Program
(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Let's do G-5 that I'll be presenting now. I have a small PowerPoint presentation that Chelsea from my office is going to present to you. So just give us one quick moment so she can make it here from the office. Take it away.

Ms. Granell: Good morning, Mayor, Vice Mayor and Commissioners. Today, I'll be speaking about the Coral Gables Page Program and I would like to encourage any students that are interested in applying to the program to do so. So, to give you a little background on the program. It was established in 2019 by a resolution that was sponsored by Mayor Lago. The idea came from three Belen students who met with the Mayor who wanted to establish a program that was similar to the Florida Senate Page Program and the program offers students with the opportunity to learn about government processes with a hands-on approach to learning. Some of the requirements include students being between 15 and 18 years of age, high school students. They must have a 3.0 or above GPA, submit a letter of recommendation from a teacher, school administrator, or member

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of the community, express an interest in local government, and complete an application and submit it to the Human Resources Department. So, based on the feedback that we had submitted from the 9 interns that were a part of the 2019 program, some of the interns had said that they wanted to see a more challenging program. They wanted a longer program. So as a result, we've modified the internship standards to include legislative report, which would require the students to attend a Commission meeting and develop some key points as to what was discussed during the meeting, an internship report, which is an assessment of how processes in the city can be improved. It would include the summary of their experience, observations, areas of improvement, and a general conclusion. And then, at the very end, the students are going to be asked to create a final presentation project, which is going to be exciting, because they are going to be coming to the Mayor and the Commissioners and presenting their proposals as to their suggestions as to how to make the city better. And of course, we want to know how to improve the Page Program, so we want to hear from them and their feedback, so they are required to submit an improvement survey. And so, these are our 2019 interns; we had nine of them and one of the interns was actually our City Attorney's son, Andres Ramos. They are very excited, and the Mayor presented them, who was Vice Mayor at the time with certificates and we had, kind of had a roundtable discussion on how to improve the program at that time, as you see on the picture on the left. And so, if there is anybody interested or if you know anybody that is interested in the program, we highly encourage you to encourage them or encourage them to apply and submit their application to the Human Resources Department, they could copy me at cgranell@coralgables.com and the application deadline is June 21, 2021. So, we are very excited and thank you for your time.

Mayor Lago: Chelsea, thank you so much. First off, I wanted to commend Chelsea for her hard work on this program. I know we didn't do it last year, it's something that we were looking forward to, especially after the success that we had the first year in 2019. When we came up with this idea in my office, it was something that was brought to us by the City of Miami City Attorney and it was something that has seen great success, and again, we always continue to work on that aspect of mentorship, all of us are mentored in one form or another and this is an opportunity to really push forward and bring young people who have an interest in government, who have an interest in serving and hopefully one day they'll move into the public sector and serve in one form or another. I want ideas from my colleagues. I know that Commissioner Menendez has an item on G-7. I think we actually may have had one member of our pioneering class from Coral Gables Senior High. I have a very good relationship with the Principal, I go back 30 years since before high school with the new Principal, Tony Ullivarri, and he's great, by the way, he has a lot of ideas and interest in really getting engaged, and I met with him on several occasions. So, I wanted to bring this up, because I know obviously, that Commissioner Mena has similar kind of concept and see how we can bring them together, so that we do not waste resources, so that we can really try to bring in as many of these young kids into the fold and get them engaged in different opportunities here at the city. I'd love to see this program be extended to all summer long, get young people in here and getting involved in as many different disciplines or departments as possible.

Ms. Granell: Anything to help.

Commissioner Anderson: I did a court observer program when I was in high school; travelling to the courthouse, assisting Assistant Public Defenders doing research and so forth, throughout it,
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and I know that in some of our departments we've had some young people in college or otherwise, even in high school we can open it up, where they could through internship get to experience and area that they are interested in whether its sustainability, or public works, to get a hands-on sort of approach to...

Mayor Lago: Law.

Commissioner Anderson: Law as well, to do it. So, I wholeheartedly support this Page Program and we'll get to Commissioner Menendez' proposal as well here in a moment.

Mayor Lago: Just wanted to bring this before you, no other purpose just to get some direction and I guess we'll talk about the issue when we get to the next item.

Commissioner Fors: And if your office, Mayor, could send us that PowerPoint that would be nice to be able to send to parents.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.