

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-1**  
**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)**

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Agenda Item F-1 [2:50 p.m.]

Discussion regarding the installation of the F.P. Journe clock in the city center.

Mayor Lago: Moving onto the first item under Discussion Items for the Commission – City Commission Items, item F-1, Discussion regarding the installation of the F.P. Journe clock in the city center. So, I bring it back, I don't know if you have any pictures. I wanted to show it on Ponce, hoping that we have the pictures this time, if we don't, we'll wait until the next Commission meeting, maybe we don't. Mr. Clerk, do you know if we have any photos.

City Clerk Urquia: No sir. I have not seen it.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Then we'll just have to bring it back, not a big deal.

[Note for the Record: The Mayor resumed item F-1 since the photos were available]

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Mayor Lago: We'll move back to F-1. So, you have different options. You have this which kind of gives you a little bit more of an idea of the location which is there on Ponce and LeJeune, excuse me, Miracle Mile and LeJeune, I apologize. Do you have any other photos? Here we have, what I think will be nicer, in my opinion, protected, something very nice and it shows...as well. I think this area is also very inviting. This is also very nice too, protected, and I think it's an opportunity to showcase something beautiful that's, again, it's free, which is being donated and it's probably one of the most iconic watch manufacturers in the world. So, I would like for the Commission to make a decision. Again, it's up to you, whatever you'd like. I just need to move on this, as a result of us with the fabrication and it should be ready probably within the next month or two. What is the will of the Commission?

Commissioner Fernandez: I had a couple of questions. Is the manufacturer going to be paying for the maintenance of the clock? – is there going to be a cost for maintenance from the city side?

Mayor Lago: There is.

Commissioner Fernandez: Electrical, etc.

Mayor Lago: The city will install it and what we can do is, we have issues with the clock, we can always call them because they'd like to probably handle it, because it is an F.P. Journe clock, but simple things like painting the pole and that kind of stuff, I think will be the maintenance of the city, but the actual clock in itself would have to be handled, obviously by the manufacturer, the fragile mechanism that needs to be respected.

Commissioner Fernandez: Now, I know that they are giving us this clock, but this is going to be perennial advertising on a main street of the city, so are they going to be paying an annual fee for having this on location?

Mayor Lago: No.

Commissioner Fernandez: If we're talking about not doing advertising, this is clearly advertising within the city.

Mayor Lago: So, if you go to cities where I was this summer, Aspen, Milan, go to Paris, these clocks are in main squares and it's something to be celebrated. It's a beautiful thing. It's very iconic. People come to take pictures with it. It's something, again, that it provides an added cachet to our downtown and it's something beautiful. Again, the advertisement

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is very small, and I think it's a very limited price to pay to have such a beautiful, well-respected manufacturer in our downtown.

Commissioner Fernandez: Their manufacturer does not have offices in the City of Coral Gables or a store.

Mayor Lago: They have a store – they only have one store, they probably have a handful of stores, one in Brickell, they have one in Milan, they have one in New York, they are limited. It's a very, very high-end limited brand and it's something that, again is coming as a gift to the city; and again, if you don't want it, we'll tell them that we don't want it. The previous Commission accepted it, but again, they are not going to pay to have that clock when they are giving us the clock. That's like a \$75,000 to \$100,000 gift. It's a beautiful thing, but if you don't want to have it in the city, then we won't have it in the city.

Commissioner Fernandez: Mainly the question is, we are always talking about supporting American-made. This is not an American-made product. So, we should probably provide the opportunity for American-made companies to also provide, if they are interested in participating in this, and maybe we should go to an RFP; and I think if we are able to get a revenue from this as well, it would be to the benefit of the city. We are looking for revenue all the time and we're talking about recession, this is an opportunity that we have. If we do want to do this, let's do it right and let's make sure we find the right clock and the right manufacturer who can satisfy all of our needs.

Mayor Lago: That I'm aware of, no municipality pays to have one of these clocks donated and put on their wall. What you're talking about, I think is more like ventures, like a tennis tournament, or professional outing, football game, or a marathon where you actually see it on TV and it says, Rolex time, for example at a tennis match where you see it over and over and over again. This is a little bit completely different. This is more like a sculpture that's being donated to the city, and again, this brings beauty and cachet to the city. They are an exceptional brand and I thought it would be something nice to bring to the city. You're not going to derive revenue from this. You're going to derive having an exceptional brand in the city that I would love one day to bring here to the city and bring more and more high-end brands here to the city and this could send a message that we're looking for that type of quality.

Commissioner Castro: I would have to agree with you. It's a pretty clock. I like it. But I would feel more comfortable, if maybe we did a little more research on what is the history. They put this in other cities, are they paying, is it for free, what is it exactly? You just said, you don't think that there was no certainty.

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Mayor Lago: The cities that I've asked and the places that I've asked, they told me, look, we don't pay. It's a privilege to have an F.P. Journe, a Rolex...watch upon the wall. It's a sense of our city is recognized having a high-end luxury brand and it provides time and it's something beautiful that people could potentially take a picture next to. Again, it's up to the discretion of the Commission. If you don't want it, but we're not going to get revenue from it. I've done my research. I've asked in Aspen. I've asked in different places. They don't. To say that you have that there and again, it's just another added attraction. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I quite frankly think this is quite an honor that we've been considered for this. You wouldn't go out for an RFP for a gift. We're not buying this. This is a gift. This is an honor. But there are some really nice locations here. On the corner you have some not so close to the traffic, that would be very appropriate, and I think we, pardon my French, be fools if we turned it down, you know.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner, what would you like to do? What is your will?

Commissioner Menendez: I like the design. It's a lot nicer than the Casio I used to wear in the 80s, very nice. I'm open just to at least what you ask, let's identify locations. I defer to you. Let's narrow it down to two.

Mayor Lago: But this is the third time that I bring it back, and I've shown you locations that I think are...I'm asking the Commission, if we're going to move forward to help me a little bit.

Commissioner Menendez: One option I didn't prefer.

Mayor Lago: Can we put it back up, Mr. Clerk, so that...

Vice Mayor Anderson: Slowly.

Commissioner Menendez: I think that's a beautiful site. The one I didn't care for was the one where the TD Ameritrade, I think it's the southeast corner of Ponce and Miracle Mile. It was too barren.

Mayor Lago: I like that side right there. I like the one before.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Go back.

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Mayor Lago: Go back.

Vice Mayor Anderson: That's far enough away from the corner.

Commissioner Menendez: I like that one.

Mayor Lago: Keep going. I like that one and I also like – keep going please, keep going, keep going, one more. Go back, go back, there you go. I like that one. I think that one works well. It's sheltered, something beautiful. I think it will get some shade from the tree that's growing. There's the camera there already in place to protect it and I think it plays well with the historic building next to it, because again, if you know it's not a very modern watch. Its very whimsical, very classic elements to it when you get close to the watch, and you can see it.

Vice Mayor Anderson: That's my vote.

Commissioner Castro: That's right in front of Crema, right.

Commissioner Fernandez: What's the height on the clock? My concern is the one that's in Brickell, I was able to see. I think it's a little too low, so in areas where you have pedestrians it kind of blocks the view of the pedestrians. So, I would just like to see a little bit taller than six feet just to make sure.

Mayor Lago: Not a problem. My number one location is in front of Hillstone, that's the perfect spot. That's what I advocated for, Mr. Manager, remember. I said to put it there.

City Manager Iglesias: Its probably from the drawing, I believe its about eight feet from the bottom.

Commissioner Menendez: In front of Hillstones, at least the people eating outside can time how long it takes to be seated. (Laughter)

Vice Mayor Anderson: Right. The other thing you ought to look at is how people are going to pose next to it. They want to pose next to it and have the clock face them, not just have it above your head like a balloon.

Commissioner Menendez: I personally think that's what the vegetation...

City Manager Iglesias: That is not correct. Its about 8 to 8 ½ feet from the ground to the bottom.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, it's taller than that.

Vice Mayor Anderson: How many feet?

City Manager Iglesias: I'm looking at the drawing right now.

Commissioner Fernandez: Its 8 to 8 ½ feet, so its probably about the height of that door behind it.

City Manager Iglesias: Its 11 feet 6 inches, I think I have it. It's 7 feet 6 inches to the top and the diameter is approximately a hair over 3 feet.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So that pole is not...

City Manager Iglesias: The pole is short by 2-3 feet.

Mayor Lago: So, can I say that this looks the best.

Commissioner Castro: I could agree. This looks better than in front of Crema.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes, that would be my preference.

Vice Mayor Anderson: And you can see what time it is when you're waiting.

Mayor Lago: So, can we, Mr. Manager, can we – Madam City Attorney, should we have a resolution finally releasing this location as the spot?

City Attorney Suarez: I think that would be prudent Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Somebody make a motion please.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I'm of the assumption that we will provide the foundation and the electrical connection.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Clerk Urquia: May I have a second.

Commissioner Menendez: I'll second.

Commissioner Castro: Did we get the fiscal impact for this or no?

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's a gift.

Commissioner Castro: Right, but the clock is free, but the foundation, how much are we spending and where is it coming from? I'm okay with it.

City Manager Iglesias: (Inaudible)

Mayor Lago: How about we do this, how about we do this. I'll pay for the installation myself. I'll take care of it. I know where this is going. I'll take care of it. I'll pay for the installation. Go ahead. So, let's add that to the resolution.

City Manager Iglesias: This is not a large foundation.

Mayor Lago: Its okay. I got it. I'll take care of it.

Commissioner Menendez: I'm good with it either way.

Mayor Lago: Do we have a motion and a second and an amendment and a friendly amendment saying that Mayor Lago will pay out of my own personal money, not of any city money, the installation.

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Lago: Thank you.