

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-6
January 28, 2020
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Assistant City Attorney, Stephanie Throckmorton
Senior Sustainability Analyst, Matt Anderson

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-6 [1:31:45 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, directing the City Manager to cease the regular use of fertilizers containing nitrogen or phosphorous by City Staff of City Contractors from June 1 through September 30 yearly. (Sponsored by Commissioner Keon)

Vice Mayor Lago: Our next item, G-6, we have two speaker cards, thank you very much.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: Thank you. This is Commissioner Keon's item, G-6. As already been briefly mentioned, this is a resolution that directs the City Manager to cease the regular use of fertilizers containing nitrogen or phosphorous by City Staff or City Contractors from June 1 through September 30 yearly. As explained, this will be applied to the city-owned and operated properties. There are some exemptions for some larger facilities that have different needs and do need that nitrogen and phosphorous in the summer months, as we previously discussed,

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different grasses require different things. We have experts to talk about that, but what this will do is cease the regular use of nitrogen and phosphorous for most of the City facilities from June 1 to September 30th. This is directed to City staff and City contractors and we will incorporate it into any future contract. It's very similar to the...resolution that you all passed a few months ago.

Vice Mayor Lago: Will you do me a favor. Will you tell me exactly what the exemptions are?

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: So, the way it's written right now for City facilities and its directed to larger City facilities, directed to the City Manager. I believe the Manager's office would like to exempt the Granada Golf Course and the Youth Center, at the very least those have different turf requirements in those summer months.

Vice Mayor Lago: How many acres would you say is the Granada Golf Course and the Youth Center – 50 acres, 40 acres, 30?

Landscape Director Dannemiller: I don't know the exact acreage. Fred knows the golf course acreage.

Parks & Recreation Director Couceyro: About 65-66 acres.

Vice Mayor Lago: 65?

Parks & Recreation Director Couceyro: 62 for the golf course and 3 or 4 for the Youth Center.

Landscape Director Dannemiller: And they want to just be blanket exempt. We follow Florida Golf Course Best Management Practices and those which has very strict guidelines.

Vice Mayor Lago: The reason why I ask, I just want to be clear. I ran some numbers and I thought it was very interesting to find out the impacts, the possible impacts of residential versus non-residential and Gables owned. We own 80.52, so if you take away the 60, you are left with about 20 acres.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor you want to use the best practice.

Vice Mayor Lago: I understand. I got it.

City Manager Iglesias: We are not ignoring it, we just want to use the best practice...

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Vice Mayor Lago: I just want to put my information out there, because I think its important that people understand what the significance is and how far-reaching this resolution is.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: And to follow up on the City Attorney’s comments about the ordinance, because I know she explained to you all via e-mail the timing. We want to dot our I’s and cross our T’s to make sure we have all the data in place so that we could withstand any challenge to any ordinance should it pass on second reading. So, we are going to collect the data with our partners at FIU. We are also going to reach out to other organizations that have data about our impacted waterways and make sure we are ready to go before second reading.

Vice Mayor Lago: We have two speaker cards. We have Collin, Collin Scott from Miami Waterkeepers. I’m in favor of this resolution. We also have Reagan Pace from Miami Waterkeeps in favor of Resolution 20-1044, to cease the use of fertilizers containing nitrogen and phosphorous from June 1 to September 30 – Reagan. Any further comments.

Commissioner Keon: No. I’ll move it.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: Answer any questions.

Commissioner Keon: I’ll move it.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

Vice Mayor Lago: Billy please give us roll call.

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 4-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Absent

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: And Vice Mayor just to clarify your previous resolution about the Super Coral Play. It will be the same time period to challenge residents.

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: One thing I just also wanted to briefly mention, I don't know if Matt knows the exact dates yet, but City staff has been working with the Coral Gables Museum and Waterkeeper to do some educational components about where our water goes, about the impacts of nitrogen and fertilizer on our waterways and I think we are working on scheduling those public events.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. We are working on scheduling one with the Coral Gables Museum in April during our earth month activities, we have a number of events that go on during earth month. So, we are going to be scheduling a community talk and education on that in partnership with FIU; and we have previously worked with Waterkeeper on doing an education campaign. I think that's something we are going to continue to do annually just to continue to remind our residents and our businesses and really showing the City is leading by example as well and doing it in our own facilities.

Vice Mayor Lago: Perfect.

[End: 1:36:06 p.m.]