

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item I-1
June 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)

Agenda Item I-1 [4:46 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission accepting a grant from the State of Florida (State), Department of State, Division of Historical Resources for financial assistance in the amount of \$750,000.00 for the Restoration/Reconstruction of the Historic Gondola Building and authorizing the City Manager to execute this agreement with the State for said financial assistance under Agreement no. 23.h.sc.900.154; and authorizing an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 annual budget to recognize the grant funds as revenue and to appropriate such funds to cover the cost of the grant expenditures.

Mayor Lago: City Manager items.

City Attorney Suarez: I-1, Mayor, is a Resolution of the City Commission accepting a grant from the State of Florida (State), Department of State, Division of Historical Resources for financial assistance in the amount of \$750,000.00 for the Restoration/Reconstruction of the Historic Gondola Building and authorizing the City Manager to execute this agreement with the State for said financial assistance under Agreement no. 23.h.sc.900.154; and authorizing an amendment to the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 annual budget to recognize the grant funds as revenue and to appropriate such funds to cover the cost of the grant expenditures.

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Mayor Lago: Let me tell you Commissioner, Vice Mayor, Commissioner Menendez, it is good to see hard work come to fruition.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Fruit has been born.

Mayor Lago: Fruit has been born. The \$750,000 was a labor of love and I'm super excited about this coming and getting this project done. Mr. Manager, one item that I ask you to please have a conversation with my colleagues on the Commission is moving the Gondola Building. I know it's a very touchy subject, but at the end of the day, there's no way to get to it with a car, you get hit by golf balls, and the best thing to do is put it in a location where some organization can use it. Who could that be? – The Garden Club. Who could that be? – The Girls Scouts. Somebody could use it, who knows. You know who could use it, who would love to use it, Rotary could potentially use it. Maybe we get four, five different organizations here who could use it in one form or another, but I think having it in the middle of the golf course serves no purpose.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I think Parks can use it very well, placed by the Kerdyk Tennis Center.

Mayor Lago: I love it.

City Manager Iglesias: And our Parks Director says he can certainly use that building for a number of events, and as you mentioned, the building there it has issues; there are utility issues, its very dangerous, because golf balls are flying around all the time, except at night, and so, by the way we've had to wait until the grant came in so we can contract the architect, if not we could have lost funding for the architectural service. But we've already solicited the architect, except it has not been awarded, so I think we are ready to go. I think the big issue is, where is this building going to be located so it can really be used by the public and by the residents.

Mayor Lago: That's why I would love to have a conversation with my colleagues, maybe they can come up with something, think outside the box, location.

City Manager Iglesias: We're going to bring this back to the Commission with certain alternatives and the design can proceed, because we can simply design the building and do a foundation and place it wherever it goes as far as the site plan is concerned. So, we're going to move forward with it and then bring it back to the Commission once we find various locations. I do think that Parks is very happy to have it by the Kerdyk Tennis Center. It's got to stay within the Biltmore Complex, the Biltmore Golf area. It can't be placed outside the golf area.

Mayor Lago: Alright. I need a motion.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move.

City Clerk Urquia: Who seconds it?

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Vice Mayor Anderson: I think that was...

Mayor Lago: Ladies first, go ahead.

Vice Mayor Anderson: That hand movement was the second.

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

Mayor Lago: Perfect.

City Clerk Urquia: Maria Cruz is on Zoom.

Mayor Lago: Alright.

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Cruz. She is not unmuting sir.

Mayor Lago: Alright. What we can do is, if she comes back, we can have her speak at the next item.

City Clerk Urquia: Understood.

Mayor Lago: So, we have a motion and a second.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Before we vote, I have to amend the motion to include the amount, the \$750,000 for the restoration and reconstruction of the historic Gondola Building.

Mayor Lago: By the way, before we vote, again thank you to our state leaders, our state representatives, Senator, thank you to the Governor for making sure we land this great project.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We're ready to vote.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Yes

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

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