

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Non-Agenda Item
August 23, 2016
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Jim Cason
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Frank Quesada
Commissioner Jeannett Slesnick

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Police Chief, Ed Hudak

Public Speaker(s)

Non-Agenda Item [4:09:00 p.m.]

Commissioner Keon: I had an item that was just some miscommunication that wasn't on. I think it was distributed to everyone. It was a resolution to collaborate with local officials and First Responders to prevent mass shootings and large scale human loss of life and suffering in America by limiting the availability and use of military grade high capacity magazine assault weapons to law enforcement agent. The only one that they would be available to would be law enforcement. So all we are asking is that – this was a piece of legislation that came forward from Miami Beach, they sent it to us, I think it is a great piece of legislation and the more support that they have for it, I hope maybe will also go through the League of Cities and to other municipalities and the County, to also look at and for our lobbyists to also begin to deal with. I asked Chief Hudak about this and one of the grave concerns that law enforcement has with these types of weapons is that the bulletproof vests that exist today that police officers generally wear do not protect them from this type of weaponry and this is the type of weaponry we have seen used in mass shootings. So not only we are also endangering the people that are going in to try

and save lives as well as, and get the people and deal with the issue as well. So, I wanted Chief Hudak to talk about it a little bit please.

Chief Hudak: Thank you Commissioner; and again, as the Police Chief, I support this initiative as far as the resolution is concerned. Today, this morning you approved about \$70,000 plus dollars for the plates that you are talking about, the active shooter plates. That is not worn in lieu of the vest, that's worn on top of the vest, because of the fire power that's out there and we are seeing on a more regular basis. We will talk about the other equipment at a later date that we are asking for. I started this job when I had a revolver and it's continued and police workers are usually a little bit behind. From the moment that Dallas happened and through Baton Rouge, I've talked with the officers personally and we are looking at, right now they purchase their own long guns, we train them, we certify them and there has been an uptick on that. In talking with some of the family members there are some concerns. So, I appreciate the Commission's first initiative this morning was allowing us to use the FAF funds to make them safe and to give you an idea of how close it comes. In our City, Friday night an officer was taking a traffic stop strictly just for a tag light out, and the person didn't stop right away and ended up pulling up on a street right off on LeJeune Road. When he came around the corner, because the car was a little bit ahead of him, the back rear seat passenger was trying to run out of the car and got caught up in the seatbelt, which he then ran off and dropped the gun that he had in his hand when the officer was pulling up as well. The subject was subsequently arrested, the gun was found at the scene where he was where he was falling out, and he had no shoes on because he got caught in the seatbelt. Again, this is a right rear passenger of four people just driving through the City not doing business. So, as I tell the officers every day, this can happen here and this has happened, and we have had officers in the history of this department shot at by these types of weapons. Years and years ago, the late John Hasty was on midnights and this has happened. This is what we are up against. I believe in this resolution contrary to some other resolutions, it's a holistic approach of trying to help us curtail and not necessarily attack on the Second Amendment, but it also looks at what kind of restrictions should we put on?- what kind of background checks should we do and then close some of those loop holes. I ask for that and I support this on behalf of the family members of our officers.

Commissioner Keon: The State of Florida can enact legislation to allow only, only these types of weapons to be in the hands of law enforcement officers legally, in the hands of law enforcement officers. So, I'd like your support on this. Is there the potential for the police unions themselves or the Police Chiefs Associations to also support this kind of legislation?

Chief Hudak: I believe the Florida Police Chiefs Association has a resolution on it. I can get back to you and find out where we are at. I know they've been supportive of it.

Commissioner Keon: At what level can the police at all – yes it eventually hopefully will protect every one of us, but I know every time you swear in new police officers you make a promise to their families that you will look out for them, that we will take care of them and that we will do our best to see that they get home at the end of every single day. When we have this type of weaponry on our street we just can't make that promise.

Chief Hudak: I know, but I do, and that's what keeps me up at night.

Commissioner Keon: Absolutely – absolutely. So, yes, I'd like to make the motion.

Mayor Cason: Commissioner Keon makes the motion.

Commissioner Slesnick: Second.

Mayor Cason: Seconded by Commissioner Slesnick – City Clerk.

Commissioner Slesnick: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Vice Mayor Quesada: Yes

Mayor Cason: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Commissioner Keon: And you'll send this on, we'll thank Miami Beach and Chief Hudak you'll get back and let me know about what other police associations and the law enforcement organizations are also in support.

Chief Hudak: I'll send out an e-mail to everyone so you know exactly who...

Commissioner Keon: And send it to our lobbyists.

[End: 4:15:15 p.m.]