

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item 2-3
July 11, 2017
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Pat Keon
Commissioner Vince Lago
Commissioner Frank Quesada
Commissioner Michael Mena

City Staff

City Manager, Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark
City Attorney, Craig E. Leen
City Clerk, Walter J. Foeman
Deputy City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Historic Preservation Officer, Dona Spain

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item 2-3 [11:38:24 a.m.]

A Resolution by the Cultural Development Board increasing the budget allocation for FY 2017-2018 Cultural Grant Funds and further recommending an increase of ten (10) percent every year thereafter. (Unanimously approved: 5 to 0).

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let's go to Item 2-3, Resolution by the Cultural Development Board, increasing the budget allocation for Fiscal Year 17-18 Cultural Grants.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: She's not only the Historical Resources Director; she's also the cultural side of the shop, so we'll have Dona Spain address the recent recommendation.

Ms. Spain: This is a recommendation from the Cultural Development Board asking that, you know we have grants and this past year was \$175,000 in the budget and here we are requesting that it goes to \$200,000. I will tell you that in the budget that you are going to be reviewing this afternoon, there is an increase, I think it goes up to \$180,000-\$250,000 that's a 50 percent increase with the intent to increase it through the year, so it doesn't go to the \$200,000...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: The last one was asking for a ten percent overall increase, which I think is way too much and it looks excessive. Can I make a suggestion? Can we give them the \$200,000, but limit at three percent per year?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We are seeking input from the Commission.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes, but that's my suggestion, that's my input.

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: We are very excited about the three percent annual increases, its absorbable, if it's the direction of the Commission we can work on it before we convene today on our 3 o'clock budget item, if that's the direction of the Commission. I will say when I was here it was 175, it went down to 150, we were able to bring it back up to 175 and develop an index, but if it's the Commission's direction is to reset it at \$200,000 with the three percent, we will work with the budget office to accomplish that.

Commissioner Quesada: For the last two years we've had a few, and I'll wait until the Mayor finishes. So, Mr. Mayor what I'm saying is, for the last two years, it's been quite contentious with the amount of monies that we give out, and I've gotten real involved in it for the last two years and try to resolve the issue; and the conclusion I've come to...

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I'll like to hear your recommendation.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes, I know. The conclusion I've come to is, no matter how much money we give they're going to be people upset. If we give half a million dollars a year, we are still going to have people that are upset. I think my recommendation is going to be whatever Dona's recommendation is because I'll tell you what, because they are the ones going through all the reports.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: But, I am opposed to the 10 percent per year, that will double and triple their money every...

Commissioner Quesada: That I agree with, that I agree with as far as the increase per year, but I'm saying whether we should go to 200 or not at this point, because it's a \$20,000 jump, I will guarantee you that with \$200,000 we are still going to get two or three groups that come in and they are going to be fuming that they didn't get any money or they got less money than last year.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: It would be your fault.

Commissioner Quesada: Exactly.

Ms. Spain: I believe that's a separate issue though, because some of the people that the organizations that apply just don't fit the qualifications.

Commissioner Quesada: And I think the quality – look, I don't want to cast dispersions on any of the groups.

Ms. Spain: It's not like they are not quality organizations, but there is set criteria and says things that they have to do to get the money and I know that that can be very contentious. I can tell you again, when I came here 20 years ago, the Commission was doing it, and it was before the Cultural Development Board actually had a role in it, and it's very well organized, very thought out, they are amazing, it's really an amazing Board. Honestly, it's up to the Commission to put it up to \$200,000; I know they would be thrilled....

Commissioner Quesada: My thought...keep it at \$180,000 and I don't want to have any set in stone percentage to go up year by year. Here's why – we are looking to allocate more funds to parks now and maybe more money to the Underline. I would hate to have a firm commitment to continue increasing. We've had this number for a long time.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Is that your motion?- I will back it up.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes, that's what it would be. You wanted \$200,000.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: You have more involvement in this than I do. If you say \$180,000 that's fine.

Commissioner Quesada: You know what happens when it comes to our approval for the allocation, we are going to get a list of everything that everybody is getting. At that point, we could say, and maybe this doesn't work for budgeting, we could say, you know something; we want to give an additional \$5,000 to this group or the other. I think that buffer, in my opinion, would be helpful to have it just in case.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Make a motion.

Commissioner Mena: Am I correct that it's currently three percent compounded every year?

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: Well for the first time you'll see at 3 o'clock that while we were 175, we started applying a three percent which would bring you to like \$180,500, in your

next year's budget. We were envisioning increasing incrementally every year, but we are waiting for feedback from you at 3.

Commissioner Mena: But Commissioner Quesada, you are saying you don't even want the built-in increase.

Commissioner Quesada: I love the organizations, I love all volunteer work, I love what they do for our culture and our community, but living it really fighting it the last two years in the sense of trying to get more money, no matter what happens you are going to have groups upset. It's true. With \$180,000 we have a lot of great events in the City.

Commissioner Lago: You can't make everybody happy.

Commissioner Quesada: And here's the thing is, I don't want it just because we have more money now and we are financially better now, doesn't mean we spend more money. We still have issues with pension; we still have issues in other places. I want to make sure – we have issues with bridges. We just agreed to spend a significant amount of money on bridges you know, I don't think we need to. I would rather have a bigger savings account.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Make a motion.

Commissioner Quesada: You have a thought; I don't want to cut you off, because I rely on you quite a bit on this.

Ms. Spain: If we put it up a notch some \$180,250, which is a three percent raise from last year and keep it at three percent a year until it gets to \$200,000 that would be in the year 2021, and then just cap it at \$200,000, and then you can readdress it. It's a compromise.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm in favor of the three percent this year, but I think that's a year-to-year determination, because I think it handcuffs the City Manager and Budget and us, oh we made a commitment for three percent a year, what if things aren't as rosy a few years from now.

Commissioner Lago: I'll second Commissioner Quesada's motion.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm OK with the three percent now.

Commissioner Lago: I second your motion.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. City Clerk would you call the roll?

Vice Mayor Keon: Is that what you set \$180,000...

City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark: In this year's budget, this forward budget, 17-18, we have placed \$180,250 to represent a three percent increase above 175.

Commissioner Quesada: I'm OK with that.

Vice Mayor Keon: I was asking Commissioner Quesada what the number was - \$180,000

Commissioner Quesada: 180, 250, for this year – yes, that's my motion, but not with the increased, I think it's a year-to-year determination.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: OK. Will you call the roll please?

Commissioner Lago: We also have a commitment to the museum also; we have a commitment to the museum, so we are giving out significant cultural grants to the City, just want to make sure. I'm all for it like you, let's give much to the arts, but let's be also a little careful.

Commissioner Quesada: Yes

Vice Mayor Keon: Yes

Commissioner Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: So it's what?- 250 and ten percent per year, right?

[Laughter]

[End: 11:46:27 a.m.]