

City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134
www.coralgables.com



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

8:00 AM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84243975634>

Communications/Public Affairs Conference Room

Budget/ Audit Advisory Board

*Chairperson John Holian
Vice Chairperson Joseph Palmar
Board Member Debra Register*

Virtual Zoom Meeting Available for Public Participation

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 AM by Mr. John Holian.

ROLL CALL

The roll was taken, and an in-person quorum was established. The meeting was also available on Zoom for public access. Mr. Thomas Korge and Mr. Richard Barbara have resigned. New appointees will be selected by the City Commission in the forthcoming weeks. Members were asked to provide early notice of absences to ensure quorum.

Present: 3 - Board Member Register, Vice Chairperson Palmar and Chairperson Holian

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. Debra Register, seconded by Mr. Joseph Palmar, to approve the February 18, 2026, meeting minutes.

[26-1269](#)

Budget Audit Advisory Board Meeting of February 18, 2026.

Attachments: [Budget Audit Board Minutes - 2.18.26 Board Approved-Legistar Generated](#)

A motion was made that this matter be approved. The motion passed by the following votes:

Yeas: 3 - Board Member Register, Vice Chairperson Palmar and Chairperson Holian

DISCUSSION ITEMS

•Budget Process Update

Assistant Finance Director for Management, Budget, & Compliance, Mrs. Paula Rodriguez, provided a comprehensive update on the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 (FY 2027) budget planning process. Departments have submitted operating budgets estimates, new need requests, and operating reduction scenarios of up to 4%. The City is emphasizing a conservative budgeting approach due to uncertainty regarding the potential property tax reform proposal being discussed by the state legislators. Capital project funding updates and new project requests have also been submitted and are reviewed in detail with department directors and the City Manager. Revenue projections will begin at the end of March, which will provide a clearer financial picture, which will be presented early June, during the Commission Capital Workshop.

The Board discussed the significant implications of possible property tax changes being debated at the state level. Property taxes account for 63% of the City's General Fund, and elimination or increased

exemptions could result in service cuts or needed increases to service fees. The timing of an approved change at the state level would likely not impact the FY 2027 budget. The City is monitoring proposed legislation and new transparency requirements. Mrs. Register asked whether there had been any discussion about lowering the millage rate. Mrs. Rodriguez stated that the topic has not been raised at this time.

Mr. Holian asked whether any groups were actively opposing the proposed tax reduction. Mrs. Rodriguez responded that various organizations are currently lobbying and engaging policymakers to discuss alternative approaches.

NEW ITEMS

Mrs. Rodriguez advised that following proposal evaluations, Plante & Moran is recommended to replace Crowe as the City's internal auditor, one of the criteria was the proposal including more competitive pricing compared to other proposers. A formal award is expected at the April 14 Commission meeting, after which the firm will be introduced to the Board and begin the annual risk assessment. Mr. Palmar highlighted the importance of strong controls surrounding vendor onboarding, fraud prevention, and payment transparency. He recommended that vendor payments and transactions for a full one-year period be reviewed as part of the internal audit risk assessment to ensure accountability and reduce reputational risk. An introduction to the new auditors is anticipated for the April 29th meeting, if scheduling allows.

Updates were provided on labor contracts, with only the Teamsters contract carrying into FY 2027. The Fire Department contract is still active, and the Police Department contract has expired, negotiations underway.

Staff is also working on enhancing the budget software to integrate with our current Enterprise Resource Planning-ERP, (Infor) to streamline salary projections.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

SCHEDULING

The next meeting scheduled for April 29th, 2026 - 8:00 AM

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 AM.

NOTE

Any person who acts as a lobbyist pursuant to the City of Coral Gables Ordinance No. 2006-11, must register with the City Clerk, prior to engaging in lobbying activities before city staff, boards, committees and/or the City Commission. A copy of the Ordinance is available in the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall.

Any person, or persons, wishing to appeal any decision made by the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting or hearing, will require a verbatim record of the proceeding upon which the appeal is based. Interested persons should, therefore, take the necessary steps to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which contains the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based.

Any person making impertinent or slanderous remarks or who become boisterous while addressing the Commission, shall be barred from further audience before the Commission by the Chair, unless permission to continue or again address the Commission is granted by the majority vote of the Commission Members present. Clapping, applauding, heckling or verbal outbursts or any remarks in support or opposition to a speaker shall be prohibited. Signs or placards shall not be permitted in Commission Chambers.

Any person with a disability requiring communication assistance (such as a sign language interpreter or other auxiliary aide or service) in order to attend or participate in the meeting should contact the City's ADA Coordinator Clifford Friedman, Esq., Director of Labor Relations and Risk Management (E-mail : cfriedman@coralgables.com, Telephone: 305-722-8686, TTY/TDD: 305-442-1600), at least three (3) business days before the meeting.