

**City of Coral Gables
Virtual Commission Meeting
April 21, 2020
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

**Mayor Raul Valdes-Fauli
Vice Mayor Vince Lago
Commissioner Jorge Fors
Commissioner Pat Keon
Commissioner Michael Mena**

City Staff

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz

Agenda Item D-2

Personal Appearance by Maria Cruz regarding the City's response to Corona
Virus/COVID-19

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Alright. We have a personal appearance, D-2, by Maria Cruz, regarding the City's response to Coronavirus/COVID-19. Maria.

Maria Cruz: Yes, I'm here.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Good. Fire away.

Ms. Cruz: Good morning, Mayor. I'm on?

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes.

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Ms. Cruz: Good morning.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Let me say something before you speak. I've started calling you our ray of sunshine because you bring light to things that need to be brought forth and we very much appreciate that. Go ahead, Maria.

Ms. Cruz: Thank you. Good morning. My name is Maria Cruz, and I have lived in the City Beautiful since 1976. I'm here today to encourage the residents to get involved in our city. I know from experience that sometimes it is very discouraging because we encounter pushback from employees that either think that they know what is best for us or have some (INAUDIBLE) qualities where they are used to ignoring the voice of the people. That is not the Coral Gables way. Our elected officials and our employees know or soon find out that we know what we want and will not give up. Of course, I'm not saying that we always get our way. No, we don't. But in general, we're heard, and decisions are usually made after (INAUDIBLE). The response to the Coronavirus outbreak concerns is a perfect example. Somewhere in the process, many of us wanted our city to come up with a plan so our residents didn't have to leave their homes, their city to get tested. Several of our Commissioners, beginning with Commissioner Lago, tried very hard to make it happen. Well, they didn't get anywhere. They hit a brick wall. When the Miami-Dade Mayor announced his plans to send Miami-Dade firefighters into every city except Miami to test those who fit the guidelines and requested it, some of us decided that we didn't want that to happen. It was not easy. It took a lot of phone calls, a lot of back and forth, but we got it. Miami-Dade is not coming into our city. We will take care of our residents. There is a process in place. We do not have to call 311. We have a Coral Gables number to call. And if we fit the requirement, our Fire Department will come to us. The process is not perfect, of course. But we were heard and I'm sure that nothing is written in stone yet. Please do not take no for an answer. When you see something that needs to be changed or you have ideas on how to make our City better, get involved. The City Administration is a good place to start but keep your elected officials in the loop. Make

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phone calls, send emails, get your voice heard. Do not give up. Let's keep our City Beautiful what it always has been, the very best, second to none. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much, Maria, and keep it up. As I said, you bring light to things that are necessary, and I've started calling you my little ray of sunshine. Thank you, Maria.

Ms. Cruz: Thank you, Mayor.