

**City of Coral Gables  
Virtual Commission Meeting  
May 26, 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**

**Assistant City Attorney, Naomi Levi Garcia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

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**Agenda Item I-3**

A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, granting the City Manager the authority to relax current standards for outdoor/open-air dining and signage through January 15, 2021 in order to provide for expanded outdoor seating opportunities to assist with social distancing at restaurants and suspending all applicable fees.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I-3, I'm sorry, I-3.

City Attorney Ramos: I-3 is a Resolution of City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting the City Manager the authority to relax current standards for outdoor/open dining and signage through January 15, 2021, in order to provide expanded outdoor seating opportunities to assist with social distancing and restaurant and spending all applicable fees. I believe someone from staff is going to present how this is going to, how the process is going to work.

City Manager Iglesias: We'll leave Devin Cejas.

Deputy Development Services Director Cejas: Good morning Mayor and Commissioners, Vice Mayor, City Manager. We will be presenting a process that is not too far off with how we do work

*City Commission Meeting*

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today creating a process that is efficient and effective is of much importance, to not put too much strain on the business community. Essentially, what we have put together is a an application that would allow business owners, if we do not have an existing permit to come in and request a temporary permit to be able to have temporary seating under these emergency times, along the frontage, and if appropriate you may even look into a possible parklets into the parking area of the right-of-way. Applications can also be considered to allow flexibility for outdoor seating to expand to adjacent detail spaces, if there is appropriate permission from those business owners. We have worked hard with staff and the legal team to put together an application that is effective and simple to follow, and in addition, we've also put together a brochure similar to what we have today and have distributed throughout the city that is easy to read for our business community. With that, I'll leave it open for any questions you may have.

City Manager Iglesias: Mr. Mayor, Naomi Levi is working on the administrative order for this and she would like to further explain. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: She would like to what?

Vice Mayor Lago: Respond.

City Manager Iglesias: Naomi is work on the administrative order for the implementation of I-3, and she has some further explanations that this would provide. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Very good. Naomi you're on.

Assistant City Manager Levi Garcia: Good morning, Mayor and Commissioners. Can you hear me?

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes.

Assistant City Manager Levi Garcia: As Devin mentioned, we have been working across multiple departments to develop this temporary open-air dining permit. We envision it being expedited business-friendly, very flexible. It would be, the permit process would be available to restaurants with or without current outdoor dining. Our goal is to have the framework in place for review, but to have quite a bit of flexibility in allowing the restaurants to propose to us where they can safely locate the outdoor dining. We looked at cities like Miami Beach, Tampa, and Miami Dade County in order to develop the best possible process; and we see this going through January 15<sup>th</sup> to take the restaurants through the holiday season, and the New Year, at which point those permits would expire. So, we're happy to take any input from the Commission, in order to make this process even better, and we're happy to take any questions as well.

City Manager Iglesias: Let me just say that two things that will dictate this process are safety and ADA. We plan on making sure that everything that we do is, number one, safe. At no time we'll be creating anything that, any type of event that is unsafe. In addition to that, we are looking at all

the ADA requirements to make sure that whatever we do is accessible and maintains accessibility throughout the year. So, safety, ADA are paramount, those are two issues that cannot be weighed. However, we would like to make this process an expeditious process, so that we can reduce the timeframes considerably. In addition to that, make it a no cost to them.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you. Thank you, Peter. I think it's very appropriate, especially with our 50 percent restriction and this will expire by itself on January 15<sup>th</sup>. I would like for this to also include, giving you the ability together with the county, of course, the county is the one that regulates traffic, to certain streets and five and six restaurants, to temporarily close those streets during the hours where the restaurants will be open, in order to promote outdoor seating. I say temporary and I say streets with a lot of volume, which we would leave in the...[Inaudible]...and your discretion as to which these would be. But I think it's a very, very good resolution authorizing the use.

City Attorney Ramos: Sir, if the rest of the Commissioners are in agreement, we can add that language about the temporary closure subject to County approval.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Okay.

Vice Mayor Lago: I don't have any issues at all with the Mayor's request. I think is more than appropriate. You covered two of my questions, basically, in reference to life-safety. I think we need to be incredibly careful, especially with ADA accessibility for individuals in wheelchairs and that measure. But I also want to make sure that the process is as streamlined as possible, in regard to the application process and this is for Mr. Cejas as he was talking. I've sent you several emails already and I covered it in a memo that I sent to my colleagues on the Commission. That what other cities are doing just to kind of get ideas in reference to this, because this is a new world in regard to his outdoor dining with a 50 percent census that we're allowed in interior restaurant. I'd like to know from Mr. Cejas, so we can feel comfortable, because we're going to start receiving phone call from the business community. What do you think the timeframe as long as the application is completely done as required by the City? - everything is notarized, documents are required to be notarized. How long do you expect from the moment that document is delivered to the city to when that merchant can have a response in regard to rolling out their outdoor dining seating? - and also there's not going to be - I hope that there's no cost associated with is, correct?

Deputy Development Services Director Cejas: No, correct.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor, I can answer that. We are trying to turn this application for weeks to days. And the idea is of no cost to application that can be looked at very, very quickly. So, the idea is to get this out in weeks and days. And so, that's what we're trying to do with the administrative order.

City Attorney Ramos: Yeah. The resolution itself waives the permitting fee.

Vice Mayor Lago: I just want to put it on the record, because we've gotten several phone calls from business owners about that issue.

City Manager Iglesias: No. There might be a fee for police and things like this, which would not be waived. But the application will be...

Vice Mayor Lago: When you say what fees, what fees would not be waived?

City Manager Iglesias: In other words, if an event closed down a street, they may need some police there, then that would be a fee that would not be waived, because that's a direct cost to the City. However, all the other fees would be waived.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I think that's a wonderful, wonderful idea. Thank you, Vice Mayor, for agreeing. Any other comments from the Commission?

Commissioner Keon: Yes. I'd like to see the...[Inaudible]...for parking on the street. We're not allowed to have valets...[Inaudible]. So, the valet stands are going to sit empty anyway, and I think there's an opportunity if you waive parking, particularly on the Mile, you can really extend the area that those restaurants can move their tables to.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Very good. Any other comments?

Commissioner Mena: Yeah. I would just add that, and I mentioned this to the City Manager, you know, we have to have a process. We have to be ADA compliant all those things, but we really need to err on the side of being, you know, business friendly and understanding to these businesses during this time. They're going through, you know, hell frankly, and it's incumbent on us while we typically pride ourselves on having very specific regulations and a very specific aesthetic in a way that we do things which is wonderful under normal conditions. I think right now we have to be flexible, you know, even if you see, maybe a restaurant that's got some sort of outdoor dining and they don't have their permit yet, you know, instead of coming in and cracking down hard on them and making them go through the process A to Z, you know, work with them, be like here's the have the Code Enforcement people, have the application may be on hand with them. Give it to them. Tell them, look, we understand the situation you're in, you need to submit this. You can keep operating for a couple days, you know. Work with them as opposed to being strictly code enforcement. I think it's really incumbent on are people to and for the City Manager to talk to our Code Enforcement staff about this, and about how we go about enforcing this. It's okay to enforce, but let's do it with a very, very soft hand, because you know, you have businesses that are really teetering on the brink of extinction here, given the economic situation, and I think it's incumbent on us to do our part to help them through this.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Commissioner Mena, very appropriate. Anybody else?

Assistant City Attorney Levi Garcia: If I may Mayor. I just want to mention that we have taken the Commission's direction to heart to make this as business friendly as possible. It's a single application. The submission would be fully online. We would take it upon ourselves as staff to

*City Commission Meeting*

route to the proper departments for review. We've been working closely with the Economic Development Department to make sure that you know, the business interests are well represented, and they will be in communication with the businesses. We've also input from the Business Task Force. So, we are doing everything in our power to make sure this is going to support businesses and be easily accessible and help facilitate the outdoor dining, so that they can stay open.

Vice Mayor Lago: Naomi, when do you expect roll out of this program?

Assistant City Attorney Levi Garcia: I think we can have the implementing order and the application finalized today or tomorrow.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Naomi. Do I hear a motion?

Vice Mayor Lago: So moved.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Second.

Commissioner Keon: Second.

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

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)