

# City of Coral Gables

405 Biltmore Way  
Coral Gables, FL 33134  
[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)



## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

8:00 AM

City Hall, First Floor Conference Room

### **Budget/ Audit Advisory Board**

*Chairperson Board Frank Paredes*

*Board Member John Holian*

*Board Member Joseph Palmar*

*Board Member Debra Register*

*Board Member Carmen Sabater*

## Virtual Zoom Meeting Available for Public Participation

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 AM by Frank Paredes.

### ROLL CALL

The roll was taken, and an in-person quorum was established. The meeting was also available on Zoom for public access. Joseph Palmar could not attend because he had a meeting that conflicted with this one.

**Present:** 4 - Board Member Holian, Chairperson Paredes, Board Member Register and Board Member Sabater

**Absent:** 1 - Board Member Palmar

### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Carmen Sabater seconded by John Holian to approve the January 24, 2024 meeting minutes.

Budget Audit Advisory Board Meeting of January 24, 2024.

**Attachments:** [Budget Audit Board Minutes - 1.24.24 Board Approved -FINAL](#)

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

**Yeas:** 4 - Board Member Holian, Chairperson Paredes, Board Member Register and Board Member Sabater

**Absent:** 1 - Board Member Palmar

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Presentation Re: Triple A Rated Cities-J.Palmar

This presentation was deferred to a later date as Mr. Palmar was unable to attend the meeting.

#### Discussion Re: AI Use at the City

Director of Innovation & Technology, Raimundo Rodulfo started his presentation with a brief explanation of what Artificial Intelligence (AI) is. AI is software with data that automatically correlates data using quick reaction time. The first use of AI in the City was approximately 10-15 years with the purpose of making our networks intelligent to prevent cyber-attacks. The use of AI has allowed the City to shut down systems before they are compromised by analyzing behaviors. Mr. Rodulfo explained that ransomware injects software components with learning capabilities into the network, making it behave in a way that seems normal. Our networks are

protected in the back end in the cloud, as well as in our servers and are able to react quickly and automatically in case it encounters malicious software. Due to the fact that we have sophisticated operating systems, the City does not have a need to have a dedicated group of people observing our network 24/7, also known as a security operating center.

Another area that we use AI is in sensor monitoring automation. We have traffic sensors that assist with the wait time in red lights as well as parking sensors that show how many spaces or what parking spaces are empty in a parking garage. In addition, traffic sensors help identify the flow/speed of traffic as well as traffic patterns and can help classify whether the objects on the road are either cars, bicycles, or pedestrians. Our Police Department also uses AI to understand the best time to deploy patrol. AI can also be used to inventory City assets using algorithms. A 3D model of the City also exists which can be navigated through, similar to a video game.

We also have smart light sensors that can automatically detect when to shut on/off as well as flood detectors that can automatically detect when water levels rise. Through the automation of AI and computer "vision" we are able to gain an optical sense from a camera and analyze all of the different data points that are captured, as it would be impossible for humans to do it alone as quickly as AI can generate the results. Mr. Rodulfo also displayed photos of the Emergency Operating Center (EOC) located in the Public Safety Building which has a multitude of televisions displaying the feed of over 1,000 cameras the City has installed in different locations including inside of the building which is monitored by Police staff as well. Mr. Rodulfo gave an example where recently, an ATM was stolen in the corner of Ponce de Leon and Miracle Mile, and through a partial license plate number, they were able to identify the make/owner of the car and apprehend them. Another example where the City was successful was during one of the Carnival on the Mile events where a child was lost. Fortunately, after inputting the search parameters, the child was found quickly and safely. These systems have even been successful in finding missing pets. Mr. Frank Paredes inquired if the IT department or the Police Dept was responsible for analyzing the AI systems. Mr. Rodulfo explained that it's been a dual effort between IT and Police where IT has assisted in training the systems while Police has been managing the systems. Mrs. Debra Register inquired if we share our traffic studies with others outside of the City as supplemental information. Mr. Rodulfo explained the process of training our systems to obtain accuracy. Statistical samples are collected through manual audit to compare what a person has counted versus what AI has counted. For example, an AI system that has not been fully trained may be at a 90% accuracy although we strive for 95% accuracy through "training" the system. However, while we share our traffic findings with the community delegate center for example, or anyone interested in analyzing it, that information is not absolute, and we always recommend for others to pair our information in addition to their own findings, to feel

confident when sharing information.

Mr. Rodulfo presented the Coral Gables Smart City Hub which can be found on our website and has a lot of valuable data that many people including businesses have benefited from. The City has placed “smart poles” that analyze various patterns in traffic, lighting, weather. Mr. Paredes inquired about who produces the poles and Mr. Rodulfo explained it that it is a combined effort because while we do not manufacture the poles, they do not come with the capabilities that we integrate into them. We are the first City to have this type of technology. The analytics dashboard was developed by one of our software engineers by collecting data and developed an AI model that they were able to train depending on the task. The poles have been enhanced through the years and depending on their aesthetic, they are placed in different areas around the City. An inquiry was made by regarding the price of the poles. Mr. Rodulfo explained that the first 2 poles were prototypes (first pole was \$20,000 and the second was at no cost to us) and the final poles customized to Coral Gables aesthetics were \$37,000.

The City has also implemented a chat bot called AIDA (Artificial Intelligence Digital Assistant), that can be found in the City of Coral Gables website, that can assist with common requests but also has the capability of connecting you with an actual person because it is not meant to replace the human touch. The City of Coral Gables won an award, and a grant was provided by the National Science Foundation. That grant was used to work with AI expert Saiph Savage who helped evolve the bot’s features and capabilities. Afterwards, one of our own software engineers was able to integrate AIDA with ChatGPT another AI system known to help steer conversations. AIDA is safe because the information is contained by the IT department by trusted sources. Mr. Rodulfo also presented the Coral Gables Citizen Center found in a phone’s app store that has multiple request capabilities. The system can monitor quality assurance by monitoring response times. Finance Director Diana Gomez also added that a customer can request additional information through the app and online which will prompt a specific department to reach back out to the customer. AI will also be implemented into our Enterprise System-INFOR, to assist in analyzing Finance and Human Resources information data faster and identify patterns/correlations in the near future, once we finalize our new payroll implementation. Ultimately, through joint partnerships with Scientists and other government facilities as well as time, we will be able to improve our current systems and designing new technological innovations. After the presentation, Mrs. Carmen Sabater inquired about how other neighborhoods are harnessing AI. Mr. Rodulfo explained that thankfully due to our team, use of grants, and a combined innovative effort, we are well advanced in comparison to other neighboring cities. The Board congratulated Mr. Rodulfo on his AI presentation and thanked Mrs. Sabater for suggesting this as an agenda item.

**BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION**

On a separate topic, Mrs. Register inquired about tax dollars going into parks and recreation department and that division not generating much profit. Mrs. Gomez explained that the purpose of park facilities is to break even as it's meant to provide amenities for residents to enjoy without being charged an excessive amount of money. In addition, revenue is season based and it generates more revenue in the summer months. Mrs. Register also inquired about the Country Club and Mrs. Gomez recommended that the Country Club Director was invited to one of the meetings to provide more insight. In addition, Mrs. Register inquired about how the payroll process has improved since the last meeting and Mrs. Gomez explained that while there are still some errors in the system, they are currently being addressed and the process has improved with each successive payroll period. Tests were run before going live and any corrections needed to be made to paychecks have been made. Mr. Paredes inquired how the Internal Audit Process work with a new City Manager and Mrs. Gomez explained that the process remains the same with Mrs. Paula Rodriguez reporting to the new City Manager, Mr. Amos Rojas, Jr, in regards to the Internal Audit Process.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Public Comments were made.

**SCHEDULING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20th, 2024-8:00 AM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting Adjourned at 9:06 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 Raquel Elejabarrieta, Esq., Director of Labor Relations and Risk Management (E-mail : [relejabarrieta@coralgables.com](mailto:relejabarrieta@coralgables.com), Telephone: 305-722-8686, TTY/TDD: 305-442-1600), at least three (3) business days before the meeting.