

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item E-4**  
**May 19, 2026**  
**Public Safety Building, CMR**  
**2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Jackson Rip Holmes**  
**Nestor Menendez**

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Agenda Item E-4 [Start: 3:28 p.m.]

An Ordinance of the City Commission amending Chapter 58 "Special Assessments", Article III - "Repair or Construction of Streets and Sidewalks" to amend Section 58-48 "Duty of Abutting Property Owners to Repair" in order to amend the code to clarify that abutting property owners are not responsible for defective sidewalks where such defects are a result of City trees and the City has been notified of those defects; providing for severability clause, repealer provision, codification, and providing for an effective date. (Sponsored by Vice Mayor Anderson)

Mayor Lago: Item E-4.

City Attorney Suarez: E-4 is an Ordinance of the City Commission amending Chapter 58 "Special Assessments", Article III - "Repair or Construction of Streets and Sidewalks" to amend Section 58-48 "Duty of Abutting Property Owners to Repair" in order to amend the code to clarify that abutting property owners are not responsible for defective sidewalks where such defects are a

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result of City trees and the City has been notified of those defects; providing for severability clause, repealer provision, codification, and providing for an effective date.

Vice Mayor Anderson: This is an item I brought to align our current practices with the code. The code itself was conflicting for some code enforcement officers. They were enforcing the current code and that's clearly unfair to the homeowner or the business owner. So, I brought this simple amendment to the code to bring us to date.

Mayor Lago: I see no issues with it. Do you have any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor, we do. First speaker, Maria Cruz. Okay. Jackson Holmes.

Mayor Lago: Can I make a request? Instead of screaming from the grandstands, you have a message, if you have a message for the Clerk or for anyone here, please feel free to come up and speak to the Clerk or speak to staff instead of screaming from across the room. Thank you very much.

Mr. Holmes: Thank you very much. So, I spoke with Commissioner Anderson on this item, and I don't think that we have any real disagreement on this item. She's a sponsor. But I was out knocking on doors for the referendum at the time I think that this must've been brought up previously and I do have reservations about what this is amending. I know I'm with the city on, I mean, I'm a selfish person, all right. I don't speak for anyone but myself, but I don't like what the legislature is trying to do and cut off our funds to give homeowners whatever they're trying to give on property tax relief. I'm in step with the Mayor on that subject and you all have to look over your shoulders and wonder what's next in Tallahassee. But I just think that you're laying too much responsibility on property owners, like we're supposed to be more rich than the city. I don't think that's a correct assumption. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Nestor Menendez.

Mr. Menendez: Good afternoon, Nestor Menendez, 6611 Riviera Drive. Just one quick question on the item. As far as the duty of owners to repair liability concerns, if somebody happens to injure themselves, some type of negligence, who is liable? Is the owner liable if they're footing the bill or has to find somebody to fix the sidewalk or is that the city's responsibility?

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Well, I think, one, I have to defer to the City Attorney, and this is limited to where is a tree causing the damage and the homeowner or the business owner informs the city of the issue.

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City Attorney Suarez: Right, so the only change this ordinance is making is adding one line to clarify. Currently, the obligation is on property owners for the abutting property, I'm sorry, the abutting sidewalk in front of their property or adjacent to their property. So, this change only clarifies what has been the city practice that if the damage is caused by a city tree, the city is responsible for that sidewalk.

Mr. Menendez: And just to follow up, how is the, who?

City Attorney Suarez: Generally, the city and that kind of litigation would assert that the responsibility of the sidewalk is on the abutting property owner. As a general matter, if it's caused by a city tree, we're hearing that the city is taking on the responsibility for correcting that, provided the city has been given notice.

Mr. Menendez: All right.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Anything else, Mr. Clerk?

City Clerk Urquia: No, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Alright, we'll close the public comment. Can I have a motion?

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Mayor Lago: Can I have a second?

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll second.

Mayor Lago: Clerk.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

