

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item I-3
February 11, 2020
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

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

Public Speaker(s)

Jackie Kellogg
Lorna Nuvall

Agenda Item I-3 [11:45:15 a.m.]

A discussion regarding “Bridge for Peace” fundraiser hosted by Coral Gables Senior High School PTSA

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I-3 – discussion regarding “Bridge for Peace” fundraiser hosted by Coral Gables Senior High.

Ms. Levi-Garcia: Good morning, we have a few members of the Coral Gables Senior High PTSA here. They have a request they’d like to share with the City Commission.

Ms. Kellogg: My name is Jackie Kellogg, I’m the President of Coral Gables High School PTSA and with me is Ms. Nuval, she oversees the “Bridge for Peace” ceremony that’s an important part of our IB ceremony and our IB experience for our students, International Baccalaureate Program. I just wanted to have a moment for public comment because I have some very good news to share about our school, our Coral Gables Senior High School. For the first time since 1984 the boys’ and girls’ varsity soccer team won district championship, that’s a major accomplishment. Also, our

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Cast Connect, it was just yesterday named the Distinguished High School Communication site in the country. Our Year Book and Year Book Advisor who were selected top five in the country and our culinary academy baking and pastry won gold at the FCC LA Districts, top ten in the country.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Congratulations.

Ms. Nuvall: Hi, my name is Lorna Nuvall, I'm a teacher at Coral Gables High School, been there for 16 years. I'm also an alumni, so I grew up in this beautiful City. So, I'm the sponsor of IBHS, which is an honor society for the IB Program; and part of our job is to make our students more globally aware of what's going on around the world. So every year this has been an annual event that we chose – this is all student lead, this is all students who apply for their cause, its an international non-profit organization and we have a sitting and they present their causes and then we chose which cause we think that will reach the most people and the biggest impact. And so, every year we do this event and for the past five years we've been doing it at the Coral Gables Museum; and we use their open courtyard area for, we do an international fashion show, we have our Bonga perform, it's a very beautiful ceremony and all the money goes to this non-profit. So, my Principal Costa, who wanted us to try to close the sidewalk off so that we don't have people that are not really just walking passing through and keep that more secure. So, we've been now on this journey to pass this permit to close the sidewalk. So that's really what we are here for. We usually raise around \$10,000 to give to any type of non-profit on annual on average. When they went to the permit it was all these extra expenses, they wanted an electrical permit. It came up to like a lot of money, and so, we were here to see if you guys could help waive some of those fees so that the majority of the money does go. This year our cause is in Ayacucho, Peru there is an orphanage and we are there to help build a cafeteria for the orphans in Ayacucho.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: What are the expenses? What can we waive?

Ms. Levi-Garcia: I believe the City Manager has actually waived several of the permit fees, if I'm not mistaken, and the one outstanding fee is for the off-duty police officer which we are unable to waive, but there was a suggestion from the City Manager on how we might be able to work with that fee.

City Manager Iglesias: It could come out of various sources, it could come out of Commission funding, it could come out of other sources, its not a great deal of money, but we normally do not waive those things, but it's a very good cause, its for orphans in Ayacucho.

Ms. Nuvall: We are also willing to pay for that fee. There were so many other fees that I was really concerned about. We have the funds to pay for that police officer. It was the other things that were...

City Manager Iglesias: Those other fees we'll waive.

Commissioner Keon: Why do they want to close the sidewalks, are you concerned for safety?

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Ms. Nuvall: Yes, for student safety. Last year we just had some random people just walking by, because we have food. We go into the local community and ask for donations. Everything is free at this event, and so people will come in and start like, Oh I want some food and we have students there and we just wanted to keep it more secure.

Commissioner Mena: Closing the sidewalk or closing off the courtyard to the sidewalk?

Ms. Nuvall: Its considered a sidewalk that whole open area – the courtyard, because it turns into that, like open area and that’s really where like we have our performances. I mean with all the stuff that’s going on.

City Manager Iglesias: The Chief would like to add security there. I do believe we have to be very careful when we have an event like this.

Chief Hudak: The issues that come up with the design of the plaza, we have to block a lane of traffic, because if not, we have to pedestrians crossing in the middle of the street. So, if you block the plaza you have to block the street, because there is no place for people to walk up and then the natural flow, the way it’s designed is, you walk the sidewalk and then you go through the plaza to continue north on Salzedo. What we will have to do is stop the pedestrians from in front of the old museum at 282 Aragon, make them cross the street there to walk north. So even though, the only thing the permit was asking for was to block the sidewalk, there is no place to put them, because there is no sidewalk. The plaza is the sidewalk. So, we have no way to reroute the pedestrians. It was brought up last time that we start having regular pedestrians not attending the event wanting to cross the street. So, the safest way to block this would be to have a police car and barricades taking the right lane northbound on Salzedo from the front of the museum all the way up to the corner.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: How long is the event last?

Ms. Nuvall: Its only two hours – 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on a Thursday, this Thursday.

Chief Hudak: Listen, we can do whatever you all want. It’s by contract, it’s a 4-hour minimum with the officers either way. The off-duty rate is a set rate, for one officer, they also, which I’m OK with. They have two School Board police officers working this as well. Now I can’t require them to do traffic, so they would just be doing something inside and call us if they needed us inside. But for the traffic, if we are just going to take that sidewalk, we have to have one officer. To do it on overtime that would be a contractual issue, if they want to pay it, it’s a lot cheaper for that, and we do not do these overtime details unless its authorized by you all. That’s the only way we could do it.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Mr. City Manager, I think we should help them anyway we can.

City Manager Iglesias: I don’t disagree Mayor and we can waive that, I think the City Commission can go ahead and authorize us to go ahead and waive the fees.

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: I move that we waive it.

Commissioner Mena: Second.

City Attorney Ramos: A couple things, I'm sorry, couple things; one is, I hear that you are authorizing the closure of the streets, so we'll put that in the resolution once you vote today. The second thing is one lane, one lane of the street. The second thing is waiving the police officer's fee doesn't work, because they have to get paid. So, the question is how are we going to pay them. If we are willing to pay them that's fine, the question is how.

Commissioner Keon: They said that they had the money to pay them.

City Attorney Ramos: I heard that. I just also heard the motion they will waive the fees.

Ms. Nuvall: I mean you guys waived so many other fees, that's totally fine.

Commissioner Keon: So, you'll pay the police officer and we'll waive the other fees.

Ms. Nuvall: Absolutely. I've already applied for the jobs for hire fine.

City Manager Iglesias: All the other fees have been waived.

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

Vice Mayor Lago: Find out what the fee is for the four-hour minimum.

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

Chief Hudak: \$170.

Vice Mayor Lago: Per hour?

Chief Hudak: No, \$170 total, for four hours, whenever they are there, that's all the fees.

City Manager Iglesias: For two police officers?

Chief Hudak: No, one police officer. We are only closing one lane, Salzedo will stay open, four-hour minimum, they do that. To do this otherwise, the overtime rate which can go to \$200 and something.

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

City Attorney Ramos: What is the motion sir?

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Commissioner Mena: We are going to waive all the fees, except the police officer.

City Attorney Ramos: Its already been waived under the City Manager's authority.

City Manager Iglesias: We have waived them; the only issue was the police officer.

City Attorney Ramos: The only motion is to close one lane on Salzedo for these two hours during the event.

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

Commissioner Keon: Yes

Vice Mayor Lago: Yes

Commissioner Mena: Yes

Commissioner Fors

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Yes

(Vote: 5-0)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

Ms. Nuvall: Thank you. I have one more. This is an annual thing and I would love to use this Coral Gables facility every year and keep everything very, like promoting the City. So, I don't know if this is something I should come through every year.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: We have to have the pleasure of seeing you every year.

Ms. Nuvall: OK. I'll see you next year. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.

[End: 11:55:24 a.m.]