

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-8
June 28, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors, Jr.

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Deputy City Attorney, Cristina Suarez

Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz

Assistant City Attorney, Naomi Levi-Garcia

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-8 [Start: 5:32 p.m.]

Update on are the steps we need to take to move forward to hire a planner to establish the City's Septic to Sewer plan. (Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Mayor Lago: Commissioner, you have anything else on that item or you want me to move onto G-8.

Commissioner Anderson: Let's move onto G-8. This is a staff update.

Public Works Director Diaz: Hi, good afternoon, Hermes Diaz, Public Works Director. As I'm sure you all know, we got a grant, a 50 percent matching grant to cover planning level for a septic to sewer conversion in the city, in the areas that are still on septic. Based on our conversations with the grant office and the interactions with the state office, the new fiscal year starts on July 1st and then we basically have between July 1st and September 22nd to enter into an agreement with the state, a proper agreement which the Commission will have to approve, that's something that we'll

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be working with the City Attorney's office and the Grant Administrator. Based on our initial interactions with the state, they seem to indicate that we can probably use one of our companies, engineering companies that are already in our business services contract, which will accelerate our ability to start that process. However, they will, once we get to that point, they are going to want to see the agreement. They are going to read through the fine print, then at that point they will really tell us whether we can use those folks to do the actual assessment. Absent that, we'll have to go full bid, but so far it looks like we'll probably should be able to use one of our companies, which we have a few that are very qualified.

Commissioner Anderson: Do you need us to take some action to help you move this along?

Public Works Director Diaz: Not at the moment, but we will, except we have to wait until after July 1st, because that's when it becomes official, I believe that's the new fiscal year for the state. The agreement is we implement and that will have to be approved by the Commission before September 22nd.

Commissioner Anderson: So, you bring it back to us in September.

Public Works Director Diaz: Before September 22nd, we'll bring it as soon as possible. I don't see why it should take up to September to make that happen, but that's the deadline that they've given us. So, we are going to work that agreement with the City Attorney's office and our Grant Administrator office and when that's ready and the state is okay, there is a little back and forth with the language, and then we go through that process and then it will come to you, to the Commission for approval.

Mayor Lago: When do you expect that to be?

Public Works Director Diaz: It has to be done before September 22nd.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I think Naomi is very good at that. She'll be handling this contract, matching grant for 375, which means our total minimal cost would be \$650,000, and Naomi will be working on that contract to make sure its ready while we work on our continuing services...

Public Works Director Diaz: We've reached out to them, and they indicated that its probably okay, but subject to the fine print. Once we submit to them the contract, they'll read through it and if they have any objections to the language, then – it looks like its okay, but I don't want to say with 100 percent certainty, because its subject to the review.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner, how do you want to move forward?

City Manager Iglesias: I think what we are trying to do is avoid a long procurement process.

Public Works Director Diaz: If we can.

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Mayor Lago: Do you want to deal with Naomi directly and then come back to the Commission in August with an update?

Commissioner Anderson: Yes, we can do that.

Mayor Lago: Whatever you'd like.

Commissioner Anderson: That would be good. I'd like to just make sure we...

Mayor Lago: Keep the ball rolling.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely. I'm very excited about this. This is a great job.

Commissioner Anderson: Not everybody is so excited about it.

Mayor Lago: I'm excited about septic to sewer.

Public Works Director Diaz: The beauty of this process is that it's going...

Mayor Lago: Naomi will tell you on the trip, Naomi, please join us, Ms. Garcia, please join us. On the trip that we took to Washington, we met with, I don't even know how many legislators we met with and organizations in regard to funding. We talked about septic to sewer conversion, I don't even know how many times.

Assistant City Attorney Levi-Garcia: Absolutely.

Mayor Lago: It was a hot button issue and its something that I've been anticipating for a long time.

Commissioner Anderson: And its critical for our water quality. I'm excited that you're excited.

Mayor Lago: You want to bring it back in August, after you've coordinated with Naomi?

Assistant City Attorney Levi-Garcia: So, the grant has to come back to the Commission for approval and then we also need to do a budget adjustment to show the funds as revenue, incoming revenue. So those items can come back. They are usually done on Consent. We don't even need Commission action at this time. Its pretty standard, we deal with this every year.

Commissioner Anderson: Perfect.