

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-16
May 20, 2025
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

Acting City Manager, Joe L. Gomez
City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz
Gonzalo Sanabria
Tom Wells
Burton Hersh

Agenda Item F-16 [11:12 a.m.]

Discussion and possible action regarding position of City Manager.
(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: We'll move on to our first item of the day, which is F-16. I'm going to go out of order. F-16 is a discussion and possible action regarding position of city manager. I have a few comments and then I'd like to get a few -- have a discussion with my colleagues in the Commission. I want to begin by reminding this body and the public of

City Commission Meeting
May 20, 2025
Agenda Item F-16 - Discussion and possible action regarding position of City Manager.

the platform upon which my colleagues, Commissioner Ariel Fernandez and Melissa Castro, were elected. The platform was simple and clear. It was residents first. But when it came to -- when it came time to make one of the most significant decisions affecting our city's leadership and future, those words were ignored. In February of 2024, dozens of residents came to the City Chamber and passionately advocated to retain Peter Iglesias as city manager. They voiced their support clearly, respectfully, and with a hope that their voices would matter. Instead, they were dismissed, and Mr. Iglesias was terminated in public without process and without regard to the input of our community. Let me be clear. The manner in which this was done was shameful. It was not only unprofessional, it was completely out of step with the values and decorum that define the City of Coral Gables. I stood here that day and urged this body to follow a process, a fair, thoughtful, and transparent process, but that never happened. Instead, an individual with no experience in municipal government administration, Mr. Amos Rojas, was brought into the chambers and hired on the spot. As a mayor, I wasn't even granted the courtesy of receiving his résumé. Think about that. You hired a manager for a \$300 million plus city with over a thousand employees and you didn't review a résumé or a background check. That speaks volumes about this Commission, volumes about the lack of integrity, the lack of experience, acumen, and business acumen, and the lack of true care and thoughtfulness when making decisions. Despite multiple requests, think about this. We conduct a more comprehensive hiring process for our lifeguards at the Venetian Pool than we did for our city manager, the chief executive of our municipal government. That's not how we should be doing business. And beyond the procedural failure, we must always acknowledge the internal damage this caused. The way this was handled deeply demoralized our staff, people who dedicated themselves every day to keeping Coral Gables running at the highest standard we've known for. The message sent was one of instability and disregard for professionalism. And we're still feeling the effects today. Let me also be clear about this. Peter Iglesias is not an exper -- is not just an experienced administrator. He is a highly qualified structural engineer and former city manager with a proven track record of delivering results. Under his leadership, Coral Gables successfully executed numerous multimillion dollar infrastructure projects, including our state-of-the-art Public Safety Building. That project alone has become a national model and a source of pride for our city. His experience, institutional knowledge, and steady hand are exactly what we need right now, especially when one of my highest priorities is to deliver on the renovation of City Hall in a timely manner, something that has been discussed for decades to no avail. Now, if it is desire of this Commission to move forward with a formal search for a new city manager, I'm fully supportive of that. Let's do it the right way, with professionalism, transparency, and public input. Whether it's a national search or another approach, I

welcome the discussion. But in the meantime, we need to restore order and trust and return our City towards the path of greatness while we move forward with a process for finding a new city manager. Let's do -- let's do what's right not for ourselves but for our residents. Let's put leadership back in the hands of someone who has learned -- who has earned the trust of this community and who has delivered for Coral Gables time and time again. With that, I respectfully make a motion to reinstate Peter Iglesias as City Manager effective immediately.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Mr. Mayor, I'll second that motion, but I'm going to make some comments with regard to it. Whether Mr. Iglesias is brought in as a full city manager at this time or brought in as an interim city manager to help steady this ship, I respect and appreciate Joe Gomez being able to step up to the plate and serve as an interim city manager for this period of time. It's a big job. As Deputy City Manager, your hands were full, and now you just don't have enough hands to do everything by yourself. So, I do believe that having Mr. Iglesias by your side and working together as a team, that this city will move forward in a much more expeditious manner. Many issues that were existing then, and I addressed them at the efforts of our former Commissioner -- our former Commission to remove Mr. Iglesias on unsubstantiated grounds of insubordination. The 45-minute presentation that was done that demonstrated clearly that those claims were false, but yet, despite the public comment and the emotions that were strongly supporting Mr. Iglesias, the majority of the Commission voted to remove him unceremoniously. Tears shed that day from City employees and people that did not understand why this Commission made such an abrupt change. As I spoke then, and I'll speak again now, I had spoken to Mr. Iglesias about having a transition plan because we all don't live forever, because we need to bring some younger people in and help train them to be the next future leaders of our city. I think we have that opportunity now and we should continue with the search to have someone come in as an additional member of the team, have adequate time, I think it takes at least a year or two of mentoring to be able to pass the baton to the next person, whether they're going to be on this Commission or they're going to be in the City Manager's Office. I had a wonderful time working with Mr. Iglesias as a city manager. We worked on many projects together. We were working on improving even the Development Services Department. It went from basically crayons to perfume, if you want to make an analogy of it. It was a paper-only system. Can you imagine that? I've done that in the legal business where we went from paper-only filings to electronic. There are going to be bumps in the road. There's going to be potholes in the road on getting there. And there's a transition that must occur. We have a brand-new Development Services Department that is state-of-the-art. We have an electronic filing system. The programming, like with any

programming, and I've dealt with this in the federal courts and state courts, takes some time to get it running smoothly. And we're working on improvements along the way. Studies were undergoing on the structural integrity of City Hall at the time Mr. Iglesias was in office. So, the rumors that spread that he ignored City Hall were 100 percent false. He was on top of it. The studies that were referred to were started under his guidance. We were moving to the next step. We worked together on many projects, from the Mediterranean Design Ordinance to the carbon sequestered cement. He was a major collaborator on these projects and helped bring them forward. He also made sure that our city was ready for hurricanes. Every preparation, training that had to be done was done so that we were ready not only before the hurricane hit but afterwards for cleanup. Fiscally managing the budget properly so that we are ready for disasters when they hit. So, I am in favor of bringing back Mr. Iglesias, whether he's brought back as an interim city manager or as a full city manager with the emphasis on bringing in somebody to have that succession plan moving forward. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Chair, may I speak? You're the chair...

Vice Mayor Anderson: You may.

Mayor Lago: For this -- for this item. I completely agree with you. The plan is simple. It's to have over the next 20 months have Mr. Iglesias come in as city manager, stabilize the City, the many issues that we're addressing now, move forward and use a national local search for the most competent replacement. And then potentially after that person has been named, then Mr. Iglesias stay a few months after to make sure the transition is seamless. That is my intention, and I think that's what is in the best interest of the City.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor -- are you done?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor, I am in disgust.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, Madam City -- Madam City Attorney.

City Attorney Suárez: So, the...

Commissioner Castro: Are you interrupting me?

City Commission Meeting

May 20, 2025

Agenda Item F-16 - Discussion and possible action regarding position of City Manager.

Mayor Lago: I'm not interrupting.

Commissioner Castro: Do I continue?

Mayor Lago: Ask the City Attorney; she wants to tell you something.

City Attorney Suárez: Sorry, just remember the Vice Mayor is serving as chair because the Mayor has...

Commissioner Castro: Oh.

City Attorney Suárez: Passed the gavel. Even though it's physically there, but he's passed it.

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's confusing. I understand.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. I'll start all over again. I am in complete disgust with the hypocrisy of this body right now. This body has urged for a process. This body has preached about a national search. And now I'm hearing from the Mayor, let's give him 20 months? I am sorry. That feels like I'm walking into a trap. I'm walking into a hole. Yes, Peter has done great things for this city, and I think that's something that cannot be discounted. But what's also important is that when I was commissioner, in the beginning, when I first got elected, I was in the dark. I did not know what it was to be commissioner, or how to even function in this city, okay? So, when there was a new city manager, I was actually able to see some light, and I was actually able to function and move my things along. With Peter Iglesias, I'm sorry, I wasn't. He was favoring certain individuals on this Commission and one of them was not me. One of the things that are very important to me is that we power -- empower City employees so that they provide the best service to our constituents, to you, our residents. And unfortunately, I was not able to push any of those items because, and I'm going to quote Peter, "Employees are lazy, and they don't want to work." So, my vision for the City does not align with how Peter governs or administers the City. So, unfortunately, I am really going to have to -- I'm a definitely no vote for this. He's a great person, but not a city manager. For me, he doesn't work good with me, and he has to work good with me so that I can go ahead and do the things that I do here. It doesn't work out. It really wouldn't work out with Peter. I know you guys probably have the votes and I can understand that, but I wouldn't be truthful if I don't state my opinions.

Commissioner Lara: Madam Vice Mayor, may I make a few comments?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, you may. Thank you.

Commissioner Lara: Okay, so, right, I'm the newest commissioner on the dais, right? Second meeting, first actually regularly scheduled meeting, but I've been intimately involved with several threshold issues that form the bedrock tenets and principles of my platform when I was running. And one of the main reasons why I decided to run, and I made these comments publicly before this Commission in February 2024, was what I believed was improper at best, illicit at worst, unceremonious as the Mayor stated, firing of the city manager. Now, while again, it is within the powers and the authority of the majority of the Commission to hire and fire city managers, I was not supportive of the stated reason as being insubordination on behalf of former City Manager Iglesias as the basis for his firing. Indeed, there was an overwhelming outpouring of community support for keeping Peter Iglesias, as well as advocating directly to certain commissioners, do not pull the trigger to end unceremoniously the tenure of Peter Iglesias, especially when it was with no cause, no basis for doing that. Nevertheless, simply because something can be done doesn't mean it's the right thing to do. And so, I walked thousands of homes, I've spoken to thousands of residents, and several things are patently obvious. That there is instability in the position of city manager. All of this shot out of a cannon when Peter Iglesias was fired in 2024. And it may be because, you know, one commissioner didn't feel that she was getting enough attention and hoped to get it with the next commissioner [sic], hired as he was with no interview and no prior experience in the position, and as a surprise to all, he resigned less than a year later, continuing the chaos and the instability in the position of city manager. One of the campaign promises I made, and one of the ones that I intend to keep, is to bring stability back to the city manager position. I certainly advocated for a search. I wasn't specific saying that it needed to be an executive national search, but certainly that we have at least the opportunity for somebody to apply for the position from within City Hall and those that might be working in the private sector wanting to work in City Hall. I still feel that way. However, what this is to me, as it was during the May 6th meeting, is one of several opportunities for this Commission, if the majority so feels this way, to reset, to take back what can be taken back so that we can go forward from this point. I believe that we would have immediate stability if we bring back Peter Iglesias. That's my view. There are projects that he was working on that we would benefit with his return at the helm on those projects. In fact, today's agenda is packed with items that are both millions of dollars in play and years of time to see them through. Not

the best time to bring in, yet again, someone who may not be familiar with the job at hand. Of course, I echo that Acting City Manager Joe Gomez has done yeoman's work, but he certainly cannot be asked, nor would it be reasonable to have him do two jobs indefinitely, that's simply unsustainable. So, I believe that the residents have spoken. I believe that City Hall has also voiced its views. I believe that to take a different approach to this at this time, in my view, would be to ratify the firing of Peter Iglesias, which I am definitively against. So, with that being said, I also express my support for this resolution.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, through the Chair.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, Commissioner.

Commissioner Fernandez: Thank you very much. I understand a lot of your comments. I understand there was a lot of anger by those who were disappointed in the dismissal of Peter Iglesias as city manager, but it was done because it was necessary. We had a city manager who was not working with members of the Commission, who was actively keeping them in the dark on things going on in the City. To what end? Nobody knows. The issues here at City Hall. I hear today the Vice Mayor saying that there was a study that was taking place. I was a member of the Commission for ten months during the tenure of Peter Iglesias. That was never voiced to myself as a member of the Commission. Now, we do need a path forward. We do need stability in the City. I also concur; Mr. Gomez has done a phenomenal job in this week that he has been here. He learned under probably one of the best in Alberto Parjus, who himself was handpicked by Peter Iglesias and brought into this City. I don't think taking a step back is a step forward. I think we do need to move forward and seek a city manager who can come into this City and fix the problems that we do have, whether it be City Hall, whether it be our dilapidated parking garages, whether it be the Gondola building that collapsed under Iglesias' watch, whether it be our finances as a city, everything that falls under the purview of the manager. Now, I will tell you, we are stronger today as a city and in a much better position than we were when Peter Iglesias left because we have Joe Gomez and Christina -- Carolina Vester in their positions. Because we have somebody with plenty of institutional experience and knowledge in our city, and somebody who brings in ideas from Miami Beach and from other places that have brought a new perspective to the City of Coral Gables. What that path forward is, I think that's something that we need to decide as a Commission, but I would not be supportive of bringing Mr. Iglesias back because we need a manager who works for the residents. Mr. Iglesias didn't even reply to emails sent by residents. Emails would go months and months, and they were un-replied to by the city manager. Regardless

of what you say about Amos Rojas Jr., about Alberto Parjus, or about Joe Gomez, residents' emails get answered right away. And my priority has been to bring a resident's first government to the City. That would not happen under Peter Iglesias' tenure as city manager. And he made that very clear to me. His focus was on other issues, whether it be upzoning the parking garage -- the parking lot, building the Mobility Hub, projects that residents were very clear they did not want in Coral Gables, those are his priorities. While City Hall fell apart, while the Gondola building collapsed on us, and Vice Mayor, you had actually had a conversation three months before because you and I had spoken about it at the time, informing him that something needed to take place to save the Gondola building and it collapsed, costing us millions of dollars. Burger Bob's sat there for almost three years without being done, until Amos Rojas Jr. took over as city manager and moved that project along under the leadership of Carolina Vester, who oversaw that project from her department. So, we are in a much better place today. I think what we've seen over the last couple of weeks since Alberto submitted his resignation is concern by staff of this exact decision that could possibly be made of bringing Peter Iglesias back. It was the talk of staff at the picnic this weekend. They were all concerned that that could happen. I think the words that were quoted by Commissioner Castro of his perspective on staff is exactly what he shared with me. So, we need to have somebody who respects our staff, stands up for our staff, works with our residents, and works with the Commission on finding a path forward. And you know, there's been a lot of talk back and forth. This city expects better. This city needs a unifying force. Peter Iglesias is not a unifying force.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Thank you for your comments. Unfortunately, Mr. Iglesias is not here to respond to those. With regard to the Gondola building, a tractor backed into it. There was no saving that building. There were vertical cracks in it. They were not going to simply put that back together without taking the parts and pieces apart and doing a proper restoration. It was in dire straits. There was no roof on it. I did personally go out and look at the building. And with regard to Burger Bob's, there's a missing piece of history here when you say how long that took. The country club had to be dealt with first, and that was the first thing that had to be dealt with. The conference room had a hole in it with a board over it. I asked the question. That's why I knew. There was a line item in the budget, millions, over \$17 million designated for City Hall. I asked the question. That's why I knew. So, the resolution hasn't been read into the record yet. Madam City Attorney, I'd ask you to read the resolution in the record, and then we'll see if there's public comment.

City Attorney Suárez: Thank you, Vice Mayor. So, in connection with F-16 the Mayor asked that I prepare this resolution. I provided copies to each of you and the Clerk has

extra copies as well. It's a resolution of the City Commission appointing Peter J. Iglesias as the City Manager of the City of Coral Gables and approving a salary and benefits package. The resolution provides that the appointment would be effective Friday, May 23rd.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Is there any public comment?

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, ma'am.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah. I would like to know if this was already on the agenda, why it was just given to me last minute if everybody already knew about this? Was it to prevent the public from actually speaking their opinion on it? Or what was the intent of last-minute giving this to me? I mean, what was the purpose of that, to shut everybody up, to not let anybody talk?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Chair, it was on -- there was an item on the agenda. And I'll add, by the way, I did go by the picnic. The comments were the opposite from folks that I heard.

Mayor Lago: May I respond to...?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, you may.

Mayor Lago: Madam Chair? So, first and foremost, Madam City Attorney, please speak freely.

City Attorney Suárez: So, I was asked to prepare this yesterday for the Mayor. That's when the Mayor asked me to prepare it, and so it was finalized -- I got the green light from the Mayor this morning. So, that's why I provided it to you this morning.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah, but...

Mayor Lago: So -- but I'm not done yet. I'm not -- she's answering a question. So, if I may, Madam Chair.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so what you heard from my colleague to the left, Commissioner Fernandez, is not reality. It's not reality. It's not reality. It's not. Burger Bob's, when they removed the drywall, it was structurally -- they found it was a disaster. The parapet wasn't even connected to the structure of the building. You had to redo drawings that took months, and you had to attack the building, and that's why you have a significant cost overrun. The change orders were massive as a result of what they found after they removed the drywall. That's number one. Continually lying about somebody and their professionalism only makes you look bad. Every single person that I know as an employee here in the City that came to see me in open office hours or stop me was excited and asked me if Peter was going to come back. They respect Peter. And let's also remember Amos Rojas, in the words of my colleague Commissioner Castro, "Oh, my God, this is the most exciting thing. You're on my LinkedIn. I'm going to hire him off the LinkedIn." Okay. I mean, that is -- you don't -- as a professional, as a person who has a business with significant amount of employees, you have to do background checks, you got to look at their résumés, you got to call references, you got to call people and put them in positions and empower them so that they don't fail. Hiring somebody that walks in the door like the chief just walked in and not being granted the opportunity to review his résumé -- to review his résumé, or to review a background check, or to see somebody else's credentials, or speak to their previous employers to me is a disservice and shows a lack of real preparation in how to select the person who's in the highest position in the City. This is simple. When Amos Rojas was here, he did not speak to me for over six months. He would not meet with me over six months over a blatant lie that he stated. So, this was all a game. The issue is we need somebody who's competent to lead us in a transition, to do a search. And I think the most prepared person, person who has always shown class, a person who's a resident and a person who's prepared and they want to do the job, is Mr. Iglesias. And the resolution is very clear. The City Attorney finished it yesterday, and that's why we were able to give it to you today. Madam Chair, I have a motion and there's a second on the floor.

Commissioner Castro: But -- through the Chair.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Public -- may we have some public comment?

Mayor Lago: Yep.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Chair, can I have my last -- my last comment?

City Commission Meeting

May 20, 2025

Agenda Item F-16 - Discussion and possible action regarding position of City Manager.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. Can we hear the public comment first so we can hear from the public?

City Clerk Urquia: Ms. Maria Cruz.

Commissioner Castro: Very happy, huh?

Maria Cruz: Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. Please excuse me because the game has begun. There's some history. I remember sitting in a commissioner's home and talking about how disrespected he felt when Salerno, when Cathy Swanson did not talk to him, did not give him the stuff ahead of time. They lied to him. Oh, my God, all the stuff that we heard about why Salerno had to go, about how Cathy had to go. And now it so happens that everything was hunky-dory. No issues. Everything was great. I have heard so many things today that I'm going to tell you, some people need to go to confession because the lies are getting bigger and bigger. I love Vice Mayor Anderson moving forward, not backward. But that ended right there because then we went backward. I loved Mr. Sanabria's comment. He's not an attorney. I'm not an attorney either, but I love the malfeasance and misfeasance comment because you know what? I've been here. Peter Iglesias was a structural engineer in this city. Then he left, he came back, assistant city manager. Then he became manager. Nothing happened that we're being described today. City Hall took last place because guess what? It was the money that was for City Hall was not for City Hall anymore. It was for the City Hall Complex. So, we could move that money and fix 427. The problem is the 427 was fixed so well that, number one, the windows were leaking; number two, the fire alarm was never connected. It was not connected 'til I heard after he was fired that the Fire Department did not get notice that there was a smoke event in 427. All the employees had to leave the building. Guess what? They had to call because the fire alarm was never connected 'til I told Mr. Rojas what happened. Never connected. This was the wonderful, fantastic city manager, okay. Water tower, that was under his watch. Under his watch. Nothing. Well, still nothing. The police building, new, brand-new building, brand-new building. Guess what? Roof problems, air conditioning problems, elevator problems. Still, they cannot flush the toilets because there's a plumbing (INAUDIBLE). All during Peter Iglesias. Guys, hypocritical, lying people here. And you know what? All the minutes will show that in the past, Peter Iglesias did not do a good job. This is called, let's be vindictive.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Please wrap up your comment.

City Commission Meeting

May 20, 2025

Agenda Item F-16 - Discussion and possible action regarding position of City Manager.

Ms. Cruz: And let's do what we promised to do, bring him back. You know what? He'll have 20 months to destroy this city.

City Clerk Urquia: Gonzalo Sanabria.

Gonzalo Sanabria: Gonzalo Sanabria, 944 San Pedro Avenue. I am in full support of reinstating Peter Iglesias as city manager. But you, Ariel Fernandez, Commissioner Ariel Fernandez, you orchestrated a hire of an unqualified city manager that has cost the City and the taxpayers \$365,000 of wasted money because you brought into the City somebody who couldn't handle being a city manager. Zero experience in that regard, but you jammed it in because at the time you had the power of the votes. You no longer have the power of the votes. You can verbalize whatever you want to say, but you made a mistake that's costing the City hundreds of thousands of dollars. And also, the shoring up of the City Hall. How much is that going to cost? How many millions of dollars has Commissioner Fernandez strapped the City with? I'll also remind you that Peter Iglesias was a structural engineer for the City, and he had an office at the very bottom of this building in the basement. I know him from that time. I find him to be a total professional. We need to bring professionalism, civility, and harmony back. No matter who's sitting at the Commission, you need to be in respect of the residents. Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Tom Wells.

Tom Wells: Hi. My name is Tom Wells. I live at 1310 Coral Way. To review some of the facts, Mr. Iglesias was terminated for numerous reasons, not just insubordination. The permit, it took 20 months to pull a permit for Burger Bob to start renovation. So, it took 20 months to find bad drywall, that's from February 2022 to October 2023. It took only 10 months to rebuild the Biltmore or to build the Biltmore. I mean, that's despite the current Commission that said, we will reopen Burger Bob's by December 2022. That didn't happen. There are still false statements on the Coral Gables website about Fritz & Franz. He made specific comments that the current tenant was in default on payment leases. That's false. Insubordination is certainly one of them. Another one was failure to keep the residents involved as to the increasing budget for the Mobility Hub that went from \$29.3 million to \$62 million. We just got finished paying Albert Parjus a severance so that he would resign. We don't need to pay Mr. Iglesias a severance. We already have. We didn't have to, but we did as a compromise. And so, I think that we should avoid paying him a severance. We should also limit the period of time that he's going to be a city

commissioner [sic]. 20 months seems a bit extreme. We talked about 12 months. Amos Rojas also did not get a severance. He resigned and didn't take a severance, despite his agreement. And so, I would like that there would not be a severance paid for the interim commissioner [sic], Peter Iglesias. I would like for him not to be the commissioner [sic]. I know there was one meeting we talked about professionalism. There's one meeting that I attended with Mayor Lago and City Attorney Suárez with Mr. Iglesias there, talking about Burger Bob's. Mr. Iglesias told me that if I continue to take notes, he's going to terminate the meeting. So, I stopped taking notes because I'm not going to forget what he says, but that's not an act of a professional person. I think this is a mistake. I don't get any votes, that's fine, but I would prefer a search process, like we advocated, like I advocated, like all you guys advocated. I'd like a search process and make this an interim period of time, a very short period of time until the search process is complete. And the search process, as Mayor Lago, you said, "Be transparent. Let everybody have a bite out of the apple," your words in the Coral Gables Magazine. And that'd be great. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Madam Chair, may I respond?

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, you may.

Mayor Lago: First, two things, Mr. Wells. I'm going to be as transparent as the Commissioner Fernandez was when he removed two seats from the board that you sit on. That's being a lack of transparency when you remove seats, so you have more control on the Charter Review. There will be transparency, but this will be a transition from our current manager through a national search, and I'm not going to put a timeline onto it. But just before you know that, just before your comment right now, Madam City Attorney, what did you and I discuss yesterday in regard to the severance?

City Attorney Suárez: The resolution does not include any provision for severance.

Mayor Lago: So, before you even mention it, I want to put on the record I already said there's no severance. Unlike...

(COMMENTS MADE OFF THE RECORD)

Mayor Lago: Okay, that's very clear. So, this is an opportunity to have a world-class individual being in place during a transition of the next 20, 24 months to see where we stand and find the best candidate to lead the City. This is not like bringing somebody in

through the doors without reviewing a résumé and without reviewing a background check, without having any experience on the issue. This is a truly competent person who is prepared on day one to do the job. And we can continue going back and forth, but obviously, there is a motion and a second. Mr. Clerk, is there any more else -- anyone else? Sorry, Madam Chair, I apologize. I took over. I forgot.

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Burton Hersh.

Mayor Lago: I apologize, Madam Chair. Sorry about that.

Vice Mayor Anderson: It's okay.

Burton Hersh: Good afternoon, Commission, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Attorney. My name is Burton Hersh. My offices are at 130 Miracle Mile. I have been an architect in the City for approximately 40 years. So, it's been about that long or close to that long since I've known Peter Iglesias. I've known Peter as a structural engineer. I've known Peter as a building official. I've known Peter as an Assistant City Manager and as a City Manager. At a time where we're looking to switch to somebody else, it makes sense to bring somebody in that has so much history with the City, knows all the little pieces and can pick up things that may have fallen due to people that have come in they're just new, so they didn't know. Peter knows all the problems. Peter knows things that somebody else would not know. And then for him to stay on to school that person, I think it makes a lot of sense. Now, we have had our differences, Peter and I, but everybody that knows Peter knows he's had differences with everybody. It's just like anybody else. So, as a person that's been working with him for decades in a professional manner, I think it makes sense. Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Madam Chair.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Chair.

Vice Mayor Anderson: We are ready to take a vote. Please don't be repetitive and keep it brief. One minute. Keep it brief.

Commissioner Castro: I'm so sorry. City Attorney, can the Chair go ahead and limit me to the amount of time that I can speak as a Commissioner?

Commissioner Castro: So, the Chair can -- and the -- and with the goal of expediency and moving the meeting along, the Chair can set reasonable limits on time, yes.

Commissioner Castro: I have to go ahead and correct the Mayor. I -- his impersonation of me, "I'm excited, let me go ahead and hire him from LinkedIn," is very inappropriate and wrong, okay? I looked him up in LinkedIn, yes, because I wanted to know some more information about him because he just walked in, and I didn't know him. Now, did I hire him because I looked at his LinkedIn? Is very wrong for him to say. The main reason that I hired Amos Rojas was in fear that you would threaten him again. That you would threaten another candidate that came about. And I was in fear that we weren't going to be able to hire anybody else unless you brought him in. That was the main reason. Now, as far as employees, employees don't like Peter. I mingle with employees every single day. You know who likes Peter? Directors like Peter. I'm going to be transparent. The directors really do like Peter, but our general employees do not like Peter at all. And that's all I have to say.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. Let's take a vote. Mr. Clerk.

Commissioner Castro: Absolutely not.

Commissioner Fernandez: No.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Before I say yes, I'd like to thank Joe Gomez for his service. I want to say that when Joe stepped in, I was not 100 percent sure in regard to him being on the (INAUDIBLE). And I told you that to your face. But you have done an amazing job. You're probably one of the most quick responding individuals I've ever dealt with, and in our line of business, as you know, it's all about seconds. So, I want to congratulate you. You're honest. You're a very capable and competent person, and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Acting City Manager Gomez: Thank you, sir.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, sir. My answer is yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll echo those comments about Mr. Gomez. You're excellent, and as I've told residents, you're one of those people that when I ask you to jump, you basically say how high, and you're always there.

Acting City Manager Gomez: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anderson: And I look forward to working with you as well. The answer is yes.

(Vote: 3-2)

Mayor Lago: Thank you. I'd like to formally take the opportunity to welcome Mr. Peter Iglesias as our City Manager. I look forward to start working with him and have him hit the ground running. Thank you.