

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item K
July 1, 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 (Absent)

Commissioner Richard D. Lara

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Police Chief, Ed Hudak

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item K
Discussion Items

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, Mayor, related to some of the issues that have come up today, I have a couple of issues to bring up.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: One is there has been a call out for essentially an investigation related to the allegations that came out in a particular article. We've had internal investigations before. There was one years and years and years ago, involving Chief Hudak. It was an Internal Affairs investigation, it was handled by FDLE, I believe it was, correct me if I'm wrong, you've been here longer than I have City Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: If its internal...

City Attorney Suarez: That was an outside counsel and an outside investigator that was hired through the City Attorney's office per the direction of the Commission.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: Right. And more recently there was, Mayor, you were the subject of an Internal Affairs investigation, which cleared you of any wrongdoing and there's been allegations of wrongdoing here against Commissioner Fernandez and I think it would be incumbent upon us not to just sit silently here and have this matter addressed in an appropriate manner. Some people ask for resignation, some people ask for an Inspector General. I'm going to open this up for discussion, because perhaps an Internal Affairs investigation where FDLE takes it up would be the least costly way to assure the public that this matter is not being just kicked like a can to the side of the road. So, you have any thoughts and ideas on how we should proceed, so the public knows that we're not ignoring these allegations.

Mayor Lago: I've gotten a lot of calls from residents after reading the article on Aesop's Gables. It was pretty well detailed and to me, I think it's very concerning, very concerning. You're concerned about that, correct.

Commissioner Castro: I haven't read the article. It's an anonymous blog. I wouldn't put credibility to something that nobody puts their name on it. So, I don't read it. I'm not sure what it is that it's saying.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I'm going to add to that. There are confidential informants and people don't reveal their information, but police departments do utilize informants on cases and the fact that their identity remains undisclosed is not a factor because there's corroboration that occurs. So, anonymous or not, that's not a factor for me. I see that there's credible allegations that need to be addressed. I've received many reach-outs from residents saying that this needs to be addressed. The question is how to address it.

Mayor Lago: That was going to be my next question after I give the courtesy to speak with Commissioner Castro, she was giggling during the issue, so I wanted to make sure that obviously we address what was so funny in the room. First and foremost, whether it's anonymous or not, it doesn't really matter. The facts are there, it's very clear what happened. I was, along with Commissioner Lara and the Vice Mayor were targeted on these push-polls, very clear. The intent was to tarnish reputations, just like what happens every day in Political Cortadito. It's a pay for play blog, just like the Gazette, just like the fire union, Billy Corben. All these individuals who are all intertwined here and there are a whole host of people in the background who are residents, who are engaged in all this type of activity, but the people spoke at the last election. You know, I thought about truly just leaving it there, but when I saw this article and I read how damning the evidence was and the extent that people were willing to go to ruin someone, to me, I think there has to be some sort of action. I don't know if, for example, through FDLE, which I went through. I went through the FDLE process when your City Manager stated very clearly that I assaulted him and that was leaked to the Herald and they wrote an article about it, without actually having any facts. Again, another effort in a whole host of efforts to try to ruin my reputation, which failed

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miserably, failed miserably, because people saw right through it. And the interesting thing is, none of this stuff showed up. It was never like this on the Commission for ten years, never. We had battles on issues, but it only started happening when Commissioner Castro and Commissioner Fernandez showed up here. That type of dirty, dirty, nasty politics, you know, drag out, destroy someone's reputation only started happening and as I've gotten on the backside of my political career, I've become more vocal. I'm not going to allow that to happen to me, the nastiness, the lies. So, to me, when I went through the FDLE process, I met with two FDLE officers with my attorneys. We had a conversation. I was deposed and other people that were in the room, including then ACM or DCM, excuse me, DCM Parjus was in the room also, then they corroborated my story, which was I was nowhere near the City Manager. Yes, was it a heated conversation? – yes it was, very heated, but at the end of the day it wasn't physical. In this case, I would have to defer to the City Attorney, whether it should be FDLE or if it should be referred to Kathy Fernandez Rundle, but something needs to happen here, because this is the constant shadow attacks, destructive reputational efforts that at the end of the day need to be addressed. And just like I had to go in front of the FDLE, and I had that hanging over me for six months, until it came out, and by the way, when the Herald cleared the air after they wrote that article, I think they put it back in the cooking section, the article, or the comic section. It wasn't addressed front and center, like the article that stated the allegation was front and center, but that's the Herald, that's what they do, it's all click bait at the end of the day. So, I have to defer back to the City Attorney because I would like to see some action taken on this matter, because I think it's embarrassing and at the end of the day it's our reputation.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Lara: In the course of when this article came out through and including the start of this meeting during the public comments and through my lunch hour, I've also been approached by residents expecting something to be done by this Commission, because the allegations while they are allegations at this stage are serious, and so, looking at it from a different perspective, right, we as the Commission should not allow our own reputation as the professional body that we are, the ethical elected officials that we strive to be, besmirched or diluted at best when allegations that are serious like this go unaddressed. You know Mayor, I remember when allegations were being made by a former Commissioner that the City was adrift in a cesspool of corruption and that he was going to lead our beloved city out of the muck, without providing in that instance any specifics, but that formed the basis, I think, in prepared remarks for why we hired or I should say, this Commission hired the City Manager that had never been interviewed by anybody, offered a position by some unknown unnamed individual without the Commission having any prior knowledge, but the point is, you wanted to access an Inspector General because you cared, in my view, enough about this Commission and its reputation to clear your name, to clear the

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Commissioner's name in the most difficult and unenviable way, because you have to prove a negative, right, that you didn't do something.

Mayor Lago: You had to face a ghost.

Commissioner Lara: But in this instance, right, we have a very fresh and I regret to say, the very serious and it appears to be very well supported series of ethical, potential alleged ethical breeches, misuse of the public trust, misuse of the public office, for personal gain, for political gain and in any event, if Commissioner Fernandez were here, I would venture to guess that he would want to have these allegations dispelled, not hidden. I would assume only because I would assume if I was in his shoes that's what I would do. So, I could be wrong, but I would think that he would want his name cleared because this is not something that, you know, is bathroom, watercooler-type talk, but it is something that seems to have caught the widespread and serious attention of our residents. So how we go about it, there's any one of a number of ways, but something should be done and quickly, I think, is crystal clear. Inaction on our part would be at best, indifferent, and at worst, ratifying, that kind of alleged behavior and I can't have and won't stand for either one of those. So, City Attorney, I think I'd like to know if there's an internal mechanism to start perhaps in the least intrusive way, but in a way that affords an opportunity for the individual at the receiving end of these allegations to respond to questions that we may have, because I believe I would assume that we, the Commission, have an obligation to self-regulate ourselves, you know, the way the Bar regulates attorneys, right. If we receive credible concerns from the residents concerning how one of us is discharging our duty, well, I would expect that the Commission would respond by giving level one, inquiry to that individual to produce, if needed, some answers to questions that could resolve this, if that individual would resort to counsel, instead of providing us the answers, I understand, maybe not. People have a right to assert the Fifth Amendment, I'm not there yet, but I'm just saying, these are things that could be coming down the pike. I would like to keep the cost to a minimum, so perhaps we can decide as a body to have conversations opened with the appropriate local and state law enforcement to see if they could offer us some solutions and interest to help clear what is a very material and serious allegation. There is no good time for this kind of allegation, but you know, it seems to me this is the kind of thing that will resonate not only with our residents, but potentially resonates all the way to Tallahassee, because we seem to be fighting and I've heard this directly from certain elected officials statewide that we've got to climb out of a whole. I don't know how else to put it. We don't go in when we are looking for appropriations with the best reputation, over the last couple of years, and we're taking steps to rectify and right the ship, but this feels like it could be potentially a massive step backwards if we don't step up and take care of our own house. These are just some initial thoughts I have, but this is regrettably a very serious situation that we are dealing with, and I'll just echo one other thing that the Mayor said. I would be personally affected by what these allegations involve, because I was then part of a target, if any of these allegations are true, I'm one of the targets of this alleged surveillance, intimidation tactics utilized to gain information from residents regarding a political campaign. I'm

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not saying any of it is true. What I'm saying is that it's been brought to my attention by several residents expecting me to do something about it.

Chief Hudak: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Chief Hudak: I'm sorry I couldn't be there in person. As you know, I got called away.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Chief Hudak: If I can make a suggestion through your office, having some experience on this side. The City Attorney's office obviously represents the board and everybody on it. Through our Charter if the board wants the Manager to have the police department initiate an investigation with outside entities, that would probably be the course of action, even though I'd defer to her final opinion on that. The way it would go down is similar to what we have done before. The Manager can instruct me Internal Affairs could initiate what, in fact, we would be looking at. We would then bring in immediately the outside entities, whether it be the Sherriff's Office who has a public corruption unit, the State Attorney's Office, who has a public corruption unit, and State of Florida, which we use which is FDLE out of Tallahassee, we've used them before to look at that, and then if there's an ethics violation we would bring in the ethics violation. When I say we would bring in, we would essentially turn over these investigations to them for their final conclusion. My recommendation to you all is that it has to be looked at criminally before we look at the ethics side of it or if there is something that this body would want to take action on, which is really limited in scope. You don't want to have those conversations and then if there is in fact a criminal violation it could impede a criminal filing of charges, if you will. Again, I'm not familiar with all the allegations nor would I be. I would assign our Commander of Internal Affairs to coordinate with the outside entities, and I would contact the heads of those entities saying what the will of the Commission is by resolution. That gets enacted by a resolution or a direction to the Manager and then his direction to me. At which point we would be hands off and another entity would handle all of the interviews, any possible charges, and then a final conclusion. Once that's done, that would get presented by that entity to the board and then the City Attorney could opine on what the options are, or actions could be taken if nothing else came of that. If it's an ethics violation, obviously that would come from ethics. If it's the State Attorney getting charges, that would come from the public corruption unit, and if it's something on a larger scale or bigger area, the FDLE could use the statewide prosecutor on that, and they have specific units that handle this all the time. I'll just remind everybody when we had the door-to-door signing of petitions that were immediately handed over to Tallahassee. They did the investigation. We had no further involvement in that until it was either closed out and my recommendation for guidance and I would defer to the City Attorney, instead of having somebody who is either a constitutional officer or employee of this body doing an investigation into a current or past person on the Commission.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: So, through the Mayor. Based upon my background and experience that is the usual course of action. You don't do the internal investigation on folks within; you have it directed out. And I'll make a motion to direct the City Manager to address this matter with an Internal Affairs investigation in the manner that the Chief just indicated and they can send it out to the appropriate agency to do it from outside rather than inside and then also the least costly way to address this matter and put it to rest, one way or another.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Commissioner Lara: I second, but I want to also comment that I wish that we would have Commissioner Fernandez here, but I don't know why he's not here, but the circumstances are such that we can't wait, in my view. This is why I second and I would urge that we carry the motion when we take the vote.

Mayor Lago: Any further comments.

Commissioner Castro: Yes. I don't know what the facts are. I don't know what you're saying that he did. Is he following recording people. What are the charges or what are the facts. I have no idea. Nobody's reached out to me, which is funny enough, because if it seems to be such a big, big deal, from what you guys are saying, it seems to be pretty substantial, but I'm still a little lost to what would be the charges or what is it that we're blaming him of doing. I know that you guys want to take action, we're talking about a person that's not even here and we're talking about something that I don't even know what we're talking about. We are accusing him of what exactly?

Commissioner Lara: If I may, through the Mayor.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: If I may, but you decide.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir. Go ahead Commissioner.

Commissioner Lara: I'm not accusing anybody of anything. I'll repeat. I have read an article with substantial and serious allegations that appear to be supported by competent facts that the Commissioner may have engaged, may have engaged, allegedly engaged in conduct which constitutes surveillance on residents through his position as a sitting Commissioner, through a very complicated scheme of using fake email accounts, sending out emails with purported surveys, without disclosing that he's the one behind it, which also for those who actually conducted the survey and participated in it, it involved embedded tracking software in it. So, I understand you are saying you have no idea about any of these allegations, and I know what I've read. I know what residents have told me seems to match up with what's been alleged, but all of this is an allegation. Where I'm coming from is that the public trust appears to already be broken if we don't

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act and act means to investigate. You know when you heard one of your fellow Commissioners say that the city was adrift in a cesspool of corruption. If I were sitting here, I would have said, what are you talking about, because that's quite a serious allegation, right, but that wasn't what I heard from the dais. I know that the Mayor wanted to have an Inspector General look into a serious allegation like that and he was blocked.

Mayor Lago: If I may, Commissioner, I'm sorry to interrupt you. I've been quiet during this whole time. Commissioner Castro, I requested an Inspector General, you voted against it, and the whole intent was to clear my name, as I was battered over and over and accused of being corrupt, and I asked you to please vote in favor of an Inspector General. I then attempted, Madam City Attorney, and please clarify if I am not being factual. We said that we could even do it cheaper, speaking with the county and getting another entity to piggyback off, is that correct.

City Attorney Suarez: We did speak with the county. We did speak with the county, but it was practically challenging.

Mayor Lago: But we tried, we tried. So, at the end of the day, we brought it back to the Commission in an effort and I said, please, I implore you, let's start with my office. We will start with my office to ensure that they were not adrift in a cesspool of corruption. You unequivocally voted against it. You voted against it while you call me corrupt. So, I apologize for the interruption.

Commissioner Lara: No, that's fine. So the point is, through inaction under these circumstances when allegations of this nature are being made and the public is reaching out for us to look into it, in good conscience I don't know how we can't pursue an inquiry, to see if there is any truth to this and to clear this Commission's name, because inaction, in my view, at this point would be, as I said before, indifference at best or ratifying this type of behavior, if true, but we won't know unless we ask. By the way, I think you mentioned earlier about anonymous, and you don't read or give credence to things that are anonymous. A couple of Commission meetings ago, I received anonymous letters from people complaining that there were some issues I suppose that touched upon HR here and I believe that you directed me or the Commissioners to give credence to that. So, I'm not sure which way the target is moving when you say we should look at things that are anonymous or not, but that being said, I hope I've answered your question that we should be taking seriously. If you didn't know, I direct you and I can send you a copy of the article with the allegations that are contained in it, and we are advising you of that now.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. You have a really good memory, a lot better than mine, but I do also remember that the Mayor gave no credit to those letters of employees because they were anonymous. Yes, it's on the record, you can go back to the minutes. So that would be a little more contradicting unless you know exactly who is writing Aesop's Gables, if you believe them, it's a different story, you have a different relationship with them.

Mayor Lago: May I respond to you.

Commissioner Castro: Absolutely.

Mayor Lago: First and foremost, I know that you are connected with Political Cortadito because when I leave a building and something happens or something doesn't happen, she calls me immediately, because I know you call her. So, everybody knows that you leak everything to Political Cortadito and to the Gazette and to Robert Ruano, because you've been caught here taking pictures on the dais and then leaking it to them and both Maria Cruz.

Commissioner Castro: That's not true.

Mayor Lago: I have it.

Commissioner Castro: But that's not true. I don't leak things to Political Cortadito.

Mayor Lago: You're correct. You use a conduit which is Maria Cruz and Robert Ruano, but you do leak things to them and then they send it to her immediately, that's how it gets on the internet. But hold on a minute, I don't remember saying that I don't believe those letters. At the end of the day, they are employees, I believe them, whatever they are feeling and I'm here for them. But if you read the article, it's a difference between somebody telling you, hey, I want to have a work-from-home opportunity, from reading an article that has such ironclad evidence that for a person who is not technologically savvy for myself, it's undeniable, especially when you look at it. That's the difference between somebody saying, hey, I'd like to work from home, please consider that, and an article that breaks down step by step by step how a cover up occurred and then they show you screen shots of how a person got rid of public records and removed items from their Linked-In, as you are so familiar with. It's amazing and it's undeniable unless it's doctored. So again, I don't know if anybody has done anything wrong here, but I was hammered and so was the Vice Mayor and so was Commissioner Lara with these push-polls and I know you don't want to admit it and I get it, but at the end of the day, I've said it here and I'll say it again, when I send something out it says, Vince Lago or it says Coral Gables First. I don't hide behind Ladra, like you do. I don't hide behind the Gazette. I don't hide behind those kinds of, you know, Billy Corbens of the world, where again, they go out there and they destroy people's reputations no matter what just to get to an end goal. I put my face on it, I give my name, I'm front and center. I've always done that. My name is attached to it. I don't hide. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, with regard to corroborating information, take the opportunity you might want to read the article, because it's going to point you to documentation that identifies that its reliable and its credible. Law enforcement uses anonymous sources all the time, but the underlying principle is that they have to always have corroborating information. Supreme Court v. United States has authorized this type of information to be used to get search warrants to search people's premises. If it's good enough to issue a search warrant to establish probable cause if there

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is a crime somewhere, it would be incumbent upon us not to ignore this evidence that appears to be very credible. We are not making an accusation. You either rule it in or rule it out by handing it off to a third party, essentially, not us. I'm not making the decision, you're not making the decision, none of us are, but we cannot ignore it. For the sake of the reputation of the Mayor, it should have been done then. For the sake of the reputation of Commissioner Fernandez, I would think that he would want this ruled out if it's false information, but if it's true, it's true. We can't deny the facts. Hand it off to the proper investigative agency to handle it. We're not going to steer the investigation. We're not going to influence the investigation. It just needs to happen.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. If this is something illegal, isn't this something that automatically the police would get a hold of.

Chief Hudak: Mr. Mayor, I can answer that if you want.

Mayor Lago: Yes sir.

Chief Hudak: Obviously, if I witness a violation goes on in most of these meetings and it's a violation of law, Commissioner Castro, then we could initiate a criminal investigation, but we would do it the same process. What I recommend at this point is, and I can be very clear, once I have a conversation with the Manager, the Commander of Internal Affairs will take initial statements and then he will then provide them to me about what we believe would be the appropriate investigative agency outside of the City of Coral Gables. I just need to tell everybody, and I know the City Attorney understands this, these continued conversations will also have to be addressed individually to you all by the investigators. So, the longer we talk in public about this, if there is any other kind of allegations or second-hand information, this would just prolong what the investigation, what the investigators would have to look at. In other words, we have to look at all of these videos, all of the issues that are out there, all of the posts that were put up there, and put them in a very concise file that the investigators can then come to a final conclusion of. Did it violate the law? – Did it violate ethics? – Did it violate our Charter? So, I know we are under discussion on whether to direct the Manager to meet with me, but I want to be very clear what would happen. The Internal Affairs people would take the recorded statements. I'm not going to be part of that. Then he would present it to me about who we should talk to, not what is said, what is truthful or what is hearsay versus what can be proven. That decision would be then what department is going to do to the investigation. I know there's a lot that we're talking about right now, but if it was a clear criminal violation that somebody stood up and said, hey, this person took money, then I would be obligated under my oath to make sure I initiated somebody from outside. I have not heard that yet and I haven't seen a lot of these things that we're talking about, but I do understand the character assignment and that would be something that we would have another entity look at. As far as an IG conversation, an IG will work for the same body. These kinds of accusations would be and should be referred to in my professional opinion to an outside entity that

has jurisdiction over everybody that's involved. If there are subpoena's due or something like that, that would be an outside entity, not your police department, not an IG. So, I believe this is the safest course of action for this body to take, to Commissioner Lara's point, to run down these issues on both sides of what has been put forward.

Mayor Lago: Alright.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I think we have a motion, and we have a second.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. City Attorney, were you aware of this? Are you up to date with any of this?

City Attorney Suarez: I had heard about this article. I haven't read it. I'm not familiar with all of the allegations.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, we have a motion and a second.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Castro: Because I don't have the facts in front of me and I have not read the article, my vote's going to be no. Maybe in the future if you guys do give me the facts for this item, I can vote on this a different way, but right now this is too new to me, so no.

Commissioner Lara: It is precisely because we don't have all the facts and what we have are allegations, it's an emphatic yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes

(Vote: 3-1)

(Commissioner Fernandez: Absent)

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor, anything else for the good of the order.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes. For tomorrow, because there are some questions about how much ADA funds we have left and what they are being applied to, received an inquiry from someone who writes, won't mention names, I'm just going to ask for it to be brought forward during the budget meeting. Second, wait for our illustrious, hopefully impact glass will decrease the noise (note: noise of sirens). City Manager, I'm going to ask you to give a brief update on our appropriations when I know the boat I addressed with Senator Garcia back in November, along with the Chief, this was the interdiction boat. I met, what I call pre-season meeting with the representatives between basically September and December before campaign season, I met with them as well, and my understanding is we got the Granada basin money. If you could just give us a quick update on our legislative appropriations.

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City Manager Iglesias: The only two items that we received were the boat for the police and the sanitary sewer issue to reduce infiltration.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. So, the ADA fund issue just bring it tomorrow during the budget. Someone is inquiring of me of what we have and what we spent and what we are planning on spending we'll address tomorrow.

City Manager Iglesias: Excuse me, Vice Mayor. The ADA issue.

City Attorney Suarez: I think the Vice Mayor is asking for the ADA funds, the fund that we have for ADA improvements. She wants to know the amount of funding in there.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Not of funding. I've received an inquiry about the amount of funding and how we're spending it, what's our plan. Perhaps we can cover it tomorrow during the budget meeting.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: And last is, hope you all have a wonderful 4th of July. Remind the residents that they can get the trolley from City Hall and avoid the chaos at the Biltmore Hotel getting there.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Castro.

Commissioner Castro: So today, this body has decided to censure me. This body sitting right here, the Mayor, the Vice Mayor, and Commissioner Richard Lara, for the reason of me reaching out to the Attorney General and defending the rights, the right to vote of my constituents of the people. After I presented all the facts, this body decided to act against the Attorney General against the State Constitution and the County Charter, and they went ahead, and they still censured me. It was unethical, unconstitutional, illegal, because I was here to defend your right to vote. This was a matter of April or November. If this would have been put on the ballot, that was my request, put it on the ballot. This body has taken their right to vote, and I was here defending it, and for that reason I got censured, and I want every resident out there to know that even if I get censured, you're not going to silence me, because I'm going to continue to fight for you and for your rights. Everybody happy 4th of July.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Lara.

Commissioner Lara: So, I'll respond to that. You're quite right, Commissioner, we voted today to censure you. I would say that hypothetically using this very last topic that we were just talking about. If these allegations regarding conduct that was committed by Commissioner Fernandez resulted in me deciding to hold a press conference or you know, take to social media and ask for somebody's head on a pike, let's say, right, I would expect to be censured, because the proper way to handle something like that would be to do exactly what we did right now, which was to have a

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conversation, a dialogue amongst and between the other colleagues on the Commission with the input from, in this case, the Police Chief, City Manager, as well as City Attorney. So, under no means, by no means, and under no possible stretch of the imagination was the censure that I voted for an attempt to silence the voters or to silence any of your rights which is believed for the reason stated on the record that rather than help the situation, we believe that you were attempting to worsen the situation and invite harm to the city, frankly. And with that being said, I want to wish everybody also a very happy 4th of July. I hope to see everybody at the Biltmore. I'll be there witnessing what I know will be yet again another spectacular fireworks event with additional surprise entertainment for all to see. I haven't seen any of the new stuff, but I'm looking forward to it and as a reminder, I may have abbreviated office hours on Monday as I have a dental appointment that I have to take care of.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Priorities. Good luck. [Laughter]

Commissioner Lara: The Vice Mayor knows what I'm talking about you know. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: I have a few items for the record. Commissioner Castro mentioned two items, the one in this Commission meeting and the one past, so she had me do some homework, and when I say me, worked with staff to address the hybrid work policy. So, she emphatically and enthusiastically said that there are four cities that have hybrid work, and we should be able to do it. OK. Perfect. So, I've got to take her word for it.

Commissioner Castro: It was the letter. I was reading the letter, remember.

Mayor Lago: Again, you stated it for the record. So, I went and did the homework with staff's help. Thank you, Mr. Manager, thank you to staff. First and foremost, City of Miami, City of Miami-Dade County, Miami-Dade County, I apologize, Mayor Danielle Levine Cava requested a plan of action by March 21, 2025, ensuring the return of county employees back to office no later than April 15, 2025. Number two – Fort Lauderdale does not have a specific hybrid work policy. The availability of work from home option is determined on a position-by-position basis by the Manager. City of Miami Beach – the city permits tele-work as an alternative working arrangement. Tele-work will be approved by the City Manager. The City Manager reserves the right to require employees to return to office work at any time for any reason or no reason at all. City of Doral – no specific citywide work from home policy exists. I spoke to the Manager myself. Facts matter. Can't just say things in an effort to build your argument and make your argument sound more accurate or more appropriate. Next item, the censure. Don't feel bad about the censure. I was censured also. I was censured by Melissa Castro for stating comments about Commissioner Menendez and Commissioner Fernandez work employment, that's what I was censured for on a radio station. So, at the end of the day, you censured me over something I said on the radio show, not even on this dais.

Commissioner Castro: That sounds like retaliation, right.

Mayor Lago: No.

Commissioner Castro: That's exactly what it sounds like.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner, what I'm doing is clearing the air. I don't need to retaliate. There's no need. I just give you enough rope. Third thing – I'd like for my colleagues to consider since we have so many protocol items in the beginning of the Commission, maybe we start at 8:30 (a.m.) and we handle the protocol items from 8:30 to 9:00 (a.m.) if it makes sense. You don't have to decide today, something that maybe we can talk with the Manager and if it makes sense for you, we'll do it. I used to do that with Mayor Valdes-Fauli. It worked out well, but at the end of the day if you don't want it, I'm perfectly fine with it. I'm just bringing it to your attention. I also want to wish everybody a happy 4th of July. This is going to be a special moment. I won't be there, but I also want to, for the first time I'll be missing 4th of July, but we invited many State Representatives and Senators to join us. It's a great opportunity to thank them for their leadership at the state and to continue building on a bright future. I want to congratulate the Vice Mayor, because I always like to make sure that the appropriate respect is given to somebody who worked hard on something. The Vice Mayor has been working on the drone show for several years now and you've brought it to fruition. Congratulations.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you for that and I think it will be, like Commissioner Lara said, a special evening to celebrate our great country. The fact that it is an honor and it's a privilege to live in this country, it's not a right and as a son of immigrants, I'm reminded of that every single day. So, in closing, I want to thank you to staff, to our City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, to all the residents that were here today. We made many decisions today; we passed a lot of legislation. We moved forward on infrastructure, but we're never going to get 100 percent consensus. I think we got close, and I foresee a bright future in this Commission, hopefully one day we'll come together. Please don't forget, Commissioner Castro, for two years I was sitting in your seat, and I went to FDLE, as a result of a manager who said that I assaulted him. I was not even allowed to stand up, at one point in the Commission meeting because the meeting would be adjourned if I stood up to go to the bathroom. My intent and our intent is not to punish. Our intent is to lead the city without making the massive mistakes that were made by the previous Commission. So, I want to say thank you to everyone who's here. God bless everyone. Happy 4th of July and thank you for your help. We are going now to move – you want to say something, Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes. One last thing because I sense that you don't understand the censure. You failed to seek the advice and consent of this board. A single member cannot act opposite to the direction of the board. Just like we put together this legislative agenda together, we have to act

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together. If you have concerns, wait till the next agenda, put it on, before you send a letter to the Attorney General. You might be surprised, maybe we will approve it. But it's all about doing things the right way. You were censured to dissuade you from doing the same thing again. Okay. That's why.

Mayor Lago: Madam City Attorney, do we adjourn.

City Attorney Suarez: Yes, we adjourn.

Mayor Lago: We'll be adjourning this meeting and opening up the next one to address the Giralda Garage Condominium Association.