

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item K-1
September 13, 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

Commissioner Kirk Menendez (On Zoom)

City Staff

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Police Chief, Ed Hudak

Assistant City Attorney, Stephanie Throckmorton

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item K-1 [12:33 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission sunsetting the City of Coral Gables City-Wide Anti-Crime Committee.

Mayor Lago: Moving onto City Clerk items, K-1.

City Attorney Ramos: K-1 is a Resolution of the City Commission sunsetting the City of Coral Gables City-Wide Anti-Crime Committee.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: Good morning or almost afternoon, or afternoon Mayor and Commissioners, Stephanie Throckmorton, Assistant City Attorney. Before you today is a resolution sunsetting the Coral Gables Citywide Anti-Crime Committee. I understand they've had issues meeting in the last few years which the Chief can elaborate on. As mentioned in the resolution, the city has approached the Crime Watch Committee of Coral Gables to see if they would be interested in working together to sort of continue the efforts of the Anti-Crime Committee; and it's my understanding that the Chief spoke to them and they are interested in having appointees from the Commission on their board.

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Chief Hudak: Correct. So, Commissioners, the Anti-Crime Committee originally called the CWACC, City-Wide Anti-Crime Committee, was reconstituted in 2014, at which point we started with 12 members to try and get one from every zone. Hard for me to say that without laughing, I'm sorry. It was not renamed the CWACC, it was renamed the Anti-Crime Committee. The idea was to have 12 people for each zone throughout our 12 zones, to get information back and forth. We started strong. Now, recently we haven't had a quorum probably in the last eight months, because it's a city board, we are not able to really do any business. I met with them two months ago, with the members that were there. We took a straw conversation. They like the idea, the members that were present about combining your representatives to the Crime-Watch Board, who has a permanent employee staged at the station where we can continue to do what the thought process was originally of the Anti-Crime Committee, which was to take both information out to the residents to the residents directly to us, which my staff and I meet with monthly. So, our recommendation is to sunset this committee again, and then by resolution, I defer to the City Attorney, to have every current Commissioner assign someone, I know most of the people that you currently have on the Anti-Crime Committee would love to continue to serve as your representatives to the Crime-Watch Committee, which is a 501(c)3. It would also give them the ability to use the Executive Director and our Crime-Watch meetings to take those into the neighborhoods.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: And we would bring that legislation back, if that's a thing that you are interested in.

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't have an issue with it. We talked about this; I think recently.

Chief Hudak: Last month. I just wanted to get a feeling for how you all felt about it, since the idea when it came up in 2014 was, they wanted the input, the Commissioners wanted the input into what we were doing. I think it started off that way. Madam Cruz was actually the Chair for a while and kept me on my toes throughout that entire time. But then again, I think it was just tough when you have a board that size to get that quorum, and that was for us to continue business. So, we would meet and I'm really having those same conversations with the Crime-Watch Committee that I have with Anti-Crime Committee. It really kind of facilitates your representatives to have access to our resources to reach out to their neighborhoods and bring things directly to us.

Mayor Lago: So, we haven't been able to have quorum in eight months.

Chief Hudak: No sir.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Are there any public comments.

City Clerk Urquia: No sir.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Again, if staff believes that we are not getting everything we can get out of this board, my colleagues don't see any reason to keep it, I'm more than willing to move forward.

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Chief Hudak: And again, in the spirit of what this was created, I think we can kind of traverse that into with the Crime-Watch, because what your appointees were doing or being asked to do in the spirit of the original resolution would be for them to go out door to door and talk to people. Now we can give them the opportunity just to bring us and our staff and our Community Affairs division can go out there and take care of those issues before it becomes more important.

Mayor Lago: This is a resolution, so it requires action by the Commission.

Vice Mayor Mena: I'll move it.

Commissioner Anderson: Second.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes

Commissioner Fors: Yes

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes

Commissioner Menendez: Yes

Mayor Lago: Before I vote, I apologize, I know that Commissioner Menendez had a question. I'm sorry about that.

Commissioner Menendez: I have a question, different topic, so I can wait before we break. It's a different subject. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: So, I'll just vote, yes. I just wanted to make sure.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: And we'll bring back an item regarding the Crime-Watch in the next few meetings, once we get that solidified.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Perfect. Thank you very much, great work.

Assistant City Attorney Throckmorton: Thank you.