

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item G-3
September 22, 2020
Virtual Meeting
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

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

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Attorney, Miriam Ramos
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Assistant to the City Manager, Solanch Lopez

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item G-3 [10:00 a.m.]

A discussion regarding the 2020 International Coastal Cleanup in Coral Gables.
(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Lago)

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Item G-3, discussion regarding the 2020 International Coastal Cleanup in Coral Gables, Vice Mayor, you again.

Vice Mayor Lago: Well, I want Solanch to come up here, because this is an arm of her significant efforts over the last two years. She'll give you a little bit more explanation, but we've been working on this for about a year now with a nice resident by the name of Lucy Lopez, who deserves a lot of credit, along with Solanch and her team, and this is something that I want all the young people in this community to get involved. We are going to have some significant prizes, and I'm going to talk a little bit about that after, but I want Solanch to give a little bit of an explanation of what we are doing, and this is not a one-time affair. This is something that I want to make sure that we continue to do year in and year out, because I think it could distinguish us from every other city in South Florida, and it goes hand-in-hand with water quality.

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Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you.

Solanch Lopez: Good morning Mayor, Vice Mayor, members of the Commission. Solanch Lopez, Assistant to the City Manager. Matt Anderson is also on the Zoom link, if we have any additional questions for him. We are briefly going to go over what the city is doing for International Coastal Cleanup this year, which actually celebrates its 35th anniversary this year. So, what is International Coastal Cleanup? International Coastal Cleanup began more than 30 years ago, when communities rally together with the common goal of collecting and documenting trash littering their coastlines. The cleanup has grown immensely in 30 years with volunteers from states and territories throughout the U.S., and more than 100 countries coming together each year and participating in this cleanup event. This year to ensure the safety and complying with all Covid-related restrictions, instead of one large one day event of clean season running from September 19th all the way through November 1st will take place. Keep Coral Gables Beautiful has partnered with VolunteerCleanup.org for the 2020 International Coastal Cleanup season. This partnership began thanks to a meeting scheduled by the Vice Mayor with staff, like he mentioned, about a year ago back in 2019. What are we doing as a city? Through Keep Coral Gables Beautiful, we are going to be encouraging residents to participate in solar cleanups throughout the season. This means instead of going to an organized event, just grabbing a couple supplies and going out in your neighborhood, if you live by the waterway, or specifically Matheson Hammocks since it's a large public area with easy access to the coastline within our city, and just going out and doing your own cleanup alone, or with friends or family. We are also hosting two supply pickup locations for our residents looking to do these solar cleanups within the city, we'll talk a little bit more about those in a minute, and we are in the process of coordinating an employee cleanup that we can do as a city within our waterway. For those solar cleanups, we are recommending that our residents look at these locations within Matheson Hammock Parks, if they want to do their own solar cleanup. We have this graphic up on our city website at coralgables.com/keepcoralgablesbeautiful or /kcgb. The solar cleanup supply pickup locations, we are hosting two, these supplies were donated to us by VolunteerCleanup.org to make it more accessible for our residents to participate in these cleanups. The first location is here at City Hall and we'll be providing these supplies from 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday, and at the Biltmore Tennis Center, Monday through Sunday at the corresponding times. Residents that want to pick up supplies to do their own cleanups simply have to come to either of these two locations, they'll sign a waiver that we have on iPads for them and they'll be able to collect their supplies. Contests and Prizes – In an effort to encourage our residents to really engage and participate in the International Coastal Cleanup season, we will be hosting two different contests throughout the season with prizes that will be given out. Two of these contests will be photo contest, the first being a best before and after picture, so when you go out to do your solar cleanup, you take a picture of the area that you are planning on cleaning up, that's the before, and then after you've done all the cleanup, you take an after picture to show the difference that you've made. The second photo contest will be a most creative contest, meaning raising awareness of the litter problem in a creative way with the litter that you've collected throughout your cleanup that day. The requirements to participate in the photo contest is to tag the city's accounts whether you are on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram, and use the hashtags #keepcoralgablesbeautiful and #kcgbphotocontest to enter. The other contest that we will be

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hosting is the Forum Work Club, this is also being done by VolunteerCleanup.org and its basically for those that complete four or more cleanups during the season. The requirements for this are the clean swale report that everybody must fill out when they do a cleanup and photo proof that you were actually out there participating in these cleanups. Additional details on these contests and the requirements will be available online at coralgables.com/kcgb. The prizes for these contests were graciously donated by the Coral Gables Community Foundation through their restaurant rally initiative. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Lago: Solanch, thank you so much. I just want to briefly mention. So we are doing things a little different this year, obviously because of the situation with Covid, we didn't want to wait one more year to kick this off, we've been working on this for such a long time, and Lucy has been just such a firecracker and really working on this, along with Solanch, to make sure that we can deliver this great project. What I'm going to try to do is, I'm going to try, and I hope that my colleagues will help me on this, and that is engage. I'm reaching out to Maria Rojas from the School Board, to engage our young students in this community to go out there. I want to thank Mary Snow from the Coral Gables Community Foundation for her generous support of this event. You know, a lot of young kids are not going to want to go eat at a fancy restaurant, if they win, that's not their idea of a prize, so what my wife and I decided to do is, we are going to make two donations and I cleared this with our City Attorney, of \$500 each for the group that comes in first and second, and I challenge my colleagues, I challenge anyone in the community, because I know several people have stepped up saying that they are also interested in doing this. I want to motivate, and I know this Commission agrees with me, I want to motivate young professionals, young kids in this community to go out there and cleanup. I do this on a weekly basis with my kids, and its become, not only a habit, but its become an opportunity for us to really spend time together and to really enjoy maintaining our neighborhood, ensuring that there is a level of quality that we really take care of the environment, and its contagious and I hate to use it during Covid season, but its contagious, because we are doing it and then my neighbors start doing it to. You see them out there with a bucket, and I found out about this through another buddy of mine who does a weekly challenge called, fill a bucket, but we do it with a garbage bag. So, its an opportunity for us to really keep Coral Gables beautiful, it is our moniker, it is what we stand for, it is what we are so proud of, and welcome for anyone else who wants to donate to the challenge, wants to get engaged. We are really going to be promoting this event and I think its going to be something that, again, will have legs and will stand the test of time and will give us an opportunity to focus on what we hold so dear to our heart and that's our waterways and our natural environment.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Commissioner. Thank you, Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Lago: Thank you Solanch, you deserve all the credit, along with Lucy and Chelsea, thank you so much.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you Solanch.

Commissioner Keon: Vice Mayor Lago, Chelsea, maybe you can contact, Chelsea I'm sorry, Solanch, maybe you can contact the Boys Scouts and Girl Scout groups that are in our community,
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because they are always looking for participating in those activities, and I think there are some qualifications for some merit badges for them to do that.

Vice Mayor Lago: Solanch, my two daughters are Girl Scouts, one is a Girl Scout, one is a Brownie, so they are going to be doing it. I think they are trying to, I'm not sure who is the Girl Scout Troup, but we can always reach out to them, like the Commissioner said.

Commissioner Keon: Well, I think Troup 7, I know is right here, and there are a couple of schools have Troupes within them, they may do that. Thank you.

Mayor Valdes-Fauli: Thank you very much.