



City of Miami Springs, Florida

City Council Meeting

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers, 201 Westward Drive, Miami Springs, Florida

Virtual Council Meeting using Communications Media Technology Pursuant to
Governor's Executive Order 20-69

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order by the Mayor at 7:00 p.m.

Present were the following:

Mayor Maria Puente Mitchell

Vice Mayor Jorge Santin

Councilwoman Jacky Bravo

Councilman Walter Fajet, Ph.D.

Councilman Victor Vazquez. Ph.D.

City Manager/Finance Director William Alonso

City Clerk Erika Gonzalez-Santamaria

City Attorney Roger Pou

City Attorney Haydee Sera (via Zoom)

Assistant City Manager Tammy Romero

Police Chief Armando Guzman

Public Works Director Lazaro Garaboa

Human Resources Director Bill Collins

2. **Invocation:** Offered by Councilman Victor Vazquez

Pledge of Allegiance: The audience participated in leading the pledge.

3. **Agenda / Order of Business:**

4. **Awards & Presentations:**

A) Administration of the Oath of Office to newly elected Councilwoman Jacky Bravo, Group II

City Clerk Erika Gonzalez administered the Oath of Office to Councilwoman Bravo.

B) Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Annual Report by Fire Chief Raied "Ray" Jadallah

City Clerk Erika Gonzalez stated that the Fire Chief will be attending the next Council Meeting.

C) Presentation from Beverly Raposa and Mercy Ruiz, flight Attendants from the Eastern 401 Plane Crash, officially thanking City Staff and City Council for the

Eastern Flight 401 Dedication efforts

Beverly Raposa and Mercy Ruiz were present and stated that December 29, 2022 was so special, the Memorial Dedication for Flight 401 event was memorable. She thanked the Mayor and Council, City Manager Alonso and his incredible team. Ms. Raposa and Ms. Ruiz presented the Mayor and City Council with a framed photo of the memorial and all of the names on flight 401.

D) Recognizing Carlos Gomez for Bridge Lighting Project during the River Cities Festival 2023

Mayor Mitchell recognized Mr. Carlos Gomez on lighting the incoming bridge at the Circle. Mr. Gomez was present to thank the Mayor and City Council for the recognition. Mayor Mitchell presented Mr. Gomez with a framed certificate of appreciation for his contributions to the City.

5. Open Forum: The following members of the public addressed the City Council: No speakers at this time.

6. Approval of Council Minutes:

- A) April 10, 2023 – Special Meeting
- B) April 10, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Councilman Fajet moved to approve the minutes of April 10, 2023 Special Meeting and April 10, 2023 Regular Meeting. Councilwoman Bravo seconded the motion, which carried 5-0 on roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Vice Mayor Santin, Councilwoman Bravo, Councilman Fajet, Councilman Vazquez and Mayor Mitchell voting Yes.

7. Reports from Boards & Commissions:

A) Chair Fred Gonzalez of the Recreation Commission providing an update on Board activities

Chair Fred Gonzalez stated that the board is meeting every month now. He stated that the board approved a City-wide survey that is currently available through social media and the City's official website. The survey touches on bike and walking paths, to the Golf Course and tennis facilities. He stated all the feedback from the survey will help with develop and plan for current and future open spaces.

B) Chair Julia Arias of the Centennial Committee providing an update on Board activities

Chair Julia Arias reported that the committee is hard at work. She stated that the committee issued a survey on what residents and business owners want to see during the celebration. They have come up with a variety of decorations, a

Centennial Park with an airline theme, business window displays, fashion shows, a historical tour, a Centennial tree planting, and pins created by students within City limits. She spoke on fundraising and sponsorship and funding proposals during the budget process.

8. Public Hearings:

A) Ordinance – Second Reading – An Ordinance Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of Miami Springs, Florida, Comprehensively Updating And Amending Chapter 53 “Stormwater Utility Management Program” Of The City’s Code Of Ordinances, By Creating Division Ii, “Water Quality” Pertaining To Illicit Discharges And Connections, Erosion And Sediment Control, And Other Water Quality Regulations; Providing For Severability; Providing For Codification; Providing For Conflicts; And Providing For An Effective Date

City Attorney Roger Pou read the Ordinance by title.

Mayor Mitchell opened the public hearing. There were no speakers at this time.

Councilman Vazquez moved to approve the Ordinance as read. Councilman Fajet seconded the motion, which carried 5-0 on roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Vice Mayor Santin, Councilwoman Bravo, Councilman Fajet, Councilman Vazquez and Mayor Mitchell voting Yes.

9. Consent Agenda: (Funded and/or Budgeted):

A) **Resolution** – A Resolution Of The Mayor And The City Council Of The City Of Miami Springs, Florida, Declaring The City Manager, Finance Director, And Chief Of Police As Authorized Signatories For The City’s Amerant Bank, N.A. Bank, Savings, And Trust Accounts; Authorizing Amerant Bank, N.A. To Accept Either Two Manual Signatures Or Two Facsimile Signatures From Any Combination Of The City’s Authorized Signatories For The City’s Bank, Savings, And Trust Accounts; Providing For Implementation; Providing For Conflicts; And Providing For An Effective Date

B) **Resolution** – A Resolution Of The Mayor And City Council Of The City Of Miami Springs, Florida, Authorizing The Issuance Of A Taxable Capital Improvement Revenue Note, Series 2023, Of The City Of Miami Springs, Florida, In The Aggregate Principal Amount Of \$3,800,000 For The Purpose Of Financing The Miami Springs Golf & Country Club Golf Course Revitalization Project; Awarding The Sale Of The Note To Southstate Bank, N.A.; Providing For Security For The Note; Providing Other Provisions Relating To The Note; Making Certain Covenants And Agreements In Connection Therewith; Providing For Adoption Of Representations; Providing For Certain Other Matters In Connection Therewith; Providing A Severability Clause; And Providing An Effective Date

C) **Resolution** – A Resolution Of The Mayor And City Council Of The City Of Miami Springs, Florida, Amending The Recreation Department Schedule Of Charges; Providing For Authorization; And Providing For An Effective Date

D) **Resolution** – A Resolution Of The Mayor And City Council Of The City Of Miami Springs, Florida, Approving The Purchase Of Police Uniforms From Lou’s Police Distributors, Inc. In An Amount Not To Exceed \$25,000; Providing For A Waiver Of Competitive Bidding; Providing For Authorization; And Providing For An Effective Date

Vice Mayor Santin pulled item 9C for further discussion.

Councilman Fajet moved to approve the Consent Agenda items 9A, 9B, and 9D. Councilman Vazquez seconded the motion, which carried 5-0 on roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Vice Mayor Santin, Councilwoman Bravo, Councilman Fajet, Councilman Vazquez and Mayor Mitchell voting Yes.

City Attorney Roger Pou read pulled Consent Agenda Item 9C, Resolution by title. Recreation Director Omar Luna was available to answer the City Council’s questions.

Councilwoman Bravo made a motion to amend the Resolution to reflect that seniors/disabled/veterans residents have free yearly membership and that during the weekdays they may enter for free. Vice Mayor Santin seconded the motion, which carried 5-0 on roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Vice Mayor Santin, Councilwoman Bravo, Councilman Fajet, Councilman Vazquez and Mayor Mitchell voting Yes.

10. Old Business:

A) Update from Police/Parks and Recreation on this year’s 4th of July Fireworks

This item was heard earlier in the meeting. Recreation Director Omar Luna and Chief Armando Guzman were present to answer the Council’s questions. After some discussion, Councilman Fajet made a motion to cancel this year’s July 4th Fireworks. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vazquez and the motion carried 5-0 on roll call vote. The vote was as follows: Vice Mayor Santin, Councilwoman Bravo, Councilman Fajet, Councilman Vazquez and Mayor Mitchell voting Yes.

11. New Business: None at this time.

12. Other Business:

A) Annexation Update

Mayor Mitchell provided an important update and also state for the record recent activity regarding annexation. Mayor Mitchell provided how the annexation process began, beginning with Miami-Dade County originally asking nearly twenty years ago if the City was interested in annexing a neighboring enclave near City limits, after approval by the citizenry during two separate elections, the annexation

process began and continued over the years. She stated recently the Board of County Commission approved the annexation of the proposed area and requested that the County Attorney draft an Interlocal Agreement. Mayor Mitchell stated that the Agreement was not approved because of concerns with the millage rate of 3.7 to 4.0 mills, which motivated the City Council thereafter, to pass a resolution to lower the millage rate even more to 2.5 to 3.0. She stated that during this portion a newly elected Commissioner was seated to District 6, Commissioner Cabrera was duly elected and sworn-in. She stated the City brought forward the annexation application once again to the new Commissioner, and before even considering the City request, he wanted to have a survey conducted to all business property owners in the proposed annexation area. The City was to provide a 100-word statement as to why the City is requesting annexation, and once the statement was prepared, she stated that fifteen vital words were inexplicably removed from the statement that provided contact information to the City for any questions or concerns. Mayor Mitchell also stated that the survey was sent to all business folios meaning that property owners who own more than one property could vote more than once since they potentially may own more than one property. She further discussed that Commissioner Cabrera asked for a meeting at the Miami Springs Community Center for all property owners that surveyed “no” on annexation a week ago, seven property owners attended. Mayor Mitchell indicated that most recently in her conversation with Commissioner Cabrera informed her that he was not going to proceed with annexation and also made a commitment that as long as he is in office he would not allow that area be annexed by another municipality. Mayor Mitchell re-iterated the importance of small communities being treated equitably as larger municipalities are allowed to expand City limits, also giving small communities opportunities for social justice, zoning diversification and lowering property taxes.

B) Request by Mayor Mitchell to discuss opportunities for new parks

Mayor Mitchell stated that she has been discussing new park or open space opportunities with Recreation Director Omar Luna recently. She stated that Rio Vista Park was a great example of potentially adding outdoor amenities. Recreation Director Omar Luna stated that his goal is to develop a Parks Master Plan for planning future open spaces. The Mayor and City Council requested that Recreation Commission Chair Fred Gonzalez take the request back to the board in order to explore ideas for the open space.

C) Request by Vice Mayor Santin to discuss a strategic plan which defines how the City will look like in ten years

Vice Mayor Santin stated that he would like for the City Council to consider working on a strategic plan for the City to define a vision on what the City will look like in the near future and long-term as well. He stated that prioritizing NW 36th Street, and parking would be a part of the plan. He said the process will allow all stakeholders to participate in the process and be a part of the final vision. The Mayor indicated that a goals and strategic planning workshop is in place for May 16th. She stated if the Council needs additional workshops, those may be planned

for the future.

D) Request by Vice Mayor Santin to discuss adding two members to the Centennial Committee

Vice Mayor Santin stated that in order to help with the task at hand and the huge undertaking the board is responsible for, he wanted to discuss potentially adding two more members. After some discussion, the City Council agreed to maintain the committee as a five-member board, and may add non-voting members with expertise to help the board at any time.

13. Reports & Recommendations:

A) City Attorney

City Attorney Haydee Sera thanked the Council for having her at the meeting through Zoom. She further introduced Roger Pou, City Attorney, who has assisted the City previously in a variety of things. City Attorney Roger Pou provided some background information on his schooling and services to the City. He thanked the Mayor and City Council for the warm welcome.

B) City Manager

City Manager William Alonso indicated that the City Council will have to start thinking about an Interim City Manager. He stated that the hiring process will lead into after his last day of May 31st. He requested that the discussion of appointing an Interim City Manager should be on the next agenda. Assistant City Manager Tammy Romero gave a list of City events for the upcoming weeks. She stated that more information and details on the events are available on the City's official website.

C) City Council

Vice Mayor Santin stated that it is a different perspective sitting on the dais and the dynamics of working together. He stated that he is happy that the Council is a good group and works like a team, and looks forward to working with all of them.

Councilwoman Bravo thanked Mayor Mitchell for being a consistent force with the annexation issue. She also thanked Julia Arias for her phenomenal job with the River Cities Festival this past weekend. She stated that she has been working with the City Manager and Commissioner Cabrera's office on the Homeless Trust and how the City can help with homelessness. Councilwoman Bravo further thanked the community for their support during the election and continued support.

Councilman Vazquez stated that possibly at the next meeting the Council can discuss the Task Force recommendations, specifically the one relating to parking.

He also requested an item for discussion at the next meeting related to police resources at hotels. He recognized Martina Bustamante, earlier in his invocation, and expressed his condolence to the family.

Councilman Fajet had no report at this time.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed the City Council once again and stated that despite there may be moments of disagreement she knows that the City Council shares the same vision for the City. She said she is looking forward to the next two years of getting things accomplished. She expressed her thoughts on Vilma, a resident of the community, and how many people come together to raise funds to assist with her medical needs; she wanted to say her thoughts and prayers are with her and her family. She reminded everyone that hurricane season is quickly approaching, June 1st, to be prepared for any weather threat or emergency. Mayor Mitchell stated that there is a call in sponsored by the Florida League of Cities, that inform elected officials of legislative session and bills to watch. She informed the Council that one bill that may affect the City is the short-term vacation rentals. She said that even though we cannot prohibit short-term vacation rentals, the City may regulate on-going issues and complaints caused by the rentals, some of the proposed changes in the bill would not allow the regulation of occupancy unless the occupancy change is for all single-family homes in the City. She assured the Council and residents that she will continue to follow the bill and inform everyone of any changes.

14. Adjourn

There being no further business to be discussed the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


Erika Gonzalez-Santamaria, MMC
City Clerk



*Adopted by the City Council on
This 8th day of May, 2023.*


Maria Puente Mitchell, Mayor

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