City of Miami

City Hall
3500 Pan American Drive
Miami, FL 33133
www.miamigov.com

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 12, 2013

5:05 PM

FIRST BUDGET HEARING

City Hall Commission Chambers

City Commission

Tomás Regalado, Mayor
Marc David Sarnoff, Chair
Wifredo (Willy) Gort, Vice Chair
Frank Carollo, Commissioner District Three
Francis Suarez, Commissioner District Four
Michelle Spence-Jones, Commissioner District Five
Johnny Martinez, P.E., City Manager
Julie O. Bru, City Attorney
Todd B. Hannon, City Clerk
CONTENTS

BH-FIRST BUDGET HEARING TO DISCUSS FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014

PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE AND TENTATIVE BUDGET

BEGINNING AT 5:05 P.M. BH. 1 THROUGH BH. 18

FIRST BUDGET HEARING

5:05 P.M.

Present: Vice Chair Gort, Chair Sarnoff, Commissioner Carollo, Commissioner Suarez and Commissioner Spence-Jones

On the 12th day of September 2013, the City Commission of the City of Miami, Florida, met at its regular meeting place in City Hall, 3500 Pan American Drive, Miami, Florida, for its first budget hearing session. The meeting was called to order by Chair Sarnoff at 6:11 p.m. and adjourned at 10:49 p.m.

ORDER OF THE DAY

Chair Sarnoff: Okay, so let me read you the order of the day so like -- and everybody out there will understand how this is going to work. At 5:05 -- by the way, see the time up there? That's pretty good for this Commission. At 5:05, we will call the budget hearing to order. I will recognize the Mayor. The Mayor will present the tentative budget to the Commission. The Mayor will then recognize the City Manager. The City Manager will present the tentative budget to address the Commission, and the City Manager will, of course, recognize the Budget director, and the director will read some required language that the state requires us to read into the law [sic]. Right after that, I will then open a public hearing. We'll be voting on three items, so you all understand: BH.1, which is the discussion of the budget; BH.17, which is the adoption of the tentative millage; and BH.18, which is the adoption of the tentative budget. So when I open up the public hearing, it's for all purposes.

Later...

Chair Sarnoff: We have to decide on BH.17 and then BH.18. Is there a motion on BH.17?

Vice Chair Gort: I got a different agenda here.

Chair Sarnoff: What's that? Am I wrong on that? Because I --

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): Yeah. Commissioner, if I may. My understanding is that we would close the public hearing for now, go ahead and take all of the outside agencies out of turn so that we can --

Chair Sarnoff: I don't have that -- okay, I don't have that --

Mr. Alfonso: I apologize for that. Mr. Clerk.

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman.

Chair Sarnoff: Go ahead.

Commissioner Carollo: I know in the past we've taken the outside agencies and we've brought it before the budget. However, I don't think there needs to be -- it needs to be in that order. We
could take it in whatever order this Commission wishes.

Chair Sarnoff: Do we have to hear the outside agencies today or --?

Commissioner Carollo: No. Well, actually no, because it's a resolution; therefore, it could be in the next Commission meeting. Some -- our ordinance, like the DDA (Downtown Development Authority) millage, however, I believe their budget is also a resolution, so technically no, we do not have to pass it today. I think -- and I'll yield to our City Attorney, but I'm pretty comfortable with what I'm saying.

Veronica Xiquest (Assistant City Attorney): Commissioner, you are correct. The only item that you do have to hear is the DDA ordinance --

Commissioner Carollo: Right.

Ms. Xiquest: -- because that does require two readings, as well as obviously the City ordinance.

Commissioner Carollo: Exactly.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I think the only thing -- just as a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, if there are any questions, though, that may need to be asked on any of these resolutions, we may want to ask them so that when it comes back to us again in the -- at the next hearing, then we could have addressed it. That would be my only suggestion so that at least we have time -- they have time to deal with any of those issues for the next -- before the next meeting, if anybody has any issue.

Chair Sarnoff: Does anybody want to take it as a whole? Does anybody have any questions? First -- the first question would be: Has everybody had at least the opportunity to review everyone's budgets?

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman.

Chair Sarnoff: You're recognized.

Commissioner Carollo: Yes, to a certain degree. There are some that usually I have obtained a lot more information and did not receive it this time around, so --

Chair Sarnoff: We could just list what those are, what agencies there are.

Commissioner Carollo: Well, starting with the DDA. Usually, I actually meet with the executive director, and there's a lot more information provided, and that didn't happen this time around. I know they met --

Chair Sarnoff: Did they not try to meet with you?

Commissioner Carollo: I don't think they -- actually, they didn't reach out to me and I didn't reach out to them. I know they met with me during the proposed millage or the cap on the millage, and they met with my staff. However, for the actual budget, they did not -- you know, they didn't reach out; I didn't reach out. And when I started looking at the budget, there was a lot more information that usually I am provided that was not provided this time around so again --

Chair Sarnoff: We'll put the DDA on. What else?

Commissioner Carollo: MPA (Miami Parking Authority).
Chair Sarnoff: MPA.

Commissioner Carollo: Some information that I had requested I received in the last day or two and one today, so -- you know, it's --

Chair Sarnoff: Well, we'll hear DDA, MPA. What else?

Commissioner Carollo: I would have to go down the list to see which ones they are, but --

Chair Sarnoff: So --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Do you want to hear all of them?

Commissioner Carollo: But the --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So he wants to hear all of them?

Commissioner Carollo: -- I think -- but the question is: Are we going to hear all the agencies today or are you thinking of deferring them to the next meeting? Where do you want to go? Do you want to do the --

Chair Sarnoff: I want to --

Commissioner Carollo: -- City's budget also? We have to do the City's budget, but I -- do you want to do that first? And I think --

Chair Sarnoff: Do the budget first?

Commissioner Carollo: Well, I think -- what I'm saying is, I think in the previous years, at least last year, we didn't have this amount of people coming in and speaking for us. Therefore, I don't know if this year we should, you know, maybe take up the City's budget first and then see where we are with the --

Chair Sarnoff: Let's do BH.2 first; then we'll go up to BH (Budget Hearing) --

Vice Chair Gort: BH.2 now, right?

Chair Sarnoff: BH.2 is the millage. So we're visiting -- right now, so the record's clear, we're on BH.2, which is, what is the size of the pie?

Commissioner Suarez: What item is that?

Vice Chair Gort: Millage.

Commissioner Carollo: Millage for the DDA.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: BH.1? That's DDA.

Alyce Robertson: I have a presentation here, if the Commission would like to see it.
BH.1

13-00944

**Office of Management and Budget**

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

FIRST PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED MILLAGE AND TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013-14.


CITY COMMISSION LISTENS AND RESPONDS TO CITIZENS' COMMENTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE AND THE PROPOSED BUDGET. **ACTION RELATED TO THIS DISCUSSION ITEM OCCURS BY ENACTMENT OF BH.17 AND BH.18.**

13-00944 Proposed Millage.pdf
13-00944-Submittal-FY 14 Proposed Budget Presentation.pdf

**DISCUSSED**

Chair Sarnoff: Well, I want to take -- I'm going to do this in the order I'm going to do this. I'm going to do the -- I'm doing millage right now.

Alyce Robertson: Okay.

Vice Chair Gort: BH.1.

Chair Sarnoff: B --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: BH.1. You said BH.2. So BH.1 you mean?

Chair Sarnoff: Oh, I'm sorry. You know what, I have it as -- I apologize. BH.1. I'm sorry, Alyce. Somebody mis-numbered mine.

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): BH.1. BH.1 is the proposed general operating millage rate of 7.6148 for the City of Miami, for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2013 and ending September 30, 2014. This rate is 9.69 percent higher than the stated defined rollback rate of 6.9420. I'm sorry; that was a discussion. That doesn't require a vote. The actual millage vote will be on BH.17.

Commissioner Carollo: BH.17.

Mr. Alfonso: Yes.

Commissioner Carollo: BH.17 is the actual vote.

Chair Sarnoff: So BH.2 [sic] is just a discussion, right?

Commissioner Carollo: No.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: BH (Budget Hearing) --
Commissioner Carollo: BH.2 is the DDA (Downtown Development Authority) --

Chair Sarnoff: I'm sorry. BH.1.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: BH.1.

Chair Sarnoff: I apologize.

Vice Chair Gort: BH.1.

Commissioner Carollo: BH.1 is a discussion.

Mr. Alfonso: Yes. My mistake's correct.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, we'll go through the book. BH.2 is the DDA millage.

Commissioner Carollo: Right, which we have to pass and --

Chair Sarnoff: We have to do that by ordinance, right?

Commissioner Carollo: Yes.

Commissioner Suarez: BH.2 is a discussion, a public hearing.

Chair Sarnoff: But BH.2 is a resolution.

Commissioner Suarez: No, it's a discussion.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: It's a discussion.

Commissioner Suarez: It's a discussion.

Chair Sarnoff: Oh, it is --

Mr. Alfonso: Two is another discussion item. BH.3 is the actual --

Chair Sarnoff: Is the ordinance?

Mr. Alfonso: -- ordinance.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Do we have any discussion on BH.1, though?

Commissioner Carollo: I think we just did.

Commissioner Suarez: Open up the public hearing and find out.

Commissioner Carollo: I think we just did. That's what we just did, I believe.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay. So we're on -- going to BH.2 then?

Vice Chair Gort: Right. BH.2 is --

Chair Sarnoff: Well --
Commissioner Carollo: Any discussion on DDA?

Vice Chair Gort: -- discussion on the millage --

Chair Sarnoff: -- let's (UNKNOWN) all over again.

Vice Chair Gort: -- and the budget.

Chair Sarnoff: So presently, there's a mill rate that's been proposed. In order for us to -- Mr. Manager, is it possible to raise the mill rate?

Commissioner Carollo: No.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioners --

Commissioner Carollo: No.

Mr. Alfonso: -- legally, it's possible. Practically, it is something that will cost significant amount of money and push our budget into the month of October.

Chair Sarnoff: What happens then?

Mr. Alfonso: We would have to start operations with the preliminary budget, and you subject yourself to state withholding -- state revenue sharing until the trim compliance is met, and it would cost a significant amount to re-trim every resident in the City of Miami.

Chair Sarnoff: Is that that $80,000 number?

Mr. Alfonso: I'm sorry. It's approximately $150,000.

Chair Sarnoff: One fifty, okay. So it's possible it's just any (UNKNOWN) in cost?

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct.

Chair Sarnoff: All right. Anybody want to say anything else on BH.1? Okay. BH.2.

Alyce Robertson: To read into the record --

Commissioner Suarez: I'm sorry, Alyce. Can I interrupt? I'm sorry. BH.1, when you say Does anyone else want to talk about BH.1? you're talking -- you're not saying that before we vote on the budget, no Commissioner here is going to have anything to say about --?

Chair Sarnoff: Oh, no. That's just -- that was a discussion on -- we're on mill rates proposed.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: We'll get to the --

Commissioner Suarez: We're going to vote on it so.

Chair Sarnoff: -- vote. Right. We'll get to the vote.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. I mean, if --

Chair Sarnoff: I'm just going how this is put in our books.
Commissioner Suarez: I got it. Sorry.

Commissioner Carollo: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: So without further ado, I now call to the podium the Mayor of this great city, Mayor Tomás Regalado.

Applause.

Mayor Tomás Regalado: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, Commissioners. Today I stand before you to present the City of Miami’s proposed budget for the fiscal year 2013-2014. This proposed budget is not an exciting budget, but it is a responsible budget. This proposed budget won’t make the headline as in previous years or, with what I would call irresponsible spending, as in some of the years before that. Rather, the City of Miami is acting much like an average family that has gone through the recent recession. We’re coming out of the difficult times and rebounding, but we are not yet back to full financial health. We have, over the last two years, reduced our budget to keep up with the demands of the economy. We have, together, the Administration and the City Commission, had to make difficult choices of what we had to have and what we could live without it. Just like an average family, we reacted to forces beyond our control by choosing those things that were most important to us. In our case, services central to government, such as police, fire-rescue, public works, parks, and economic development, to name a few. Just like a family choosing to pay rent and buy groceries, we chose those core services for which government exist. It is important that we do not overreach as we come out of this great recession. We should not assume that we are better off than we really are. But with the budget, we had taken a measured approach, increasing those services that most directly improve the lives of our citizens. With that, we are proposing a budget to you that lowers the overall tax rate and adds 25 new police officers. We have put in the budget funding to add full-time positions instead of temporary positions in departments such Building, Planning & Zoning, Public Works, and Park. Again, there is not much in this budget to grab headlines; just a good common sense approach to budgeting. The Administration is ready to listen to you, the City Commission, and we are ready to work tonight and in the days to come to have a balanced budget approved. The Administration is also willing and ready to listen to our residents. And like I said before, we’re ready to work with you and the residents tonight, tomorrow morning, and in the next days to work for a balanced budget. We do need to have a balanced budget approved, as you know. With that, I will turn the meeting over to the acting City Manager and chief financial officers, our Danny Alfonso.

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Chairman. We shared with our elected officials a little earlier a small PowerPoint presentation, and I would just like to address some issues or some points. I’d like to make some thing -- state some things for the record that I think are important to say. And as the Mayor said, this budget does include -- and these are the things that it does include -- the additional 25 officers. It includes resources in the Building and Planning & Zoning Department, because we had seen that there was tremendous demand there. It includes resources in the Department of Human Resources, because we knew that we had a lot of separations coming in that particular department since 2009, when it was reduced in half, so that looking into the future with the additional recruitment that would be required, we needed to put some positions back in there to keep track with our recruitment efforts. It increases capital funding in the fire department by $1.8 million of general fund. And we fully funded every position in the fire department, that is, sworn personnel, allowing the fire chief to put back into service some units that had been taken out of service in previous years in order to save money. And it does include the negotiated wage increase for the police officers. I’ll tell you what it does not include, and these are things that have been spoken about earlier today. It does not include any wage increases for non-FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) personnel. It does not include the living wage as we discussed earlier. And earlier today that
passed in first reading to be moved to '14 and '15, and we appreciate that. It does not include adequate funding for capital needs in terms of infrastructure, in terms of maintaining the City's buildings, repairs, replacement for our fleet of vehicles. It does not include an adequate amount of funding for replacing our computers. We have people in the City still using computers that are ten years old or seven years old. In terms of technology, you know, there's just not enough in the pie to allocate all of the resources that we would like to have. It does not include an immediate fix to our problem with the integrity financial principles compliance. You know, we're -- we know that we're $40 million away from getting there, roughly, and each year, we appropriate some money in reserve; and we hope that at the end of the year, we have additional money for surplus that goes to that fund balance, and we have proposed a plan that hopefully we'll be talking about in the coming months to get into that compliance. I want to talk a little bit about some history. You know, the City of Miami, over the last 13 years, has seen years where revenues exceeded expenses and it has seen years where expenses exceeded revenues. This Commission -- or -- I think just about everybody on this Commission was here -- took very tough decisions back in 2009/10. You know, I believe from talking to the folks that were here that the imposition was not an easy thing. That was not an easy decision, but it was a necessary decision at the time. The City of Miami ended fiscal year 2010 with a fund balance of $13 million for an operation of over $500 million. That was completely unacceptable. But the tough decisions of 2009/10, '10/11, '11/12 have gotten us to a position where we can propose a balanced budget that this year we didn't ask departments to do a wholesale reductions. We weren't looking for across-the-board cuts. We sort of looked at the budgets and said, You know, we can actually do some enhancements in here."So historically, we are now in a position where we can start to make those improvements going forward. If we look at the history of the fund balances in the City of Miami going back to 2001, you know. In 2001 this City had a fund balance near $90 million. We got up as high as 141. As I stated earlier, by 2010 we were at 13.4, and we're now at 57.5 and projecting around $65 million by the end of this year. Are we where we need to be by our financial integrity principles? No, not yet. We still got about 35, $40 million to go. So whatever we do, I ask that we consider the proposed budget. Now, I'm going to share with you another slide that talks about our revenue, and I think this is a very interesting slide. The largest single revenue the City of Miami has is our property taxes. The property taxes for the City of Miami in terms of budget always exceed the actual, because people get a 4 percent discount when you could pay early, because people request Value Adjustment Board changes, and the Value Adjustment Board takes those values down. So, historically, the state requires us to budget at 95 percent of the expected revenue, but the actual revenue comes in below that, which is why the City has established the shortfall reserve on the operating budget to make sure that we sort of cover this gap. But if we look at 2009, in 2009 the City of Miami collected in property taxes -- actual cash to the City of Miami -- 266.9. We'll call that $267 million. That's two-six-seven. Next year, with the proposed millage and the proposed budget, the City is expected to receive about 216.5 million. That is $50 million less than we collected in property taxes in 2009. Are we better than we were a couple of years ago? Yes. Are we where we were in 2009? No, not yet. I believe things will get better, but growth is something that we have to manage in a sustainable manner. Talking about the proposed budget, to give some context to what it is that we're looking at. It's a $524 million general fund pie. That pie breaks up $167 million in police. And I can tell you that of that budget, 91 percent is personnel; $99.6 million for fire-rescue. That budget is 95 percent personnel. And you will find in most of these departments, the vast majority of expense is personnel. The City's budget is 75 percent personnel. We are required to pay debt service, $24.1 million. We have our budget reserves, of course. We cover insurance. What I'm trying to say is that our discretionary piece of the pie -- you know, the travel, the papers, the pens, the pencils, the money for potholes, the money for trash holes, all those things that we would consider other costs -- if we don't touch personnel or we don't touch pension or the benefits, it's not a large piece of the pie. So whatever we do in terms of considering changes to the budget, understand that large changes require personnel cost reductions. And lastly, I'm going to share a fund balance projection that we have, that we put into the proposed budget, and I want you to understand that it does show that the fund balance through 2018 will grow, given conservative revenue estimates. But what's not in that is capital costs. It doesn't include
possible costs of deferred maintenance. It does not include living wage impacts. It does not include contract negotiation impact. Next year, we will be negotiating for labor contracts. I anticipate that there will be changes to labor cost. It'll be the sixth year of no increase for '15 -- '14/'15 if we go with a no-increase contract. So I suspect that we will need to look to the future in how adding positions or changing our budget around will impact future years, because it will be nearly impossible to absorb growth in personnel and in labor costs if we don’t cut other areas of expenses. The pie will continue to be limited. So I urge you to look at the proposed budget. It has been an effort that we have taken over the last seven months to put together, and I want to hear your thoughts. And obviously, you are the elected body, so if it is the will of the Commission to make changes, we're more than willing to listen to them. Thank you very much. Christopher Rose will read something into the record that is required by law.

Christopher Rose: Good evening, Commissioners. Chris Rose, director of the Office of Management & Budget. This is the statutory language according to Chapter 200. The proposed general operating millage rate of 7.6148 for the City of Miami for fiscal year beginning October 1, 2013 and ending September 30, 2014, that rate is 9.69 percent higher than the state-defined rollback rate of 6.9420. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. All right, this is what you've been waiting for, folks, your public hearing. This is the people who have signed up. Has everybody signed up that wants to speak? 'Cause if you haven't, you need to go right there. So I'm going to call it off by just the way it's been handed to me. First person up --

Commissioner Suarez: Mr. Chair, may I say a quick question?

Chair Sarnoff: Sure.

Commissioner Suarez: Are you -- the way you're going to structure this -- 'cause Mr. Manager made a couple of general points on the budget, and I had some issue -- not issues, but I had some comments on some of the general points that he made. I don't know if you prefer that I reserve them until after the public discussion?

Chair Sarnoff: Let me ask you: Will the public discussion help you or would it refine maybe what the public would want to hear?

Commissioner Suarez: I'd like to think it would refine what the public would want to hear --

Chair Sarnoff: Then go ahead.

Commissioner Suarez: -- but, you know, I'm not sure.

Chair Sarnoff: Go ahead, go ahead.

Commissioner Suarez: I just want to clarify a couple of things that were said. One is the 25 officers that are currently programmed in the budget are funded, in part, by a grant that has -- we have not yet received, unless I am incorrect?

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct, Commissioner.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. So I just wanted to put that on the record, that right now, those 25 additional officers are funded by a grant that we have not received. So that was one issue. The second issue is that the Manager showed a slide where our fund balance is accumulating over time, and that obviously assumes that we continue to grow the balance at the same rate that we're growing it now versus applying another strategy. For example -- you understand what I'm saying?
Mr. Alfonso: Yes, I believe I do. But, Commissioner, you're talking about the next to last slide.

Commissioner Suarez: Correct.

Mr. Alfonso: What it includes -- we have made assumptions in the five-year plan that is included as part of the proposed budget as to the future revenue growth. For example, property taxes are anticipated to grow 4 percent next year; 3 percent the year after that. Expenditure costs are supposed to grow. You know, health costs will grow at 8 percent. If the Affordable Healthcare Act kicks in, it'll throw another $2.5 million. In other words, there's a various -- variety of assumptions that are explained and that is what is in there. What is not in there is the possible impact of our labor negotiations.

Commissioner Suarez: Sure.

Mr. Alfonso: What is not in there is the possible impact of monies put to capital, et cetera, et cetera.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. And what I'm -- I guess what I'm -- I guess the point I want to make is this seems to be very well thought out in terms of the way that you have just explained it. You've taken the pains of trying to project five years into the future what expenses and revenue is going to be. What I'm trying to say is that it doesn't have to go this way. In other words, our -- yeah, our financial integrity plan, if you want to call it that, that you and I worked on and that we presented to this Commission calls for the possibility or the contemplated possibility of selling noncore -- what I call noncore assets or a variety of other strategies that we can implement to get to our reserve level, so -- I mean, I'm not saying that we're going to do those things. I know you're nodding your head no, but I'm -- we're five people.

Chair Sarnoff: No, I'm nodding my head yes.

Commissioner Suarez: Right, exactly.

Mr. Alfonso: That is --

Commissioner Suarez: We're five people here.

Mr. Alfonso: -- correct.

Commissioner Suarez: So the point is that everyone has a vote and everyone has -- the point is -- what I'm saying is that there are other strategies that can be implemented to get to our reserve level, such that -- 'cause -- it's important because the points that I want to make relative to our budget and how we can budget 100 police officers, it's important to keep those things in mind as we go forward.

Commissioner Carollo: And by the way, Mr. Chairman, the reason I was nodding my head is because there was a lot of information with regards to our financial integrity and how to get our reserves back to where they need to be. There was a lot of different ways of doing it --

Commissioner Suarez: True.

Commissioner Carollo: -- and it wasn't just one way.

Commissioner Suarez: Absolutely.

Commissioner Carollo: It was a cluster of ways.
Commissioner Suarez: You're right.

Commissioner Carollo: So --

Commissioner Suarez: And I agree with that.

Commissioner Carollo: -- I was not in agreement with some of the ways.

Commissioner Suarez: I agree.

Commissioner Carollo: But you know I had a discussion item on it and, you know -- but -- and it didn't continue for certain reasons, but the bottom line is, I wasn't in agreement with some of the ways that the Administration was going with it.

Commissioner Suarez: And I agree 100 percent with what you're saying. I understand what you're saying, and I think it's a buffet of options --

Commissioner Carollo: Exactly.

Commissioner Suarez: -- some of which we may decide by --

Commissioner Carollo: Exactly.

Commissioner Suarez: -- consensus, some of which we may decide on are more --

Commissioner Carollo: Exactly.

Commissioner Suarez: So I think that's important to mention. I think the other thing that's important to mention is, you know, Mr. Manager and I, we've talked a lot of about some of our rising costs that we haven't yet fully gotten a grasp on, and I'll give you an example. I met with -- I don't know if he's here today. I'm sure he is, 'cause we're approving his budget, Mr. Gabriel. Are you here, from FIPO (Firefighters and Police Officers)? He's got -- he'll be here somewhere, I'm sure, at some point tonight.

Commissioner Carollo: He'll be here.

Commissioner Suarez: But we were talking about -- he was telling me -- there is a discrepancy on what the increase in pension costs are from one year to the next and what our contribution is. But there's been talk that of the $16 million in new revenue in this budget, 13 million of it is going to increase pension costs.

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct, Commissioner.

Commissioner Suarez: And that is hard for me to understand, given the fact that we've done very well on our pension fund in terms of our rate of return. We've gotten, I think, on FIPO somewhere between 9 and 11 percent rate of return, which is higher than the expected rate of return, by the way, of the fund. And on GESE (General Employees and Sanitation Employees), it's somewhere like -- it's even higher than that. I think it may be 17 percent, if I'm not mistaken.

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct, Commissioner.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. So, you know -- yet, we're having to contribute $13 million more than last year into the fund, so it's hard to understand how we can have such a good performing year and no one really -- has really been able to explain it to me, not him either, by the way.
don't feel bad.

Mr. Alfonso: No, I agree. And we've had this discussion, and I've spoken to the actuary, and I don't claim to be an actuarial mathematician by any stretch of the imagination, so I --

Commissioner Suarez: I am one.

Mr. Alfonso: -- have difficulty understanding it myself.

Commissioner Suarez: I'm thinking maybe --

Mr. Alfonso: So I --

Commissioner Suarez: -- I'll have a career after Commissioner.

Mr. Alfonso: -- take the professionals' word for it at some point.

Commissioner Suarez: But my point is that when we talk about all these numbers, we have to put them in the proper context so that when we're making decisions like appropriating 100 police officers, we understand where the pulls and the tugs are, and that's all I wanted to kind of get out there as general statements. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: All right. Ready, you guys, what you came here for. So public hearing is now opened. Public hearing is opened on all items, the mill rate and how we are dividing up the pie. So the pizza pie, as well as how we're dividing the pie. First person to speak I have is Fernand Amandi. Two minutes.

Fernand Amandi: Thank you. It's interesting -- my name is Fernand Amandi. I was born, I am a resident and I work in the City of Miami. It was interesting to hear the Mayor discuss that this budget was designed as one would for a family. Well, I am here to speak for my family and my son who cannot speak yet, so I'm here to speak on his behalf and my family's behalf. Because of the responsibility of me for my family is to protect, serve, and provide for them, the City's responsibility for its residents is to protect, serve, and provide for them, and that is not happening today. It is not happening in Coconut Grove, and it is not happening throughout the rest of our city, and it's not the fault of our Police Department. Our Police Department is doing an admirable, effective --

Applause.

Mr. Amandi: -- heroic job, given what they have to work with, given what they have to work with. What they don't have to work with is the officer shortage that no one disputes that we have here in this City. Now, it's interesting to talk about this, but when people are breaking into my house and the house of my neighbors -- and it's escalating beyond petty crimes which, unfortunately, is a tolerable thing that we've had to put up with here -- it's no longer a problem that can just be tolerated. It's a problem that needs to be prioritized. Last week, 246 citizens of this community came here in an emergency meeting to tell you all we have a crime problem. And what is the way to solve that crime problem? Ladies and gentlemen on this Commission and Mr. Mayor, it is to find the $10 million in your budget, which was not planned for, which is not currently a part of this budget, to hire 100 additional officers to make up for the existing deficit that we have here.

Applause.

Mr. Amandi: It's not just the $10 million to hire the 100 officers. We have to motivate the officers by increasing their pay because that helps attract and --
Applause.

Mr. Amandi: -- retain our officers, and we have to reward them for the excellent work that they do, beginning with Commander Manny Morales and his team, and all the officers that serve the City of Miami. So what we are asking for -- no, what we are demanding, because last year we asked. We have to demand it this year because we asked last year; we didn't get it. We're demanding ten -- well, I'm wrapping up. We're demanding $10 million for 100 extra officers. Rhetoric is saying, Well, we'll see what we can do."Action is saying Here's the money for the 100 extra officers."We're asking and demanding for action. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Javier Ortiz. Next up after Javier Ortiz is Albio Castillo.

Javier Ortiz: I'm Sergeant Ortiz. I'm the president of the Miami Fraternal Order of Police. I also have a couple people, Commissioner, that yield their time if I go over the two minutes.

Chair Sarnoff: That's -- if they yield, that's fine.

Mr. Ortiz: Okay, thank you. I first want to address the Commission and talk about this 3 percent that we're getting next year. We're getting that 3 percent because we're giving up our uniforms, but we're also giving up our health care. We're giving up physicals to make sure that we're okay. So that's how we're getting the 3 percent. That's why we're the only union that's giving it, because we're giving up benefits in order to get it. That's the only thing that we're getting. That's the only thing that we're getting. I am so sick and tired of hearing the Police Department saying, Well, crime hasn't gone up."I am a resident of the City of Miami and I don't -- and I'm also a cop -- tolerate crime staying steady. It needs to go down. You got right now about 40 positions that are vacant. It's taken over a year; still haven't been able to fill them. How are you going to fill them now? You see all these people in yellow? They're police officers, they're law enforcement officers, they're law enforcement professionals, and they should be treated that way. But you know what? They're not. So look at Miami Beach -- By the way, with all due respect, our acting City Manager sent out a memo yesterday and compared us to Hialeah and the Atlanta Police Department. Well, let's look at real comps. Let's look at real comps, okay, comparables. Go across -- all you got to do is go across the bridge. They're at 53,000; we're at 44 base pay. That's a big jump. You go up to Fort Lauderdale, you're at 51. The county's at 50 for certified police officers. That's 7 to $10,000 more than us. Thank you for the 3 percent bonus. Some of these people might be able to buy Pampers for their kids after it gets taxed. But the bottom line is in order to be able to fill those 40 positions and the 25 that the Mayor wants to put in, that's 65, you know what? You have to raise benefits. We can't give -- we cannot give no more. We just can't do it. So this is what my plan is.

Chair Sarnoff: Who's -- just tell me who's yielding their time?

Mr. Ortiz: All those people there. And if I need more, I can get more.

Chair Sarnoff: That's a lot of people.

Mr. Ortiz: I got plenty. I got plenty of time.

Chair Sarnoff: I'll give you more minutes.

Mr. Ortiz: Thank you. I appreciate it. What is my plan? What can you do with those $10 million? I was at that meeting. And look, the chief's got a job to do. Yeah, yeah, yeah, he's
going to hire 100. We can't even hire 40, but we're going to hire 100 on top of that. So let's be realistic. Let's get this problem fixed, and this is how you fix it. This is how you fix it. This is a start. And by the way, a very good question that was asked last week was, *How come Fort Lauderdale, how come Miami Beach doesn't have these problems?* Because their elected officials, their number one priority is the police department. That's why.

Applause.

Mr. Ortiz: Hold on. I'm running out of time. So with that said, what do we do with $10 million? You got 40 vacant positions now. You're putting 25 in this proposed budget. That's 65 positions. So, technically, to put a total of 100 officers on the street, which is another 35 officers -- for every 10 officers, it'll cost you about a million bucks. To make us competitive, if our starting salary is at 44,000, if we went up to 49,000 -- $5,000 -- that would cost, with retirement and everything, $6.5 million. That also includes putting those 100 positions funded at 49,000. You might be able to fill those 100, chief. But you know what? Got a problem. Hold on. The problem is all the other people that have applied elsewhere. Why would you stay here if you're a qualified applicant, if you're educated, if you don't have a criminal past, if you got good credit? Why would you come here? We have the highest calls for service. We don't have the support of the Administration. We got more crime than anybody else. And then you want to compare us to Hialeah? Hialeah? Look at Hialeah. Hialeah has -- they're one of the safest cities in the United States. You're going to compare us to Hialeah? No, compare us to somebody like Miami Beach that has civil disturbances, that their -- most of the money that they get is from their tourists. We service those same people. And you know what, Mr. Manager? When you talk about that all the money goes to personnel. What is government for? Why do we pay taxes? For service. So what I'm asking from you all is to deep down -- go deep down in your pocket -- no disrespect, Commissioner Spence-Jones, 'cause I was there, and I did reach deep down in my pocket, 'cause I work about 20 hours a week on off duties in order to make ends meet; and thank God, I don't have kids, but a lot of these people do, and they don't call you when they're saying that they're losing their house. Why don't you look at how much we spend on psychiatric care of our officers? We're maxed out. People don't know what to do. So I'm asking, identify -- what I'm asking for is for you to direct management by next -- by the next budget hearing to identify $10 million. And in a half-a-billion dollar budget, you can find $10 million. You can find $10 million to get those 100 cops, to bring up everybody at the start where they should be. I'll help you fill those 100. You'll get them filled. But I'll tell you what. If you don't want to do anything and it's going to just be another year of mumbo jumbo, I'm here to tell you, you're not going to be short 100 cops; you're going to be short about 200. We had four people yesterday sign out that were not -- they were not looked at -- they were not projected to leave the DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Plans). People are fed up. So again, support us. We serve you. Serve us back. Support us. Be there for us. I'm a police officer, but I want to be proud not only as a police officer; I want to be a proud Miami police officer. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: After -- okay, okay, okay. Albio-- after Albio --

Albio Castillo: Yes, sir.

Chair Sarnoff: -- Patty Hayhurst is going to be up.

Mr. Castillo: Good evening, gentlemen. My name is Albio L. Castillo. I lives at 2335 Southwest 16th Terrace. I'd like to know is the equipment for the Police Department -- when the Police Department -- the Crown Victorias are going to be phased out and you're getting the Impalas and the Ford Taurus. The reason is that when you phase out the Crown Victoria and what we're going to be replaced with -- if they continue to break, what are we going to replace it with? The tool that we currently have in stock. The only one can be used as a pick, the Ford Taurus. You
can't use the Impalas to force a police -- a policemen cannot stop a car that is going fast on a
pursuit. Besides that, there's usually the graduation of the Police Department, per class, is
between 25 and 25 so there's going to be 50. You still 50 short, and this is going to continue
unless we improve. The Fire Department is another department, that their rescue is about 10 to
15 years old, and how are we going to continue these equipment that are going sooner or later?
We won't have replacements. I also like to know is what is the City going to do about that
problem? Solid Waste is a little better, but Solid Waste needs to continue replacing their
equipment, 'cause we went into the new recycle system, which is a good idea. That's my -- how
many minutes do I have? 'Cause I'm -- still got my one issue that I could say.

Chair Sarnoff: You got 20 seconds.

Mr. Castillo: Okay. I'd like to ask you this: Is the -- the question of the Marlins. We're
are the 25th and 26th city in attendance. There's $30 million that the league gave you. What is the City
intention if the league decides with the Marlins? We do not going to give you the 30 million. Is
the City have a contention [sic] plan to use the building where the Marlins that we paid for in
the county?

Chair Sarnoff: Thanks, Albio. Good question.

Mr. Castillo: You're welcome.

Chair Sarnoff: All right. Patricia Hayhurst. Seth Sklarey, and on deck is -- all right, you didn't
use -- bad handwriting -- Holmy, H-O-L-M-Y?

Seth Sklarey: I've been a resident of the City of Miami for 47 years. And when I ran in 2006, we
had about 1,100 police officers, and now we still have 1,100 police officers. The problem is --
and it's getting worse, because a lot of the police officers want to leave. They're tired of it. They
don't have the support that they need. And even with 25 being hired, you're going to have 25
leaving, maybe 40 leaving. So you have to have an incentive for getting them in. And the
standards have been raised in some respects. You have to have an absolutely clean criminal
record, and you have to have a clean credit record, which is even more difficult in these hard
times, and even the police who are leaving can't get another job somewhere, because they don't
have the credit, so it becomes more of a problem. The -- there has to be a way to attract more
people into the department, and one of them is a starting salary that's reasonable that's
comparable with other departments. The other thing is maybe to bring in some experienced
people from other departments who have a reason for coming over here, and you need to think
about that, and you think of how to incentivize this problem. You have another problem with
equipment, as the gentleman before me mentioned. Crown Victorias are out. They've been
eliminated by Ford. They're not making them anymore. So there's got to be a new kind of police
car coming in. What's it going to be and how much is it going to cost? You know, I don't know
yet. So these are things to be thinking about. But the main thing is to develop a plan that works.
You want to hire 25 more police officers, you've got to -- you want a net increase of 25, not just
hire 25 and you lose 25. It doesn't make sense.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. All right, Ms. -- there you go. All right. Robert Loupo is on deck.

Renita Holmes: Good afternoon. My name is Madam Renita Holmes. Do I have to qualify by
giving my address? Or has that been done already?

Chair Sarnoff: It's all right. It's 350 --

Ms. Holmes: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) Place.

Chair Sarnoff: There you go.
Ms. Holmes: Thank you. Which is very close. I'd like to get an understanding, because a lot of times when I again to speak, a lot of people think that I'm bashing, but listen, I'm not. We're all first responders when it comes to the baddest [sic] communities or even the good, 'cause I got to call the police if I survive. But me representing the many mothers, particularly in Liberty City and Overtown, who have lost their children to gunfire from bad cops and bad kids with guns. But don't get me wrong. I don't pay the kids that are surviving, the bad kids over there, extra attention simply because they're doing good, so I don't expect across the board all the City employees that are doing the best that they can as fire persons, as victim responders, as anybody else that works for the City, along with the Police Department, okay? The balancing act of putting officers in, particularly officers who don't perform or an agency that does not perform at the level of any other agency and is four times, is difficult for me to accept, on top of 3 percent and the cost of living, and I understand that. But we're all first responders. This is now -- I got to pay for the loss of my child. I got to pay for bad performance. And I got to actually ask the rest of the people in the City to share some of their money with those who have not lived up to their professional courtesy. So when one cop dies, everybody comes to that cop's aid, everybody's off from duty, and then we lose money in that area. Listen, it's not about -- it's about the value of life. I was always taught that real leadership, it empowers its leadership. And I got 23 seconds left. Now what after that? How do you tell those that are really great that they deserve even more than 3 percent and, on top of that, sharing of the other millions, and then we have no reserves? We don't even have money for our victim response. We don't even get any attention from people about losing our children in most disparate way. So pay by performance not according to cost of living, 'cause it cost me more than it cost a lot.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Ms. Holmes: And if you gone be about the brotherhood, be about the motherhood too.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Ms. Holmes: I'm not paying for you to kill my children.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. Robert Loupo, and then after Mr. Loupo is Adrian Valle.

Robert Loupo: Good evening, Commissioners and Mayor. I'm Robert Loupo, 3229 Gifford Lane, in Coconut Grove. I am a 33-year resident of Coconut Grove in the City of Miami, and I'm also chair of our All Grove Crime Watch. This is an organization that has been meeting now the second Wednesday of every month for the past 12 years. With that, we, our residents, have come together with the business community, along with the police and the State Attorney's Office, and we really work very hard to make sure that we fulfill the mission of our organization, which is, very simply, to help make Coconut Grove safer for everyone, residents and visitors alike. With that, we have a concept of what's going on with crime in our community here in Coconut Grove. And we have seen that, particularly this past year, beginning in the spring, there has been an onslaught, an increase in crime in every section of Coconut Grove. With that, it's a perfect storm in coming together with Fernand and others who are fed up, those that are in the Village West, those that are in the south Grove, North Grove, Center Grove. We have really come to that point where -- that is why we're here to get the kind of protection and to see that the number one priority of the City is fulfilled, that is, public safety. And we urge you, all of us within our All Grove Crime Watch and everyone in the community, to hire the 100 additional police persons. And it's not just for our Grove area. This is a citywide endeavor. And I just want to emphasize that the City does so much for so many others within our Miami-Dade and South Florida community. We have -- we deal with the American Airlines Arena --

Chair Sarnoff: And in conclusion.
Mr. Loupo: -- events. Arsht Center and everyone. So we just want -- urge you, please, to -- for the benefit of everyone in our South Florida community not just here in Coconut Grove.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Mr. Loupo: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, Adrienne Valle.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: All right. Mariano Cruz.

Commissioner Carollo: Shirt and all.

Commissioner Suarez: Time is running, buddy.

Mariano Cruz: Mariano Cruz, and I don't reside at 17 Southwest 12 Avenue, okay? I reside at 1227 Northwest 26th Street, okay? And I come as a lobbyist for my daughter. My youngest daughter happen to be a robbery detective in the City of Miami. She couldn't be here tonight because she had to take care of the granddaughter Megan. Anyway, by the way, tomorrow is Grandparents Day; I have to be in the school. But she told me, look at that -- look at this advertisement for Atlanta. They paying extra to people with a college degree. They even taking away the money they used to pay me for the college degree. He say, Well, it's good to improve yourself and to do it. They take the money away and say, I don't do off duty. Many of my friends I got are working every day off, off duty to make ends meet, and I am for that because I travel -- every week I go around to Commander Laberdesque, and we go with Albena Sumner, and my nephew, Freddy Cruz. We travel the neighborhood checking problems there, talking to the businessmen, because Allapattah is a very complex neighborhood. We got a very big flowing population there and -- with this problem, but you have to take care -- put the money back, money back in the -- the money you took away from the officer, the people give willingly or unwillingly years ago to balance the budget. And remember, at the time we don't used to play the -- remember that shell game? Now you see. Now you don't see. And taking money from the water thing and the whole thing. No, no, give the money back. You get money to hire tomorrow -- look at Atlanta. They hiring people, they coming here looking for people and they paying extra to people with associate degree and people with college degree so --

Chair Sarnoff: In conclusion.

Mr. Cruz: Okay. In conclusion, sure, sure. Whatever is it. I don't know -- I don't need to be here. I don't pay city taxes or anything.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Cruz: But I pay federal taxes --

Chair Sarnoff: And in conclusion, Mariano.

Mr. Cruz: Remember --

Chair Sarnoff: You got to conclude.

Mr. Cruz: -- I got service connected disability from the October -- as a volunteer.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.
Mr. Cruz: -- in the October (UNINTELLIGIBLE) era veteran, okay?

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Mr. Cruz: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Kenneth Rodriguez, and after Kenneth Rodriguez is Angel Roman.

Kenneth Rodriguez: Good evening. I've been -- my name is Kenneth Rodriguez, and I've been a City of Miami police officer for the past six years. When I first came to this department from New Jersey, specifically for the job, I thought this was the greatest department in the world. Everybody that I come in contact when I'm working, whether it's a citizen or a tourist, they look at me like I'm a superstar just because I'm a police officer in the City of Miami, 'cause they know when things happen, I'm going to run to it and not away from it just to protect them. My wife and my daughter disagree. They know that when I step out of my house, I might not come home. Yet, the department hasn't given me a raise in the last five years, has been taking pay cuts from me, and I can't take care of them; yet, they can take care of me when I'm home. You may be able to hire 100 new officers and you should, 'cause crime is going up, but you're going to lose the officers you have now, probably about a third, due to all the departments pay more money, and they pay more money because we deserve it, and we deserve the respect. The City -- losing these officers, you're going to end up going back to the '70s and the '80s where you're going to have to hire at the pay -- what you're paying officers now, you're going to have to hire officers off the street like they did in the '80s, and then what happened? What problems did you have then? Everything that you do here today, you're going to reap what you sew. I, right now, can leave this department and go work at another department making $10,000 or more, due to my qualifications and my experience, and I'm doing that now, because if nothing happens, I'm going to move on. I can't stay in a city where I'm not feel appreciated, especially when I do my job on a daily basis. We're not people that go to work and just have a 9 to 5 job. Our job is very difficult and it's dangerous.

Chair Sarnoff: And in conclusion.

Mr. Rodriguez: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Angel Roman, Stanley Paul-Noel. After him is Thomas Reyes.

Stanley Paul-Noel: Good evening. My name is Stanley Paul-Noel. I've been a police officer for the City of Miami for the past two years. I've been with the department for over seven. I was a Police Explorer here, and I was a counselor here, and the morale in the past was way better than it is now. The police officers were paid, although crime was riddling the area. The morale has plummeted ever since I became a police officer here. I love the City of Miami, and I love the people that I serve. Anybody can vouch for me that I give 100 percent every time I'm out there, but I'm willing to leave and go anywhere else that's willing to pay me more for the work that I do. I've applied to three other agencies because I don't feel like I'm appreciated by the City of Miami officials. The civilians and the people where I serve appreciate the work I do, but unfortunately, you guys don't. Thank you.
Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Thomas Reyes. After Thomas Reyes is Hiram Cabeza.

Thomas Reyes: Good evening. My name is Thomas Reyes. I live at 2825 Northwest 5 Street, here within the City of Miami limits. I am a police officer. I have been a police officer for the City of Miami police for seven years this month, okay. I am making less now than I was five years ago, okay. There's something wrong here, okay. We need to hire more police officers, but we don't need 100. If we continue at the same rate we're going, we need 200, because we got guys going out the door, okay. I don't know where the chief got his information. The information I'm getting is we can't hire them fast enough. You guys aren't going to get your 100, because as quick as he's bringing them in, they're going out the other door. That's about all I got to say. But it's -- you can't -- it's not going to happen. I will stand up here and I will put my word on it. It's not going to happen. And in a year from now, I'll come back, and I'll say the same thing, and I'll tell you I told you so. "If we do not -- something doesn't happen with our benefits, things are just going to keep getting worse. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: After Hiram Cabeza is Roberto DeStephan.

Hiram Cabeza: Good afternoon. My name is Hiram Cabeza. I'm a police officer with the City of Miami. I also live in the City of Miami. I started as a PSA (Public Service Aide) back in 2007. I was PSA of the month for eight months straight; PA a year for 2011, and I'm not afraid to work hard for our City, for our residents. I went to the police academy part time for a whole year, working full time; on my days off, attending the police academy to better myself in life and have an opportunity to grow in the Police Department. I was offered a job with the Miami Beach Police Department. I even signed the conditional employment, but I decided to stay with the City of Miami, 'cause I like to represent and protect the people that I serve. Now I'm second-guessing myself about that decision. I do have hope in this department, and I'm sure the right decision will be made in restoring our benefits, and it shows that you care about our City being protected the way it should be. I'm still here because I believe in the City. Please, don't let me down. Don't let us down. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: After Roberto DeStephan is Eduardo [sic] Lugo.

Roberto DeStephan: Good evening, everybody. My name is Roberto DeStephan. I've been a police officer for eight years. And I just wanted to say I love working here, but due to the economic situation, I'm applying to other police departments outside the City. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: After Eduardo [sic] Lugo is Luis Arcia.

Luis Arcia: My name's Luis Arcia. I'm a police officer with the City of Miami, just shy of two years now. I've grown up in the City of Miami; went to school in the City of Miami. I got hired
here; went through the academy here. I actually had -- I had a conditional offer in Coral Gables. I applied with the Beach now and I'm going to sign a conditional offer. I show up to work and give 110 percent. I've faced the barrel of a gun various times in these two years. In these departments, I have friends that worked that haven't handled any of the calls I've handled, and I feel like we're being undervalued. We're not being backed up, and when we go out there and do our job, what we do is get in trouble. And I really do hope this Commission comes together and realizes you got to take care of your people. We work hard for all of these people. We don't show up to work and risk our time. We show up to work and risk our lives. That's something to consider. Thank you for your time.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.


Jose Hernandez: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) I'm Jose Hernandez, officer for City of Miami. I was a New York City police officer for four years; came here on vacation, and I really enjoyed what I saw when I confronted police officers, how they handled the situation there. So I moved down here; took a cut. I've been with the City 13 years, 4 years with City -- with New York City police; 17 year law enforcement. I have 10 years left, almost 11, to finish my career, but at this time, I'm going to take my chances and take another leap and go somewhere else. City's really disappointing. I feel, for 17 years I've given life, everything to the City, to law enforcement to help others and it's -- I don't feel you guys appreciate it. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Pete Fernandez, Joseph Marin, John Blackerby.

Joseph Marin: Good afternoon. I've been an officer for --

Chair Sarnoff: What's your name?

Mr. Marin: Officer Marin.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Marin: Joseph. I've been an officer for four years for the City. I love coming to work. All of the officers that I work with always give 110 percent. They want to work for you guys. They want to work for our citizens. But the way you guys treat us, it's impossible. It's -- other departments, they are giving incentives, they're giving salaries. Even in the private sector, if you do well, you get something back. We haven't received anything back from you guys. We're always giving, giving, and giving. How much are you going to take from us? We asking for more officers and we're asking to be treated with respect and courtesy. If we're doing well at our jobs, please, give us back our step raises. It's four years; I haven't had one step raise yet. Treat us like professional people that we are. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: John Blackerby and Pierre Simpson.

John Blackerby: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Officer Blackerby. I've
been a City of Miami policeman for about 15 years now. First off, I want to say to those of you citizens who are here in appreciation, standing with the law enforcement officers that are in this room and waiting outside and are working right now, thank you.

Applause.

Mr. Blackerby: We don't get it enough and we need it. Officers will go a month, two, three sometimes without getting so much as a “thank you.” This means a tremendous amount to us. Right now we have a huge deficit. We have a shortage. It's going to get worse. A hundred officers is not going to make it happen. Now, I have passion for what I do. I love what I do. I love being able to give you comfort; to be there for you in your time of need. Sometimes just a pat on the shoulder or a hug is all I can, but I love that I can be the one to do it for you. It's hard. When you have passion for what you do and you don't feel appreciated, it's hard. It's hard to wake up in the morning and look at your family and say Sweetheart, I don't know if I'm going to be able to come home.'And what about them, the sacrifice that they make for us so that we can enjoy our passion? They need it. My family deserves better. I should be able to give them a little bit, a subtle compensation for the effort and the sacrifice that they make. I have given of my mind and my body to this agency, to these citizens. I have scars, mental and physical, and what I have given is nothing, pales in comparison to what so many of these other officers have given, and some have given all. They deserve more. Their families deserve more. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Pierre Simpson, and after that is Steven Louis Jean.

Pierre Simpson: Hello, my name is Pierre Simpson, and I've been an officer for seven years with the City of Miami. I come here before you saying that I enjoy what I do. I enjoy working for the people of the City of Miami and its residents. I've endured a lot of pain throughout these five years. My pay rate right now is $25 an hour. I lost 25 percent of my income through all the concessions we gave. Me as a man and as a father to my family, okay, I'm suffering. I cannot provide for my family. I pay my rent late. It's -- I'm embarrassed to say that I pay my rent late, because I cannot afford to pay my rent on time. And I'm asking you to reinstate our step raises. I need it. All of us need it. And we deserve it. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Steven Louis Jean, Sardia Wilson, Moline Innocent, J-N-N-O-C-E-N-T, Brian Nurciss, Eric González, Mathew Reyes, Alex May, Rafael Frometers [sic].

Mr. Ortiz: Commissioners, just so everybody's aware, a lot of these officers took time off to be here. It was time certain for 5 o'clock, and since it was delayed, they need to go back onto the street and continue to serve, so that's why they had to leave and that's their, you know, their primary obligation.

Chair Sarnoff: Passion Wilson, Renita Holmes.

Commissioner Carollo: Renita Holmes (INAUDIBLE) 7:08:35 speak.

Chair Sarnoff: She did?

Unidentified Speaker: That's Passion.

Chair Sarnoff: Oh, right there? Okay. And you said Renita spoke already?
Commissioner Carollo: Renita spoke already.

Ms. Holmes: That was in regards to people -- I'm sorry, Mr. Chairperson. I spoke on that issue already.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, she spoke.

Chair Sarnoff: After that is Debra Grant, Mario Rodriguez, Aura -- if I say it wrong, I apologize -- Fynes, F-Y-N-E-S [sic]. Go ahead.

Passion Wilson: Yes. My name is Passion Wilson. I've been a City of Miami officer for over eight years. And I just want to say that I became an officer because I wanted to help people. I wanted to, you know, be a good role model for my kids. And my kids depend on me. My family does. And, you know, it's really hard. Ever since we've been getting all these cuts and concessions, it's been really hard for me to keep my home, and my family depend on me. And it's sad that I can't depend on the City who I work for and I risk my life for. It's really sad. And we just want to be compensated fairly. We're not asking for too much. And I'm really considering going to other agencies because, like I said, I'm struggling. And in my heart -- and my -- you know, my profession is very dangerous, and it really hurts me that I leave my kids home every day knowing that I might not make it back home. And it's just a really sad situation. That's all I had to say.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.


Primerose Danier: Hello. My name is Primerose Danier, and I've been employed by the City for nine years now, and I am very disappointed with the ones that's voting against. I need my money. I'm a single mom. Every night when I come here to work to take care of the City, take care of the residents, take care of the businesses downtown to make sure nobody tries to break into it, and I have to tell my kids “I love you. I don't know if I'll see you in the morning.” Now, I need my money.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, Albert Bazan, Magdiel Perez, Viona Browne Williams, Norbert Bondankinko (phonetic).

Unidentified Speaker: Bondenko (phonetic).

Chair Sarnoff: What is it? How do you say it?

Unidentified Speaker: Bondenko.

Chair Sarnoff: Bond -- well, that's hard. I got to fault him for the “R” there.

Vice Chair Gort: That's it.

Chair Sarnoff: Bondenko, Armando Rojas, Jose F. Gonzales. Want to get the “F” in there.
Isaac Abella. Isaac -- that should be Abella, but Isaac Abella. No? Nestor Garcia.

Applause.

Nestor Garcia: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is Nestor Garcia. I've been a sergeant for the City of Miami. I'm a sergeant with the City of Miami Police Department. I've been a City employee for the last 25 years. In 2009 we were asked to give concessions in order to save the City. The Police Department was asked to give a larger portion of these concessions, and it wasn't given evenly, like it was discussed earlier. The Police Department was given the first year $20 million; the following year, more and more money was given from the Police Department. So when I hear it was given out evenly, it wasn't given out evenly. Our step raises were frozen and our salary was decreased by the percentage of the salary a person makes a year, so that wasn't given out evenly as well. Now this Commission wants to give a one-time bonus and call it fair. This Commission now want to hire 100 new officers. Residents of the Grove, you are being lied to. We cannot hire 100 officers next year. It takes at least four months to do a background check, six or seven months to attend the academy, and then another year to ride with an FTO (Field Training Officer) officer. So they're lying to you. You're not going to get 100 officers next year. And the way we're losing officers -- we just lost four officers last week. We're losing officers daily. People are getting tired of getting underpaid. Other departments are starting off 7 or $8,000 more with step raises. We're making -- why do we always have to be the lowest paid department in South Florida? I'm not asking you, “Hey, let's be number one.” but why do we have to be the lowest paid police department? War is in the news. Crime, it keeps going up. We're getting more and more residents moving into the City of Miami. Skyscrapers are off the roof in Brickell. Folks, I love my job. I'm going to continue to do my job whether I get paid more or less. That's the way I am, you know, but unfortunately, you're not going to find the same type of people as I am, people that have to support their family. I'm tired of working off duties.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Mr. Garcia: One more minute, please.

Chair Sarnoff: Does anybody want to give him his time?

Unidentified Speaker: All the people that didn't show up.

Chair Sarnoff: All the people that we didn't have?

Unidentified Speaker: They'll waive their time.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Garcia: I'm tired of working off duty to support my family. I want a better life for my family. And unfortunately, I cannot continue to keep on working in this city. If somebody else is willing to pay me 8 or $9,000 more to start off with, with step raises, I'm going to go; the same way younger officers here are leaving, they're leaving here daily. So by the time next year we're going to be here, we're not going to be here with a shirt saying “we need 100 officers.” By the time we leave here next year, we're going to be with a shirt saying “we need 300 officers” and crime's still going to continue to keep going up. Commissioner Carollo, you have been an officer. I was with you at the beginning. You know how hard it is, our job. We put our life out there daily, you know. As a supervisor, folks, it's very hard for me to supervise and motivate these young officers to stay here, and it's getting so ridiculous that it's embarrassing that by motivating my officers for the hard work, I have to buy them a plaque out of my own pocket to show them the appreciation for working hard, for serving the citizens of the City of Miami. Folks, please, restore our step raises. You know, do the correct thing. To put -- the way that
we're hiring laterals, it's not fair for a lateral to come from a different agency, who's a retired officer from a different agency: now we're going to be paying that officer $5 or $6 more an hour than we're paying an employee here -- that's been here for the City for the four or five years; and that officer who's training that lateral, how do you think he feels? Unappreciative. You know, he's going to leave. They're leaving here. So folks, thank you for your time. Please restore our step raises. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Jorge Lazcano, Walter Byars.

Unidentified Speaker: Went back to work.

Chair Sarnoff: Way back there, you said?

Unidentified Speaker: No, they went back to work.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. Sheila de Lemos, Sheila de Lemos, Sam Dobrow, D-O-B-R-O-W. There you are, Sam.

Sam Debow: Good evening. I am a relatively new resident of Miami. I've been here about two years. Prior to moving here, I made my living as an executive recruiter. And hearing what I've heard from these officers today scares me even more about my safety than what I already knew the problem was, and that is because I would look for companies that had problems with morale, I would look for companies that were underpaid, and I would take the best people out like that, one after the other. And these companies that I would take it out of, they would tell me who the best people were and help me get their friends out as well. The companies that really suffered were the ones that thought they could cut corners during bad times and they did not reward their people during those times to keep them. I see Miami -- the City of Miami's Police Department right now as really a very fragile environment. And as a citizen, I'm concerned about what's going to happen, because this morale problem that you have is like a cancer. You've got some serious problems that you're going to have to deal with, and throwing money at it isn't going to be the only way to do it. You're going to have to hire senior people from other places, and then we have to replace people that have bad morale in the organization before you're going to be able to recover this thing. But once this gets started, you're not going to be able to stop it. And I'm hoping that you all will take some time and some consideration about the safety of the citizens here and figure out how do we implement a leaner but more effective police department, a police department that has a good morale, and that may mean some leadership changes as well. I don't know who they are. I can't tell you about the problems, but I can tell you that if you don't, the City of Miami and the citizens here are going to have some very serious crime problems, because we do need police officers on the street. A hundred of them probably can't be hired at the wages if they're that far out of whack, but you're also going to have to give them a reason to stay. They have to have a reason to be promoted. They're going to have to have a future. And it's a lot more than just money.

Chair Sarnoff: And in conclusion.

Mr. Dobrow: But you can't play without the money.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.
Chair Sarnoff:  Inna Roca, Inna Roca, Artemisa Woods, Tiffany -- and then Tiffany Walker.

Artemisa Woods:  Hello. Thank you, Commissioners and others represented here today. On the behalf of Curley House, I agree that she is to continue to be commended for outstanding service given here in our community at large; for Curley House incorporates feeding, clothing for the needy, aids in the economic development of our country by providing jobs. Inconcluding but not ending, Curley House allows offenders to redeem themselves by volunteering community service hours to make matters straight with the courts, with the criminal -- excuse me -- with making matters straight with the Criminal Justice Department. Thank you very much.

Vice Chair Gort: Thank you.

Applause.

Vice Chair Gort: Florence Nicholls.

Tiffany Walker: Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm here in behalf of Curley's House. I am a volunteer. I've been there for four years. I run the front. Day by day, I'll say by the average of a week, we at least feed up to at least 600 people, probably more than that. Some days it be days where we don't even have food to feed those people, especially our seniors, you know. And we try and keep food there for our people, you know, and we do as much as we can because we love our seniors. Not only the seniors; we help out everybody. We don't turn no one down. So, you know, if ya'll can help us, we need a little bit more help also, too. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Reginald Mathis.

Applause.

Florence Nicholls: My name is Florence Nicholls. I live at 330 Northwest 19th Street. I'm here to talk about Curley's House. Curley's House is the best thing the seniors have had. They brings food to all the seniors, and children, and people that don't have nothing to eat. And I think that we shouldn't take nothing from Curley House. And then it's another thing: Food stamp. We finding out now that they are fixing to stop food stamps. I don't even get -- I used to get $26. Now I get $16. Now they're saying they fixing to cut and then they gon' stop the food stamp. How are the seniors going to survive? Some of us can't even work. Some of us can't even get out the bed to go to work. We need some help, at least the seniors need help. And we have to look after the children. Medicaid. Everything going up. Everything leaving. What are we supposed to do? We need help. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Mr. Mathis and then Theodist Grimes.

Reginald Mathis: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Reginald Mathis. I've been a member of -- resident of District 5 for all of my life. I've been here for the past couple of months that a lot of things is going to be cut. And like the young -- the -- I'll call her young lady. Like she just said, they started with the food stamps, the food assistance. They cutting that back, and I heard it's going to be cut out also. Then I'm hearing that the doors of Curley House is going to -- might be closing itself. You know, I've been coming to Curley's House as a client maybe about four, five years, but recently, I've been a volunteer for this year. And Tiffany was pretty close, but I work the front where I sign them in at. Tiffany works the front desk, but I sign the people in. And I sign as many as 250 to 300 people per day, per day, from 9 o'clock to 2
o'clock, to get food. And sometimes we run out of food. Sometimes we don't have enough. But when we do, the -- when we don't, the people that's really in the dire and need stress for this food. So -- I mean, I'll -- I don't know what it is about how far as the money is supposed to be allocated to whatever. I don't know how much we need to stay open. But I think those doors need to stay open because the people really needs Curley [sic] House. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. Melissa Stapleton.

Theodist Grimes: Good evening. My name is Theodist Grimes. I reside at 431 Northwest 59th Street. And I heard how tough things were, but I really didn't see how tough it was until two years ago when I was laid off. After 37 years, I was laid off. And I visit Curley [sic] House, and I see what they are doing for the community, and I applaud them, and I beseech [sic] you to keep Curley [sic] House open, because they are doing a wonderful job and helping peoples in the community. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Melissa Stapleton: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Melissa Stapleton. And just recently -- I'm here on behalf of Curley's House. I've been looking for work for quite a long time, and I haven't been able to find anything, and a lot of it, I believe, is because of my age. I don't have many skills, but I do the best with what I have. I came across Curley's House at a job fair, and they gave me a chance to work at Sun Stadium doing the base -- the football games there, the college games and --

Applause.

Ms. Stapleton: -- the Dolphin games. In this community, regardless where it's at, we need places like Kelly's [sic] House for one, to help people with food. The seniors need the help. People like myself need the help, because without Curley's help, without the food help that they give to the residents, there's no reason to really stay around and exist. They are there to help people and that's what they do and they do a darn good job at it. And it's through Curley's House that I was able to get my job at the stadium, and I appreciate that very much. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. Queen Davis. Queen Davis and then Laverne Holliday.

Queen Davis: Good evening, Commission. My name is Queen Davis and I'm a volunteer at Curley [sic] House. I used to work there. But I've been at Curley [sic] House about eight years or more, and I've seen so much in that area that these people do for the community. And as I was sitting there, I heard the prices of this and the prices of that and the prices of this, but seem like y'all done left out the poor peoples. Y'all done pushed them to the side. Y'all don't care if they live or die. I mean, I don't know where this money come from. If they see a stray dog, they'll pick it up and take care; a animal, they'll pick it up and take care, but we seniors can't live off of what we get in our income taxes. We have taxes to pay if you got a home. I do have one. I have taxes and I have insurance. I live off one little income check, and I cannot live off the money that I get, when I have to go to the same grocery store y'all go to, to the same gas station y'all go to; I have to go to the same clothes store y'all go to; and look at the money y'all get and it's still hard for you all. So if it's hard for you all, what you think about us? I heard all about building this and building that. Y'all can't take care of what you already got. You ain't got no problem --
Chair Sarnoff: Wait, wait.

Ms. Davis: -- to take care of what you already got.

Chair Sarnoff: Step -- back up from the mike a little bit.

Ms. Davis: Okay, I'll back up. But I want to know why y'all keep putting these buildings up in the sky and can't even take care of the buildings you already got? We can't live in 'em 'cause we don't make enough money to live in those kind of buildings. We can't even hardly eat, yet more go live in a building. Y'all need to think about the seniors. Y'all need to think about the poor. That's what's wrong now. We got the wrong peoples in the wrong chairs, and that's why things going on like it is. Y'all need to think about the Curley [sic] House, somebody that love the poor, somebody gon' to do something to help the poor.

Applause.

Ms. Davis: And be blessed.

Chair Sarnoff: Laverne Holliday, Lavern Scott, Aleatha Toombs.

Laverne Holliday: Good afternoon. My name -- well, good evening. My name is Laverne Holliday. I'm the assistant director of Curley's House. Mayor Regalado, Commissioner Spence-Jones, Vice Chairman Gort, Chairman Sarnoff, Commissioner Carollo, Commissioner Suarez, I want to thank you on behalf of Curley's House for your continued support of our organization, individually and collectively. I want to thank George Mensah and the Community Development Department with their support and technicalistance [sic]. I'd like to say that what we do, you guys know, and you know we do it from the heart. And we thank you once again. Marlins Stadium -- all of the money that we gave to the Marlins Stadium, they was supposed to make sure that there was jobs in our community. That -- this year we lost $150,000 because they sourced it out, the Marlins sourced it out to other venues, and we were not included in that. That hurt us very much and a lot of people in our community. And right now we're thankful for the Sun Life Stadium, who we still have a contract with, that helps us support the people, the poor people that -- and the ones that need a second chance in our community. Thanks once again for all of your help and support and hoping that you continue to support us and a little bit more. Thanks. Have a good one.

Applause.

Lavern Scott: Lavern Scott, Curley's House. And we would also like to thank the Mayor as well. We could come to this microphone every year and say the same thing repeatedly, but for this year, the federal government is taking over $60 billion out of the food stamp budget; $37 million will affect the state of Florida. So this year particularly, those cuts start on November 1, which they are started -- until -- November 1 of this year until 2016, so many people that have been receiving food stamps will be down to nothing. Like Ms. Florence said, she was only getting $26 in food stamps. If you receiving $400 a month income and you got to pay your rent, pay your utilities, buy your prescription medication, that leaves you nothing to eat with. And then she was getting $26 a month; now they cut her down to 10. So that's why it's so important that you all continue to fund Curley's House, because many people come to our door. Like Reginald told you -- he work the front -- some days its 3 to 400 people, and all of those people that come to our door do not look like us. They come from all areas of the City asking us for our assistance, and we give them whatever we have in that warehouse to help them, whether it's food, we help them with food till we -- till our refrigerator is empty and nothing is in there but that bright light. But we gon' give out everything that's in that freezer and refrigerator. We them with jobs. Like these people here from the stadium -- y'all could stand up, that work with us at that stadium. They give
us the opportunity to have from 30 to 60 people. That's 30 --

Applause.

Ms. Holliday: -- to 60 jobs for people in our community. Many of these people are hard to hire. Maybe they don't have the education level or the skill level. Many of them have been incarcerated. I understand my two minutes is up.

Chair Sarnoff: In conclusion.

Ms. Scott: Okay, I can't continue?

Chair Sarnoff: In conclusion.

Ms. Scott: In conclusion, we give them the opportunity --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Somebody going to give her a minute, two minutes, some of their time?

Unidentified Speaker: Yes, I will.

Ms. Scott: Yeah, give me some time.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ms. Holliday: Thank you.

Unidentified Speaker: Yes.

Ms. Holliday: Okay, we give them the opportunity to work. Without that opportunity, they would not be able to feed their kids or put clothing on their kids' back. So that's why it's so important that each and every one of you -- Commissioner Suarez, Commissioner Carollo, we need your help. Commissioner Sarnoff, we need your help. Commissioner Gort, we need your help. Commissioner Spence-Jones, we need your help. And Mayor of the City, we need you to continue supporting Curley's House as well.

Applause.

Ms. Scott: Thank you very much.


Commissioner Spence-Jones: I think she's here, Marc.

Alretha Toombs: I'm Toombs.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Who you --? Who --?

Ms. Toombs: Toombs.

Chair Sarnoff: Chenell?

Ms. Toombs: Alretha Toombs.
Chair Sarnoff: Oh, I'm sorry. Come on up.

Ms. Toombs: Good afternoon first. I want -- I'm representing Curley [sic] House because I'm like a -- I'm not a convicted felon, but I find myself getting in trouble all the time until I met Curley [sic] House, but -- it's not funny, but I always in and out of jail, so I say -- they always tell -- they always holl'ing [sic] "Oh, can't you find this? " And by the grace of God, I found Curley [sic] House. And every since I been with Curley, since 2009, they the best thing I ever had. They been helping me get along -- getting my life back together and on the right track, so please -- and they also give away food, but the most important part is they help me to learn who I am and that I can work, because I can't even get a good job or a job because I got a record. So that's the most important point about Curley. They help people that have records. And I need this job. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Chenell Tannure and then Alex van der ven.

Chnell Tannure: Hi. Good evening. My name is Chenell Tannure. I live at 3543 Loquat Avenue. Oh, that's better. Thanks. I'm sitting here listening to the debate about the crime spike in the City of Miami, and the police officers who are earning too little pay, and having benefits taken away, and it sounds to me like we have a false choice that's being presented to us.

Applause.

Ms. Tannure: It sounds like what you're saying is either we can give our officers competitive pay, competitive benefits, or we can hire new officers to fill the deficit. The reality is that the priority that you have before you is to do something about the crime spike that we have been seeing in Miami not just for the last year, but over the last decade. National magazines and newspapers put out, you know, worst crime cities in the U.S. (United States) and Miami consistently is on those lists. That hurts our city in various ways. It hurts us in tourism. It hurts us in attracting the best and the brightest in the country and internationally to come and live and work here. So your priority needs to be to deal with this issue. And it sounds to me like you need to find the funds to do both. That's all I have to say.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Good point.

Chair Sarnoff: Alex van der ven and then Marleine --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Bastien.

Chair Sarnoff: -- Bastien.

Alex van der ven: Thank you, Commissioners. My name is Dr. Alex van der ven. I'm a -- I'm actually originally not from Miami. I'm originally from Boston. I came down here about eight years ago when I rotated at Jackson, then I fell in love with the community, and I decided this is the place I wanted to raise my family. I lived on the beach for a while. I've been renting just outside of the Grove. I was burglarized two years ago where some burglars basically swept out anything that had any personal value to us, and we've been trying to rebuild our home and rebuild the safety in our home. We're just about to close on a house in the Grove. And I'm doing everything I can to protect my family. I just had a son. My wife was pregnant when we were burglarized, and I don't want to go through that again. I don't want to have that feeling of being in a community where we know the crime rate is still rampant and we know that burglaries are
quite common in this community. I want to feel safe. I want to have support and I want to support this police department. I think we've seen renowned support for this, and I think this is really a no-brainer on your end to make this decision to make it happen and to make sure that this is a safe community to raise our families. I grew up in a community where I never even thought it -- I didn't even know what a burglary was, and I've now been the -- I've been a victim of it. And I think you guys should put yourself in our shoes and try to understand that once it happens to you, you can't live the same in a house that way. So just again to support our Police Department, to support an increase in the monies available to them, and I support that 10 million, if not more. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Marleine and then Jessica Mark.

Marleine Bastien: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Mr. Chair, Commissioners. I am the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and founder of FANM (Fann Ayisyen Nan Miyami, Inc.), Haitian Women of Miami. I did not come here to talk about the police, but I would be remiss if I didn't make a comment about all the presentations that I heard this evening. Like I said at the County budget meeting the other day, the community where police officers, where Fire Department workers, where people will have to come to prevent libraries from being closed is a community that has deep and profound problems. So I hope that you will heed all the calls of all the presenters from the Police Department here and then find it in your heart to do something to support them. And then the second reason for my being here -- well, the main reason for my being here is to talk about investing in social services. The City of Miami is a city of the extremes where you have extreme wealth, you know, living or siding or -- with extreme poverty, and I represent a community that is probably one of the worse, the poorest in the City, the Haitian-American community. So I'm here to let you know, to tell you that it is extremely important to continue to invest in public services. Let me give you an example. At FANM, for example, we used to have -- we used to receive $150,000 for public services. How much do you think that we get now? At a time when there is an increased demand for mental health, increased demand for domestic violence intervention, increased demand for our aftercare program, increased demand for job training and services, do not turn your heart away from public services, because the people you've heard, people from Curley's House, from FANM, from the Haitian Women of Miami, they need you. We cannot only support businesses, we cannot only support big developers; we need to invest in families. You need to invest in public services. Lastly, I know we've been working very closely with Commissioner Michelle Spence-Jones. We thank her. She's been a leader really in trying to help us, you know, increase and help assist the businesses --

Chair Sarnoff: And in conclusion.

Ms. Bastien: -- in little Haiti, but we need more support to make sure that these --

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you

Ms. Bastien: -- businesses keep their doors open.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Ms. Bastien: So find it in your heart to support public services and make sure you do something for these police officers. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. Jessica Mark, Robert Steinberg.
Applause.

Jessica Mark: Hi. My name is Jessica Mark. I live on 2920 Washington Street, in the North Grove. And I was recently broken into and burglarized about two weeks ago, so it's pretty raw. I don't want to get too emotional. It's really been unfortunate. I've been a resident of the City of Miami for 18 years, half my life, and the Grove for 12, and I've pretty much become a prisoner in my house. My three young daughters, 11, 7, and 4, are terrified. And I could tell you firsthand, when the police responded to our house, that -- how low the morale was. I -- my husband, who's a former Miami Hurricanes player and defensive line coach, was almost shocked by how almost nonchalant the police were. Either they were so desensitized by the amount of break-ins in our neighborhood, in addition to just their morale being so low that -- like they just can't do anything about it, and that's really scary. I grew up in New York, in Queens; never been robbed, or mugged, or burglarized, or anything. So coming here into a really beautiful, what is considered affluent community of Coconut Grove, it's been very surprising. I'm here to support the monies to be allocated to the police so that our public safety can please come first. If you think about what you say to your kids, what's the most important thing? The most important thing is health. Well, the health of our community is really at risk right now, and the people feel scared and unsafe and don't want to leave their houses, 'cause they're scared of what they're going to come home to. Please, please support the Police Department. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause

Chair Sarnoff: Michael Taylor.

Robert Steinberg: Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Robert Steinberg. I lived, I grew up in Miami. I left here 35 years ago. Five months ago I bought a home with my wife in Coconut Grove. Officer Blankenberry [sic] that spoke, I met him on Sunday, and we were standing in front of my Mercedes as -- which was up on blocks. Now, here's what we have. I want my officers and my pilots well paid and happy. What no one has mentioned here -- as a trial lawyer for many years in Texas, I cut my teeth on premises liability cases. Those are inadequate security cases. What everybody talked about here and nobody's mentioned is that we have a significant inadequate security problem in the City of Miami, Coconut Grove especially. So what might happen, ladies and gentlemen, is when someone gets shot and killed who is a money earner -- we talked -- Commissioner Suarez mentioned it and the Mayor mentioned it -- about a problem that might be a -- you're going to have a huge hole, and it's not the $10,000 that's going to be allocated for the police officers. And I want these guys well paid and more. But it's going to be a problem when somebody sues the City of Miami, and it's going to be in federal court, and I have a lot of very high-powered friends that would welcome the chance to march into a federal court and say, We're suing the City of Miami” and it's not $10 million because there's a lot of rich people in my neighborhood, and when someone dies and there's a $25 million damage model; guess what? It's not 10 million; it's going to be over and over and over. And I will -- I'll get licensed in Florida just to pursue these things. I'm licensed in Texas and I'm licensed in New York, but I'm licensed in federal court as well. So, you know, it's an embarrassment, you guys. For everybody here, it's an embarrassment. My wife just had to go home, 'cause I didn't it was going to be this long, because I'm afraid that -- we had people at our house; I didn't know if the house was locked up. So the big picture is it's bad for business. It's bad for our City. I'm a proud member of Miami. I want to live the rest of my life here. I'd like to die here, but not before my time. I hope we do the right thing.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.
Chair Sarnoff: Michael Taylor and then Catherine Christofis.

Michael Taylor: Mr. Mayor, Commissioners. I want to speak in favor of new police hires and also increase in their salaries. I'm not a police officer. I'm not a lobbyist. I don't represent any special interest groups. My wife, Brenda and I have lived in Coconut Grove on 17th Avenue. We've paid property taxes to the City of Miami for over 30 years, okay. We were here during the days of the Cocaine Cowboys, and I want you to know that we feel less safe today than we did in those days. We are very much concerned about the increase in crime in residential areas. We think you need -- we need more police officers to help combat that crime. And from what I've been hearing here tonight, in order to do that, in order for it to be a net increase, I think you better find the money to raise their pay. That's all I have to say in conclusion.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Catherine Christofis: Good evening, Chairman Sarnoff, Commissioners. My name is Catherine Christofis, and I'm going off on a totally different subject tonight. I'm a representative of the Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Church, located at 2401 Southeast 3rd Avenue, in Commissioner Carollo's district. We are celebrating our 65th anniversary in the City of Miami and are having our 36th annual Greek festival coming up at the end of February. We have been paying for the past 35 years a lot of money to the City of Miami for our permit fees, our fire fees, and our Police Department for traffic direction and road closures, and they've been doing a great job. We are asking for the first time -- because we know that you have special monies set aside for these particular events, such as the Three Kings Parade and the Martin Luther King Parade. Well, we're asking for the first time if you can set aside a $10,000 donation to assist us with these ever-increasing fees and so that we can make it a very special festival, because it is the 65th anniversary of our organization in the City of Miami. This is a three-day festival that promotes wholesome and family values, and projects a very positive image in the City of Miami. One of the first settlers in the Roads area were the Greek people, among the Lebanese and the Arabic that also came. We have 500 attendees that attend the church, that vary in different denominations, also from Hispanics, Greeks, and so forth. And we are asking first time -- and this is not an annual request, but we are asking if you would assist us in November when we start making our preparations for that particular donation. If Commissioner Carollo does not want to give it, we were hoping that it could be spread amongst you all since this is a -- really a Miami-Dade County event, because people come from throughout the area, so it wouldn't be a big burden for just one Commissioner, because we do have everybody who attends it. And that's basically it. And I hope we do have your support in this upcoming year. And a special thank you to Commissioner Suarez' staff. Michael Llorente is really awesome.

Commissioner Suarez: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. Melissa Tapanes and then Zalie Dominguez.

Melissa Tapanes: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Melissa Tapanes. I'm usually here as a land use lawyer, but today I'm here as a proud City of Miami resident and a business owner in the City, as well. I was born and raised in the City of Miami. My first memories are being bussed from Shenandoah Elementary School to Sunset Elementary, and what I remember most as I looked outside that bus where the beautiful homes along 17th Avenue, down South Bayshore Drive, Main Highway and Ingraham, and I remember asking my older sister who lives in these beautiful homes, kings, and queens, and princesses, and princes? And my sister told me, “No, doctors and lawyers.” And I told myself, I'm going to be a lawyer someday and live in one of these homes with majestic trees. Well, today I'm a downtown lawyer and I live in one of those beautiful homes with lots of trees in South Coconut Grove. And those beautiful trees, they make
me feel unsafe every day. This morning when I went out for a morning jog, the security guard in my neighborhood is one of those neighborhoods that chose during the last crime spike in Coconut Grove to put together a special taxing district, petition this City, petition Miami-Dade County to pay more taxes so that we would feel more secure. Well, that security guard this morning told me, "I can't protect you out there; stay here," right in my little community of a few cul-de-sac streets. I'm here to implore you to make public safety a priority of the City. I want to feel safe as a mother, as a resident in my neighborhood. I want to feel safe as a professional in downtown Miami, and I don't feel safe today. I feel that I have to be outside the house when the sun's up and we're -- I mean, it's like -- it's very strange to feel that way. And I just want for you all to make police services a priority in whichever way that you see fit. Mr. Steinberg mentioned negligence. I would mention to you, as a land use lawyer, the level of service required for police services in this City -- we're willing to pay more as a taxpayer. Commissioner Sarnoff mentioned it's 30 to $100 a year and raise taxes for additional police officers and to give them the kind of pay and respect that they deserve. Your residents will pay 30, 50, $100 for those services. So I'm just here asking you to please make police services a priority. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Zulie Dominguez, Robert Suarez.

Zulie Dominguez: Hi. If you guys recall, I was here earlier for the PST (Problem Solving Team) in Little Havana. I shook all of your hands for the proclamation, that we did a good job for the arrests. Later today I intended to apply with another department. I haven’t received a pay raise in over five years, and I can make approximately 10,000 more by making -- by working for another agency. Restore benefits and step raises. I think for the hard work that we’ve done, me and my PST crew for Little Havana, I think that we deserve better. That’s all I can say. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Robert Suarez: Good evening, Commissioners. Robert Suarez, representing the City of Miami firefighters and paramedics. Commissioners, you know very well the cuts that your City employees have taken over the past four years. You've heard a lot about morale. Morale is in crisis in this City. Our employees struggle every day to wake up and come to work. They're proud of what they do, but they're not proud of the commitment that the City is -- has made to support them in being able to serve the citizens of Miami. I thank you for the 3 percent bonus. You know, it pales in comparison to the cuts we've taken over the past four years, but it's a step. In the proposed budget is money for Fire Department capital. I'll tell you, the past four or five years our Fire Department property and vehicles have been falling apart. Commissioner Sarnoff and many of the other Commissioners have helped support the Fire Department with not only fundraising, private fundraising, but grants. We've literally been operating our vehicles and stations with grants, year to year on annual grants. Commissioner Sarnoff, in your district, we have one of the most deplorable fire-rescue facilities, Station 1, one of the City's oldest firehouse, our largest facility housing paramedic, firefighters in the City. We have tile falling off the walls, showers that are leaking water, sewage spilling over on the first floor. We have a serious need for capital investment, in addition to the morale problem we have because of the benefit cuts. This budget right now, with the support of the Administration, does give us a little bit of money for capital, but we have about a $50 million -- over $50 million capital needs list in fire-rescue, and this is $1.8 million of general fund to go to that capital. So we -- I can tell you, morale is a benefit issue. It's about salary. And with the 20-plus percent salary reduction we've taken over the past four years, that's in the dirt. But when the equipment we're using is falling
apart -- Commissioner, right in front of your own home, we had a fire apparatus that busted down last year. I think you remember dumping transmission fluid all over the street. That's a 12-year-old emergency vehicle racing through the streets of Miami. And the investment we need for public safety -- not only the morale for our employees, but for our equipment -- to be proud to be able to serve the citizens -- is a critical need. And I have to remind you that we're far, far behind in addressing those salary, and morale, and equipment needs, and I ask you to do as much as you can to fulfill that forgotten commitment. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Dr. Mae Christian, George Burgos.

Mae Christian: Good evening. I'm Dr. Mae Christian. I live at 4824 Northwest 15th Court. To the Commissioners and to the Mayor, I marched in 1963 and '68 with Dr. King and a part of the Movement. One of them in '68 was called the Poor People's Campaign. And guess what? This is 2013, and it seems like poor people are getting poorer. I live in Liberty City, and it was considered to be the most suffering city in America. And recently, Congress has failed to pass the food stamp bill. Effective November 1, the food stamps will be cut across the board. Recently, I volunteered at Curley [sic] House, and it seems that the poor is getting poorer. And you and I know that the cutting of the food stamps will contribute to what? To crime. And it will have more incidents of crime for the officers that you're trying to give a raise. They going to have a lot of work to do. I ask the City Commission to please fund Curley [sic] House, but also support our officers, because we need to expand to a larger distribution area, we need freezers, supplies, in order to feed the poor. When you take the food stamps, then you increase nutrition deficits which contribute to health problems. So I ask you to fund the Curley [sic] House, as well as be aware that we're going to need more police officers. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: George -- again, George Burgos. There you go. And then Ken Knight.

George Burgos: Good evening, everyone. My name is George Burgos, born and raised here in Miami, Florida. I came before this Commission and many of the City members -- rather, the citizens last Thursday at the emergency meeting to second or to emphasize more than what has already been said by the police officers themselves. I have witnessed firsthand. We were burglarized two weeks ago on Sunday. My wife lives in fear. My neighbors live in fear. My house has been targeted five times in the past four years. To say that -- what they have -- the police officers already emphasized is an understatement. I have seen the -- there are many wonderful police officers. Let me first say that. They're excellent officers I have had the pleasure of meeting, the commanders as well, lieutenants. They've been very helpful, the burglary units. But I must say that I have also seen -- other officers who I've seen, as has been mentioned earlier tonight by some individuals, the complacency. It seems -- the morale, you can tell, is extremely low. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see there are many issues that have to be addressed by you as a Commission. I have done business -- I'm a business consultant, a financial consultant. I've been billion-dollar budgets. I understand. I can appreciate what your -- the situation you're in, but something can be done. When I have an officer come up to me on a -- different occasions over the past three years, where they say, Well, it's a sign of the times. We just have to accept it. And they shrug their shoulders. We don't have to accept this. This is something that -- something can be done. The morale can be lifted. There are many things that can be done. There's not a simple solution, I understand that. But something has to be done. And if this is a start, which is desperately needed as well just to bring -- keep the good officers that we have and
bring more, then please give the time and the effort. We can find a solution within the budget, because I've done billion-dollar budgets before myself. It can be done. Please do it.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: C. C. Reed after Ken Knight.

Ken Knight: Good evening, Commissioners. Mr. Chair, Honorable Mayor, I've come to talk to you about a Category 5 hurricane, a tsunami, but it deals with the food crisis. We got 3,552,000 Floridians that's going to be affected by the drastic cuts or the elimination of food stamps in the state of Florida. That also has a trickle-down effect to the business owners, and I'm one of them. A lot of inner city stores receive their monies through the EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) system. And without that income or that commerce, those stores are virtually going out of business. And let me also make you aware, of the 3,552,000 Floridians, a lot -- most of those people that are on food stamps, they're not like me, so we have to think about all the people. And hunger is like tears. When a child tells you that they're hungry in the afterschool programs, in the daycare centers, you feel that, and I think we as a city have to respond. Now, Curley [sic] House has been taking the lead in the inner city, and they should be supported. We need more resources. But I -- as I said, this is the tsunami. This is a Category 5 hurricane. I heard crime, I heard about safety and all those other issues. Well, when you're hungry, and I mean hungry, it leads to a lot of things. So I hope that this Commission, through the Chair and the Honorable Mayor, that we do the right thing, that we find the resources that we need to support the challenges that we have in the inner city. And thank you very much for your time. And keep us in your prayers, and happy holiday. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: Mr. Reed and then Joseph T. Longueira.

C. C. Reed: Hello --

Vice Chair Gort: Longueira.

Mr. Reed: -- Ola, bonsoir, maraba (phonetic), buenas tardes, good afternoon, good evening, or whatever. Here we go again, again, and again. Towners for Life. We stand here before all of you Mayors, want-to-be Mayors, Commissioners, want-to-be Commissioners. It's now our way, and we will stand our ground. Hello. Now our way can be reached at www.cleanflorida.net, an electro-nearing communication organizations that's successfully promoting OCC, which stands for “Operation Come Clean.” As you notice, in our community there been a lot of littering, and I must commend the City of Miami for the baskets, I should call them, that's basically been installed by the bus benches. And if you notice also, we've been very effective and powerful with -- now, when you enter the buses here in Miami-Dade County, you find a trash bag at the front door -- the front entrance, thank God. What we need to do, we need to stop littering right now, please. In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, respect the ground all of us children of God are walking on, please. No more littering right now. Because see, God sit high and looks low. And I feel that -- when I was young as a little boy, you know, it was shameful to see someone like go and purchase a bag of potato chips or a can of soda --

Chair Sarnoff: And in conclusion.

Mr. Reed: -- and just throw it on the ground, and that shows disrespect to God in my life. But I have for 20 --
Chair Sarnoff: In conclusion.

Mr. Reed: Okay, in conclusion, please, I have, all my life, not littered, and I have continued littering [sic], and I'm hoping that you all --

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Mr. Reed: Well, just one other thing, is that I put in an RFP (Request for Proposals) back in --

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Mr. Reed: -- 2000 and --

Chair Sarnoff: All right, Joseph Longueira. Go up there, Mr. Longueira.

Joseph Longueira: My name's Joseph Longueira. I don't live in the City, but I'm president of the Miami Police Benevolent Association that does community work and helps our police officers. I'm a Vietnam vet. And when I got out the military, I came down to Florida and I got hired by Metro. Before I went to work there, I decided to come to Miami PD (Police Department), 'cause we had a rich history and I believed in what they did. I spent 32 and a half years here, and I love this City. People say, “When are you going to move to Georgia?” I'm not moving to Georgia. I love Miami, okay? I retired in 2005, going on eight years. I used to be the chairman of the Impact Fee Border Review from when -- its inception till when you decided to eliminate it, almost all of that time; only a few years I wasn't. For over 20 years I was the Commission rep here. Commissioner Gort you know that, and some of the other Commissioners have seen me over the years. So I know what you're going through and I know the budget process. And I can remember being here at 3 in the morning sometimes. I'm proud to be a Miami police retiree and a Miami police officer; always will be a Miami police officer. I'm proud of the rich history of this department, but I'm not proud of it today. Miami police has a rich history, one of the first female sergeants in the country. We've developed the PSA program that is now nationwide. The first 800 megahertz radio system wasn't even a product. It was built here in the City and went through seven revisions while the officers' lives were still at stake while they ironed out the problems. We developed the field force concept that is now used nationwide and in other countries, and our officers went to other countries to train people.

Chair Sarnoff: Need you to conclude. All right.

Mr. Longueira: Please. We developed substations and put them in the communities, and I know 'cause I built them. I was the project manager, many stations. Since the '70s and even before, we traveled all over the world, and other countries -- Israel, Central and South America -- came to learn from Miami police. We have the famed homicide investigator, Mike González, who Scotland Yards sought out to help them solve crimes, okay? We had the first Hispanic chief of any large police agency. There might have been a little chief somewhere, but we had the first Hispanic chief here in Miami. Things have changed. Proper priorities are not given to public safety today. If you're not careful, you'll be on the national news again and on the cover of Time Magazine. We've seen it before. It'll have a drastic impact to this City. You need to restore the benefits to the police officers. You need to restore professionalism to the Police Department. We need to fix the recruiting process, fix promotions, fix training. We need to hire police officers that are based on the daily service population of the City, not the resident. We like to call ourselves “the core City of Miami.” I did all those studies, okay? We need more police officers. We really need a lot more than you think in these discussions, okay? Another topic, and I know people aren't going to like this. But over the years, politics has crept into the Police Department. It is eating away our Police Department from the inside, okay? I know I'm not going to like -- I know somebody else isn't going to like this, but I like Chief Orosa personally. I don't see him here in the room. I don't see his staff here in the room listening or watching his officers and you while
this discussion's going on. That is not right. He should be here speaking for them, speaking whether their salaries are at the proper level to have a professional law enforcement agency. You need to look at the City charter to find a way to keep politics from creeping in police. You need to evaluate the CRAs (Community Redevelopment Agencies) and determine how good they're benefiting the City or how they hurt the delivery of service citywide not just to those CRAs. Just imagine if you didn't have the CRAs and you had that money that goes to them citywide, okay? Now, I know areas need help, but you can still do that from a citywide budget. You don't have to have a CRA. Impact fees, we used to give impact fees, waive them for big developments, and they would make profits, millions of dollars, but never reimbursed back anything after they made their profits, okay? Young men dream their whole lives, since they were little, of being Miami police officers. They had pride. Now they're leaving to go to other places. This is not right. Please fix the Miami Police Department.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: The last person I have is Gregory Mallet. Is there anyone else that signed up that I did not call? Okay.

Gregory Mallet: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Officer Gregory Mallet. First of all, I would like to thank the residents for coming out here and showing us support. I know myself and my fellow officers greatly appreciate it. Today, on September 12, 2013, I made two years in the City of Miami. I have three applications out there in other police departments. To be honest with you, I'm happy here. I love coming out here, and working, and giving 110 percent enforcing the law, catching the criminals, which you know how it is nowadays. But you know what? With no competitive benefits and no backup support from my superiors, the City's creating a low morale and crime is going up. The criminals out there know they're winning the battle. The City needs to do something. Guys, must I remind you, we are professionals? This is a career, not a job. Must I remind you, guys, this is the City of Miami Police Department where a job goes from 0 to 60 in one second? You really think my job is from 9 to 5? Negative. In conclusion, please give us what we deserve. Thank you.

Applause.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, anyone else wishing to speak? The public hearing is now closed, coming back to this Commission.

**BH.2**

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

**13-00914 Downtown Development Authority**

**DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE AND TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.**

**PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN MILLAGE OVER ROLLED-BACK RATE.**

**RESPONSE: 13.03%(0.478 IS THE PROPOSED RATE, 0.4229 IS THE ROLLED-BACK RATE)**

**CITY COMMISSION LISTENS AND RESPONDS TO CITIZENS' COMMENTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED MILLAGE AND EXPLAINS THE REASONS FOR THE INCREASE OVER THE ROLLED-BACK RATE.**

13-00914 Proposed Millage - DDA.pdf
13-00914-Submittal-DDA Proposed Budget Presentation.pdf
Alyce Robertson: This is a -- Alyce Robertson, executive director of the Miami Downtown Development Authority. This is a discussion of the percentage increase in the millage over the rollback rate. The proposed rate is 13.03 percent over the rollback rate. I have a -- I don't know if you want to hear it now or -- We have a budget presentation. I don't know if you --

Chair Sarnoff: Let's go. Let's put it on.

Ms. Robertson: Right. All right, this is just -- I want to go quickly through this. This is the remind the Commission what our mission is, is we're basically a economic development agency for downtown Miami, and our mission is to make sure that businesses grow within the downtown area. Last year, and the year before, and actually the two previous years, four years in a row we've had clean audits; the last two with not one management recommendation. And last year, we also won the Public Sector Organization of the Year by the American Society for Public Administration. One of the things that has been happening in downtown is that our property -- our real estate is growing, and as a matter of fact, it represented in this year's increase citywide 57 percent of the City's increase valuation comes out of the downtown area, and we grew another percent; now representing 38 percent of the City's tax revenues. We also have -- in the time that has ensued, we had -- we started out with an occupancy rate five years ago of 62 percent in our new condominiums. Today that rate is 97 percent, and there's 3,000 condominiums being built currently. We've reached out. We've built some new businesses. Venture Hive, which is a technology accelerator that's happening in the Park West area. We've sponsored eMerge America [sic], which is going to be a technology conference. And we're also traveling to New York and Connecticut to incentivize Hedge Fund Row to come down and be in downtown Miami, and joining the other parts of our financial industry. And we also plugged the visitors and vendors. The visitors, we have expanded our cultural offerings. By the way, we have in your packages that we gave you the invitation to Art Days next week. It's 130 different events that'll be occurring in downtown Miami, as well as -- of course, I claim credit for the Miami Heat winning their back-to-back championship. We're proud of our downtown Miami Heat, even though Mr. James thinks he plays on South Beach. One of the things I wanted to bring to your -- the City's attention is that the DDA is already picking up what are traditional municipal services; about $2 million in traditional municipal services that are being picked up out of the DDA budget. Our charter functions are 78 percent, but 22 percent are being picked up on the municipal services. That includes things such as the ambassadors and our downtown enhancement team. The City used to have a roving cleanup crew that would go through downtown; paid for out of the Solid Waste budget. Now, we're doing that with Camillus House and sponsoring people picking up litter as well as painting out graffiti, and also planting plants to make it look better. One of the things to do economic development, it have to make sure that the place looks good, and that's what we've been spending a lot of effort on. In addition, we added ambassadors a few years back to provide additional eyes and ears on the street, because the police capacity was not adequate to have people feel safe on the streets, especially for events at night. So -- in fact, to touch on what the City's discussion was earlier, the DDA Board passed a resolution asking for more police services in the downtown area. Our population has grown from 39,000 in the 2000 census to over 65,000 today, and we're projecting going up to 85,000. We're here at the first budget hearing where our preliminary -- the ordinance on first reading is here to discuss our millage rate. Couple of things that are interesting. I did mention already that we're -- 57 percent of the City's taxable values is attributed to the DDA district. One other thing that is interesting that happened in this particular budget evaluation year is we actually grew to surpass Coral Gables in taxable value, and so we're actually bigger than everything, except UMSA (Unincorporated Municipal Services Area), Miami Beach, and the City of Miami obviously. So one of the things that I think that we're looking at -- one of the messages coming from the DDA is that we're actually growing your tax base. And looking at how we're spending that money, we're spending it to enhance the quality of life of the people in downtown, as well as make it attractive to new businesses coming into downtown. And thank you for your continued support.
Chair Sarnoff: All right.

Vice Chair Gort: Mr. Chairman.

Chair Sarnoff: You're recognized.

Vice Chair Gort: I think it’s important -- you stated there's an additional tax that the property owners in the area are willing to pay.

Ms. Robertson: Correct. And one of the things I point out, this year the Brickell Homeowners Association asked us to join the DDA, and I don't know of many occasions in my 35 years in government where people asked to be taxed more, and this is an occasion that that happened.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, is there a -- it's a motion to approve BH.2.

Vice Chair Gort: Move it.

Todd B. Hannon (City Clerk): Excuse me. Chair?

Mr. Alfonso: Yeah.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Discussion item, right?

Chair Sarnoff: Is it just --

Mr. Hannon: Madam City Attorney.

Veronica Xiques (Assistant City Attorney): Commissioner, BH.2 is a public hearing. You have to open the public hearing up. If there's no one here, you can close it.

Chair Sarnoff: Does anybody wish to be heard on BH.2, BH.2?

Alvin West: Chairman, Commissioners, my name is Alvin West, and I am the treasurer of the Downtown Development Authority, and I would like to speak on behalf of the budget and the presentation that Alcy just made. I can tell you that we have put a lot of time and a lot of energy in the DDA trying to make it the best operation there is. I think from the numbers that you've seen, it tells you that the DDA district is a donor district; that whatever happens in downtown helps the rest of the City. And so the budget that we've put together and we are presenting we feel is going to propel the whole City forward. And so with that, we would ask you to please approve this budget.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you, Alvin. All right, anyone else wishing to be heard on BH.2, BH.2? Public hearing is now closed, coming back to the Commission. Is there a motion?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So moved.

Vice Chair Gort: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: Motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones, second by --

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner -- Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry. BH.2 is a discussion item. BH.3 is the ordinance for the millage. That is where --

Commissioner Carollo: Exactly.
Chair Sarnoff: And that's what I thought too, but okay. So thank you for the discussion --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: We're finished --

Chair Sarnoff: -- on BH.2.

Vice Chair Gort: Move it.

BH.3 ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), RELATED TO TAXATION, DEFINING AND DESIGNATING THE TERRITORIAL LIMITS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA; FIXING THE MILLAGE AND LEVYING TAXES IN SAID DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014, AT .478 MILLS ON THE DOLLAR OF NONEXEMPT ASSESSED VALUE OF ALL REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY IN SAID DISTRICT; PROVIDING THAT SAID MILLAGE AND THE LEVYING OF TAXES WITHIN THE TERRITORIAL LIMITS OF THE CITY OF MIAMI ("CITY") AS REFLECTED IN THE CITY'S MILLAGE LEVY ORDINANCE FOR THE AFORESAID FISCAL YEAR WHICH IS REQUIRED BY CITY CHARTER SECTION 27; PROVIDING THAT THE FIXING OF THE MILLAGE AND THE LEVYING OF TAXES HEREIN SHALL BE IN ADDITION TO SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS; PROVIDING THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL NOT BE DEEMED AS REPEALING FOR AMENDING ANY OTHER ORDINANCE FIXING MILLAGE OR LEVYING TAXES, BUT SHALL BE DEEMED SUPPLEMENTAL AND IN ADDITION THERETO; CONTAINING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

13-00915 Memo - DDA SR.pdf
13-00915 Legislation - DDA FR.pdf
13-00915 Pre-Legislation FR.pdf
13-00915 Legislation FR.pdf
13-00915 Exhibit A FR.pdf

ACTIONS BY THE CITY COMMISSION:
1. RECOMPUTE THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE, IF NECESSARY
2. ADOPT THE FINAL MILLAGE RATE

Motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones, seconded by Vice Chair Gort, that this matter be PASSED ON FIRST READING PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

Chair Sarnoff: And now we have BH.3. Is there a motion?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So moved.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you.

Vice Chair Gort: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: And we have a motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones, second by Commissioner
Gort. It is an ordinance, Madam City Attorney.

The ordinance was read by title into the public record by Assistant City Attorney Veronica Xiques.

Todd B. Hannon (City Clerk): Roll call on item BH.3.

A roll call was taken, the result of which is stated above.

Mr. Hannon: The ordinance passes on first reading, 5-0.

BH.4

RESOLUTION

13-00916

Downtown Development Authority


13-00916 Memo - DDA.pdf
13-00916 Legislation - DDA.pdf
13-00916 Pre-Legislation.pdf
13-00916 Legislation.pdf
13-00916-Submittal-DDA Proposed Budget Presentation.pdf

ACTIONS BY THE CITY COMMISSION:
1. AMEND THE BUDGET, IF NECESSARY
2. ADOPT THE TENTATIVE BUDGET

Motion by Vice Chair Gort, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 4 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Suarez and Spence-Jones
Noes: 1 - Commissioner(s) Carollo

R-13-0346

Chair Sarnoff: BH.4.

Alyce Robertson: This is the resolution accompanying the ordinance, which is the actual levy of the budget, the budget explanation. This has been approved by the Miami Downtown Development Board in July of this year. It technically doesn’t have to come tonight. It can come at the second budget hearing. It would give us the opportunity to schedule something with Commissioner Carollo, should you like to have something in more detail. We did provide it to your staff. I don’t know if she didn’t share it, but we --

Commissioner Carollo: Yeah, it was a nice folder that had the same exact information that you just passed out, but you know we usually receive a lot more information and get into a lot more
Mr. Robertson: You want your box?

Commissioner Carollo: I don't know if we need to go to the box, but --

Ms. Robertson: Okay.

Commissioner Carollo: -- you understand that I usually obtain a lot more information and --

Ms. Robertson: All right.

Commissioner Carollo: -- I thought it was going to be provided. And at the time that I started -- I sat down and actually started going budget through budget, I said, “Where's all the additional information?” and stuff like that, which wasn’t there. That's okay.

Veronica Xiques (Assistant City Attorney): Mr. Chair, I apologize for the interruption. As the City's budget -- the DDA budget is the same; it must be adopted tentatively today and then set for final hearing at the next meeting.

Chair Sarnoff: All right. Is there a motion?

Vice Chair Gort: Move it.

Chair Sarnoff: Motion by Commissioner Gort.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Commissioner Spence-Jones.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Knowing it's coming back on --

Chair Sarnoff: All right.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- the next hearing.

Chair Sarnoff: Any discussion. All in favor, please say “aye.”

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Aye.

Vice Chair Gort: Aye.

Commissioner Carollo: No.

Ms. Robertson: Thank you very much.

BH.5
13-00897
Bayfront Park Management Trust

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE BAYFRONT PARK MANAGEMENT TRUST, IN THE AMOUNT OF $7,770,000, TO PROVIDE FOR THE OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS OF THE BAYFRONT PARK MANAGEMENT TRUST'S MANAGED FACILITIES, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING
OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014.

13-00897 Memo - Bayfront Park.pdf
13-00897 Legislation.pdf
13-00897 Exhibit 1.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Carollo, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

R-13-0347

Chair Sarnoff: Next is BH (Budget Hearing) --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Five?

Chair Sarnoff: Is it 5 or 4?

Commissioner Carollo: BH.5.

Chair Sarnoff: Where's Danny? I'm going to kill him.

Commissioner Carollo: BH.5.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I think it's BH.5.

Chair Sarnoff: BH.5.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: It's the Bayfront Trust.

Vice Chair Gort: Bayfront Park Trust.

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Tim Schmand: Good evening, Commissioners. Tim Schmand, Bayfront Park Management Trust. It's nice to see you all. I'm here to ask you to approve my budget for 2013/2014. If you have any questions, I could discuss it.

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman.

Chair Sarnoff: You're recognized.

Commissioner Carollo: I just want to point out that this budget includes $42,000 from the Bayfront Park Management Trust that's going to be coming to the City of Miami in order to pay the additional exemption that we have passed, and I make a motion to approve the budget.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So move -- second.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner Carollo; second by Spence-Jones. Don't need a public hearing, right?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No.

Chair Sarnoff: All right. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion --

Vice Chair Gort: Wait a minute. I got a lot of questions, so -- go ahead.
Chair Sarnoff: That was my move. All in favor, please say “aye.”

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Sarnoff: And in the words of Judge Patterson, “You don’t need to be pedantic; I will vote for it.”

Mr. Schmand: Thank you all very much.

Vice Chair Gort: Great presentation.


BH.6

13-00940

Coconut Grove Business Improvement District (BID) Board


13-00940 Memo - BID.pdf
13-00940 Legislation.pdf
13-00940 Exhibit 1.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Carollo, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

R-13-0348

Chair Sarnoff: All right, I guess BH.6.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: The BID (Business Improvement District).

Chair Sarnoff: BID.

Vice Chair Gort: Coconut Grove BID.

Manny Gonzalez: Good evening, Chair. Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Manny Gonzalez, executive director, the Coconut Grove Business Improvement District, located at 3390 Mary Street. I stand before you in an effort to receive an approval for the Coconut Grove BID’s budget for fiscal year FY’14. Please note this is a balanced budget consisting of $1,329,432 in expenditures for this coming year. Grove BID is comprised of five subcommittees, which were all addressed. They were all approved. And this was approved at the BID Board on August 2, which is a 21-member board. Some of the highlights of this budget consist of CCTV (Closed Circuit Television) cameras for Coconut Grove. This would be for the central district, a first; up to $25,000 in emergency clean-up services in the case that there would be a storm for the City within the district; funding for over 2,000 hours of additional off-duty police services, which is another priority of the BID. We have 152 hours of weekly additional security services for the district. It totals about 8,000 additional hours when you factor it throughout the whole year; 128 weekly hours of supplemental cleaning, as well. We have new funding initiatives with the GMCVB (Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau), which is a first; expansion of
streetscape improvements and an implementation of a special event grant policy. Please note that approximately almost 40 percent of our budget, of our $1.3 million budget, consists of traditional municipal services that are now provided by the BID. This consists of $116,000 in cleaning, 131,000 ambassador services, $73,000 in police and off-duty.

Vice Chair Gort: Move it.

Mr. Gonzalez: Thank you very much. If you have any questions.

Commissioner Carollo: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, we have a motion; we have a second. Any --

Commissioner Suarez: Can I just say one thing? I just want to say one thing.

Chair Sarnoff: Go ahead.

Commissioner Suarez: I don't mean to -- It's not about being pedantic. This is -- this was a heck of a budget.

Chair Sarnoff: Is a what?

Commissioner Suarez: This was a Carollo --

Commissioner Carollo: You see me seconding. I was going to make the motion. You see me approving it, right?

Commissioner Suarez: This is a heck of a -- I mean, this is the way to do a budget. I mean, it even has explanations on the variances. I mean, this is -- you know what? I'll let you do it. I'll let you say it.

Commissioner Carollo: No, no, I don't have to say it, but --

Commissioner Suarez: I want you to say it.

Commissioner Carollo: But I am going to approve this (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. So, Manny, next year, the same format.

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes, sir.

Vice Chair Gort: Very well.

Chair Sarnoff: All right.

Mr. Gonzalez: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Any further discussion, other than the lauds from Commissioner Carollo? It's as much as a laud as you'll ever get.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, that's it, that was it, that was it; be happy.

Chair Sarnoff: He raised his eyebrow. Did you notice?

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. He seconded the motion.
Chair Sarnoff: That's a five tier --

Commissioner Suarez: He seconded the budget.

Chair Sarnoff: That's a five tier --

Commissioner Suarez: That's good enough.

Chair Sarnoff: Exactly.

Chair Sarnoff: All in favor, please say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

**BH.7**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), ACCEPTING THE BUDGET OF THE SOUTHEAST OVERTOWN/PARK WEST COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ("SEOPW CRA"), ATTACHED AND INCORPORATED, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014, AS APPROVED BY THE SEOPW CRA'S BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS.

- 13-00941 Memo - SEOPW CRA.pdf
- 13-00941 Legislation.pdf
- 13-00941 Exhibit 1.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Carollo, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be DEFERRED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

Note for the Record: Item BH.7 was deferred to the September 26, 2013 Budget Hearing.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, BH.7.

Manny Gonzalez: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Southeast Overtown/Park West.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I'm just wondering -- I don't know where Clarence is at this point, but I'm assuming it's the same --

Commissioner Carollo: Just (UNINTELLIGIBLE). Want to roll it over to the next meeting?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: You want to roll it over to the next one?

Unidentified Speaker: Sure.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: That's fine.

Chair Sarnoff: Do we have to hear it tonight? Madam --

Vice Chair Gort: This was approved (UNINTELLIGIBLE).
Veronica Xiques (Deputy City Attorney): You do not have to have a hearing on this today.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay, there you go; not hearing it now.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: BH.8.

Todd B. Hannon (City Clerk): Chair, could we at least defer the item, make a motion to --

Chair Sarnoff: A motion -- does anybody have a motion to defer?

Commissioner Carollo: Motion to defer --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Commissioner Carollo: -- BH.7.

Chair Sarnoff: Second. We have a motion by Commissioner Carollo --

Commissioner Suarez: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: -- second by Commissioner Spence-Jones. Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, please say “aye.”

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

BH.8

13-00872

Miami Parking Authority


13-00872 Memos - Miami Parking Authority.pdf
13-00872 Legislation.pdf
13-00872 Exhibit 1.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes:
Ayes: 4 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Suarez and Spence-Jones
Noes: 1 - Commissioner(s) Carollo

R-13-0349

Chair Sarnoff: BH.8.

Art Noriega: Art Noriega, chief executive officer of the Miami Parking Authority. Before you is our 2013/14 budget for your approval. Sort of as an over-arching highlight of the budget, we're requesting roughly $1 million more in advance of last year. The significant portion of that is a 3 percent payroll increase, as well as a -- the addition of six positions, three of which are in enforcement. At the specific request of our Downtown Development Authority, we're being asked...
to increase enforcement of the downtown core, as well as a significant component of the expense side is also the revenue share piece, which is a function of the increase in revenues projected for next year, as well.

Chair Sarnoff: All right.

Commissioner Suarez: Move it.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: -- Suarez; second by Commissioner Spence-Jones. Any discussion on the issue? All right, all in favor, then please say “aye.”

Commissioner Suarez: Aye.

Vice Chair Gort: Aye.

Commissioner Carollo: No.

Chair Sarnoff: Suarez and I have a bet. I get ten bucks that says those are just clear glass. He says they're actually magnifying.

Mr. Noriega: Oh, no, I'm -- my eyes are going way south.

Chair Sarnoff: I owe you ten bucks.

Mr. Noriega: So I'm not pulling a Dwyane Wade. It's not fair.

Chair Sarnoff: That's what I thought; it was straight (UNINTELLIGIBLE) Dwyane Wade.

Commissioner Suarez: Dwyane Wade.

Mariano Cruz: There is no public hearing on this one, eh?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No.

Chair Sarnoff: No.

Mr. Cruz: Okay. Sorry. That's all right.

BH.9

RESOLUTION

13-00911

Virginia Key Beach Park Trust

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE VIRGINIA KEY BEACH PARK TRUST, IN THE AMOUNT OF $521,300, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014.

13-00911 Summary Form.pdf
13-00911 Legislation.pdf
13-00911 Exhibit 1 SUB.pdf
Motion by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be ADOPTED WITH MODIFICATIONS PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

R-13-0350

Chair Sarnoff: All right, BH.9, Virginia Key Trust -- Beach Trust.

Guy Forchion: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. Guy Forchion, the executive director of the Virginia Key Beach Park Trust. Our budget before you for approval is $530,300. Please excuse me. I'm suffering from a tough cold, so my voice may break at points. The highlights in this budget essentially are two part-time positions in addition. That is an administrative assistant and also a park supervisor for the grounds crew. Overall, in comparison to last year’s budget, which was $557,000, this is a reduction in the overall projection in terms of revenue. We have had an increase between this year and last of roughly $80,000 in increase. If you have any specific questions on the budget, please, I'll be ready to take them.

Chair Sarnoff: Mr. Forchion, I don't think you need an elderly budget. You budget very similar to the way Bayfront Trust is, which means you don't actually line item something until you actually have a contract. You're asking for $9,000 of general fund dollars. I don't really think you need it, and in light of what we're about to do today, if you absolutely did need it, you could come for a midyear. I'm going to ask you to remove it, to agree to remove it.

Mr. Forchion: In light of all of discussions this evening, of course we would, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. We would remove that and our budget would be $21,300.

Commissioner Suarez: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. All right, is there a motion?

Commissioner Suarez: Move it as amended.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner Suarez.

Mr. Forchion: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Spence-Jones. Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, please say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Commissioner Suarez: Good to see you guys again.

Chair Sarnoff: MSEA (Miami Sports & Exhibition Authority), Miami --

Mr. Forchion: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: I'm sorry.
A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE MIAMI SPORTS AND EXHIBITION AUTHORITY ("MSEA"), IN THE AMOUNT OF $66,000, TO PROVIDE FOR ITS OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014.

13-00943 Memo - MSEA.pdf
13-00943 Legislation.pdf
13-00943 Exhibit 1.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Carollo, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 4 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo and Spence-Jones
Absent: 1 - Commissioner(s) Suarez

R-13-0351

Chair Sarnoff: BH.10, Miami Sports & Exhibition Authority. Do you even have a budget?

Kirk Menendez: Yeah. Good evening, Commissioners. Kirk Menendez with the Miami Sports & Exhibition Authority. Before you, you have the Authority's 2013/2014 operating budget, totaling $66,000 for your approval.

Commissioner Suarez: Move it.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner Suarez.

Commissioner Carollo: Second for discussion.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Commissioner Carollo, who's recognized for the record.

Commissioner Carollo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Menendez, I said this in the last budget hearing, and I'm going to say it again. We're continuously working on carryover and no revenues, but it's my understanding that there was a resolution passed to receive "X" amount of money -- I think it was about $22,000 -- for the helipad, and I don't see it reflected in your budget.

Mr. Menendez: The heliport agreements were signed by Lynden Aviation approximately a week ago, and right now they're making their way through the City, just passed Risk Management, and they'll be with the City Attorney's Office for review and approval, so we expect that agreement to be in place, I'd say, within the next 30 days.

Commissioner Carollo: I don't know when we passed that, but it seemed like ages ago, and I don't know why that money is not reflected in your budget. You're saying it's not reflected in your budget because it hasn't made its way through yet?

Mr. Menendez: Right.

Commissioner Carollo: When is it going to make its way through? I mean, this is for next year's budget, which starts October 1. You have about two or three weeks.

Mr. Menendez: Yeah.

Commissioner Carollo: And then it should be reflected in our budget that we should, at the very least, receive 20 -- I don't want to say a measly 22,000 -- but a measly 22,000 for 2 point -- what
is it, two point [sic] acres of waterfront property?

Mr. Menendez: At that time, like I said, we received the signed agreements from Lynden just approximately a week ago. We expect to sign them, so I would say by the end of September, they should be signed, and once we start receiving those funds, they'll go into MSEA’s reserves or account. If I’m not mistaken, those funds, however, since they deal with Watson Island, are restricted dollars. They can’t go to general funds. I’d like to double-check with the City Attorney.

Commissioner Carollo: I think it’d be more with Mr. Alfonso. Is there a special revenue set up for --

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) requirements -- we’re talking about the total revenues of the heliport?

Commissioner Carollo: Right.

Mr. Menendez: Yes.

Mr. Alfonso: Any revenues derived therefrom have to be spent in that facility due to FHA (Federal Housing Authority) -- FAA, Federal Aviation Administration requirements.

Commissioner Carollo: So in other words, what -- is it going to be a special revenue fund just for there, or is it going to go -- is it going to flow through their budget and expense, you know, going to that location?

Mr. Alfonso: It will flow through that budget and expense therein.

Commissioner Carollo: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: Now --

Commissioner Carollo: And what I’m saying is that their budget is now reflecting the 22,000 --

Mr. Alfonso: Right. And he still has two more weeks. I mean, he can come back for the next budget presentation two weeks from now reflecting that 22,000 or he can come back with the changes -- amended budget sometime during the year when he gets the money, if he needs to spend it. If he can just remain -- if he can go through next fiscal year with only spending $66,000, he doesn’t need to amend his budget. He can just put that to carryover cash in the future.

Commissioner Carollo: All right.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, so we have a motion; we have a second. Any further discussion? All in favor, please say “aye.”

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

BH.11 13-00902

Civilian Investigative Panel

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), APPROVING THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE CIVILIAN INVESTIGATIVE PANEL, IN THE AMOUNT OF $743,100 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014.
Motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones, seconded by Vice Chair Gort, that this matter be DEFERRED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes:  
Ayes: 4 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo and Spence-Jones  
Absent: 1 - Commissioner(s) Suarez

Note for the Record: Item BH.11 was deferred to the Second Budget Hearing scheduled for September 26, 2013.

Chair Sarnoff: CIP (Civilian Investigative Panel), which is BH.11.

Horacio Stuart: Good evening, Chairman Sarnoff. Horacio -- and Commissioners. Horacio Stuart Aguirre, as chairman of the Budget and Finance committee, City of Miami Investigative Panel. We are the quasi-agent, independent agency enshrined in the City Charter with the task of oversight and so forth.

Chair Sarnoff: Would it totally offend you? I don't think we have to pass this one tonight.

Mr. Stuart: You don't, but you could.

Chair Sarnoff: Right. I think -- and I --

Mr. Stuart: And I would invite you to do so.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But it come -- we'll go ahead and -- So moved.

Mr. Stuart: Good.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: And get a second on it.

Vice Chair Gort: Second.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Stuart: Thank you.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So it still has to come back at the last one. That's what he's saying.

Mr. Stuart: Delighted.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But I do have a question and -- you know, just so that when we come back the next time. We were just looking at the table of organization and there's at least about seven vacancies. Have any of these been filled as of yet or --?

Mr. Stuart: We'd like to correct that. As a matter of fact, right now, ma'am, we're working without an executive director, and this new budget will allow us to hire an executive director.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay, 'cause there's a -- there's still six other vacancies.

Mr. Stuart: You're close. All right, we'll go visit you.
Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Stuart: Thank you, ma'am.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Thanks.

Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion; we have -- we have a motion. You want to approve this tonight?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I mean, it's still coming back, right?

Chair Sarnoff: Well, if we --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Oh, you -- oh, okay.

Commissioner Carollo: Yeah, we have a --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay, I gotcha.

Commissioner Carollo: -- discrepancy with what you're asking for and what's in our budget. We have --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay. So I --

Commissioner Carollo: -- in our budget -- in the City budget --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- move to defer it until next meeting, correct?

Vice Chair Gort: Continue.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Got to withdraw.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a --

Vice Chair Gort: To continue.

Chair Sarnoff: -- withdraw a second. Motion for continuance; second by Commissioner Gort. All in favor, please say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Chair Sarnoff: Please come in and see me, Mr. Horacio.

Mr. Stuart: You got it. Okay, we'll go see --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Come see all of us.

Mr. Stuart: All right, we'll go see all of you.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Motion by Vice Chair Gort, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be ADOPTED WITH MODIFICATIONS PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

R-13-0352

Chair Sarnoff: Next is the FIPO (Firefighters and Police Officers), right? Isn't that --? Yeah, FIPO. BH.12.

Tom Gabriel: Good evening, Mr. Chair, Commissioners, Mr. Manager, City Attorney. Today we're here to adopt the annual budget of the City of Miami Firefighters and Police Officers Retirement Trust for the fiscal year commencing October 1, 2013 and ending September 30, 2014, and that's about as far as I can go on the descripted part of the resolution. And I'm here to ask for a revision to the number that's in the resolution, as you have it in front of you, of $2,087,114 and increase that to $2,187,114, an increase of $100,000. Knowing that that's the dubious honor after watching many people come up here and be cut, I just -- I have spent some time explaining to your staff and/or to yourselves that after this budget was placed and approved by our board, we were sued by a group of police officers, as well as the City was sued at the same time, and it appears that it may be a class action lawsuit, and it appears that we're going to need legal counsel, outside legal counsel because our counsel was named as a witness for the other side, so to speak, because of his opinions prior to the crisis. So the deductible for our insurance is $100,000. After that, it'll be covered, so our liability for that part of the legal defense, which could go on for years, will be $100,000. As far as the rest of the budget, I don't know if you want me to proceed prior to that, Mr. Chair, or --

Chair Sarnoff: I mean, if there are questions -- I want to make some statements, which I think there are some things that could be competitively bid that could net you some reductions. I think some of your professional compensation needs to be visited in terms of percentages versus probably pay for fee services. I think there's been a delta change in the community for the past three or four years, so I'm not going to hold you up, so to speak.

Mr. Gabriel: Well, I'll give you my commitment. Any of those that need to be competitively bid -- and we talk specifically as the custodian bank, who gets two basis points on a percentage basis of everything held -- we're more than willing to look at that and bring that out, without a doubt. And if that washes through the budget during the year, there'll be the benefit of the carryover so.

Chair Sarnoff: Is there a motion or --?

Vice Chair Gort: Move it.

Chair Sarnoff: Motion by Commissioner Gort.

Mr. Gabriel: To revise.
Vice Chair Gort: To revise, yeah.

Chair Sarnoff: I think he's saying it -- I think as --

Mr. Gabriel: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: -- modified.

Commissioner Suarez: What are we moving? I'm sorry.

Vice Chair Gort: Modify.

Chair Sarnoff: We're asking -- he's asking for an approval.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay. Well, I just have two questions --

Mr. Gabriel: Sure.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- and they're just small little questions.

Chair Sarnoff: Commissioner, just for purposes of clarity, can we just get a second and then --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, now discussion.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Discussion.

Chair Sarnoff: There you go.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I just had -- I didn’t really have a big issue, but just the retirement contributions. I saw that they were lower actually this year. I just wanted to know why that changed. And then the other one I had a question on. It actually went a little higher this year, which was repair and cleaning services. It's like an extra 30 -- just curious as to what the changes were in both.

Mr. Gabriel: Yes. The first one, the reduction from the retirement contributions from 189,000 to 54,000, we have -- I guess the nice way of saying it is the senior staff, they’ve met retirement age. Four out of five of our staff are eligible for retirement, so we're at the point where we're -- we've paid the collection of money up to their retirement date. It's pretty much paid for, and we're going on a year-to-year basis, so on top of that, they also have gone without raises for several years, so there's been a reduction on the salary side of it. The repair, maintenance, and cleaning, part of that was the cuts that we needed to deal with last year. We’ve had to deal with other issues. And the other part is that that also maintains part of our computer maintenance program, so --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay, no problem.

Mr. Gabriel: -- we try to do with less employees and use more maintenance.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay, cool. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, so --
Commissioner Carollo: I mean, I think Mr. Gabriel knows how I feel. I think that some of these costs can be cut, but at the same time, it's hard to argue against him and tear up his budget when -- I mean, the FIPO Board handles $1.5 billion, and the GESE (General Employees & Sanitation Employees) Board handles -- and I'm going on memory -- 500 million, somewhere around there, and FIPO administrative cost is way below GESE's. So, you know, do I think some of these can be cut, the increases in professional services of 100,000 or so? Absolutely. But at the same time, you know, like I said, it's difficult when I'm seeing GESE's administrative cost and they handle so much more -- so much less, so, you know, I --

Mr. Gabriel: If I just may state just a bit about efficiency as far as our staff, Bob Nagle and Dania Orta and the ladies there. The total cost for Administration is five basis points for this fund; pretty darned good, even if you look at, you know, professional managers outside. The second thing is outside of the $100,000 and the 90,000 for compensated absences that will be net -- taken away -- liabilities, dollar for dollar, this budget would have been a negative $50,000, barring those two things. So I under --

Chair Sarnoff: Which, to the average person, what you're saying is the Manager recommended strongly (UNINTELLIGIBLE) you've been carrying a burden which was never disclosed. You've now disclosed the burden or the liabilities --

Mr. Gabriel: Correct.

Chair Sarnoff: -- I guess the right way to put it, and -- which is what Danny's been good at, our Manager, about not allowing unfunded liabilities to not be demonstrated in a budget.

Mr. Gabriel: Correct, and we plan on putting this in an encumbered fund. You give it to us; it goes into an encumbered fund. It can only be used for that -- this is 50 percent of our liability out there right now, so -- and hopefully, you know, our staff stays forever and we'll never need it.

But --

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. Do you want to speak?

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. I mean, he knows what my issue is. I mean, Mr. Gabriel and I have spoken about --

Vice Chair Gort: Investment.

Commissioner Suarez: What's that?

Vice Chair Gort: Investment.

Commissioner Suarez: Well, my concern is that -- and this goes to the point I think that many of the residents are concerned about, which is we're talking about revenue, we're talking about resources, we're talking about how do we hire more police officers, how do we pay the current police officers that we have better, et cetera. And our -- what the public doesn't understand is that we're -- we were one of the cities last year that grew by the highest rates, and as a major city, we probably grew by the fastest rates of any major city. We grew by almost 5 percent, which means that without raising taxes, our revenue increased by -- if we didn't raise taxes, $15 million. If we end up increasing the millage slightly, it'll be $16 million in new revenue. So we were told or we've been told -- haven't been explained yet fully, and we'll -- I'll continue to work with you guys. I'm trying --

Mr. Gabriel: I think we got it.

Commissioner Suarez: -- to get an explanation.
Mr. Gabriel: I think we got the explanation.

Commissioner Suarez: I don't know what it is but --

Mr. Gabriel: I don't know if it's satisfactory but --

Commissioner Suarez: I don't know if it's going to be satisfactory either.

Mr. Gabriel: Right.

Commissioner Suarez: Because I think -- and by the way, I don't know if it's going to be satisfactory to the public, which is really -- at the end of the day. If we have $16 million in new revenue -- in other words, doing nothing, keeping the tax rate flat -- we get $15 million in new resources based on new construction and based on increased property values, and 13 million of that 15 million goes to increased pension cost on a year where we made 11 percent on our FIPO fund and a year that we made 17 percent on our GESE fund. We're done. I mean --

Mr. Gabriel: If I may.

Commissioner Carollo: And not --

Mr. Gabriel: At least (UNINTELLIGIBLE) try to attempt to take this on, because after I left you, Mr. Commissioner, I did call the Manager, and I said, “Why are you telling him we’re the cause of all evil?” And he replied, “Well, it’s because” -- and it goes back to last year’s budget hearing here when FIPO requested $45 million for their budget, which is what the actuarial -- not this budget that we’re talking about. Everybody understands that, I think.

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Gabriel: Not this two million -- or a million, though, that we’re asking, but the main amount -- right? -- the pension contribution. We asked for 45. The Manager at that time decided to budget 33, but he had money coming in from the firefighters who had given up $4 million the prior year -- now we’re at 37 -- and $3 million for this year; August of some point, maybe September. I don’t know if they’ve -- if we’ve received it as of today, but sometime before the end of the fiscal year, we will have gathered $7 million from the Firefighters 175 Fund. Thirty-three million plus the seven makes it forty million that the Manager did properly budget. He knew where the money was coming from. We ended up settling for 40 million through the dispute process, $40 million; perfect budgetary meeting for last year’s budget. However, this year we appear and we say, “Well, our costs are going up 1 million.” And you have the right to say, “Well, your line is going up 8 million because those monies that you used from the Firefighters aren’t there for next year.” So, yes, however you skin it, you paid $40 million last year for pension cost. It just came from different lines.

Commissioner Suarez: Mr. Manager, can you explain that?

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): Through the Chair.

Commissioner Suarez: I got the first part. The first part was good. Once he went past, “We’re budgeted, we’re balanced,” that’s when I got confused, so.

Mr. Alfonso: Through the Chair, if I may try to shine a little bit of light, because I see some furled eyebrows. First of all, I want to make sure that Mr. Gabriel put on the record officially that he is requesting to amend his budget by $100,000. Make that, please, very clear; is that correct?
Mr. Gabriel: That is correct.

Vice Chair Gort: Understood.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: The maker understood that to (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Vice Chair Gort: The maker (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman --

Mr. Alfonso: Now --

Commissioner Carollo: -- and I want to point out, which is not in our current --

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct --

Commissioner Carollo: -- proposed budget.

Mr. Alfonso: -- it's not in our current proposed budget in the City of Miami, so we'll have to make that amendment as well, if this passes. What Mr. Tom Gabriel was referring to, Commissioner, if you recall, during labor negotiations a year ago, we had a dispute between the FIPO actuarial reports and their estimates and the City of Miami's actuary that was doing the computations of what would (UNINTELLIGIBLE) impact of a backdrop, what would be the impact of various changes that were made to the retirement plan. In the end, we agreed to budget what the City of Miami actuary recommendation was. That was what the Commission passed with the recommendation from the budget. We then went into several months of discussion about the dispute of where the number was supposed to be. If you recall, we came to the Commission with a $4.2 million adjustment to the dispute, which took the budget, in a sense, from $33 to $40 million. Now, $3 million of it is coming from the Firefighters Section 175 and $4 million of it is -- was coming from the adjustment. If you go back to the January reports that were given to the Commission as to the dispute and how it was progressing, we also noted that our own actuary adjusted his estimates by roughly $1.8 million. Those numbers that we told the Commission that we were adjusting our pension payment, we then came and asked for a budget amendment to make that payment, et cetera. Those were not in the original budget. So when I say "original budget to budget," there's a $13 million increase in pension. It increases roughly $7 million for FIPO and roughly 6-something million dollars for GESE, or 5 and a half, 6 million. So that's the total of 13. But it is a comparison of budget to budget. Our original budget for '12/13 included a disputed number that we were to determine later, which we did.

Commissioner Suarez: I think I'm starting to understand it a little bit, but what it appears that you're saying is that we got out of labor negotiations, right?

Mr. Alfonso: Correct.

Commissioner Suarez: We assumed that the changes that we made to the plan were going to result in a certain amount of savings.

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct.

Commissioner Suarez: And, in fact, after a dispute, they did not result in the amount of savings that we originally thought they would.
Mr. Alfonso: That is correct.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. And that's a recurring expense.

Unidentified Speaker: I'm sorry?

Mr. Alfonso: You are correct, Commissioner. He is stating that there's still a cost method issue. I thought that the new actuarial report included the change in the cost method and the backdrop -- and (UNINTELLIGIBLE) backdrop.

Mr. Gabriel: As part of negotiations -- from what I understand, I was not part of the negotiations. But as part of the negotiations, there was discussion about changing the cost method, the actuarial cost method.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, we did.

Mr. Gabriel: That has to go -- We did not do that yet. That has to go back to the Gates --

Commissioner Suarez: Talking about between entry age and --

Mr. Gabriel: Aggregate versus entry age.

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Mr. Gabriel: So I think as part of your actuary's calculations, he assumed that that would be done upon signing of the contract and there -- hence, your little bit of difference -- I don't know what the final is going to be when we do change from aggregate to entry age, and if we get there, but --

Commissioner Suarez: That's supposed to result in a savings for the City, it is not?

Mr. Gabriel: That is what the actuaries were saying in the past, yes.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay.

Mr. Gabriel: And it should, but it hasn't happened yet --

Commissioner Suarez: But you see why --

Mr. Gabriel: -- because of the legal complication that it has to go back through Gates. So out of the parts -- and I understand the confusion, 'cause I was confused yesterday.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay, but part confusion is part frustration, because I think what we're saying is -- and it's hard for me to make a decision, an educated decision about other priorities in our budget, like policing and like -- you know, when we're not fully -- things are not clearly explained in terms of why there's additional costs. So it appeared -- it almost appeared, before you started explaining it -- and you guys now seem to have some sort of a handle on it. It almost appeared like on a year where we're making a yield of 17 percent and 11 percent on our fund, our costs are going up by $13 million, which is just unbelievable. I mean, if that's the case, then what are we doing?

Mr. Gabriel: Unfortunately, the -- as -- I did try to explain a little bit of it yesterday, is that there's a market gain and there's actuarial gain. And last year, our reports show that we gained 17.4 percent in the market; great job. However, we had lost money before; at least didn't make as much as the 7.5 percent assumption, so we were in a hole. So we smoothed that out. We used
20 percent markup, and the actuarial gain in a year that we made 17 percent was 6 percent. So it's way beyond my pay grade as a dumb fireman to explain actuarial science, so I can tell you that I will not be able to give you any more better -- any better explanation than that.

Commissioner Suarez: But do you understand how that sounds --

Mr. Gabriel: Yes, yes.

Commissioner Suarez: -- to the general public --

Mr. Gabriel: Yes.

Commissioner Suarez: -- when you say we made 17 percent on our fund, which is a fantastic -- listen, I'll give you all my savings, the very little that I have, and you can invest it at 17 percent. I'd be thrilled. And then --

Mr. Gabriel: Glad to take it.

Commissioner Suarez: -- you come back and say -- not if you come back after and say it's 6 percent, you know. So -- and the problem is not -- I mean, this is funny, but --

Vice Chair Gort: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) --

Commissioner Suarez: Bob, if you want to --

Vice Chair Gort: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) liability (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Suarez: -- (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Mr. Gabriel: No, what Robert is saying is that those are real dollars in the bank. Those are real dollars that are in the bank that the City will see. The concept of smoothing is that you have liabilities and you have assets, and you don't want it to swing up and down --

Commissioner Suarez: I get all that.

Mr. Gabriel: -- by 17 percent.

Commissioner Suarez: I get that.

Mr. Gabriel: So you have -- when a good year like 17 percent hits, it partially makes up for those years that we didn't do so well.

Commissioner Suarez: Agreed.

Vice Chair Gort: Right.

Mr. Gabriel: So although you would expect at a 17 percent gain that you would overcome every little bit, we have not done that yet.

Commissioner Suarez: Listen, I understand that we do five-year averaging. I understand that we have 80, 120. You know, I understand that we have a variety of concepts that try to prevent fluctuations and large cash payments when the market doesn't do well, for example, and that that -- on the opposite side, when the market does very well, that also -- but what --

Mr. Gabriel: Dampers it.
Commissioner Suarez: Right. But what surprises me is we did very, very well. Fine, I get the fact that we are not getting, let’s say, money back, or that we -- you know, but it’s hard for me to understand how on a year where we make such a good return, we still have to pay money into the fund. Do you understand what I’m saying? It’s -- ’cause I can’t see it getting much better than that. I mean, I can’t imagine -- maybe it could get 24. I mean, I’ve seen some returns over the years historically where it gets maybe somewhere in the 20s, but I mean, it doesn’t get much better than that. Go ahead, go ahead.

Robert Suarez: Commissioner, Robert Suarez for the Miami Association of Firefighters. What I think Tom is trying to describe is the pension cost for FIPO did not go up by $7 million --

Commissioner Suarez: You’re right.

Mr. Suarez: -- from last year’s --

Commissioner Suarez: I now understand that.

Vice Chair Gort: We were being (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Mr. Suarez: -- actual costs.

Commissioner Suarez: Now I’m understanding that.

Mr. Suarez: It went up compared to what you budgeted last year’s costs were going to be.

Commissioner Suarez: Yes. And I’m now understanding that. I think that what it -- but it did go up a little bit.

Mr. Suarez: One --

Commissioner Suarez: One million.

Mr. Suarez: One million.

Commissioner Suarez: Yes, right. And that’s certainly less startling than what I was originally told, because originally, I was told -- I was just told the blanket statement, “Pension costs went up by 13 million bucks.”

Mr. Suarez: Right.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. And that’s -- as you’re saying, that’s not exactly correct. What happened was there was a dispute over changes that were made by agreement to the plan and that resulted in higher costs than what was originally budgeted.

Mr. Suarez: Right. Commissioner, if you take a look at what the Miami Fire and Police Pension Retirement cost had been over the past couple years, it’s been relatively steady compared to many other municipal police and fire plans. The rate of change in the cost has changed very little, even though the market has had some pretty significant swings --

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Mr. Suarez: -- in the past five years, because in 2007 we sat down with the City and changed the actuarial methodology to a method that Mr. Gabriel referred to a few minutes ago as a 20 percent write-up. It’s like a five-year smoothing. Mathematically, we don’t actually follow five
years of the past.

Commissioner Suarez: Is (UNINTelligible) money?

Mr. Suarez: We recognized 20 percent of the change is what you do. It's like one-fifth.

Commissioner Suarez: In any direction.

Mr. Suarez: In any direction. So when the plan -- unfortunately to say -- the market crashes --

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, which is one-fifth.

Mr. Suarez: One-fifth. So that's a very simple way to describe it. So everything is in 20 percent slow motion, so when the market crashes, your costs don't go through the roof.

Commissioner Suarez: So we don't do five-year averaging anymore?

Mr. Suarez: It's the mathematical equivalent of five-year, but we don't physically use actual five years --

Commissioner Suarez: I understand.

Mr. Suarez: We do like one-fifth of the difference.

Commissioner Suarez: Makes sense.

Mr. Suarez: And what that does is --

Commissioner Suarez: Fine.

Mr. Suarez: -- it helps us not have to worry about a particular year dropping or gaining.

Commissioner Suarez: But nevertheless, I still think it's -- I want to drill down into this a little more, just talking here about the year budget.

Mr. Gabriel: I actually have some numbers for you that might explain the change. Our actuary -- and it's an item that I should probably provide each time to each of the Commissioners --

Commissioner Suarez: The one that you sent me.

Mr. Gabriel: -- and I will in the future. It's in the actuarial report, but good luck getting through that. But it is the breakdown of what the change was from last year's 40 million --

Commissioner Suarez: Right, I saw that.

Mr. Gabriel: -- to 41. So let me just read it down real quickly. The element of change of experience from last year, the lack of salaries saved the City increases, saved $2 million of pension cost. The turnover increased it 94,000; mortality, the City gained 2,500. The increased amount of retirements, it increased it by 411,000; new participants, 561,000; disabilities, it got -- the City saved 101,000 on that. The investment return, which is the item that we're talking about, literally cost the $1.2 million that we were talking about. So that 6 percent to the 7 and a half percent was 1.2 change. Although there was a lot of other assumptions that were up and down there, and several more that I won't bother to read, there's a whole series of investments. Usually, usually, the investment return is the best, but your actuary and our actuary don't usually argue over that part of the return, or they don't usually argue over what the return is. It's usually
methodology. It might be some other part of the structure. But the return, actuarially speaking, they all put the numbers in the black box and crank it out, and it doesn’t equal an accountant's number and --

Commissioner Suarez: No, I hear you. I know it's not simple.

Mr. Gabriel: Right.

Commissioner Suarez: It's not linear or simple in that sense. I know that it's a complicated mathematical formula, and I'm always trying to keep up with it. But it's still hard for me to understand on a year -- even with the 20 percent rule, it's hard for me to understand in a year where we get 17 percent return on investment.

Mr. Gabriel: Right. And 17 percent on a $1.4 billion fund is real money, and that money is in the bank --

Commissioner Suarez: That's an incredible amount of money.

Mr. Gabriel: -- so you will be seeing the good parts of that going forward. So you will see some of the benefit of that. Let's say, for example, right now we're at 9.1 percent at the beginning of September. Knock on wood; it continues to do well. But let's say that we didn't make our bogie of 7.5 percent this next year. We may -- that 17 from last year may help pull it up. So there is some reserve on that aspect of it.

Commissioner Suarez: I hear you and I just -- I don't know -- and we got to drill -- I have to drill down on this a little bit more. I mean, we got to get to -- Mr. Manager, we got to get to a point where we feel comfortable with this, you know, and I -- I'm not there yet. I'm more comfortable -- not that I'm -- not that I accept the explanation. I'm more comfortable understanding what happened. I'm not saying I agree with what happened, but at least I'm starting to understand what happened.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So, Commissioner -- can I ask you something, Commissioner Suarez? 'Cause it sounds like -- 'cause I know we had a motion and a second on this item, I believe. Do you want to --

Mr. Alfonso: No, actually --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: And I think I might have -- did I move it?

Mr. Alfonso: No. No, Commissioner. I'm sorry. The discussion that just took place, actually, it had nothing to do with his item.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. I'm sorry.

Mr. Alfonso: It was all related to the City's budget.

Mr. Gabriel: So it'll carryover from yesterday.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But do you have a --

Chair Sarnoff: But (UNINTELLIGIBLE) Commissioner Spence-Jones is saying “Call the question.”

Mr. Gabriel: It happens every year. It happens every year.
Commissioner Suarez: It does.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, I'm going to call the question.

Vice Chair Gort: I have a simple question.

Mr. Gabriel: I've been told by the City Clerk that I'm supposed to revise what I stated?

Chair Sarnoff: No.

Mr. Gabriel: No. We're good?

Chair Sarnoff: We're good.

Mr. Gabriel: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: You said with the extra 100. He said as amended. She seconded it. The record will reflect all that, so I'm calling the question. All in favor, please say “aye.”

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Vice Chair Gort: Simple question: What is the value of those funds right now?

Mr. Gabriel: It's at 1.4, 5 -- 1.450.

Commissioner Carollo: Billion.

Mr. Gabriel: Billion, yeah, with a “B.”

Vice Chair Gort: Billion.

BH.13

13-00876

General Employees and Sanitation Employees Retirement Trust


13-00876 Memos - GESE Retirement Trust.pdf
13-00876 Legislation.pdf
13-00876 Exhibit 1 SUB.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Carollo, seconded by Commissioner Suarez, that this matter be DEFERRED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 4 - Commissioner(s) Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones Absent: 1 - Commissioner(s) Gort

Note for the Record: Item BH.13 was deferred to the Second Budget Hearing scheduled for September 26, 2013.

Chair Sarnoff: BH.13.
Tom Gabriel: Thank you, Commissioners, and I apologize for the surprise.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No, no problem.

Commissioner Suarez: No, that's okay.


Ron Silver: Good afternoon or evening or whatever. It is a pleasure to be here. Ron Silver, the attorney for the City of Miami General Employees and Sanitation Employees Retirement Trust. We're before you on the resolution for you to approve the 2013/2014 budget in the amount of 2 -- let's see -- oh, yeah, $2,994,169.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Commissioner Carollo, I'm looking at you. Are you -- do you want to deal with this now or you want to deal with this at the next meeting? Deal with the next meeting.

Commissioner Carollo: Senator, why did office supplies go up $20,000?

Mr. Silver: I'm sorry?

Commissioner Carollo: Why did office supplies go up $20,000? They went from 40,000 last year to 60,000 this year in office supplies. I mean --

Edgar Hernandez: Edgar Hernandez for the record. We have exodus as you -- we have a few retirements happen on September.

Commissioner Suarez: We can't hear you.

Mr. Hernandez: We have many people leaving in DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Plan), about 125 members leaving in DROP September 27, and we're going to have another mass exodus next year, September 26, also 2014, so we have to project for that.

Commissioner Carollo: So you need an additional 20,000 in office supplies for that?

Mr. Hernandez: We do have -- keep records. We don't do electronic records yet. It's something that we definite --

Sandra Ellenberg: Hi. Sandra Ellenberg, Pension administrator. Also, what happened was last year we reduced our budget by $500,000. Last year -- the year before that, the fiscal year before, the one that we are in right now, our budget was actually 45,000, so we had reduced it to 40 and then now we're actually -- we went to 60. We actually did spend 60 two years ago. And like Edgar mentioned, we just had this month 63 people leave the DROP, and next year, it's going to be -- 250 is it? -- 225 people leave the DROP in just one day. And there's also next year. The State of Florida has made some new requirements for more transparency where we're going to have to let all the retirees know, and all the members, the financial statements, and we have to send out all this other information, and as you know, that's letterhead, that's envelopes, so we're just trying to do accurately our budget, what we are going to need for this coming fiscal year.

Chair Sarnoff: Can I make a comment? Because you start out your budget sort of -- I will call it "the Carollo way," which is: What did you do last year? What did you do this year? What are you asking for this year? And then you break off doing it. And I hate to say this, but I've done the math on your budget, and some things don't add up, and so I'm not going to vote for this. If you'd like to come see me and you'd like to break out -- if you'd like to show me why page A1, A2,
and A3 can't show me last year's budget, to show me the delta between this year's budget, and then you're going to have to show me how $804,000 equals $822,000, 'cause I think I know what it is, but I don't know what it is, so I'm going to ask you to come to my office and explain that to me.

Mr. Silver: We'll be most happy to do that, Commissioner.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman, do you want a motion to defer then?

Chair Sarnoff: Yes.

Mr. Silver: Yes.

Commissioner Carollo: I make a motion to defer to the next --

Commissioner Suarez: Second.

Commissioner Carollo: -- budget Commission meeting.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner Carollo; second by Commissioner Suarez. All in -- No discussion. All in favor, please “aye.”

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Commissioner Carollo: BH (Budget Hearing) --

Mr. Silver: That goes for any -- By the way, that goes for any other Commissioner that wants to talk about the budget; we're willing to come down and talk to you.

Chair Sarnoff: Just do me a favor: break down everything from last -- I just want to see the deltas.

Ms. Ellenberg: Excuse me. Just so you know, the budget is two pages, and it is broken down from last year to this year. What you're mentioning, the exhibit, that's the detailed, where I detailed every single thing.

Chair Sarnoff: Right, but then it doesn't add up, which is what I thought you would say.

Mr. Silver: We'll come see you.

Chair Sarnoff: I thought --

Mr. Silver: We'll come see you.

Chair Sarnoff: -- I know exactly what you're saying. I thought that's what you're doing, and then I did the arithmetic, and you're missing 20-something thousand dollars.

Mr. Silver: We'll come see you before then.

Ms. Ellenberg: Okay.
General Employees and Sanitation Employees Retirement Trust


13-00877 Memos - GESE Excess Benefit Plan.pdf
13-00877 Legislation.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Carollo, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be DEFERRED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 4 - Commissioner(s) Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones
Absent: 1 - Commissioner(s) Gort

Note for the Record: Item BH.14 was deferred to the Second Budget Hearing scheduled for September 26, 2013.

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman, BH.14 is the GESE (General Employees and Sanitation Employees) excess. Should we defer that also? It's 109,000.

Chair Sarnoff: That's fine.

Unidentified Speaker: There's --

Chair Sarnoff: We'll do it all at once.

Commissioner Carollo: Let's do it all at once. I make --

Chair Sarnoff: So there's a motion --

Commissioner Carollo: -- a motion to defer BH.14 to the next budget Commission meeting.

Ron Silver: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: And is there a second?

Commissioner Carollo: Second?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Commissioner Spence-Jones. All in favor, please say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

BH.15
13-01029

Liberty City Community Revitalization Trust

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENT(S), APPROVING THE LIBERTY CITY COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION TRUST'S FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014 BUDGET, IN THE AMOUNT OF $327,993, ATTACHED AND INCORPORATED, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING...
SEPTEMBER 30, 2014.
13-01029 Summary Form.pdf
13-01029 Legislation.pdf
13-01029 Exhibit 1.pdf

Motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones, seconded by Commissioner Carollo, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 5 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Sarnoff, Carollo, Suarez and Spence-Jones

R-13-0353

Chair Sarnoff: PH.16.

Ron Silver: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Fifteen.

Commissioner Carollo: Fifteen.

Chair Sarnoff: Sorry, 15.

Commissioner Carollo: Fifteen.

Elaine Black: Good evening. My name is Elaine Black, president of the Liberty City Trust, and we're here to present our budget for 2013/2014 in the amount of $327,993. We're happy to say that this year we were able to complete 5 homes; 60 units of affordable housing; 7 units of housing for people with challenges; and in addition, we also assist people in buying those homes. So we’ve reached to 300 people in the community while we have, at any time, about 50 people being given counseling in the area of homeownership, and we have 10 people who are qualified to buy homes at this point in time.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So move. But Mr. Chairman, I do want to ask you --

Commissioner Carollo: Second. Discussion.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay. This is the -- like the third time I've had the Liberty City Trust, or second time. They have not been able to have their presentation on the agenda so I want -- it's been on the agenda, but we just -- by the time it gets to the end of the night, they haven't had an opportunity to do it. So I do want to make sure at the next hearing that they're able to at least present all of the things that they have done in the neighborhood.

Chair Sarnoff: All right.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I think it's really important, so I apologize to them. They've been waiting and waiting.

Chair Sarnoff: I gotcha. I'll -- thanks for bringing it to my attention.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, so we have a motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones; second by Commissioner Carollo.

Commissioner Carollo: Discussion.
Chair Sarnoff: Commissioner Carollo is recognized for the record.

Commissioner Carollo: Thank you. And I think that was part of some of my questioning. In the projects, you know, I see 142,993, and I wanted to know what projects they were and, you know, get a little bit more detail with regards to that.

Ms. Black: The projects that you see there are projects that are -- we are -- we have a house that's for sale, which is $115,000. We have rental income coming in of $8,400. And we have grant income, which would be the $19,593. That's the project. There's dollars that we have -- anticipate but have not spent or have not received.

Commissioner Carollo: And let me ask you, with the property that you have for sale, does that need to come to the City for approval, or how does that work?

Ms. Black: That has already been approved and everything. We just have to -- we're going through the closing with the client at this point in time. It will come to the City for final approval.

Commissioner Carollo: Okay. Listen, it's 327,000, I'm going to vote to approve it, but in the near future, I do want to get together with you 'cause I want to see exactly what property and more details with regard to (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Ms. Black: We'll be more than happy to do that. And in addition, come and visit us at any time.

Commissioner Carollo: No problem. Thank you.

Ms. Black: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Ms. Black, how many people do you employ?

Ms. Black: We employ three individuals, okay.

Chair Sarnoff: Full time?

Ms. Black: Full time and part time. We have one person -- actually, I have four employees because one person is not on our payroll. That's a Vista person.

Chair Sarnoff: So that's like a contract employee?

Ms. Black: Yes.

Chair Sarnoff: So of this 130 staff salary, it'd have to be broken down by four people?

Ms. Black: Yes.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. All right, so we have a motion; we have a second. Any further discussion? All in favor, please say "aye."

The Commission (Collectively): Aye.

Ms. Black: Thank you so very much.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: You don't have to come back; only for your presentation.
13-00889

**Department of Solid Waste**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION, WITH ATTACHMENTS, RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF SOLID WASTE SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS IN THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA; IMPOSING SOLID WASTE ASSESSMENTS AGAINST ASSESSED PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY OF MIAMI FOR FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2013; APPROVING THE RATE OF ASSESSMENT; APPROVING THE ASSESSMENT ROLL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion by Commissioner Carollo, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be ADOPTED PASSED by the following vote.

**Votes:**

Ayes: 2 - Commissioner(s) Carollo and Spence-Jones
Noes: 1 - Commissioner(s) Sarnoff
Absent: 2 - Commissioner(s) Gort and Suarez

R-13-0354

Chair Sarnoff: BH.16.

Keith Carswell: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Keith Carswell, director for the department of Solid Waste. BH.16 is the adoption of a resolution for the assessment of the solid waste fee. The proposed rate of $380 per unit on an estimated 69,300 units would generate $26,334,000 a year. Also, I'd like you to know that this would be the fourth year in a row that we've kept our solid waste fee the same.

Commissioner Carollo: Mr. Chairman, I --

Chair Sarnoff: You're recognized.

Commissioner Carollo: -- don't know if we kept our solid fee rate the same for four years. I think it increased from 365 to 380.

Mr. Carswell: Fiscal year 2010, it was 365. For 2011, it went to 380.

Commissioner Carollo: Right, so it hasn't been four years.

Mr. Carswell: And fiscal year -- so it would be fiscal year '11, '12, '13 -- three. You're right, three.

Commissioner Carollo: And again, I just --

Unidentified Speaker: This is '14.

Mr. Carswell: No, this is '14. Yeah. This is -- yeah. The upcoming fiscal year would be the fourth year, fiscal year '13/14.

Commissioner Carollo: Okay, so you're counting next year. You're counting the incoming year.

Mr. Carswell: Correct, the upcoming year, because this will be for the next fiscal year --

Commissioner Carollo: I got you, I got you.
Mr. Carswell: -- which will commence October 1.

Commissioner Carollo: Okay. So it's going to maintain a flat fee, correct?

Mr. Carswell: Correct.

Commissioner Carollo: Okay. I move for the flat fee. I move to approve the flat fee.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner Carollo.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Commissioner Spence-Jones. Any discussion? Hearing none, all in favor, please say “aye.”

Nicole N. Ewan (Assistant City Clerk): Chair, this is a public hearing.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. Anyone from the public wishing to be heard on BH.15 -- 16, sorry -- BH.16, please step up. Hearing none, seeing none, coming back to this Commission, all in favor, please say “aye.”

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Aye.

Commissioner Carollo: Aye.

Chair Sarnoff: I'm going to register a “no”' cause I would have liked to have seen it gone up, because it shouldn't be part of our general fund.

Commissioner Carollo: Okay.

**BHH.17**

**ORDINANCE**

**13-00945**

**Office of Management and Budget**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION DEFINING AND DESIGNATING THE TERRITORIAL LIMITS FOR THE CITY OF MIAMI FOR THE PURPOSE OF TAXATION; ADOPTING THE TENTATIVE MILLAGE AND LEVYING AD VALOREM TAXES IN THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014; CONTAINING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

13-00945 Summary Form SR.pdf

13-00945 Legislation (Version 2) SR.pdf

**ACTIONS BY THE CITY COMMISSION:**

1. RECOMPUTE THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE, IF NECESSARY
2. ADOPT THE FINAL MILLAGE RATE

**Motion by Vice Chair Gort, seconded by Commissioner Spence-Jones, that this matter be PASSED ON FIRST READING PASSED by the following vote.**

**Votes:**

**Ayes:** 3 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Carollo and Spence-Jones

**Noes:** 2 - Commissioner(s) Sarnoff and Suarez

**Note for the record:** Please see Item BH.1 for minutes referencing Item BH.17.
Chair Sarnoff: BH.17. This is the millage.

Commissioner Carollo: Yes.

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): BH.7 (Budget Hearing) --

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Alfonso: It's an ordinance.

Chair Sarnoff: Who's going to present, or do you feel like you already have presented? If you feel presented --

Mr. Alfonso: You know, I'm going to read it just for the record, sir, to make sure absolutely that when it comes to term compliance, nobody can question it.

The Ordinance was read by title into the public record by Acting City Manager Daniel J. Alfonso

Mr. Alfonso: And the millage that this Commission is considering is the 7.6148. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Could we get a full Commission for this?

Commissioner Carollo: Sure.

Chair Sarnoff: Can we get Commissioner Sua -- does anybody know if he's indisposed?

Commissioner Carollo: While we wait, could I take a restroom break?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No. I'm sorry, I'm taming my tongue. I didn't do a good job today, did I?

Chair Sarnoff: You did a very good job today.

Vice Chair Gort: Very good.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Taming my tongue?

Chair Sarnoff: I thought you did a great job.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I failed that exercise.

Mr. Alfonso: For the record, I want to state that the debt service millage is also part of the item at .8162.

Chair Sarnoff: What did you fail to say?

Mr. Alfonso: The debt service millage.

Chair Sarnoff: Right, but did you fail to say that?

Mr. Alfonso: Yes. I hadn't mentioned the debt service millage. I just want to make sure it's on the record.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.
Commissioner Carollo: I'm going to do a Michelle -- Commissioner Michelle Spence-Jones, I'm going to go “vroom” and come right back.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: All right.

Commissioner Carollo: Watch me.

Commissioner Suarez: What are we voting on now?

Chair Sarnoff: Millage rate.

Commissioner Suarez: Ready?

Commissioner Carollo: Yep.

Commissioner Suarez: Let's go.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. Is there a motion on the millage?

Mr. Alfonso: BH.17?

Chair Sarnoff: BH.17.

Vice Chair Gort: I'll move it. It's not like it's not going to be discussed.

Chair Sarnoff: Motion by Commissioner Gort.

Commissioner Carollo: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Commissioner Carollo. Any discussion?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: You don't want to hear my discussion, so it doesn't matter.

Chair Sarnoff: I might want to hear your discussion.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Well, we had the same discussion last year, and we went nowhere.

Chair Sarnoff: You know what? Sometimes, sometimes a lot of bodies get shot, and it's a shame they do, but at least they made a record, and somebody will remember later on what that record had to say. The civil rights movement didn't work the first five years.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: And sometimes you got to know when to hold and sometimes you got to know when to fold.

Commissioner Suarez: There you go. Call the question, Mr. Chairman.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, call the question. So, Madam City Attorney, it's an ordinance.

The Ordinance was read by title into the public record by Assistant City Attorney Veronica Xiques.

Chair Sarnoff: I have to open a public hearing on this, don't I?

Ms. Xiques: No. You already had your public hearing when you --
Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Before we make -- before we move on -- 'cause I really want to make sure the Chairman -- is there anything that you want to say on this? 'Cause maybe you might have some things --

Vice Chair Gort: I made a motion for discussion purpose.

Chair Sarnoff: Yeah. I'll be candid, Commissioner Spence-Jones. I don't see how you're going to be able to do all the things that I think the citizens demand of you without a mill increase that would have averaged the average City of Miami $34 a year. I said that at the last -- I put a -- I thought, a pretty good PowerPoint presentation on. I know some people have some principles on increasing taxes, but sometimes -- and I said, let's special-revenue that amount of money to go towards police. Whether it was to go towards additional police, or whether it was to go towards relieving the police of what they perceive to be their -- whether it was to improve -- I want to say it right -- their morale, which I think is bad, we should have had a robust discussion on it at that time, and nobody seconded my motion. It was a very lonely moment on the dais.

Commissioner Suarez: I've had a few of those.

Chair Sarnoff: So --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second your motion. You mean last year?

Chair Sarnoff: No, I made a motion, I believe it was very -- just very recently that we should consider increasing the mill rate when there was not this $150,000, I guess, mailer of sorts or administrative expense.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But I thought I always supported you on that. I think you --

Chair Sarnoff: You walked off the dais.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I walked off the dais?

Chair Sarnoff: You did.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Did not support it?

Chair Sarnoff: Yes.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I was the main person fighting for it with you.

Chair Sarnoff: This was --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Maybe I walked --

Chair Sarnoff: -- during the month --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- 'cause I had to use the restroom.

Chair Sarnoff: This was the last meeting in July.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Maybe I had to use the restroom. I didn't do it intentionally. But didn't I support you last year? We were the only ones supporting this thing last year.
Chair Sarnoff: But last year you did, but I had a PowerPoint presentation that I thought --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I probably had to use the restroom. It wasn’t done intentional.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. So we can have the conversation. I think it is a lost cause. It would have been a lost cause then, too, but -- You know, this is what I tell the folks in Miami. Can we fight over 2 or 3 million bucks in this City? We can. Can I disagree with Suarez over this program or that program? Can I disagree with Carollo? All the time. Just kidding. But, you know, I get the fact that everybody comes up here with a different priority. But there isn’t this $10 and $15 million any longer that really exist that may not need to exist. Like I said, I could disagree with Gort, I could disagree with Spence-Jones on dollars that would net maybe 2, maybe $3 million. I actually think it’s lower than that, but I’ll just try to be as non-conservative as I can. And, you know, when I showed you just how understaffed -- I mean, whatever you want to say about this Chief of Police -- you like him, you don’t like him, he’s political, he’s not political, he’s too political, he’s this, he’s that -- he is a nice guy. We all like him, I know that. He put together a presentation over the past 14 months. I called three of his best memos the best memos I’ve ever read by any City employee. He presented a case that showed two things: One, at times, the City of Miami goes as low as 1.7 police officers per thousand people. Certainly, that’s during the Heat game; certainly, that’s during the day, but we hover around 2.1 most of the time. How does the rest of the world live? Well, the rest of our world -- New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta -- 4.5, 4.7, as low as 4.1, Miami Beach. So, okay, is that really fair, Commissioner? I don’t know. It’s how you measure cops. Then he did another memo that said, “How do we do on violent crime?” Not quality of life stuff. Who the hell cares if Fernand Amandi loses his back? It’s called “the Miami callus.” You all are supposed to have a Miami callus if you lived here for six years. It is just generally acceptable to lose three or four bikes. It is just generally acceptable to have a lawn mower stolen. It is just generally acceptable that somebody stole something from your car. It’s just living in Miami, and that’s the callus you get for living here, and I call it “the Miami callus.” So then we -- he shows us that in violent crime, the number of police officers per thousand residents -- we’re not in the top percentile [sic]; we’re not in the second percentile [sic]; we’re not in the third percentile [sic]. We’re at the bottom; so two measuring devices. I always said, and I think I could justify this, and I’d love the Herald to say that’s false (UNINTELLIGIBLE). We are the lowest staffed police department of any city over 100,000 people in the United States. And I defy them to show me one lower. And I’m using the 1.7 when it comes to our daily commuters, as well as an event. Then he showed us the third statistic. I think it’s a very fair depiction. So of this great, big $524 million budget of ours, what percentage do we spend on police? What percentage does Hialeah spend? What percentage does Miami Beach spend? So we spend 25.2 percent. What does Hialeah spend? If I remember correctly, 32 or 31 percent? Somebody else is 35 percent. So on a percentage basis of what we do, we don’t even spend what other cities do. And we’ve been at this for 14 months. He’s trying to show us in an as respectful a manner as he possibly can -- because, after all, he serves, to some degree, at our pleasure, and we also know he has some charter provisions that gives him some latitudes. But he’s a soldier. All these guys are soldiers, except for Javier Ortiz, who’s a rebel, not a soldier. You know, they pretty much take their orders, and they take the hill with whatever amount of police you give them, and they don’t complain. Then you get a canary in the cave, which I thought was a little bit; and then you get Ortiz, who is a rebel that uses nuclear weapons, and he starts making noises. Is he 100 percent right? Probably not.

Commissioner Suarez: Definitely not.

Chair Sarnoff: No, I -- you’re right. I don’t care for his tactics. I don’t think he should be king of the ashes. I’ve said that to him many times. He thinks it’s okay to be king of the ashes, but he’s going to extreme measures to be a different kind of canary in the cave. Is he right? Are we going to lose all these cops? You know, I didn’t know what was going to happen today. I heard some cops -- what I notice is the younger cops, those one- to five-year cops have no vested interest in staying here in the City of Miami. There’s nothing vested in them to want to stay.
When the cop that came from New York came, I know it hit a nerve in me. I left New York to come to Miami, and now I'm looking for my next job. Are there a lot of them out there? You know, I don't know, but I know the number one thing -- well, I'll put two number one things here, 'cause I had this conversation with the Mayor, and I'll cede this point. You know, your job here is to make sure your citizens are safe. Now, at what level you want them to be safe is a matter of judgment. You know, to me, I'm tired of the Miami callus. I'm -- I've had a shooting every month in the West Grove. I know there's a reason for it, Commissioner Spence-Jones. They've given me the reason; not a very good reason, but there's a reason. I had -- four years, I didn't have a murder in the West Grove. The past two years, I've had three murders. Is it a lot? To me, it is. You know, to me, it's not acceptable. And for $34, we could have gotten how much money, Mr. Manager?

Mr. Alfonso: I'm sorry, Commissioner, I did not listen to the question.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: For 30 --

Chair Sarnoff: Thirty-four dollars to the average citizen, that's that matrix you gave me.

Mr. Alfonso: The numbers that were asked was: What was the average cost for one-tenth of a mill on the average household? Yes, I want to say the one-tenth of a mill on the $100,000 property is actually roughly $12. I think we were --

Chair Sarnoff: How much money does it generate?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Generate. How much does it generate?

Mr. Alfonso: Three million dollars.

Chair Sarnoff: Three million dollars.

Mr. Alfonso: A tenth of a mill, yes.

Chair Sarnoff: You know, the $3 million, I thought, with all due respect -- I know you -- nobody here agreed with me -- the $3 million, plus using some of this year's anticipated surplus -- if that's the correct term, Mr. Manager -- I thought we could get, candidly -- and I'm going to speak hypothetically, 'cause I know you don't want me to say this -- I thought we could have gotten the police to educational benefits; I thought we could have gotten their step increases back, hypothetically; and I thought we could have hired -- I was prepared to negotiate from the 100 cops to about what I would call 50 net new. Fifty net new to me was 1,144 plus 50, which was 1,194. That would have been really almost 100 cops right there. It would have been, if you factor we're at 11, 94 more cops. I'm going to be honest with you. Next year, I'm coming back for another 100 cops because I just can't believe that nobody sees or -- I can't believe nobody sees what I see coming.

Vice Chair Gort: You're going to make a motion?

Chair Sarnoff: Yeah, I want to --

Vice Chair Gort: I'll take mine -- Go ahead.

Chair Sarnoff: I'll make a motion --

Vice Chair Gort: I'll take my motion out. Second?

Chair Sarnoff: I'll make --
Vice Chair Gort: Who seconded?

Chair Sarnoff: I'll make a motion to increase the mill rate --

Todd B. Hannon (City Clerk): Chair --

Chair Sarnoff: -- by the $34.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Vice Chair Gort: Okay, it's been moved and second. Any further discussion?

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. I mean, I'm going to vote against it, but I'll discuss why I want to vote against it. Okay, where do I start? Let's see, fun time. I'm going to give you some numbers as well, and I think this is important for us to put all these numbers that are flying by us in context, 'cause that's the only way you can make sense out of all this. And you gave a lot of statistics and numbers, so I might address some of the numbers you gave, 'cause I was paying attention and writing down what you wrote. If you look at our budget, proposed general fund budget that's in front of us, that was prepared by the Manager and given to us, if you look at the pie or the circle with the little pies, you'll see that there's one line there that says, “budget reserve, $16.1 million.”

Chair Sarnoff: Wait, wait, I want to get to it.

Commissioner Suarez: It's three away from the end; three away from the end. The last one is the increase in fund balance.

Chair Sarnoff: This one, right?

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Chair Sarnoff: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) one?

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, that one works too. Both of them have it. Both the circles have it. So we're basically saying in our budget that we have enough money to hire 100 police officers. That's issue number one. So we have the money to hire 100 police officers. It's right there, okay? So, now, let me just continue with some of -- with one of the things that you said. You talked about the percentage of our budget that we spend on police officers, and you said we spend 25 percent, and you used Hialeah as an example of a city that spends 32 percent. Now, I'm taking your numbers 'cause I don't --

Chair Sarnoff: No, no, take it from the Chief's memos.

Mr. Alfonso: Well, Commissioners, if I may. The Chief's memos and I -- we had some discussion about this -- had some numbers that I would have issues with. First of all, let me start by saying that the proposed budget has the police at 32 percent of the general fund. In addition to that, I will say that the Chief's memo used 2011 CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report) figures, because when he did that memo, the 2012 CAFR had not been published yet. He made comparisons to some cities that did not have solid waste in their general fund. There were cities in that comparison sheet that did not have pension costs inside of the department or that did have it versus our 2011 budget or expenditures which did not have it, because back then, we weren't accounting for pension inside of the departmental expenses. So when we talk about these numbers, we need to make sure that we're comparing apples to apples, and, you know, I had expressed those concerns to the Chief. He and I have been speaking. We have some new
personnel on board. We're doing some studies that will be going forward in terms of, you know, what percentages of our budget in comparison to others, but to get to a true presentation or -- you know, it's not that it wasn't true. It was correct for the City's CAFRs that were presented, but one needed to go steps further. You know, it was not just take numbers that were in CAFRs, but look at what was in those numbers, 'cause, you know, if I look at a city that doesn't have a solid waste department in its general fund, then clearly, if Solid Waste is in an enterprise fund, then the police would be a much higher percentage of the general fund than us. We have our solid waste inside of our general fund. Likewise, some of those cities' expense pension inside of their departmental expenditures, which made that departmental expense much higher. Like I said, in 2011 we did not reflect our expenditure in that manner. So that's why some of those comparisons, I think, need to be taken with a grain of salt. Yes, they are a good first guideline to kind of raise some concerns, but they certainly required additional looking into.

Chair Sarnoff: Well, did you take the time to look at this and issue a corrected memo?

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner, I did not issue a corrected memo. We had some conversations about some of the concerns of why we had some concerns about the memorandum, but we did not issue a corrected memo to you.

Chair Sarnoff: I mean, what -- am I not supposed to rely upon what my Chief of Police writes me, and nothing comes out of the Administration to say -- you know, and by the way, 32 percent, 31 percent of -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- sanitation comes out of our general fund?

Mr. Alfonso: The general fund budget for sanitation is not -- nowhere near that amount.

Chair Sarnoff: No, no, no. Of the sanitation budget, what percent comes out of the general fund?

Mr. Alfonso: The Sanitation Department's budget has a component, which is the household collection. That component of the expenditures in the department, I believe to be somewhere around $19 million, if my mind serves me correctly. The revenue from the households is roughly $26 million. However, the $19 million is not an all-inclusive number. You have to apply to it the City's overhead rate, because not all costs of sanitation are in sanitation; for example, the GSA (General Services Administration) maintenance for the vehicles, the fuel for those vehicles, the cost of payroll for those people. So, you're right, there is some subsidy of general fund at the $380 fee that is going on, if that's what you were trying to get at.

Chair Sarnoff: What I'm saying is if we truly funded -- this is how it was always explained to me. If we truly funded sanitation, it would be 500 -- was it $505 a year?

Mr. Alfonso: I did not give that number, but it would certainly be much higher than the $380, yes.

Chair Sarnoff: Right, which then leads me to believe not much of Solid Waste is in our general fund, but there is some.

Mr. Alfonso: Well, Solid Waste is a 26 million -- $24 million budget.

Keith Carswell (Director, Solid Waste): Twenty-six-point -- 27.6.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay, there you go, 27.6.

Mr. Carswell: Okay, but -- Keith Carswell, director for the Department of Solid Waste. The Manager is absolutely correct. There are costs that aren't reflected in our budget; for example, the maintenance of equipment, that is borne by GSA. Additionally, if there's property damage
accidents, that's paid out of Risk, and that's nearly $1 million a year, roughly. So the true cost is somewhere in the mid- to $30 million. We've kind of estimated, but we have not done -- plus, there is the overhead cost associated with the other operations that have an impact on Solid Waste and use those services. Now, there's a --

Chair Sarnoff: Have you ever, Mr. Manager, provided to us or ever thought to provide to us the true cost of every department?

Mr. Alfonso: We have not done that, sir.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Suarez: Can I continue or no?

Chair Sarnoff: I'm sorry. I apologize.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay, thank you. So whether it's 32 percent, which I agree with the Manager, it's probably 32 percent. I think the Manager's -- I think your number is correct. According to our budget book, your number is correct. So that's not the point. The point is that there's 68 other percent. And so my point is that if -- before I'm going to raise taxes on our citizens, I need to be shown that we're spending the other 68 percent efficiently, and that at -- in a priority basis. If we all agree here -- and I think the citizens and the residents of the City of Miami have made very impassioned pleas that this should be a priority -- we still have, you know, a lot of money, a lot of resources that we can use in our budget to pay for the police officers that we need. Now, we saw today that -- we were talking about this year's budget reserve, and we were giving 50 percent of that budget reserve today to our employees in the form of salary increases -- a bonus, my apology. Sorry, Commish.

Commissioner Carollo: It's all right.

Commissioner Suarez: My bad.

Commissioner Carollo: One-time pay.

Commissioner Suarez: One-time pay. But what the prior practice of this body was over a ten-year period, when we negotiated in 2009, we saw that of every dollar of incremental revenue -- the $16 million that we got -- that we're getting in this budget is incremental revenue -- the City Commission gave $1.15 to its employees. So we gave 50 cents and they -- prior Commissioners gave $1.15, which is why our surplus went from 140 million to 13 million in a decade, and why it's gone from 13 million -- so my apologies on making a mistake, thinking it had gone down to 9. I don't know why I thought it had gone down to 9, and it's up to now 50 -- almost 60 million, 57 million. So my point is that you have -- we had $16 million in reserves. We had $16 million in revenue. That's $32 million, $32 million. That's 300 police officers right there. Not 100; 300. That's recurring revenue, recurring revenue. So before I'm going to impose a tax on my residents, I would have to justify the fact that we have $32 million in new revenue that we're not using in an efficient manner for one of our priorities. Now, one thing that's interesting is I represent -- and by no means is my district the wealthiest district, and I probably live in one of the nicest neighborhoods. The Mayor's daughter lives there, as well; one of the nicest neighborhoods in my district, but it's not a wealthy district. I mean, I -- by any stretch of the imagination. But we had a crime issue, as well, and by the way, I wouldn't be sitting here, possibly, if it wasn't for the fact that my house was broken into, and it was a very traumatic experience, two times, actually; once -- both times I lived in the City of Miami -- once when I was young and another time when I was a professional. And we talked about a special taxing district in our neighborhood, and I would have voted for it. As a Commissioner, I told them, "Look, I will vote for the special -- I will tax myself an extra 150, $200, $700," 'cause
there was even talk about having, you know, what Grove Isle has -- or not Grove Isle -- Bay Heights has, which is the 24-hour police officers. I would have voted for a $700 a year increase, but my residents didn't even want the most basic, you know what I mean? So not all neighborhoods from a taxing perspective are the same. They say to me, figure it out. As Fernand told me yesterday, "I don't care how you guys do it. It's really not my problem. That's your problem. That's your job. You figure it out. But you know what? I don't want to hear any more excuses." And to be honest with you, I understand. I can't in good faith continue -- you know, we can't continue to give excuses, you know? I mean, you have highlighted the problem. I completely agree with you. By the way, just to give more numerical context to the issue, as far as I know -- and correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Manager or Police Chief -- I don't know -- he's not here. Is he here? I don't know. Okay, well, maybe you know. My understanding is that -- and these numbers might shock you -- we have about 350 officers on patrol. That's our patrolling force.

Chair Sarnoff: Four-fifty. I was told 450.

Commissioner Suarez: I was told 350.

Commissioner Carollo: And that's important, 'cause that's something that I was going to get into. Is it 350, 450? Where are we? Because out of roughly 1,100 officers --

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Commissioner Carollo: -- you know, I think that's important.

Commissioner Suarez: That's another issue, yeah.

Commissioner Carollo: Yeah, because now we're talking about efficiency.

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Manuel Orosa (Chie of Police): Five eighty-three.

Chair Sarnoff: On patrol?

Chief Orosa: Yeah.

Commissioner Suarez: That's -- I've never been told that.

Chief Orosa: Uniform services is 583.

Commissioner Suarez: I've never been told that. With all -- listen, with all due respect, I'm not doubting your number. I'm just telling you I've never been told that; nowhere near that.

Commissioner Carollo: And I want to make sure that is -- and Chief, I want to make sure -- uniform officers driving police cars, marked police cars --

Chief Orosa: That is --

Commissioner Carollo: -- on patrol, on the street.

Chief Orosa: Yes. Everything assigned to the NETs (Neighborhood Enhancement Teams). It's 583, including beat officers, the NROs (Neighborhood Resource Officers), and the problem-solving team. They're all in marked [sic] uniforms and -- they're in uniform and all in marked cars.
Commissioner Carollo: Okay.

Commissioner Suarez: I'm not saying I don't believe your number. I'm just saying I've never heard -- and I've heard from other Chiefs and from other people numbers that are dramatically lower than that.

Chief Orosa: The numbers you heard before were close to the 400 mark.

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Commissioner Carollo: Right.

Chief Orosa: And that is the officers that go and respond for calls for service. But in uniform services, we have 583.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay, but can you describe in greater detail the difference? Because I want to make sure that I -- 'cause the way I'm -- the number I'm trying to find is the number of officers on patrol. I don't know if I'm using the right word, but the number of officers that --

Chief Orosa: Usually --

Commissioner Suarez: -- (UNINTELLIGIBLE) and we can expect to be driving around our streets and (UNINTELLIGIBLE) --

Chief Orosa: Well, let me break it down. Usually, there's around 4 -- right now, there's about 400 officers on patrol.

Commissioner Suarez: That number makes more sense with what I've been told.

Chief Orosa: Now you add 26 NROs (Neighborhood Resource Officers). Now you add probably about another 20 beat officers; that, you know, you have 2 in your NET, 2 in this NET. Coconut Grove has 4; downtown has like 28. Then add to that the problem-solving teams. There's usually like 4 per NET, so that adds 11. That's another 44. That's where I got the 583 -- 582.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. I -- at some point, I want to see a breakdown on that.

Chief Orosa: Okay, sure.

Commissioner Suarez: And because I -- that number just hasn't been jiving with the numbers I was -- But let me ask you this, Mr. Chairman, 'cause maybe now I have the numbers wrong, and if I have the numbers wrong, I have the numbers wrong. That's okay. When you say we're at -- 'cause the last number I remember, you were saying we were at 1.6 officers per thousand residents.

Chair Sarnoff: We go down that far, daytime hours, if there's a major event.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay. Then under normal circumstances, we're at 1.9?

Chair Sarnoff: One point nine daytime, daytime.

Commissioner Suarez: We still have to be at 4.0. That was the benchmark, correct? Which is where we got the number -- where I thought we got the number, 'cause I thought we were like at 350, and I thought we needed to double our patrolling force. I thought that was the objective.
Chair Sarnoff: I was always told that we were at 450 patrol officers. I don't -- and I really try to remember these numbers.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, these are important numbers. Anyways, the point is that they're broken down into three shifts.

Chief Orosa: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Suarez: So whatever number they are -- what number did you say, Chief?

Chief Orosa: Patrol is around 400, and then when you add everything else, it's 582.

Commissioner Suarez: So you got a --

Chief Orosa: And I forgot to mention, you also have around 60-some-odd sergeants that are in patrol, as well.

Commissioner Suarez: But that's in addition?

Chief Orosa: In addition, right.

Chair Sarnoff: So 400, 583, and now you said 60?

Chief Orosa: No, no, that's including --

Commissioner Suarez: That's included, okay. I was going to say --

Chair Sarnoff: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Chief Orosa: Includes it, correct.

Commissioner Suarez: 'Cause I wasn't sure that it was adding up.

Commissioner Carollo: That's included in the 583.

Commissioner Suarez: I want to see a breakdown on that (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Chief Orosa: Sure.

Commissioner Suarez: -- I mean -- whatever.

Commissioner Carollo: Chief, does that also includes lieutenants?

Chief Orosa: Yes.

Commissioner Suarez: So --

Commissioner Carollo: Okay. How many lieutenants, more or less?

Chief Orosa: We're -- right now we're short on lieutenants. There's about 11.

Commissioner Carollo: So 60 sergeants, 11 lieutenants?

Chief Orosa: Right.
Commissioner Carollo: And that is included in the 582?

Chief Orosa: Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Suarez: So what you're saying is that we're basically at roughly -- and if I'm wrong on this, just clarify me -- 200 officers per shift?

Chief Orosa: No, not really because --

Commissioner Suarez: Why? Because some of these are not shift-based officers?

Chief Orosa: Exactly. You're going to have the great majority of them on --

Vice Chair Gort: Daytime.

Chief Orosa: -- daytime.

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Chief Orosa: And then you can expect like 200 per shift after that.

Commissioner Suarez: I lost -- you lost me.

Chief Orosa: You're going to have the majority of them on the morning shift, because you have all your beats; you have all the NROs there. And then in the afternoon, you're going to have everybody in patrol, usually your PSTs; and in midnight shift, it depends whether the PST is changing their hours or not. You're going to have some people in midnight shift.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay, 'cause what I'm trying to get a handle on is if you -- I'm trying to get a handle on a number of what per district, per Commission district, how many officers at any given time are working a Commission district.

Chief Orosa: At any given time?

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah.

Chief Orosa: Patrol, you're probably talking about anywhere from four to six at any given district, at any given time, but keep in mind that given time has to be multiplied at times three shifts and multiplied times two sets of days off --

Chair Sarnoff: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) --

Commissioner Carollo: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Chief Orosa: -- to get to your real number.

Commissioner Carollo: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Suarez: What's that?

Chair Sarnoff: You're asking a coverage question.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. well, I'm trying to get to -- if we're saying we have to double the number of police officers or that we need 300 more police officers, I think -- I'm trying to look at
things from a quantitative perspective when you talk about the coverage of area that you have to
cover in my district, and I don't know why these numbers are all constantly in flux. I mean, these
numbers should be ingrained in all of our minds. This should never be -- it should not be a
moving target like this all the time.

Chief Orosa: Commissioner, let me clarify. When I said four to five, sometimes six, it's per our
NET office, not --

Commissioner Carollo: Right.

Chief Orosa: -- Commission district office.

Commissioner Suarez: I understand.

Chief Orosa: Okay.

Commissioner Carollo: 'Cause ours overlap.

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah, and that just makes things even more confusing, but -- Look, I'm
convinced -- I'm -- 'cause this has been my experience as a Commissioner, and maybe it's
different for your guys. Crime -- I'll get a call a week from a certain area of my district where
crime is flaring up -- maybe a call a week, maybe a call every other week -- that they want a
crime watch meeting. So I go with my commander, and I go with all the officers from my area,
and we have a crime watch meeting, and then they start to marshal resources to that area,
whether it be a mounted police officer, whether it be the PSTs, whether it just be, you know, the
commander driving through the area more often, whatever the case may be. But my experience
has been that that usually, in most cases -- almost in all cases, that solves the problem for that
area for that time. And then I start getting the calls in another part of the district, right? So
what that indicates to me is that we need more police officers, because what -- the anecdotal
experience is when we put more resources into an area, it solves the problem and then it flares up
somewhere else. What I think we all want to do here is create an experience where you have
enough resources in the City of Miami so that if crime is about opportunity, that it goes to
another city where there are better opportunities, right? So, I mean, that's where I think the
whole philosophy came --

Chief Orosa: About deterrence.

Commissioner Suarez: Correct.

Chief Orosa: All about deterrence.

Commissioner Suarez: But also, where I think he started with the numbers, the numerical, we're
down -- and we need to really tighten up these numbers, guys, 'cause -- I mean, we -- you know,
we really can't make good, hard fast decisions if we don't tighten the numbers. I think it's
indisputable that 100 officers is a critical need in the City of Miami. I'm willing today to budget
100 officers in the City of Miami. I think that's what our residents expect, what they came here to
pled for. I don't think we need to raise taxes to do it. I think I've explained that there is at least
$32 million somewhat at our disposal. And like I said, my neighborhood, which is probably the
most affluent of my district, doesn't want to tax itself, and we have a comparatively high tax rate
when you compare, by the way, with Hialeah, just to use -- since we've been talking about
Hialeah so much today. We have a 20 percent higher tax rate than Hialeah; 24 percent higher
tax rate than Miami Beach, which is paying its officers more money apparently; 34 percent
higher tax rate than Coral Gables. So, you know, I mean, taxes are not necessarily -- more taxes
are not necessarily the solution. Using our resources more efficiently is the solution, in my opinion.

Vice Chair Gort: I'd like to get --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Mr. Chairman --

Vice Chair Gort: -- a number. My understanding is that most of the police officers that were here today, they would like to see some improvement in their benefits, and what good is it going to do to bring new police officers if the existing police officers do not -- they're not happy with their jobs?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: And Mr. Chairman, that's what I --

Vice Chair Gort: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I'm sorry. Mr. Chairman, that's what -- I'm just going to add that onto what you're saying. Commissioner Suarez, I don't -- I -- what I heard in that room today and what was very clear to me was, you know, we're not necessarily -- or they're not necessarily agreeing that we need to hire 100 more officers.

They're saying that we need to at least make sure we take some of those resources and put it into the officers that are already there, because you're having a morale issue. There was a man that got up here and spoke, and I think he did such a wonderful job with explaining -- I guess he does this for a living -- you know, we can hire -- and I said it, too -- 100 more officers, but if they're coming into an environment where it's already hostile or already not a comfortable environment to work in, then you're really not solving the problem, I mean. So I think, you know, we can budget the dollars -- right? -- to, you know, put towards the officers or new officers, but the reality is we got to take care of the officers that are already here. And then also, we saw Fire -- let me finish -- we also saw -- Fire got up and said the same thing, you know. It's a public safety issue, as well. I mean, they haven't had equipment in God knows how long and, you know. So I would just caution us -- you know, not taking anything away from what Commissioner Sarnoff is asking. And I do agree, Commissioner Sarnoff, that even if we said, okay, we're going to put it in the budget, 100 officers, we know the reality is --

Vice Chair Gort: It's not going to happen.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- you know, it's going to take a minute to even -- we'll be in 2016 before we hire them all. So in the meantime, whatever those dollars are that we would allocate, we should allocate towards, yes, new officers coming in, but also taking care of the officers --

Vice Chair Gort: The existing.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- that are already here, because I do think that, you know, them seeing that we are making a real effort -- you know, you had single moms and you had fathers, you had people that really were pleading with us to really look at the situation, and even though we had given them a nice little, you know, bonus -- one-time bonus, that was great, but their reality is they still got to live year round. So I just would caution Commissioner Suarez' approach of, you know, let's get a -- take it out of the existing budget for 100 new officers and -- 'cause I don't think that's really the answer. I think that we'll create more animosity than we would create a unified police department. That's just my opinion. Now, I do want to just say this, adding onto Commissioner Sarnoff -- and I don't remember -- maybe your -- what I walked off on was about the different officers and the whole big presentation, 'cause you had a couple of them, so that was maybe in -- couched in this discussion. But I do think -- you know, I think what you tried to do in this discussion was say, you know, at least break it down so that at least the layman person could understand we're talking about $34 that we're asking for homeowners to,
you know, contribute. And I’m sure that if we asked the question, you know, especially to a lot of these folks you saw here today, would they rather pay the $34 or have somebody breaking in their house or, you know, gunshots happening in their neighborhoods. I -- it would be a quick answer of “yes,” they don’t have a issue with it. I just think that sometimes, we get stuck on our own philosophies, you know, of why we don’t want to do something and not really looking at the greater good for what we’re trying to do. Now, I agree with -- or I understand what Danny’s saying. I know Danny’s freaking out over here, because he’s already prepared all of his documents, and to now talking about raising millage, which, two months ago, Danny was like, let’s -- we need to raise the millage. But at this point, I think probably the fear in doing that is everything that has to happen in order for us to meet this timeline. For instance, if Danny was -- had started work on this a few months back, then he would have the options to actually do that, correct? I think the fear right now is, one, we’d have to spend more money to do it, correct?

Mr. Alfonso: Clearly.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: And we’re not really prepared to take on the load to do that.

Mr. Alfonso: Clearly, Commissioner, the optimal time to have voted on a millage higher than what is proposed would have been the July 2 meeting where we put the millage on the trim compliance. It went out to the homeowners of the City of Miami. You know, at this point, is it legally possible? Yes. It would require us going back to the property appraiser, requesting a re-trim. We spoke to the property appraiser earlier today, at least the deputy, the deputy property appraiser. He explained that it would take roughly two weeks to prepare a re-trim; that it would cost approximately $150,000 to do a complete mailing to the 100,000 properties roughly in the City of Miami.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But can I just ask this? But for the folks that are, you know, really wanting to push this along so that it does assist with the greater good, maybe perhaps they would be willing to jump in to support that if they know the overall outcome is the additional revenue coming in.

Mr. Alfonso: And one last thing: The second budget hearing then would have to be held 10 to 15 days after that re-trim notice went out, so we would be into the month of October before we have an adopted budget for fiscal year ’13/’14, which means we would operate -- we would start operating fiscal year ’13/’14 under a continuing preliminary budget, because something would be passed today. It would be a preliminary budget. We would put that in, but we would not be in trim compliance at the time, so then the state, since we’re not in trim compliance, would tell us, “We won’t release some of our revenues until you get into trim compliance.” They will then release them later, so that’s just a matter of cash flow. However, it is not an easy feat. Then we would have to add to whatever revenues we would need the additional cost of these transactions, assuming, of course, that we get the appropriate number of votes to raise the millage.

Commissioner Suarez: Mr. Chair.

Chair Sarnoff: You’re recognized.

Commissioner Suarez: And if you -- I lost my train of thought. Go ahead.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. You’re -- Commissioner Carollo has not spoken, so go ahead.

Commissioner Carollo: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay, listen, I truly agree with Commissioner Sarnoff, that we could definitely find 2 or $3 million in our budget rather quickly. It might be painful for some, maybe not as much for others, but, yeah, I’m sure we could start looking. However, some of it may not be recurring revenue; some of it will. The thing is, I thought that the FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) were going to receive a 3 percent salary increase this year,
and I thought it was something that they actually agreed with; that it was actually a two-year agreement, and it was signed and agreed to. So now we're coming back and saying, "We want additional," and I understand. I understand the morale. And you know, if we're really going to look, I think -- and here's where, you know, some people may not be too, too happy and -- you know, I think we may have to have some hard discussions, but then we really need to look at the whole City of Miami. We need to look at CRAs (Community Redevelopment Agencies). I mean, the CRAs, since I --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

Commissioner Carollo: I'll tell you why. Be -- continuously, one of them has had somewhere in the area of 30 million carryover. The other one's had somewhere in the area of 20-something million carryover --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But let me --

Commissioner Carollo: you know, year after year, so I'm just saying. Commissioner Spence-Jones, I started saying I know some, but you know what? We really need to see all this. Hialeah doesn't have a CRA, that I know of. So when you're looking at it -- and, you know, that's money that's not going into the general fund. So that's why -- listen, if we really have to open up, we really have to open it up and discuss every option. So -- and I know that's taboo, but really -- I mean, if we really have to open it up and let's look at all the revenues, you know, that's coming in, I think we do. And by the way, Mr. Chairman, you know, with all due respect, I haven't even seen the Omni budget. Omni CRA budget, I haven't seen it.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Well, I'm just going to say --

Commissioner Carollo: So --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- in Overtown CRA, you know, you might see that money carrying over, but it's all allocated to key projects that are happening, So you need to really definitely check out the budget. And finally, the people of Overtown have the opportunity to really have something happen, and so every one of those dollars are allocated towards projects. But I don't have a problem -- because I want to share in the responsibility -- with us identifying some of those dollars for public safety; don't have a issue with that. We do and we have spent money in the past to assist in the area of police, and I'm sure you know that.

Commissioner Carollo: Of course.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But I would be open to consider it. I just don't want it to become like, okay, now CRA becomes a grab bag --

Commissioner Carollo: Listen.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- when we really already have --

Commissioner Carollo: Listen.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: In our CRA, I know we have identified where those dollars are going.

Commissioner Carollo: Even with the millage of the CRA, I don't know, for future, maybe it doesn't have to be that high. Maybe, you know, (UNINTELLIGIBLE) go over and some of that money could come, you know, into the general fund, you know
Commissioner Spence-Jones: But Omni --

Commissioner Carollo: So in other words --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- probably could definitely do that.

Commissioner Carollo: -- continue the CRA, just not at the same level that it's being, you know, funded, so when the property values increase, some of that money could then come into general fund and help out with public safety, help out. And again, listen, I'm just starting to put everything out on the table. If we're really looking at this, I think it needs to be discussed. I think we need to have some healthy discussions because --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: DDA (Downtown Development Authority), Bayfront Trust, all of them. We all can pitch in.

Commissioner Carollo: Hey, Bayfront contributed $542,000. And by the way, that wasn't monies from the City of Miami. That's monies that we earned and we're giving back to the City, you know, so, yes, you're right.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah.

Commissioner Carollo: Bayfront did. So it's not like, hey, listen, you guys, but not us. I mean, I think, you know, if we really look, yeah, if -- I think we really need to open everything up and look at it. I mean, yes, yes.

Commissioner Suarez: Mr. Chair.

Chair Sarnoff: You're recognized.

Commissioner Suarez: Thank you. No I kind of remembered. We can get into the Bayfront/CRA debate in a second, but I just remembered -- I kind of --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: It came back to you.

Commissioner Suarez: -- agreed what Commissioner Carollo was saying at the beginning, and I was a little bit -- to be honest with you, I was a little bit confused. I understand it's budget time, and I'm actually glad that a lot of our employees and police officers came to witness the spectacle that is our budget, but I was a little bit confused, because my understanding was that we had -- we bargain for our wages. I mean, that's the process. There's a process in place, and that process, the way it works is it's not just like we wake up today and go, “Hey, we want to do this or that or whatever.” We bargain for our wages, so we entered into a contract with our labor union, with all of our labor unions, two-year contract. The only one that got raises, I believe, in that contract -- in those contracts was -- go ahead.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner, the police got a 3 percent in the second year --

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: -- halfway through. The Firefighters negotiated to give up some of their Section 175 money --

Commissioner Suarez: Correct.

Mr. Alfonso: -- for raises for some of their officers upfront in the first year.
Commissioner Suarez: Agreed. And then --

Mr. Alfonso: So the public safety got increased.

Commissioner Suarez: -- this Commission did something that it's never done, for no reason, 'cause we were under no obligation to do it. We started talking about issues with police officer pay, and then we started realizing, well, if we start talking about -- for example, we entertained the discussion of paying all police officers their back pay, the wages that they've lost, then we got to talk about firefighters and the wages that they've lost, then we got to talk about everybody and the wages that they've lost. And I think we started to see the slippery slope of that argument, and we said, "Wait a second. We got to do something, because we now have accumulated $44 million of reserve from the point that we started, and what we're going to do is different, a departure from what had been done previously, which is, instead of giving 115 percent of our incremental dollar to our employees, which is very generous, but is a little irresponsible, we're going to give of the money that we know we have at the end of the year essentially a portion of it, half of it, whatever, and we're going to give it to all our employees so that one employee doesn't say, 'Listen, you guys are being unfair.' " So that's why I was a little bit confused, to be honest with you, about the whole thing. I understand you have every right to have your position, and I'm glad our officers are here, and I'm glad they got to see this process, because I think that's important. If we're going to talk about CRAs, you know, and that's -- and I agree with your point in the sense that, you know, these carryover balances, I mean, since I've been here, I mean, it's frustrating; it's very frustrating. You know that. I mean, we're all frustrated.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Frustrating to what?

Commissioner Suarez: To all of us. But we also -- we start our budget process, and I don't know -- when we talk about salaries, I don't know if we even talked about pension cost in our salaries. I don't know if that was part of the salary that we're talking about, but we start off our budget after pension cost, 85 cents on the dollar, 85 cents on the dollar. So if we're going to talk about major expenses, that's -- what? -- What is our pension contribution going to be in this budget; 70 million? Are we up to 70, 72?

Mr. Alfonso: It's about $76 million total.

Commissioner Suarez: Seventy-six million out of 500, so that's 15 percent, so that's a huge cost. That's -- we start off our budget 85 cents on the dollar. We have to provide our services with 85 cents on the dollar, so if we're going to talk about cost and we're going to talk about -- you know, we got to talk about everything, and that's -- this Commission has been grappling with that issue; unfortunately, a little bit unsuccessfully, because we thought we had made some modifications which would have resulted in some savings, which apparently didn't result in some savings, which now we have to figure out a way to pay for it. So, look, I can't support a tax increase, because it hasn't been proven to me that we're using monies that are already available efficiently so -- and we're a very high-tax city, so I can't support it, but I will support budgeting for 100 police officers. And I'll go further than that, because Fernand, who was in my office yesterday -- and I apologize that I couldn't -- I was on vacation when the meeting happened. I wish I could have been there. But he kind of issued a challenge, which was, you know, "You got to solve the problem, man. We can't -- we don't want to hear about it anymore," you know? And I kept thinking to myself, "How can I escalate more than what we've already done?" And I was imploring for him to know everything that we've done, all the yelling, the screaming, the canaries, the coal mines, whatever, and I'm thinking to myself, "How can we escalate more?" And the only thing I could think of was Section 14 of our charter allows the Commission to create a committee which has subpoena powers and can be designated -- any member of the Commission can be designated as the chair of that committee, and that committee can investigate any matter that comes before the Commission or that has to do with the government. And I would be willing to sit on that committee if you would be willing to sit on that committee.
with me. That would be a -- obviously, a sunshine committee. I think we should meet once a week on Fridays and bring everybody in the Administration, every week, in front of us, in front of this committee. And if they don't come, we can subpoena documents, we can do whatever we want, and just bring them before us and say, “Okay, what progress have you made this week and what steps are you going to take next week?” because every two weeks hasn't worked, so we got to go to once a week. That's the only way we can escalate this any further than what we've escalated it. So after budgeting the 100 police officers, which I'm -- hopefully, we'll have three votes to do that at some point tonight, but we need to escalate even further and do what is, unfortunately for us, uncomfortable, because that's not really our role. But we do have the right, under Section 14 of the charter, to investigate official transactions, acts and conduct. It says that the Commission or any committee thereof may investigate the financial transactions of any office or department of the City government and the official acts and conducts of any City official, and by similar investigations, may secure information upon any matter. So I'll sit on that committee. I'd like for you to sit on that committee, and we can make it a once-a-week sunshine meeting. Everyone could come. The press is invited. Everyone can be there. It's a sunshine meeting. It has to be a sunshine meeting, and we can just meet every week, and one week we'll have the Chief; next week we'd have the union or we can have them both, and just keeping asking HR (Human Resources), whoever. I mean, that's the only way that I can think of that we can escalate beyond what we've done.

Chair Sarnoff: Well, what you're saying is your only role in this government is to create a volume of dollars.

Commissioner Suarez: But we're being asked to do more. Our citizens are --

Chair Sarnoff: Oh, I (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Suarez: -- sitting out there saying, “We don't care. We just want results.”

Chair Sarnoff: I -- you're right. And this is the frustrating part that I hope Fernand and everybody understands. We provide a pile of money, or theoretical money. That's all we really do. As a matter of fact, today, a seven-time convicted felon sent a complaint that either one or all of us has directed some employee in the City of Miami to do something, and as soon as we say to the Chief, “Chief, I demand you hire 100 cops,” “we violated the charter. So our role in this government is extremely, extremely limited.

Commissioner Suarez: But hear what I'm saying. What I'm saying is something different. What I'm saying is we're going to appropriate the money -- right? -- hopefully, today. We're going to appropriate the money, hopefully, today, to hire 100 police officers, hopefully.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay, and then you want to follow up.

Commissioner Suarez: Absolutely.

Chair Sarnoff: Right. And what you're saying is the only way you can follow up is through this structure.

Commissioner Suarez: That's it.

Chair Sarnoff: I don't deny that.

Commissioner Suarez: Yeah. And let's --

Chair Sarnoff: Otherwise, you'll have another complaint (UNINTELLIGIBLE).
Commissioner Suarez: Exactly, absolutely, precisely.

Chair Sarnoff: I get it. I get it completely. I -- there's the 800 pound -- well, it's not an 800 pound gorilla. There's an issue still out there -- I think Spence is trying to broach it -- and that is, is there a hybrid plan here? Is there a way of getting the morale up in the police department and still hire some police officers? Is there a way, hypothetically, Mr. Manager? 'Cause, of course, we're not talking about negotiations, but hypothetically, is there a way --

Commissioner Suarez: I just think we did it. We just gave our employees a 3 percent bonus.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Yeah, but -- Suarez --

Vice Chair Gort: You really need to deal with the existing police officer --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Yeah, that's the --

Vice Chair Gort: -- before you start bringing 100 police officers. You also have to find out what is the cost of it.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay but --

Vice Chair Gort: Because, let's face it. Let's not go back to 2009.

Commissioner Suarez: Wait, wait, wait.

Commissioner Carollo: The recurring cost.

Commissioner Suarez: But here's --

Vice Chair Gort: Of course.

Commissioner Suarez: -- the question. Here's what I don't understand. Again, going back to what Commissioner Carollo said, okay, we had a bargaining session.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay? We all agreed.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Suarez: He agreed. We agreed. We took it to -- he took it to his members. They took it to our board.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner, if I may shine a little bit of light or perhaps give my understanding. What this Commission approved was a resolution authorizing the Administration to make a payment of 3 percent. But we have been meeting with the union groups, in official negotiation meetings, to inform them of our intention. They have been given memorandums of understanding. The Police is scheduled for next week, because there was some issue with the timing, but we've met with Fire, with AFSCME 871; 1907 already ratified, contingent upon the Commission approval. So there is a official negotiation process. What we came to the Commission with was contingent upon that negotiation, we're going to need the appropriation to make the payment. So what this Commission approved was the appropriation of the amount of dollars, and there was an explanation of how that amount of dollars was derived, which is the 3 percent, et cetera, and it approved, if you read the resolution, the payment of the 3 percent, contingent upon ratification by union, et cetera.
Commissioner Suarez: But why wouldn't anyone ratify that? I mean, you're getting extra money.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner, I understand. It seems almost illogical not to ratify it.

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: But there was -- at some point, there were some discussions by some members of various unions to take it in a different way, so, you know, they can negotiate -- For example, the Firefighters at one point thought, “Let's not take it as a 3 percent pay, but let's get back some of the Section 175 monies that we gave.”

Commissioner Suarez: Understood.

Mr. Alfonso: Or other unions try to --

Commissioner Suarez: That all makes sense.

Mr. Alfonso: -- negotiate other (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Suarez: That all makes sense. I mean, that all makes sense in the sense of they may want it in a different way, and I don't have any issues. I don't think anybody here has any. I can't imagine that anybody here would have any issues with that. What I'm saying is that we bargained for -- that's where I got confused. We bargained for a contract. It was taken back to the members. It was ratified by the members, so that's their way of saying, “We agree with (UNINTELLIGIBLE) our compensation. We may not like it, but we agree.” And now, we said, “Okay, we had a good year. We want to help. You know, we want to give back.” I'm not saying that they're going to be satisfied. Of course they're not going to be satisfied, you know? But it's the first opportunity that we've had, and we all did a year in good faith, you know, I think. But anyways, look, I don't want to -- I think my position is clear as to where I'm at.

Chair Sarnoff: So -- all right, I'll call the question. But while we're discussing this, is there a hypothetical way of finding a way of increasing morale, or am I not listening correctly?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: He wanted to just -- can he say something?

Chair Sarnoff: I don't want to hear the rebel speak. Go ahead. I'm sorry, and I shouldn't have said that.

Javier Ortiz: It's all right. It's late. Let's start off by saying, yes, we did agree to a contract, 100 percent. We did not agree to pay cuts. And you have to remember that last year --

Commissioner Suarez: I agree with that.

Mr. Ortiz: -- when we were being threatened again with another fiscal urgency, and I was told that the City had no money, I did everything possible to put a contract together. Why? Because I have an investment in the City also. I want the City to progress. But a month later, we find over 40-something million dollars. I was with you, I was with you. I know you had no idea, and I believe you, and we went in -- we actually went into the Mayor's office and it was a total blowout. I totally understand. What --

Commissioner Carollo: By the way, just for correction purposes, 'cause it's being -- it's continuously saying “40-something” or “40.” It ended up by --
Commissioner Suarez: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Carollo: Yeah. -- our audited financial statements, I think showed 37, Danny? I'm going on memory.

Mr. Alfonso: That is correct, Commissioner.
Commissioner Carollo: It was --

Mr. Alfonso: The final number (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Commissioner Carollo: -- 37. It's still a lot, and it still was surprising. So --

Mr. Ortiz: Thirty-seven million.

Commissioner Carollo: Yes.

Mr. Ortiz: But it would have given us all our stuff back, so 37 million. So, yes, we agreed to it in good faith, but a month later, ha-ha, 37 million. So that's why a lot of us feel the way that we feel. Now, let's move on from that 'cause that doesn't matter anymore. We need to move forward, okay? This is the plan that I have been able to put together. You have approximately 40 positions. You need 100 cops. You need 100 cops, and you can fund the 100, but then again, you saw all these people that are planning to leave and the people that are in the DROP. There's 300 of them. They can leave at any time. So what I thought was a hybrid approach, approach that could help not only the officers here but as well as hiring 100, is you have approximately 40 that are vacant right now. You have another 25 already in the budget, so that's 65 officers. To fund 35 officers, it will cost you about $3.5 million.

Commissioner Suarez: To fund how many?

Mr. Ortiz: Thirty-five.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay.

Mr. Ortiz: Okay? In order to make us competitive with police departments, surrounding police departments, it would cost us about $6 million, a little less than $6 million, and that would move us from 44,000 to 49,000, and it would also move everybody up within the --

Chair Sarnoff: Can we just -- I don't mean to interrupt you 'cause -- I --

Mr. Ortiz: It's okay.

Chair Sarnoff: -- guess I had steam. But this is the frustrating part of being up here. Can we agree that you start --? I thought we agreed with the -- well, let's just put it out there. The $48,765 is what a cop with a badge and his first day gets pushed out the door and says, “go cop.”

Mr. Ortiz: Forty-six thousand.

Chair Sarnoff: Forty-six thousand --

Mr. Ortiz: When you're talking about --

Chair Sarnoff: -- sixty-five dollars, plus you get two thousand seven hundred dollars supplement --
Mr. Ortiz: Correct.

Chair Sarnoff: -- for wearing a blue uniform.

Mr. Ortiz: Correct, but if you look at all the other police departments --

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Ortiz: -- and we'll use Miami Beach as an example.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Ortiz: -- they're really at $7,000. They're not at $3,000, 'cause when you add additional pay --

Chair Sarnoff: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) saying apples to apples --

Mr. Ortiz: Right. I'm just doing it on raw numbers.

Chair Sarnoff: So apples to apples --

Commissioner Suarez: And here's my question.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Suarez: What's the “all-in”? 

Chair Sarnoff: Oh, no, the all-in of a police officer is $77,000 --

Commissioner Suarez: Starting?

Chair Sarnoff: Yes. First year -- to a taxpayer, it's $77,000, to a taxpayer.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Suarez: Am I missing something?

Mr. Alfonso: The all-in cost --

Chair Sarnoff: It's your number.

Commissioner Suarez: That can't be right.

Mr. Alfonso: Remember, you're forgetting the car and some other things. The total cost of a police officer for the first year --

Chair Sarnoff: First year, okay.

Mr. Alfonso: -- is $126,000. The second year that number drops to about 90-something. That includes pension, healthcare cost --

Mr. Ortiz: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: That includes the fuel, the car, the salary --
Commissioner Carollo: And that's how you get the $10 million, because 130 roughly times 75 officers -- 'cause we've already budgeted 25 -- equals the 9-point --

Commissioner Suarez: Right.

Commissioner Carollo: -- something million dollars, which we're saying is $10 million.

Mr. Alfonso: Right. But --

Chair Sarnoff: Wait, wait, wait. Before Chuck writes a bad story about me, 'cause he doesn't think I know my numbers -- did you not send me a memo, starting salaries, all in, Miami -- City of Miami, Miami Beach, Coral Gables, and the County, and was not the City of Miami $77,000 -- wait, let me finish -- was not County $76,000; was not Miami Beach $110,000; and was not Coral Gables $89,000?

Mr. Alfonso: I will -- I'll get the memo, Commissioner. It did have those numbers, but it was not the -- if you look at that same memo, if you keep going down, you'll see the higher cost. But I -- that was an intermediary step. I'll get the memo so we can show it. I mean, it's there. It's in the memo, I'm sure.

Chair Sarnoff: I have it here if you want to see it, but --

Mr. Alfonso: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: I'm reading -- correct. I mean, I -- this is the thing. I mean, if you guys are going to be issuing memos to Commissioners and you think it's -- well, it's your memo, this one, so -- but I can just imagine Chuck Rabin over there: "Commissioner Sarnoff again makes numbers up out of clear sky," you know.

Commissioner Suarez: He'd never do that.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner, no, it's -- there is no difference of numbers. The specific number that you asked for, Commissioner, was the benchmarking against other cities --

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: -- for the entry level salary of the police officer.

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: So that included pension and whatnot. It did not include the car and the --

Chair Sarnoff: No, I agree, I agree.

Mr. Alfonso: Right.

Chair Sarnoff: Right.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: I agree. But I thought it was health insurance. I thought it was the all-in the taxpayer pays, other than what you call GSA-type issues, the gas, the -- Wrong? Okay. Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt you. So are we in agreement, base salary, City of Miami, $46,065?

Mr. Ortiz: Yes.
Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Carollo: Plus 2,700.

Mr. Alfonso: Yes.

Chair Sarnoff: But -- and I have to agree. I think he's right. If you have a pulse and a heartbeat and you're a cop, you get 2,700 bucks.

Mr. Ortiz: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: True, right?

Mr. Ortiz: Yes.

Chair Sarnoff: I know it's not pensionable, but true.

Mr. Ortiz: No -- go ahead.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, $48,765.

Mr. Ortiz: Okay.

Chair Sarnoff: And if some other police department has that same kind of pay, I agree candidly with you, we should measure it the same way. So you're very close to 50,000 starting and, you know --

Mr. Ortiz: If you compare 48,000 --

Chair Sarnoff: To?

Mr. Ortiz: -- to 57,000 --

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Ortiz: -- there's a big difference.

Chair Sarnoff: No, I don't deny that.

Mr. Ortiz: Okay?

Chair Sarnoff: That's Miami Beach, right?

Mr. Ortiz: Yeah.

Chair Sarnoff: And there's a reason why Miami Beach can do that. You know what that reason is? Because they get -- they have what's called a municipal resort tax, and do you know on a $260 million budget how much that municipal resort tax comes to? Sixty-million dollars. They have $60 million. They don't have -- you know when you go to pay your hotel bill in Miami Beach, they don't have that CDT (Convention Development Tax)/TDT (Tourism Development Tax) tax? They don't even mail theirs over to the County. It goes directly to them. And they're allowed to use that municipal resort tax -- guess --

Mr. Ortiz: Towards police.
Chair Sarnoff: -- what it's for?

Mr. Ortiz: They can put it towards police.

Chair Sarnoff: As long as they say they use their police --

Mr. Alfonso: For tourism.

Chair Sarnoff: -- for tourist services. Very hard for the 7th poorest city -- some people say 5th, but I'll go with 7th -- to compete with the 11th wealthiest city in America. And I know they don't think they're the 11th wealthiest, but I could show you how they are, 'cause I can show you if they reported their municipal resort tax correctly -- and if we don't start smartening up and realize --

Vice Chair Gort: My neighborhood (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Chair Sarnoff: -- that this is how they're able to pay so much money -- and by the way, so that Commissioner Suarez can get a little irritated with them. So Miami Beach, even though they have that resort tax, according to the proposed mill rate, has a higher millage rate than does -- I apologize. They're a little below us. They're a little bit below us. A little bit (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Vice Chair Gort: They're all below us.

Chair Sarnoff: So I just -- I want to get you somewhere, 'cause I see the morale problem. I just don't want to -- I understand you're a butcher, and you're here to sell meat, and I understand you're going to tell me the meat's really good. I understand I'm going to the wrong place for you to tell me what the salary should be. And he's going to say something different. There's some modicum of increase to get the morale up.

Mr. Ortiz: I agree, but it's not only about morale.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Mr. Ortiz: When you all speak about City employees -- and, yes, all City employees have been deeply affected -- you have to look at what are your priorities. And I don't know of any other director, except the Chief of Police, that has shown that there's a critical shortage. We don't have a critical shortage of plumbers or firefighters or electricians. You have a critical shortage of police officers, and when you got 300 in the DROP that can leave at any time, you got 40 positions right now open, and you're budgeting another 25, and then you guys want to add another 100, you might as well believe in unicorns, because it's just -- it's not possible. Plus, you saw the officers here, and I think they were very genuine. It wasn't like I was paying them a buck to come up here and say, "Hey, I want -- I'm looking for another job," no. They are actively looking. They are actively seeking employment elsewhere, and I can't blame them. So there has to be some type of happy medium. Another thing that I've heard time and time again, "Oh, well, we can't negotiate. We have a contract." The contract can be reopened.

Commissioner Suarez: Of course, of course.

Mr. Ortiz: It can be reopened, and we can actually extend it up to one year.

Commissioner Suarez: Agreed.

Mr. Ortiz: So it isn't like you're going to give us -- it's not like a one-stop shop, and then we're going to go, "Hey, we expect more money." Something has to be worked out. And like the
saying goes, “You don't get what you deserve; you get what you negotiate.” And I'm open to negotiations, and I'm open in getting this cleaned up and getting it fixed.

Chair Sarnoff: You went to the Paris School of Negotiations.

Mr. Ortiz: No. My father taught me that, okay.

Commissioner Suarez: The what?

Mr. Ortiz: My father taught me that.

Chair Sarnoff: Actually, it's a saying in the Paris School of Negotiation. So your proposition cost just under 6 million.

Mr. Ortiz: That is correct.

Chair Sarnoff: And just for the heck -- what is it again? It is increasing -- the steps come back, right?

Mr. Ortiz: No. Well, again, that can --

Chair Sarnoff: What is it? What is it? I'm trying to --

Mr. Ortiz: It was moving our starting salary from 44 to 49; $5,000. Moving everybody $5,000.

Chair Sarnoff: So it's a 5 percent kicker everywhere. Everybody bumps up 5?

Mr. Ortiz: Well, it's not really “bump up.” Everyone goes up 5,000, but remember, a lieutenant, a police that's been here 26 years, it's not going to be a 5 percent compared to somebody that’s -- the newer you are, the bigger the percentage; the longer you've been on, the lower --

Vice Chair Gort: The lower.

Mr. Ortiz: -- because of your hourly rate.

Chair Sarnoff: It's not a percentage. It's a $5,000 increase.

Mr. Ortiz: That is correct, right, but you said a 5 percent kicker.

Chair Sarnoff: Well, I -- you're right, you're right, sorry. So $5,000 step for every police officer.

Mr. Ortiz: That is correct.

Chair Sarnoff: And it's done on -- based on years of service?

Mr. Ortiz: Yes -- no, no, everybody would get it.

Chair Sarnoff: This is across the board.

Mr. Ortiz: Everybody gets a cut, which would make us competitive with everyone else.

Commissioner Suarez: (INAUDIBLE) practice.

Chair Sarnoff: What's that?

Commissioner Suarez: I thought that wasn’t the best practice.
Mr. Ortiz: Well, it wasn't a best practice to do pay cuts year after year and impose pension cuts.

Commissioner Suarez: No, I'm not --

Mr. Ortiz: That's why we're having the problem that we're having.

Commissioner Suarez: I'm not --

Mr. Ortiz: I want to work -- Francis, I want to work with all you guys. I really do.

Vice Chair Gort: Yeah.

Commissioner Suarez: I'm getting into something else that you said.

Chair Sarnoff: No, no, but I thought I could --

Vice Chair Gort: Look --

Chair Sarnoff: -- come onboard with you guys. Since four out of five of you voted that it was a good practice, maybe I should jump onboard.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay, touché; turn it back around.

Mr. Ortiz: Bonuses everywhere. They're just falling out of the sky.

Commissioner Suarez: Apparently.

Mr. Ortiz: Three percent here --

Commissioner Suarez: There goes 100 police officers.

Chair Sarnoff: All right.

Mr. Ortiz: No, you can --

Vice Chair Gort: No, no, no.

Chair Sarnoff: I think we know where we are. So now let's --

Mr. Ortiz: Okay, thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: Now, Commissioner, you get to watch me get beheaded. So let's just call the question on the increased mill rate.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Well, we already know what the answer is, but okay.

Chair Sarnoff: Well, you want to withdraw your second and then I sit out here alone?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No, I'm not going to withdraw my second. I'm -- listen, look, I'm going to battle all the way down to the ground, even if it means I'm going to lose.

Vice Chair Gort: Let me tell you, guys, let's try to save the --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I'm not going to abandon my decision.
Vice Chair Gort: -- Administration some time.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I'm a soldier (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Vice Chair Gort: Let me tell you what's going to happen. We can vote on it. The Mayor will veto, and there is not the 4/5ths vote to override the veto, so come on.

Mr. Ortiz: Mayor, will you --

Vice Chair Gort: Let's not play games.

Mr. Ortiz: -- veto it?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Absolutely.

Mr. Ortiz: Will you veto it or will you (UNINTELLIGIBLE) --

Mayor Regalado: Absolutely, yes, tomorrow morning.

Vice Chair Gort: So don't play the game, guys, come on.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: See.

Mr. Ortiz: Thanks. Don't call the police.

Chair Sarnoff: No, don't, don't --

Vice Chair Gort: No.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, so with that, we'll withdraw it, because we don't need to go through the exercise.

Vice Chair Gort: Of course, right.

Chair Sarnoff: So now, let's just do the motion on the mill rate, and then let's see what we can fashion. You want to read the mill rate again?

The Ordinance was read by title into the public record by Assistant City Attorney Veronica Xiques.

Commissioner Suarez: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

Chair Sarnoff: Yeah, we're doing it, a motion. So is there a motion?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Don't come up here starting trouble.

Vice Chair Gort: Move it.

Chair Sarnoff: Motion by Commissioner Gort. Is there a second?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Second.

Chair Sarnoff: Second by Commissioner Spence-Jones.
Commissioner Spence-Jones: Tell Commissioner Suarez to get in his chair.

Commissioner Suarez: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) 103911 motion?

Chair Sarnoff: This is for the regular mill rate, the one that was --

Commissioner Suarez: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

Chair Sarnoff: No. When the Mayor said he was going to veto it, I don’t think there's --

Commissioner Suarez: You withdrew it.

Vice Chair Gort: Come on.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: We were just having --

Chair Sarnoff: I did.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: -- a great conversation at that point.

Commissioner Suarez: You guys didn’t battle it all the way down.

Chair Sarnoff: I backed down. I was a coward.

Commissioner Suarez: Okay, got it. Just wanted (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Vice Chair Gort: No, why play the game and have the Administration go --?

Chair Sarnoff: Call me yellow.

Commissioner Suarez: I just want to be clear.

Chair Sarnoff: Just call me yellow, all right?

Commissioner Suarez: I just wanted to be clear on that one.

Chair Sarnoff: Call me yellow.

Vice Chair Gort: It's not calling you yellow. It's saving --

Chair Sarnoff: I don't want to (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Vice Chair Gort: -- the Administration all the -- saving the Administration the frustration of going through the process and then going back and so on. Come on, let's be realistic.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, all right, so --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: That's called “wisdom.”

Chair Sarnoff: -- call the question.

Todd B. Hannon (City Clerk): Roll call on item BH.17.

Commissioner Carollo: And to verify, it's what's there in BH.17, right?
Chair Sarnoff: Correct.

Commissioner Carollo: Okay.

Mr. Hannon: Roll call on item BH.17. Commissioner Suarez?

Commissioner Suarez: No.

Mr. Hannon: Commissioner Carollo?

Commissioner Carollo: Yes.

Mr. Hannon: Commissioner Spence-Jones?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: What's he saying “yes” for? Yes.

Mr. Hannon: Vice Chair Gort?

Vice Chair Gort: Yes.

Mr. Hannon: Chair Sarnoff?

Chair Sarnoff: Wow, I get to vote this down. It'll be okay. No.

Mr. Hannon: The ordinance passes on first reading, 3-2.

Commissioner Suarez: Just like the first time.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, BH.17 is now the budget.

Commissioner Suarez: We both voted “no” for different reasons.

Chair Sarnoff: True. I wanted more. You wanted less.

BH.18
13-00946
Office of Management and Budget

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS RELATING TO OPERATIONAL AND BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014.

13-00946 Summary Form.pdf
13-00946 Memo - FY 2013-14 Proposed Budget.pdf
13-00946 Legislation.pdf

ACTIONS BY THE CITY COMMISSION:
1. AMEND THE BUDGET, IF NECESSARY
2. ADOPT THE TENTATIVE BUDGET

Motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones, seconded by Commissioner Carollo, that this matter be ADOPTED WITH MODIFICATIONS PASSED by the following vote.

Votes: Ayes: 3 - Commissioner(s) Gort, Carollo and Spence-Jones
Noes: 2 - Commissioner(s) Sarnoff and Suarez

R-13-0355
Note for the Record: Please see Items BH1 and BH.17 for minutes referencing Item BH.18

Chair Sarnoff: All right, so BH (Budget Hearing) -- are we done?

Daniel J. Alfonso (Acting City Manager): BH.18.

Chair Sarnoff: You know what's funny? I'm going to kill my -- I don't even have a BH.18.

Mr. Alfonso: I don't know what to tell you, Commissioner. BH.18 is a resolution of the Miami City Commission adopting a tentative budget and making appropriations relating to operational and budgetary requirements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So move, but I do -- so move.

Commissioner Carollo: Second for discussion.

Chair Sarnoff: We have a motion by Commissioner Spence-Jones; second --

Commissioner Carollo: Second for discussion.

Chair Sarnoff: -- by Commissioner Carollo.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But I do have some comments, not long, though.

Commissioner Carollo: I'll yield to Commissioner Spence-Jones.

Commissioner Suarez: I'm going to go to the bathroom.

Chair Sarnoff: You're recognized.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Now, Carollo, is it going to be a long yield?

Commissioner Carollo: No, it's not, because we got a second crack at it in two weeks, so.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Oh, okay, good.

Commissioner Carollo: I'm not going to make it long.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay, go 'head, then.

Commissioner Carollo: No, I --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No, I want you to have the pressure that I'm waiting on you, 'cause if you don't have the pressure that I'm waiting on you, you will go long. Go ahead.

Commissioner Carollo: No, no, no.

Chair Sarnoff: The Chair recognizes --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No.

Chair Sarnoff: -- Commissioner Spence-Jones.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No, no, no.
Chair Sarnoff: Ladies and pretty ones, at that, go first.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No, I'm recognize -- okay, I would love to defer to Commissioner Carollo.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay, now, she is using a point of privilege and giving it to you.

Commissioner Carollo: No further questions.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Oh.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So I just wanted to -- I -- there was a few things on there. I know the Parks Department, Public Facilities, there's some adjustments that I do want to make, so I'm not going to necessarily do it on the record now, but my office will be working with them, so I want to try to get with them next week to at least work through those details.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Amendments on the budget.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay, Commissioner, so you're telling us that you would like to meet with us on some recommendations for changes that you would like to see?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Yes.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: But they already know. Henry already knows.

Mr. Alfonso: Okay. I'm --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: They're not big things.

Mr. Alfonso: I'm going to state for the record --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Yes.

Mr. Alfonso: -- that if there are recommended changes that we work through between now and the next meeting, that it is likely that the memorandum explaining those changes may not make the required print date --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Alfonso: -- for the agenda, so that it may come to you, you know, a couple of days later.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Okay.

Mr. Alfonso: Because the agenda has to go to print like Monday.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: No problem.

Mr. Alfonso: And --
Commissioner Spence-Jones: But we've done that -- I mean, we've done that before, Danny.

Mr. Alfonso: I understand. I just want to make sure that it's clear that that memorandum with the changes --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: It's not your fault, we know.

Mr. Alfonso: -- may not come with the agenda. I was just reminded -- thank you -- this budget has to be amended by $100,000 because we --

Chair Sarnoff: I know, I know.

Mr. Alfonso: -- adopted the FIPO (Firefighters and Police Officers) rule.

Chair Sarnoff: So was there a maker -- I'm sorry, who's the maker again?

Todd B. Hannon (City Clerk): Commissioner Spence-Jones.

Chair Sarnoff: You want to -- you accept the amendment?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Of course.

Chair Sarnoff: And seconder accepts? Who was the seconder?

Commissioner Carollo: I was the seconder.

Chair Sarnoff: Okay. So can I ask a question? Because -- is -- I'm not voting for this budget. I want to find a hybrid situation. And I'm -- it's not that I'm not in a position to negotiate right now, 'cause I could do it. I don't think this is the place to do it. I think there is better ways of doing it, Mr. Manager, and I think you could do a better job of it, knowing the budget. You -- this is what you do. This is your bailiwick. It's sort of like going in to an expert and -- I want to find a way for police to come up with a version of what the present hypothetically-said -- hypothetically, and for us to get 35 more officers in this budget, so that your net new police officers would be 60. Well, that would equal 100, 'cause you still have 40 to hire.

Javier Ortiz: A hundred total on the street, new. We don't have them now.

Mr. Alfonso: Commissioner --

Commissioner Carollo: And by the way, I mean, in all fairness, we could see where we are in the hiring process, because, like I've mentioned, every single year that I've been here, we have budgeted for “X” number of officers --

Vice Chair Gort: For “X” number, and we never get them.

Commissioner Carollo: -- and we've never gotten them. So in all fairness, I mean, we can budget a lower amount, see where we are at half the year, midyear, and then, you know, budget additional if we have to, and we see where we are with, you know, our revenues and so forth. So you don't have to do everything now. You know, we have the midyear budget adjustments that we could do it. So, you know -- and again, and I'm just going -- I'm just being pragmatic,

Chair Sarnoff: I understand what you're saying.

Commissioner Carollo: I'm being pragmatic, because every year that I have been here, we have
budgeted for a lot more officers than we have actually hired or have. So, you know, there's no reason to beat each other up now. Realistically, let's budget -- you know, if you -- we have 25. You want an additional "X" amount. Let's see where we are, midyear budget, and then see, well, have they been hired, have they not? If they have, okay. Do we add additional officers?

Commissioner Spence-Jones: And in the meantime, though, let's make sure that if we're saying 100 or we're saying we're going to do 40, if we're not going to hire all 100 and we're only going to hire 40, then let's see how we can supplement those officers that we know need some sort of increase.

Mr. Ortiz: You're not going to be able to do that.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: So I don't want us to walk away from this discussion and -- no?

Mr. Ortiz: You're not going to be able to do that because that's a recurring --

Commissioner Spence-Jones: You got to talk in the mike.

Mr. Ortiz: I'm sorry. That's -- I'm sorry. That's a recurring expense

Commissioner Carollo: Right.

Mr. Ortiz: So you're not going to be able to just do that midyear. It's not like they can give another bonus. What I'm pleading -- what I am pleading for you guys to do is to direct management to identify, hypothetically, $10 million out of this half a billion dollar budget, and to come back at the next -- at our next budget hearing and say, "This is how we can do it," and then for you to decide what can be done, and then we'll know what type of priorities we have for police. That's all I'm asking for. You're obviously not going to raise the millage. I respect that. That is your position. I'm not an elected official. But don't close the doors because -- The tsunami is coming; don't turn your back to it; just direct management to look for $10 million. I know they're doing the exercises. I know they've done them. I know they've done them. Look at everybody's budget, look under every couch, look under everywhere, find that $10 million. Maybe they'll only find 9, but let's find something. Let's fix this problem. That's all I'm asking for.

Chair Sarnoff: Well, I --

Vice Chair Gort: I think that's one of the instructions, and I think we can all sit down, look at the budget, and we could look at -- see where there could be a surplus coming.

Fernand Amandi: Mr. Chairman, may I speak just for a moment on behalf of the community?

Chair Sarnoff: Go ahead, 'cause you've sat here all night.

Mr. Amandi: We had 246 folks last week. In an ideal world, we would have 100 additional officers. I'd like to think I can speak for the residents of my community. We would be satisfied with a net new 60, which would get the additional 100 officers that are not on the street today. Let's not let "perfect" be the enemy of "good" in this case. A hybrid approach that addresses benefits and backup, think of it that way; benefits and backup, working together. We would have 100 officers that are not on the streets today to make this community and our City safer. Please consider that action. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: And --

Mayor Tomás Regalado: Chair.
Chair Sarnoff: Yes, Mr. Mayor, you're recognized.

Mayor Regalado: No, I just -- you know, first, I hope that you vote on the tentative budget before Commissioner Spence-Jones have to leave. I don’t know if you can. But we’ve been hearing you all these days in all the briefings, and the Acting Manager has been looking, and I think that if you give us and give him and his team some days, maybe we can come up with some idea, maybe additional, more than the 25 that are budgeted. So I just -- it's just that he needs a tentative budget approved today so we can move on with the state statute but --

Chair Sarnoff: We'll do so, Mr. Mayor, and you're right, and it's getting late. My instruction to you, Danny, if you intend on me moving forward, is to come up with $9 million. You know, how we break that up, how we divide it up, what we do -- it's not to say that we hold onto the 9, but I have to address morale, and I -- hypothetically -- also want to address net new officers.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: I think that's smart.

Vice Chair Gort: Yeah, but you got to take care of the existing officers, that's for sure, number one.

Chair Sarnoff: Agreed, agreed.

Mr. Amandi: Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: All right, so --

Mr. Amandi: That's all I'm asking. Thank you.

Chair Sarnoff: -- we have a motion, we have a second. All in favor, please say “aye.”

Vice Chair Gort: Aye.

Commissioner Carollo: Aye.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Aye.

Chair Sarnoff: I'm going to register a “no.” Okay, all right --

Mr. Hannon: For the record, there's 3-2, Chair.

Chair Sarnoff: Thank you. Thank you all for enduring this meeting.

Commissioner Spence-Jones: Thank you.

Mr. Hannon: Chair, you've adjourned your budget hearing. I need you to reconvene your regular meeting. No one else has to stay, but I need you -- we need two minutes to flip the tape and then just need to adjourn your regular meeting.

Chair Sarnoff: I'll volunteer to stay.

Mr. Hannon: Two minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 p.m.