

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Council Meeting**  
**January 10, 2023**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Government Center**  
**6601 Main Street**  
**Miami Lakes, Florida 33014**

**1. PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS:**

Vice Mayor Alvarez introduced and spoke about Mr. Maurits Acosta and his non-profit, Virtutem Populo. He explained that his non-profit assisted in putting together the City of Hialeah vs. Town of Miami Lakes Charity Basketball Game in which proceeds went to the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Councilmember Dieguez, Councilmember Garcia, and Councilmember Collazo all congratulated Mr. Acosta and spoke about his hard work and dedication to his non-profit and the Town. Vice Mayor Alvarez then presented and read a proclamation, proclaiming Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, as Virtutem Populo Day in the Town of Miami Lakes. Mr. Acosta then thanked the Town Council for the recognition.

Vice Mayor Alvarez then presented Certificates of Recognition to individuals from the City of Hialeah Educational Academy (COHEA) that worked on the live feed, broadcasting, and editing of the Charity Basketball Game. The following students were recognized: Roselyn Diaz, Emily Castillo, Abraham Alvarez, Andres Rodriguez, and Krystabella Santibanez. Teacher and the Mass Communication Academy director Cristene Martinez-Paez and COHEA's Mass Communication Academy were also recognized.

Councilmember Collazo then presented Certificates of Recognition to the 8U Padres for their championship win and undefeated season during the Fall 2022 baseball season. The following players were recognized: Lucas Collazo, Ryan Garcia, Rafael Medina Diaz, Adrian Lugo, Marcelo Buitrago, Kevin Pino, Jaden Hernandez, Dylan Garcia, Julian Napoles, Edwin Bryan, Matthew Valcourt, Richard Gil, and Brandon Lopez. The following coaches were recognized: Ramon Lugo, Eric Lozada, Andres Napoles, Matthew Valcourt, and Alex Buitrago. Mayor Cid then recognized Councilmember Luis E. Collazo for also coaching the 8U Padres.

**2. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Town Clerk, Gina M. Inguanzo, called the roll at 6:51 pm with the following Councilmembers being present: Luis E. Collazo, Josh Dieguez, Tony Fernandez, Ray Garcia, Marilyn Ruano, Vice Mayor Carlos O. Alvarez, and Mayor Manny Cid.

### **3. MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

Father Hector Perez from Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church led the prayer.

### **4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of the Allegiance was led by Councilmember Ray Garcia.

### **5. ORDER OF BUSINESS (DEFERRALS/ADDITIONS/DELETIONS):**

Mayor Cid stated that Ms. Dorothy Cook will be missed, and he emphasized that on February 25<sup>th</sup>, there will be a celebration of her life at Our Lady of Our Lakes Catholic Church. He encouraged everyone to attend.

Mayor Cid pulled Item 10B. He also pulled 14O, to be heard after Public Comments. Councilmember Collazo stated that he wanted to add an item to the Agenda, which was proposed to him at the Council Chambers a few minutes earlier and he stated that it's to create a Model UN Program. He then added Item 14R create a Model UN Program.

Councilmember Dieguez made a motion to adopt the Order of Business as amended and Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0. Councilmember Dieguez then moved to waive Rules 6.9 and 7.2 of the Special Rules of Order. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collazo and the motion passed 7-0.

### **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

(Phonetic spelling of each speaker's name will be used throughout the minutes unless correct spelling is known)

The Town Clerk, Gina M. Inguanzo, read the instructions of proper decorum that are to be respected and followed during public meetings.

The following individuals made comments on the record:

Ms. Bonnie Cintron participated in-person public comments. She stated that she does not want the Town Seal to change, that the blasting levels have to be reduced and she spoke in support of Item 14J- honoring resident Mirtha Mendez.

Mr. Mauritz Acosta participated in-person public comments. He thanked the Mayor and Town Council for the Proclamation that was awarded to him and to his organization, earlier on the same night. He also thanked the Miami Lakes Town Foundation for awarding the organization grant and how appreciative he and other members of the community are to the Foundation Members for their work and to the financial support provided by the Foundation. He explained that with this grant, the organization is developing a competition amongst high schoolers regarding Civics. He also

stated that he is in support of Item 13A.- Revised Committee Rules and Item 14M- Townwide Marketing Plan. He also added he is in support to the newly added Item 14R, Model UN, and thanked Mayor Cid for his support.

Mr. Hector Abad participated in-person public comments. He stated that the Town Council has always been supportive of student led events and Civic Engagement and he spoke in support of Mr. Jimenez' item, Item 14R Model UN.

Mr. Dayan Jimenez participated in-person public comments. He asked the Town Council for their support to host Model UN in Town Hall. He stated that he would like the conference for Middle School to take place towards the end of February and the High School competition towards the middle of March. The 3 minutes expired and Councilmember Ruano motioned to extend public comments for 30 additional seconds. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garcia and all were in favor.

Ms. Esperanza "Hope" Reynolds participated in-person public comments. Ms. Reynolds stated that she is in full support of item 14J- Honoring Ms. Mirtha Mendez. She also stated that she is in support of lowering the blasting levels; in support of improvement in communications and that government is obligated to provide full and accurate information. Ms. Reynolds also asked for no more lights to be placed in Veterans Park because it already looks like an airport. She also stated that she has never seen a manatee in Miami Lakes and asked the Town Council to not hire an independent cost estimator. The 3 minutes expired and Councilmember Ruano motioned to extend public comments for 30 additional seconds. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez and all were in favor. Ms. Reynolds also stated that she loves Golf Carts.

Mr. Domink Reynolds participated in-person public comments. He stated on behalf of the Silvercrest South community, that they are concerned with the safety issues in his neighborhood and with the cost of repairing their homes from the blasting levels.

Ms. Enid Lomax participated in-person public comments. She stated that she is in support Item 14J- Honoring Ms. Mirtha Mendez. She also stated that there is no need for Veterans Park to have more lights because it looks like an airport landing. She also requested that when the pavilions at Veterans Park are rented out to the public and when movies are held at the park, to please do not put the sound to blast.

Ms. Anne Little participated in-person public comments. She stated that she is in support of Item 14Q and she thanked Councilmember Dieguez for including it in the Agenda.

Ms. Claudia Luces participated in-person public comments. Regarding Item 14K, she stated that she does not want to move toward creating bigger government. She also stated that the Town Seal should stay the way it is because of the consideration of funding and that she is in full support of Item 14J- Honoring Ms. Mirtha Mendez. The 3 minutes expired and Councilmember Ruano motioned to extend public comments for 30 additional seconds. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez and all were in favor.

Mr. Angelo Cuadra Garcia participated in-person public comments. He stated that he is in support of Item 14J, Honoring Ms. Mirtha Mendez.

Remote Public Comments-

Mr. Abel Fernandez participated in pre-recorded public comments. Mr. Fernandez stated that he is in support of Item 14J- Honoring Ms. Mirtha Mendez.

**7. APPOINTMENTS:**

Ms. Brandon Diaz to the Miami-Dade County Sheriff Ad-Hoc Review Committee by Councilmember Marilyn Ruano.

Mr. Roberto Sosa to the Neighborhood Services District -Royal Oaks by Vice Mayor Carlos O. Alvarez

Ms. Zee Aleman to the Cultural Affairs Committee by Councilmember Ray Garcia.

Mr. Jallad Tarik to the Miami-Dade County Sheriff Ad-Hoc Review Committee by Councilmember Josh Dieguez

Mr. Clyde Pfleegor to the Miami-Dade County Sheriff Ad-Hoc Review Committee by Vice Mayor Carlos O. Alvarez

Mr. Alberto Seda to the Miami-Dade County Sheriff Ad-Hoc Review Committee by Councilmember Ray Garcia.

Ms. Maria Perdomo to the Elderly Affairs Committee by Councilmember Marilyn Ruano.

Councilmember Dieguez made a motion to approve the Appointments and it was seconded by Councilmember Collazo. The motion passed and all were in favor.

**8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

**9. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**10. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Councilmember Collazo moved to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Approval of Minutes

- November 1, 2022 Regular Council Meeting
- November 28, 2022 Special Call Meeting
- November 30, 2022 Open Forum Listening Session
- December 1, 2022 Sunshine Meeting
- December 7, 2022 Sunshine Meeting on Optimist Park Alternatives
- December 7, 2022 Workshop on Legislative Priorities

This item was approved on the Consent Calendar.

- B. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE PURCHASE OF PORTABLE TOILET RENTALS ON AN AS NEEDED BASIS; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO UTILIZE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY CONTRACT FB-00980 WITH A.E.S. PORTABLE SANITATION, INC. PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE V, DIVISION 2 OF THE TOWN CODE (THE TOWN'S PROCUREMENT ORDINANCE); AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXPEND BUDGETED FUNDS; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE CONTRACT; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This item was pulled by Mayor Cid for discussion.

Councilmember Collazo motioned to move the item and stated that he is interested in starting a discussion about looking at a more permanent solution regarding where the portable potties are at. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Dieguez.

Mr. Jeremy Bajdaun, Parks and Recreation Director, answered questions posed by Town Council. Town Manager Pidermann clarified that if the resolution is not approved, it would be a matter of days before the portable potties are removed.

During discussion, Mayor Cid then made an amendment to the main motion, for Town Staff to bring back to the Town Council in the February Regular Council Meeting, a plan to have permanent bathroom facilities, a smaller footprint -500 or 800 square feet bathroom - forgetting about the concession area. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez.

Town Manager Pidermann stated that Town Staff will report monthly on the progress of the portable potties, via the Monthly Report on MLOP. Shortly thereafter, it was agreed that Town Staff will bring back the report on the permanent bathroom facility at the March Regular Council Meeting.

The amendment passed 6-1ę Councilmember Dieguez voted in opposition.

The main motion, as amended, passed unanimously.

**11. ORDINANCE- FIRST READING:**

- A. AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 13, BY CREATING ARTICLE XIII, TO BE ENTITLED "WATER QUALITY," ESTABLISHING PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THE ARTICLE; PROVIDING FOR DEFINITIONS, SEDIMENT AND CONTROL REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTAIN DEVELOPMENTS, STANDARDS FOR SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROL, PERMIT ISSUANCE CONDITIONS, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES ENFORCEMENT OF SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROL REQUIREMENTS, PROHIBITION OF ILLICIT DISCHARGE, REPORTING OF ILLICIT DISCHARGES, PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES AND PROVIDING FOR AN APPLICATION FEE TO BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROL PLAN; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR REPEALER; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE TOWN CODE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Town Attorney, Raul Gastesi, read the title of the ordinance into the record.

Mr. Omar Santos, Public Works Director, presented the item. He explained that the ordinance is in response to a recent audit the TOML went under by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, which found that the TOML required improvement to be in compliance with MDC Phase I MS4 Permits Parts II.E and IIIA.7. He explained that this ordinance will add to our Code and allow our Town Staff to carry out these inspections, in coordination with other departments, such as Code, in case these individuals need to be cited -for them to be in compliance.

Councilmember Collazo moved to approve the item and it was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez.

The Town Clerk called the roll, and the ordinance in 1<sup>st</sup> Reading passed 7-0.

**12. ORDINANCE IN SECOND READING:**

None.

**13. RESOLUTIONS:**

- A. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA AMENDING THE COMMITTEE RULES, REGULATIONS ANE PROCEDURES; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Town Attorney, Raul Gastesi, read the title of the resolution into the record.

Town Manager Pidermann presented the item and explained the changes being recommended by Town Staff. He pointed out that the proposed rules are removing

the automatic removal after three-day absences. He explained that the new set of rules propose that if there is three absences in a calendar year, once Town Staff gets notified by the committee, the Town Clerk will send an email to notify the sponsoring councilmember and include in the email, the committee member that is being affected and the Chairperson of that committee, and also indicate in the email, that the person has been absent three times. It will be up to the councilmember to figure out if the person is merited to be removed or not.

Town Manager Pidermann also explained that another change proposed in the rules is the dealing with donations and contributions. He stated that any committee that has donations, contributions or sponsorship money, the money has to be used first for the event and that general fund money would be used after.

Councilmember Dieguez motioned to approve the resolution and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Ruano.

The motion passed unanimously.

- B. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, APPROVING A REQUEST IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION 13-308(F)(2) OF THE LANDDEVELOPMENT CODE FOR A WAIVER OF PLAT TITLED "TGC WELLS" FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 15615 LUDLAM RD, MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, IN THE TC ZONING DISTRICT; PROVIDING FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR APPROVAL; PROVIDING FOR CONDITIONS; PROVIDING FOR VIOLATION OF CONDITIONS; PROVIDING FOR APPEAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Town Attorney, Raul Gastesi, read the title of the resolution and the quasi-judicial instructions into the record.

Town Clerk Gina M. Inguanzo swore in all the individuals that would be wishing to speak on Item 13B.

Mayor Cid, Vice Mayor Alvarez, Councilmember Collazo, Councilmember Dieguez, Councilmember Garcia, Councilmember Fernandez and Councilmember Ruano all made their verbal disclosures of any ex-parte communications held in the last 7 days.

Ms. Susana Alonso, Principal Town Planner, presented the item with a brief synopsis of the application of the Preliminary Plat titled TGC Wells Fargo.

Mr. Mark Steven Johnson, applicant for the Preliminary Plat, spoke on behalf of Item 13B.

Mayor Cid opened the public hearing for Public Comments. There being no one wishing to speak, Mayor Cid closed the Public Hearing.

Councilmember Collazo made a motion to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez and the motion passed 6-0; Councilmember Dieguez was absent.

#### **14. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS:**

##### **A. Loch Ness LPR (Dieguez)**

Councilmember Collazo tabled this item until Councilmember Dieguez returns to Council Chambers.

After Item 14B, Councilmember Dieguez presented this item and explained the initial intent was to place a License Plate Reader (LPR) at the entrance of the Loch Ness Community however, after his agenda briefing with the Town Manager, they thought it be more prudent to focus on closing the LPR security net established for the eastern part of Miami Lakes.

Town Manager Pidermann explained that as a follow-up to this item, Town Staff will put together a report and send it to the entire Town Council outlining the locations in the net, which are in place, which are in the works, and this will provide an idea of a timeline, and which are unfunded.

Councilmember Dieguez then moved to direct the Town Manager and Town Staff to bring back a report at the February Council Meeting with the status of the LPR net implementation, as well as to identify how much police impact fees are expected to generate and the estimated cost of closing the gap of the net on the eastern side of Miami Lakes. Councilmember Collazo seconded the motion and the motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Fernandez also directed Town Staff to prepare a cost estimate providing an LPR for the Loch Ness community and present it to the HOA with the cost of the LPR and any maintenance costs, should they want to pay for it themselves. Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion and the motion passed 7-0.

##### **B. Volleyball Courts (Ruano)**

Councilmember Ruano presented this item to gauge the appetite of her colleagues to perhaps include volleyball courts in the future plans of any park redevelopments where possible. Vice Mayor Alvarez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Collazo suggested multipurpose hardcourts and Town Manager Pidermann asked Councilmember Ruano to provide him with the information on the specific teams so that they can try to accommodate them on a short-term basis by restriping already existing courts.



All were in favor and the motion passed 7-0.

**C. Barbara Goleman/Bob Graham PLC Lighting (Cid)**

Mayor Cid presented this item and explained that it was brought to his attention since Barbara Goleman Senior High starts early, that the walking area between Barbara Goleman Senior High and the Bob Graham PLC during standard time is very dark and concerning for pedestrian safety, due to the lack of lighting.

Mayor Cid then made a motion for Town Staff to look into the situation and if there is a need after an assessment, to see if they can work with the school district and the stakeholders to identify funding for the extra lighting, as soon as possible. Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Ruano asked for Town Staff to also include the trimming of trees as sometimes the area gets really dark because the tree canopy covers the street lighting and Mayor Cid agreed.

All were in favor and the motion passed 7-0.

**D. Optimist Park: Relocation of Pinto B Field (Collazo)**

Councilmember Collazo presented this item and explained the Pinto B Field is directly on the corner of 67<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Miami Lakeway North and unlike other fields, it is very close to vehicular traffic. He added that there does not necessarily have to be a realignment of the field, but he is looking for something to address the safety concern.

Councilmember Collazo made a motion for Town Staff to come back with recommendations on how to improve the safety of that Pinto Field. Councilmember Dieguez and Councilmember Fernandez simultaneously, seconded the motion.

After discussions, Vice Mayor Alvarez stated that he believes they need to look at doing the Optimist Park in phases, perhaps the Pinto Field and restrooms are the first phase to a long-term plan. Councilmember Fernandez also stated he will be bringing an item in February as his proposed Plan B which involves phasing out the park.

All were in favor and the motion passed 7-0.

Councilmember Collazo then brought up he would like to direct Town Staff to move forward with the FPL lighting program at the north end of the park. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed 7-0.

**E. A Resolution Supporting Legislation to Lower Blasting Levels to Provide Relief for our Residents (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented this item and explained he would like to see the Town, as done last year, co-sponsor a resolution to show the solidarity between the residents, the Blasting Advisory Board, local representatives, and the lobbyists. He added this resolution will aide in lowering the blasting to a point where residents don't feel it and it will also find relief for the residents. Vice Mayor Alvarez seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

**F. Incorporating Art Throughout Our Parks (Alvarez)**

Vice Mayor Alvarez presented this item and asked for Town Council's consideration in this initiative, to start incorporating more art throughout our parks. He then asked Town Staff to look into incorporating at least 1 art element to our parks and preferably start with Veterans Park and then move east to see the initiative grow throughout the years. Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Dieguez explained his support for the item as it is similar to his public art item from a previous Council Meeting. Councilmember Ruano then stated in regard to Veterans Park, the Veterans Committee is working on something already from their budget so perhaps the Town Council can help the committee with the funding of that project. Mayor Cid then added that the main challenge is that art is subjective, and it may be hard to make any decisions.

All were in favor and the motion then passed 7-0.

**G. MLBA Gala (Dieguez)**

Mayor Cid made a motion to approve the MLBA Gala and Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion.

Councilmember Ruano then added that she believes the date is set for March 4<sup>th</sup>; however, Councilmember Dieguez stated that he prefers to leave the motion open ended in case the date has to be changed and to work with Town Staff on setting the date.

Councilmember Collazo added this has been an item brought up in the past and feels as they will continue to support it on an ongoing basis. He also stated there are certain events authorized on an ongoing basis and asked if this can be one of them.

Councilmember Dieguez then amended the motion so that the MLBA can have ongoing authorization to have their installation gala in Council Chambers subject to coordination and approval with Town Staff. Councilmember Fernandez then added he would not be as

specific as installation gala and would allow the MLBA 1 event in Council Chambers per year.

Councilmember Dieguez stated he is open to that change and will incorporate that into the motion. Councilmember Collazo seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed 7-0.

#### **H. Golf Cart Ordinance Enforcement (Ruano)**

Councilmember Ruano presented this item and explained it has been brought to her attention by several residents that there is a golf cart nuisance in the community. She added there has been a bunch of complaints about several things such as golf carts without tags, driving on the sidewalk, and what seems to be underage children riding around in them. She stated that she is not sure how many of these complaints make it to Town Hall or the Police Department; however, she recalls that when the ordinance was created, it stipulated how you are allowed to drive the golf cart.

Councilmember Ruano then stated she wanted to discuss how the enforcement is being done with regard to the golf cart ordinance and also ask how many golf carts have been registered and how the Police Department is moving forward with that. Major Javier Ruiz then stated there are 16 golf carts currently registered with the Town and he also explained how officers have been handling the enforcement aspect to the ordinance.

After discussion, Major Ruiz added that they need probable cause to pull the golf carts over and they cannot pull over based on assumptions. Councilmember Ruano stated she understands the limitations; however, she wishes there was a better solution to the enforcement situation.

After discussion amongst the Town Council, Major Ruiz and Town Manager Pidermann regarding the registration process and situations that would be considered probable cause, Councilmember Ruano stated that she will be bringing a New Business Item to revamp the ordinance.

#### **I. Independent Cost Estimator (Cid)**

Mayor Cid presented this item and explained the idea behind an independent cost estimator.

Mayor Cid then made a motion for Town Staff to begin utilizing an independent cost estimator in a pilot program fashion during the next stormwater procurement process and for them to report back to Town Council after the process is done. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion.

After discussion amongst the Town Council and Public Works Director Omar Santos, Mayor Cid clarified that this pilot program is for 1 project, not all stormwater projects, and for Town Staff to come back to Town Council in the form of a report.

The motion passed 7-0.

**J. Honoring Mirtha Mendez (Collazo)**

Councilmember Collazo re-opened the Order of Business and asked for Item 14J. to be discussed after Item 14O. Councilmember Ruano seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Collazo presented the item and explained that in his 16+ years of actively serving his community, he has never known a meeting without Ms. Mendez attending; she has served in numerous committees and has spoken on many issues and serves as an advocate for our Town Charter. Councilmember Collazo thanked the resident -who wants to remain anonymous- who brought this item to him and then he made a motion to name the Council Chambers podium, by installing a plaque in honor of for her years of service and for being a steward of our Town Charter. Councilmember Ruano seconded the motion and asked the Town Clerk to please add her as a co-sponsor.

After discussion amongst the Town Council, the Town Clerk called the roll and the motion passed 4-3; Vice Mayor Alvarez, Councilmember Fernandez and Mayor Cid voted in opposition.

**K. Supporting our Grant Department to Keep Our Taxes Low (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented the item and explained that to provide Miami Lakes residents the best services and town infrastructure while maintaining taxes low, he asked to put forward a plan including input from residents, to support the Grants Department through contracting vendors or other means, to assist in finding new federal, state, county, NGO's or P3's grants. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion.

After discussion, Town Manager Pidermann stated that he will include the potential cost of adding this position in the Budget Amendment, which will be considered by the Town Council. The motion passed 6-0; Councilmember Ruano was absent.

**L. Lighting in the Playground of Veterans Park (Alvarez)**

Vice Mayor Alvarez presented the item, and he explained that this is a continuation of what was done in Royal Oaks Park by incorporating lighting under the playground and he stated

that Town Manager Pidermann will come before us at the March RCM with the Carryover. Vice Mayor Alvarez then motion and asked the Town Council to let the Town Manager look at pricing and perhaps this becomes a priority item by the Town Council. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garcia.

Councilmember Ruano asked to add to this, the component of looking into the time that the park is opened, because the park is supposed to close at sunset, but people continue to use the park. Councilmember Ruano then emphasized that she would like either to change and extend the park hours to perhaps a 1 hour and 1/2 more in the evening, so that the playground is lit, and the park is opened, if we proceed with the lighting of the playground. Vice Mayor Alvarez accepted Councilmember Ruano's suggestion about looking into extending the park hours if the lighting is provided to Veterans Park. He also stated that when this item is presented to the Town Council, he is open and not set on putting parameters with lighting and timing and shutting it off at a certain time.

The motion passed 7-0.

#### **M. National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (Dieguez)**

Councilmember Dieguez presented the item and stated via motion, that he would like to direct the Town Attorney and the Town Manager to find ways to establish certain penalties against anyone that is convicted of assaulting or committing battery or murdering an officer. He explained that this would enhance the statutory penalties that already exist. He stated that this item is being presented in light of National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day and that we stand united with our law enforcement community. Also, he explained that the item is asking the Town Administration to light up Town Hall's exterior in blue for the month of January, and every January moving forward, to show our support to our law enforcement officers. The motion was seconded simultaneously by Councilmember Ruano and Councilmember Fernandez.

Councilmember Fernandez added that he would like the Town Manager to look into adding some sort of civil recourse seeking reimbursement for the time that police officer is injured and off the street and not available for service. Councilmember Dieguez responded that it is already being discussed, something on that nature, and that potentially civil penalties could be collected and given to the victim or victim's families.

The motion passed 6-0; Vice Mayor Alvarez was absent.

#### **N. Townwide Marketing Plan (Ruano)**

Councilmember Ruano presented the item and explained that she has attended some committee meetings, as well as Committee Chair meetings and she understands there is

some disconnect between our marketing plan and the residents and our community. She acknowledges that the Communications Department uses several means of communication, but in order to find the missing link, she asked to consider exploring a workshop with the Communications Department and our Chief Innovation Officer, to guide us in the right direction to find the missing link. Councilmember Ruano also added that she would like to identify some of the events that perhaps have been phased out of the community due to lack of appetite from the residents. She mentioned that she would like for us to identify and evaluate those events that we are spending taxpayers money and not heavily participated in. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion.

The Town Manager stated that prior to the holidays, he was in communications with an FIU consultant to assess our social media posture and that he will re-engage again, for them to come to Town Hall and afford an educational session to guide our committees and Town Council, and to talk about the dynamics of social media.

The motion passed 6-0; Vice Mayor Alvarez was absent.

#### **O. Town Seal (Cid)**

Mayor Cid made a motion to table this item until Mr. Taylor Monroig, a young student and his classmates arrive to Town Hall, for them to make the presentation of the item. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collazo and all were in favor.

Later on the evening, Councilmember Dieguez moved to pick up Item 14O from the table and Councilmember Ruano seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Taylor Monroig presented the item and stated that his goal would be to add a manatee to the Town Seal because he has seen them in many of the canals that border of Miami Lakes. He mentioned that by adding a manatee “Sea Cows” to the Town Seal, you create awareness. He would like for the residents to see the manatee as the shared community mascot.

Mr. Taylor Monroig answered questions posed by the Town Council.

Mayor Cid made a motion to move forward and to have the Town’s Education Advisory Board to work with Mr. Taylor Monroig and see where we go with his request. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garcia.

During discussion, the Town Council congratulated Mr. Monroig’s work and presentation. They all expressed admiration for his work and motivated him to continue with his efforts to create awareness and to stay involved with the Town. It was explained that there is a real-world cost involved with changing the re-branding of the Town Seal and the consensus was not to change the Town Seal.

However, the Town Council did emphasize that perhaps he can work with local schools and create an art competition to create alternative seal or “Seal for a Day” with manatees or other things being added to the seal or perhaps work on an environmental awareness event hosted by the Town.

After further discussion, Mayor Cid withdrew his motion and re-stated the following new motion: to approve Taylor Monroig working with the EAB on an alternative seal competition with our local schools. This motion was seconded by all the Town Council, and all were in favor.

**P. Mitigating Flooding and Saving on Maintenance Costs Using Bio Retention Swales at Pocket Parks (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented the item and moved the Town Administration to research if we can add bio retention swales around our pocket parks on streets that are already slated for new storm water retention projects, to try to mitigate flooding in neighborhoods. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez.

Councilmember Collazo asked if this can be a pilot program and to analyze the cost of doing this to one pocket park first. Councilmember Fernandez also asked to start small first and then other parks. Councilmember Garcia agreed to start small and test it out first. Mayor Cid also mentioned a study done in Michigan State University regarding the design of storm drainage and the adding of compost material to the swale areas, where there is not enough percolation.

During discussion, Mr. Omar Santos answered questions posed by the Town Council.

The motion passed 7-0.

**Q. Abandoned Vehicle Ordinance (Dieguez)**

Councilmember Dieguez presented the item and explained that he has received calls and photos of certain vehicles that have been abandoned in Main Street and he mentioned that these vehicles are fool of junk and trash.

Councilmember Dieguez motioned for an ordinance to be drafted to addresses this issue, including an enforcement mechanism, that keeps our town growing beautiful. Councilmember Dieguez clarified that this ordnance is to apply for the entire town boundaries. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collazo and Councilmember Ruano, simultaneously.

Councilmember Collazo asked Town Manager Pidermann to please put in the Town Commander's radar, that Miami Lakes Middle has commercial vehicles parked in that area and he would like for this area to be checked as well.

The motion passed 7-0.

#### **R. Miami Lakes MUN Conference (Collazo)**

This item was introduced by Councilmember Collazo and added to the agenda during the New Order of Business.

Councilmember Collazo introduced Mr. Dayan Jimenez, a student from Barbara Goleman Senior High School, and he explained that Mr. Jimenez approached him and spoke about a Model UN program for the local area schools. Mr. Jimenez stated that he is not sure about the date but that he would like it the Middle School conference to take place sometime in February and the High School to take place sometime in mid-March.

Vice Mayor Alvarez stated that Mr. Jimenez should work with Town Staff and that he trusts Town Staff to coordinate the dates of these conferences, so that Middle Schools and High Schools have ample time to prepare.

Councilmember Garcia moved the item, and it was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez and Councilmember Fernandez simultaneously.

All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **15. MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS**

None.

#### **16. MANAGER'S REPORTS**

Vice Mayor Alvarez made a motion to defer Items 16C, 16D, and 16E and 16F for the next Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Collazo and the motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Dieguez then motioned to re-open the Order of Agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ruano. The motion passed unanimously.

Then, Councilmember Dieguez, on behalf of the Vice Mayor moved to defer Items 16C, 16D, 16E and 16F for the next council meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fernandez. The motion passed unanimously.



**A. Passport Office (Dieguez/Inguanzo)**

Councilmember Dieguez presented the item. He explained that last year, the Town Council tasked Town Staff to look into opening a Passport Processing Facility in the Town Hall, as a benefit to our residents and also as a general assistance to process the backlog of passports services. He stated that Town Clerk Gina M. Inguanzo did a research and is recommending for a pilot program to be put in place.

Councilmember Dieguez motioned to direct the Town Clerk to begin operations of a passport processing facility in Town Hall and gave her direction and latitude to establish the days, hours and the manner in which it would be conducted, including a team of three people -herself included- on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 9 am to 12 noon, by appointment only. To do this for 1 year and for the Town Clerk to come back to the Town Council with a report on this matter. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Alvarez.

Town Clerk Gina M. Inguanzo provided an explanation of her research and answered questions posed by the Town Council. After discussion amongst the Town Council, Councilmember Dieguez re-stated the motion for the Town Clerk to report the progress of the Passport Processing Facility in six months from the operations of the facility -instead of in one year- and to explore the possibility of an interlocal agreement with a municipality and perhaps splitting the fee. Vice Mayor Alvarez seconded the motion.

The motion passed 6-1; Councilmember Ruano voted in opposition.

**B. Entry Feature (Alvarez/Bajdaun)**

Mr. Jeremy Bajdaun, Parks and Recreation Director, provided a report establishing a basic scope of design for the entry feature located at 67<sup>th</sup> Ave. He explained that it is the required description and basic level needed for us to solicit and go out to bid. Mr. Bajdaun also answered questions posed by the Town Council.

Vice Mayor Alvarez stated that we spoke about “Welcome to Miami Lakes” and “Growing Beautifully” and also to incorporate the Town Seal because we started the branding, and he reminded the Town Council that \$40,000 has been allocated towards this project and that it is already in the budget. Vice Mayor then motioned that this item is to give Jeremy direction to start the daily process for the design. Councilmember Collazo seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

**C. Monthly Report on MLOP (Bajdaun)**

This item was deferred to the February Regular Council Meeting.

**D. Monthly Infrastructure Report (Santos)**

This item was deferred to the February Regular Council Meeting.

**E. Monthly Police Reports (Ruiz)**

This item was deferred to the February Regular Council Meeting.

**F. Open Forum Listening Sessions (Pidermann)**

This item was deferred to the February Regular Council Meeting.

**17. ATTORNEY'S REPORTS:**

Town Attorney Raul Gastesi asked for an Attorney-Client Executive Session to take place in February, on the 59<sup>th</sup> Avenue matter, Miami Lakes v. TSC.

Mayor Cid mentioned that he wants to add to the Legislative Priorities, the FRS issue. Then, Mayor Cid made a motion to add the FRS issue as part of the legislative priorities, to see if there is a legislative fix, through amendments to the statute that govern FRS or through the appropriations process. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fernandez. Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella asked if Mayor Cid wants a resolution to be done to that effect and Mayor Cid replied in the affirmative. The motion passed unanimously.

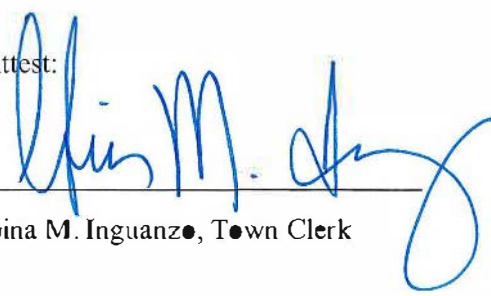
**18. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Town Council, the meeting adjourned at 10:56 pm.

Approved this 7th day of February 2023.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Manny Cid, Mayor

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gina M. Inguanzo, Town Clerk