

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Council Meeting**  
**January 21, 2025**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Government Center**  
**6601 Main Street**  
**Miami Lakes, Florida 33014**

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

**2. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Town Clerk, Gina M. Inguanzo, called the roll at 6:35 pm. Councilmember Fernandez, Councilmember Cuadra-Garcia, Councilmember Garcia, Councilmember Herzberg and Vice Mayor Morera were present.

**3. MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

Councilmember Garcia led the prayer.

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Herzberg.

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

Mayor Dieguez moved Item 14C to immediately after Public Comments. Councilmember Garcia asked to move the Mental Health Task Force Report, Item 8. to be heard before Item 8A, the Blasting Advisory Board. Vice Mayor Morera moved the New Order of Business, and it was seconded by Councilmember Garcia. All were in favor.

**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.

Ms. Kimberly Trelles came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that she is the owner of a small business in Miami Lakes, the Trelles cottage. She stated that she is in favor of agenda item 14f. She explained that she was recently denied a business tax receipt due to modern retail challenges. She further explained that agenda item 14f, allowing for flexible use of smaller spaces supports local entrepreneurs and ensures that Miami Lakes retains its unique community driven small businesses. She urged the Town Council to vote in favor of this item.

Mr. Armando Gonzalez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination to the Town Council. He further explained that Sanchez's love for the Town and unwavering commitment to serving is evident in everything he does. He stated that he strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Orlando del Castillo came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination to the Town Council. He explained that as a veteran, Sanchez dedicated his life serving our country and continues to serve the community in countless ways. He further explained Sanchez's dedication to keeping the public informed of local events and initiatives. He explained that Sanchez is deeply passionate about ensuring that the voices of Miami Lakes Residents are heard and respected. He stated that he strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Ms. Bonnie Cintron came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that the legalization of artificial turf would be harmful to the environment. She further explained that artificial turf impedes natural drainage. She thanked the Town Council for their time.

Ms. Lee Medina came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that she is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination to the Town Council. She further explained that Mr. Sanchez is a family man with the leadership qualities needed to help the community. She thanked Mayor Dieguez for nominating Mr. Sanchez for the position. She stated that she strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. She thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. David Campos came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination to the Town Council. He stated that he strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. He stated that homeowners should not be cited for having political flags in their yard. He further explained that residents should be allowed to express their political beliefs without fear of citation.

Mr. Lewis Moreno came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here on behalf of Epilepsy Alliance Florida with the hopes of developing a partnership with the Town of Miami Lakes. He further explained that their hope would be for them to come into the Town and educate the residents about epilepsy. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Fred Senra came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here to speak on item 14c. He stated that she strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. He urged the Town Council to avoid conducting another special election. He further explained that a special election would be costly to the Town. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Ms. Miriam Campos came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that last Saturday she received a letter to remove political flags from her yard. She stated that she took the

political flags down after the presidential inauguration. She explained that the Town should have a special election to allow the residents to choose a candidate for seat four.

Mr. Reinaldo came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination for the Town Council. He further explained that Sanchez is a family man and good neighbor dedicated to serving the community. He stated that he strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Larry Borman came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination for the Town Council. He explained that he met Mr. Sanchez on the Veterans committee and that he is a dedicated individual. He stated that he strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez for the position. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. William Perez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that the council should carve out a plan for allowing political flags to be attached to the residents' property. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination for the Town Council. He stated that the Town Council has the choice to either nominate Mr. Sanchez or let the residents decide through a special election. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Eddie Serreno came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is in support of item 14f. He explained that the item would allow for limited retail. He further explained that small businesses don't have retail space that is affordable. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Homero Cruz came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that the town code would have to be revised to allow residents to have political flags in their yard. He further explained that he believes that the Town will not be able to go beyond the specifications for political signage listed in the Florida Statutes. He explained that the Town should have a special election to allow the residents to choose a candidate for seat four.

Mr. Eric came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he believes that asking residents to take down their political flags is a violation of first amendment rights. He stated that he would like to request a referendum to repeal the city ordinance that prohibits sign on private property. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

Mr. Dayan Jimenez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is here in support of Mr. Alejandro Sanchez's nomination for the Town Council. He further explained that a special election would be costly for the Town. He stated that he is in support of item 14g. He explained that the most conservative way to have government efficiency is to hire less employees. He explained that the Town should implement a program that hires interns to assist the Town Council.

Mr. Andres Vidaurrezaga came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is in support of item 14f. He explained that this item would make retail space more affordable for small businesses. He stated that he strongly recommends Mr. Sanchez to fill the vacancy in Council Seat Four. He thanked the Town Council for their time and consideration.

## 7. APPOINTMENTS:

Mayor Dieguez announced the following appointments:

Miguel Martinez to the Blasting Advisory Board by Councilmember Ray Garcia.

Marly Hernandez to the Mental Health Task Force by Councilmember Angelo Cuadra Garcia.

Homero Cruz to the Planning and Zoning Board by Councilmember Ray Garcia.

Mayor Dieguez explained that Mr. Edwin Julian Ore's appointment to the Blasting Advisory Board requires a waiver. Town Clerk Gina M. Inguanzo explained that Mr. Edwin Julian Ore would be attending the Blasting Advisory Board Meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>. She further explained that if he gets approved his appointment is only valid under the condition that he must comply by attending said meeting. She explained that he also does not meet qualifications A, B, and C of Section 11. Councilmember Fernandez explained that Mr. Edwin Julian Ore is a resident of Palm Springs North, whose residence has been affected by blasting. Councilmember Fernandez then motioned to confirm the appointment and waive the rule. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion. Councilmember Herzberg then explained that he would like to know a little more about the ways Mr. Ore would like to be involved in the Blasting Advisory Board. Councilmember Fernandez explained that Mr. Ore is an engineer. Mayor Dieguez repeated the motion and second and upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Dieguez explained that Mr. Geancarlo Rodriguez' appointment to the Public Safety Committee requires a waiver. Town Clerk Gina M. Inguanzo explained that Mr. Rodriguez has been volunteering for a separate committee and that Councilmember Garcia would like to appoint him to the Public Safety Committee. She explained that he does not meet section 11 of the committee rules requirement. Councilmember Garcia explained that Mr. Rodriguez has been volunteering for the Town for a couple of years. He further explained that Mr. Rodriguez is actively seeking to move into the Town and is waiting on some accommodations. Councilmember Garcia motioned to confirm the appointment and waive the rule. Councilmember Morera seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk Gina M. Inguanzo explained that the following individuals are to be appointed contingent on complying with Town committee rules:

Mr. Daniel Montecelo will be appointed to the Blasting Advisory Board by Councilmember Steven Herzberg contingent on attending the Blasting Advisory Board meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Kimberly Trelles will be appointed to the Special Needs Advisory Board by Councilmember Ray Garcia contingent on the Office of the Town Clerk receiving her background check.

Mr. Rafael J. Schuck will be appointed to the Economic Development Committee by Councilmember Angelo Cuadra Garcia contingent on attending the Economic Development Committee meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### **A. Blasting Advisory Board Report**

The Vice Chair, Franchesca Ortega, presented the committee report. She explained that last year, the committee attended an inaugural workshop in Tallahassee where they were able to address issues regarding blasting at the state level. She explained that the committee has built alliances with other municipalities from the cities of Homestead, Doral and Miramar. She further explained that the committee has partnered with other entities to increase awareness through social media campaigns.

The Former Chair of the Blasting Advisory Board, Miguel Martinez, went over the events and initiatives the committee has been working on. He explained that the committee has been in contact with Miami-Dade County. He further explained that the county is looking into creating proper ordinances regarding blasting regulations.

Town Attorney Raul Gastesi thanked the Blasting Advisory Board members for their hard work and dedication towards committee initiatives.

Vice Chair Franchesca Ortega requested that the committee revert to their old attendance policy as they have had issues meeting quorum. She also requested that a small portion of the committee funds be allocated to hosting a committee workshop. The Town Manager, Ed Pidermann, explained that the committee can file a request to allocate funds from one line item to another line item through the committee liaison and that the request would be up for approval next month.

### **B. Mental Health Task Force Report**

Mental Health Task Force committee member William Perez presented the committee report and went over the events and initiatives that the committee has been working on. He explained that through the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office the committee would like to host a Responding with Compassion Workshop. He further explained that the workshop would educate the public about the new unit at the sheriff's office that helps respond to those experiencing a mental health crisis. He explained that the committee would like to host the workshop on May 15<sup>th</sup> in Council Chambers.

Vice Mayor Morera motioned to approve the Responding with Compassion Workshop on May 15<sup>th</sup> in the Council Chambers. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Perez explained that the Town of Miami Lakes received a grant from the federal government on an opiate reduction. He further explained that the committee would like to allocate some of the funds from the grant to the Mental Health Task Force's fall festival.

Vice Mayor Morera motioned to direct the Town Manager to inquire with the Town Staff on how much of that fund is still available and how much should be appropriated for this fund. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **9. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:**

### **A. Introduction of New Town Staff Employees**

Mayor Dieguez introduced his new assistant, Mr. Josh Villorin.

The Town Manager, Mr. Ed Pidermann. introduced the following new Town Staff Employees and he stated that these employees all replaced employees that have moved on to higher positions within the organization or who have left Town Staff.

From the Communication and Community Affairs Department Ydalis Navarro, Marketing and Digital Services Specialist.

From the Communication and Community Affairs Department Noah Maklouf, Community Affairs Specialist.

From the Communication and Community Affairs Department Isabela Creighton, Town Committee Liaison.

From the Office of the Clerk Alexis P. Martinez, Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Council.

From the Parks and Recreation Department Aaron Borno, Arbor Coordinator.

From the Parks and Recreation Department Taylor Fowler, Programs Coordinator.

From the Planning Department Justin Telleria, Transportation Coordinator.

## **10. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Vice Mayor Morera moved to approve the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garcia. The motion passed 7-0.

### **A. Approval of Minutes**

October 15, 2024 Regular Council Meeting  
October 29, 2024 Regular Council Meeting  
December 10, 2024 Special Call Meeting

These minutes were approved in the Consent Calendar.

- B. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER, TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (FDEM) FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025, WATERSHED PLANNING PROGRAM, TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE TOWN'S COMPREHENSIVE STORMWATER MASTER PLAN UPDATE NO. 4, IN AN AMOUNT NOT EXCEED TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$250,000); AUTHORIZING TOWN OFFICIALS TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, WATERSHED PLANNING PROGRAM; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXPEND BUDGETED FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES,**

This item was approved in the Consent Calendar.

- C. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE AWARD OF A CONTRACT FOR CIVIL ENGINEERING AND RELATED SERVICES FOR THE SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL, COMPREHENSIVE VISION ZERO SAFETY ACTION PLAN, TO EXP U.S. SERVICES, INC. ("EXP") IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED BUDGETED FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY OF TOWN OFFICIALS, AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXPEND BUDGETED FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This item was approved in the Consent Calendar.

**11. ORDINANCE- FIRST READING:**

- A. None.

**12. ORDINANCE IN SECOND READING:**

None.

**13. RESOLUTIONS:**

- A. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, IMPLEMENTING A TREE TRIMMING VENDOR REGISTRATION PROGRAM; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY TO EXPEND BUDGETED FUNDS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Town Manager Pidermann presented the item and explained that this item was brought in September of 2024 by former Vice Mayor Tony Fernandez. He stated that the Town would like to establish a vetting system for tree trimming companies to be added to a preferred provider list. He further explained that if town residents would like to do tree trimming on their private property, they can look at the list posted on the Town website and be able to locate vendors that have been vetted by the Town.

Councilmember Garcia motioned to approve, and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Sanchez.

Councilmember Sanchez stated that he is in favor of this resolution and explained that many town residents have been searching for vetted tree trimming vendors. Vice Mayor Morera asked Town Manager Pidermann if the resolution would require that any tree trimming within the town be performed by the vendors that are registered under the program. Town Manager Pidermann explained that the Town can provide the list of vetted vendors to town residents but cannot obligate residents to only use vendors from the list. Vice Mayor Morera

explained that he would like to request the Town Manager to work with FPL and have the company work with the Town's approved vendors. Councilmember Garcia stated that he is in favor of this item and requested that the list of tree trimming vendors be posted onto the Town website and Social Media pages, for the benefits of our residents.

Councilmember Cuadra Garcia asked Town Manager Pidermann if the Town would be in charge of the qualification process for the vendors and Town Manager Pidermann explained that the Town will vet the vendors based on a specific criterion. Mayor Dieguez made a comment on behalf of former Vice Mayor Fernandez and explained that the spirit of the item comes from ensuring that the elderly in our town are not being taken advantage of by unscrupulous vendors.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Dieguez called the roll, and the motion passed unanimously.

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

##### **A. Identification of Town Staff (Morera)**

Vice Mayor Morera presented the item and stated that TOML needs a way to commend employees that do well and hold accountable those that don't. Town Manager Pidermann stated that anybody who deals with the public will have their business cards with them.

Vice Mayor Morera then motioned to direct the Town Manager to make sure that when residents come to us, that Town Staff have a name- it could be a magnetic name tag on the shirt, the name embroidered in the polo shirt, a badge; he leaves it up to the Town Manager's discretion. He re-stated his motion for Town Manager Pidermann to figure out how to improve the identification of our Town Staff. Councilmember Sanchez seconded the motion, and the motion passed 7-0.

##### **B. Discussion of Advisory Boards (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented the genesis of the item. He stated that he wanted to discuss advisory boards but at the last Regular Council Meeting, the Town Council decided to end them. He stated that the Town Council cannot discuss anything about this matter within 6 months of the item being voted down, but he added that he wanted everybody to know that he thinks it's a good idea to discuss advisory boards and their place and that he will do so in 6 months.

##### **C. Council Vacancy Seat 4 (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez presented the item and explained why he nominated Mr. Alex Sanchez to serve as councilmember of Seat 4. He explained the provision of the Town Charter that defines the process to follow, and he explained the application process to fill the vacancy. He also stated that 8 applications were received.



Mayor Dieguez motion for his colleagues to approve the nomination of Mr. Alejandro “Alex” Sanchez to fill the seat 4 vacancy. Vice Mayor Morera seconded the motion.

All the elected officials stated their opinions and after discussion amongst them, the Town Clerk called the roll, and the motion passed 4-2; Councilmember Cuadra Garcia and Councilmember Garcia voted in opposition.

At this time, Mayor Dieguez asked for a 5-minute recess for Mr. Sanchez to be brought on board, so he can join the Town Council on the dais and start performing his duties as a councilmember.

During the recess, Town Clerk Inguanzo, swore Mr. Alejandro “Alex” Sanchez into office. Councilmember Sanchez then took his seat on the dais and Mayor Dieguez opened the public meeting. Mayor Dieguez stated that a formal ceremonial swearing in on a later day prior to the February Regular Council Meeting.

**D. Proposal to Amend Special Rules of Order Agenda to Add Separate Police Report (Herzberg)**

Councilmember Herzberg presented his item and stated that he thinks it would be a good idea to have the Police Report earlier on the meetings; that public safety is paramount for the Town Council and having the Police Report presented earlier brings more transparency and gives the Town Council an opportunity to ask the Major questions earlier in the meeting and increase resident involvement. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion for discussion.

Town Manager Pidermann acknowledged the item and stated that he could move the item up and include it under the Special Presentations section of the Agenda. The motion passed 6-0; Vice Mayor Morera was absent.

**E. Legalization of Artificial Turf (Cuadra Garcia)**

Councilmember Cuadra Garcia stated that after consulting the Town Manager and Deputy Town Attorney, he wants to amend his original New Business Item. He then motioned to remove and request for the moratorium and asked the Town Attorney to seek an option from the County Attorney, whether the County Code explicitly prohibits the installation of artificial grass in residential homes. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion.

The Deputy Town Attorney answered questions posed by the Town Council and stated that there are many areas of our Code, where the County preempts us. He explained that we can make it stricter, but we can't make them looser. He explained that Councilmember Cuadra Garcia received some verbal information that perhaps, the County Code is not specific with regards to artificial turf. He stated that if the Town Council has a desire, he is willing to ask for a formal written opinion from the County Attorney. He stated that Councilmember Cuadra Garcia would like him to get a formal written opinion of their interpretation of their County Code regarding artificial turf.

The Principal Town Planner, Ms. Susana Alonso, answered questions posed by the Town Council. The Building Department Director, Mr. Danny Angel, answered questions posed by the Town Council.

After discussion amongst the Town Council, the Town Clerk called the roll on the motion to request a written opinion from the County Attorney regarding their interpretation of the County Code specifically regarding artificial grass, and the motion did not pass, 2-5; Councilmember Cuadra Garcia, Councilmember Herzberg, Councilmember Sanchez, Vice Mayor Morera and Mayor Dieguez voted in opposition.

#### **F. Revision of Permitted Uses in RO-13 and RO-50 Zoning Districts (Morera)**

Vice Mayor Morera presented the item. He explained that currently, retail use is prohibited in office zones. He explained that after the pandemic a new kind of industry has emerged - an online industry with a very limited physical footprint takes place, as opposed to the traditional brick and mortar.

Vice Mayor Morera mentioned that he attached an ordinance and that he welcomed potential changes to the proposed ordinance. He explained that the attached ordinance would set forth a system that would allow these businesses to flourish, while ensuring that the traditional retail uses do not overburden existing infrastructure. He stated that to prevent further shutdowns of family-owned businesses, he motioned for his colleagues to support the establishment of a 180-day moratorium of the enforcement of the prohibition of retail uses in R0-13 and RO-50 Zoning Districts. The motion was seconded by Mayor Dieguez. Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella answered questions posed by the Town Council. Vice Mayor Morera then withdrew his motion.

Vice Mayor Morera then motioned to move for a 180-day extension to be granted to all active applicants of BTR's. Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella explained that what the Town can do is put a pause on any type of enforcement for the moment, for the BTR's. Councilmember Herzberg seconded the motion. Town Manager Pidermann stated that Town Staff would work on the proposed ordinance and once the new ordinance is passed, the moratorium will be lifted. Vice Mayor Morera agreed with the recommendation provided by the Town Manager. Deputy Town Attorney clarified that approving this item only meant that the Town Council passed a "pause" on enforcement of the BTR's, allowing longer time for those BTR's to renew. The motion passed 7-0.

Vice Mayor Morera then read into the record, page 256 from the proposed ordinance, which defines "limited retail". Vice Mayor Morera then moved and requested the Town Council's blessing, so that he can work with Town Staff and bring back an ordinance in first reading, to be presented to the Town Council. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion.

Councilmember Garcia mentioned that he would like the Economic Development Committee and Chamber of Commerce to be brought on board - to see what business opportunities there are when it comes to this hybrid model and that he is all in favor of exploring. Vice Mayor Morera agreed with Councilmember Garcia's comments.

Senior Town Planner Ms. Susana Alonso and Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella answered questions posed by the Town Council.

After further discussion, the main motion to bring back the proposed ordinance in first reading passed 7-0.

#### **G. D.O.G.E Advisory Board (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented his item and stated that he would like to perhaps create something similar to a D.O.G.E Advisory Board, composed of residents, businesses and governmental people, that have experience in budgets, former Town Managers, and go over the procurement process, to help us find efficiencies in our processes, to save as much tax dollars as possible. He asked his colleagues if this is something they are interested in. He asked if they would like to have a formal committee or just a part-time committee, put together when the budget cycle comes along or a loose advisory board; he then asked his colleagues how they would like to proceed. Vice Mayor Morera seconded the motion.

After discussion amongst the Town Council, Councilmember Garcia then stated that he did not sense an appetite for the creation of a board. He then suggested that during the budget workshop period, we could invite government officials, former government officials, former council members, former mayors from different cities and perhaps invite them to a section in our budget workshop and get their ideas and perhaps implement their ideas.

Councilmember Garcia then stated that in lieu of the official D.O.G.E committee, he motioned adding to our budget workshops -for elected officials to invite individuals who might add to the conversations and try to add different opinions. He clarified that he would like to add a section to our budget workshops or sunshine meetings during the budget cycle and invite all businessmen or people from former government officials that can come in and opine and assist on the decision-making process; he emphasized that this would only increase an hour to our budget workshops or budget hearings. Vice Mayor Morera seconded the amendment.

After discussion amongst the Town Council, the Town Clerk called the roll and the amendment motion did not pass 2-5; Councilmember Fernandez, Councilmember Cuadra-Garcia, Councilmember Sanchez, Vice Mayor Morera and Mayor Dieguez voted in opposition.

Then, on the main motion, the Town Clerk called the roll, and the motion did not pass 1-6; Councilmember Fernandez, Councilmember Cuadra-Garcia, Councilmember Herzberg, Councilmember Sanchez, Vice Mayor Morera and Mayor Dieguez voted in opposition.

#### **H. Revision to Building Department Fee Schedule (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez pulled this item and clarified that he did not present the item to the Town Council because of learning that the issue was that the resident had filled out the permit

with an error. Mayor Dieguez stated that Town Staff already does what he was requesting, so no action was taken.

**I. Proposal to Allow Public Participation in Committee Meetings via Zoom (Herzberg)**

Councilmember Herzberg presented the item and gave the directive to the Town Manager to make sure that our town committee hearings allow public access via Zoom for public comments. The Vice Mayor Morera seconded the motion, and the item passed 7-0.

**J. MLOP Back Stops (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented his item and stated that he would like the Town to focus on improving the park infrastructure and for Town Staff to provide a plan, to enhance and find a way to make the backstops presentable. He then motioned for Town Staff to look into a way that we can either paint the backstops or put new backstops on, as long as it does not affect the Joint Use Agreement with the Public Schools; he emphasized maintenance and not new construction, to remove the rust stains on the fence. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion.

Town manager Pidermann stated that Town staff can consider Councilmember Garcia's new business item and report back to the Town Council during the February Council Meeting and provide the Town Council with different options to accomplish his request and with a cost attached to it.

Town Manager Pidermann stated that in the next few months, there will be a workshop of the Town Council to specifically consider how to spend 1 to 1 ½ millions that we have in the Capital Account for the MLOP. Vice Mayor Morera then made a friendly amendment that as far as the replacement of the backstops, rather than addressing it as a standalone issue, that it be brought up for discussion by Town Staff, during the workshop on MLOP and to specifically discuss the expenditures of the funds relating to the MLOP Capital Account. Vice Mayor Morera clarified that his amendment is regarding replacement only. The amendment was seconded by Councilmember Herzberg, and it was approved unanimously. The main motion was approved unanimously as well.

Town Manager Pidermann then asked the Town Council for approval to have a workshop on MLOP, as explained earlier during the discussion of this item. Councilmember Garcia moved to have the workshop suggested by the Town Manager and it was seconded by Councilmember Herzberg. The motion passed unanimously.

**K. Proposal to Reinstate Committee Attendance Rules (Herzberg, Morera)**

Councilmember Herzberg presented the item and stated that he was made aware by the Town Clerk, that Vice Mayor Morera wanted to co-sponsor the item. Councilmember Herzberg explained that after submitting his New Business Item, he became aware that a Quarterly Chair Meeting was scheduled to take place on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Councilmember

Herzberg stated that he understands that it makes more sense to bring his New Business Item to the Quarterly Committee Chair Meeting, to get the input from the Chairs. Councilmember Herzberg emphasized that this item, as he proposed it, gives discretion to the Chairs, so he would like to get their input on his proposed item at the Quarterly Chair Meeting. This was his motion, and it was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera.

Vice Mayor Morera then stated that he provided a physical printout of the Committee Rules with his proposed amendments, to the Town Council and placed them on the dais, as a courtesy to his colleagues. He explained that he was aware of the Quarterly Chair Meeting and that he chose to not bring the item for discussion at the January meeting, because he wanted to wait to the Quarterly Chair Meeting to fist take place. He explained that when he saw Councilmember Herzberg's new business item, he informed the Town Clerk that he wanted to co-sponsor the item, because he agreed with what Councilmember Herzberg was trying to attempt to do. He then stated that his proposed item is all about accountability - that lack of attendance is causing substantial issues in numerous committees, and it relates to their ability to obtain quorum to conduct business.

Vice Mayor Morera then moved to table this item to the February Regular Council Meeting, so that this item is brought up to the Committee Chairs first, and perhaps a sunshine meeting will take place later, to work together in a cohesive version of the Committee Rules with Councilmember Herzberg and Town Staff. Councilmember Herzberg seconded the motion.

During further discussion, Councilmember Herzberg stated that he would like the Committee Rules not to be amended so often. Councilmember Garcia also stated that he would like Committee Members to have the option of attending their committee meetings via zoom.

The Town Clerk called the roll, and the motion passed 6: 1; Councilmember Cuadra Garcia voted in opposition.

#### **L. Political Flags (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez presented the item and explained that there was controversy over the Town's enforcement of Temporary Signage Code. He explained that campaign signage is considered temporary signs and that the Town of Miami Lakes can regulate these signs and ensure that we are not loitering the town. However, Mayor Dieguez stated that we also need to allow residents to express themselves. He emphasized that perhaps, the issue is that residents are not a familiar with the Town's Code. He suggested defining what a campaign flag is versus a generic political flag. He stated he wants residents to continue expressing themselves freely is a way that does not deviate from the existing code.

Mayor Dieguez then motioned to direct Town Staff and the Town Attorney, to report back to the Town Council, at a future meeting and provide ways to clarify the Sign Code, so it's clear for residents to understand when they would be running afoul of it and for them to continue exercising their first amendment rights; he emphasized that he wants residents to

be clear and to make the code more readable. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera.

During the discussion of the Town Council, the Town Attorney Gastesi mentioned that years ago, he tried revamping the Code and he made remarks about the Reed caselaw. He stated that the Code was slightly amended and that he agrees that the Code needs to be looked at again but to pay attention to not target anybody. He stated that the Reed decision is very complicated and that this topic needs to be workshopped because it is not an easy task. The motion passed 7-0.

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

### **A. Report on Blasting Advisory Board (Herzberg)**

Councilmember Herzberg presented the report and explained that he has reached out to elected officials from the cities of Hialeah Gardens, Doral, Hialeah, Miramar, Florida City and Homestead. He further explained that he had a meeting with Representative David Barrero to inform him about issues regarding blasting. Councilmember Herzberg requested assistance from Mayor Dieguez to get Senator Garcia involved in the resolution draft process in order to present a resolution to the County, to support Representative Fabricio's legislation. He also mentioned that the BAB will be going to Tallahassee soon to discuss their efforts. He mentioned that once the Legislature starts, perhaps the members of the Town Council should travel to Tallahassee and lobby. Mayor Dieguez stated that he will speak to Commissioner Garcia and to work on a resolution, as requested.

### **B. Miami Lakes Goes Ivy League: Congratulations to Maurits Acosta**

Vice Mayor Morera recognized the Vice Chair of the Youth Activities Task Force Maurits Acosta for his acceptance to Harvard University. He stated that Maurits Acosta is a superstar and that he has been involved in the Town for many years.

### **C. Police Contract Report (Garcia)**

Councilmember Garcia presented the report and explained that he would like to request a meeting with Sheriff Rosie Codero-Stutz to discuss new initiatives to lower costs and provide support to the Town's Police Officers.

Mayor Dieguez stated that he would work with the Town Manager to schedule a meeting with the Sheriff.

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

### **A. Police Report (Major Gonzalez)**

Major Gonzalez presented the Police Report and answered questions posed by the Town Council.

### **B. Public Works Infrastructure Report (Santos)**

Public Works Director, Omar Santos presented the monthly infrastructure report and answered questions posed by the Town Council.

### **C. Update on Par 3 (Bajdaun/Pidermann)**

Town Manager Ed Pidermann presented the report and explained that he has been in communication with the Graham Companies to look into the development of the property; about resurrecting the development of that property, to what the Town Council had originally intended.

### **D. Report On Arbor Management CRM (Bajdaun)**

Parks and Recreation Director, Jeremy Bajdaun presented the report and explained that they have begun the process of establishing a CRM. He then answered questions posed by the Town Council.

### **E. Royal Palm Removal & Maintenance Report (Bajdaun)**

Parks and Recreation Director, Jeremy Bajdaun presented the report and explained that the report aims to address the item presented in the October Council meeting regarding the removal of palm fronds on NW 166 Terrace. He further explained that there are two different sets of pricing for the removal and replacement of the Royal Palms or the Palm Maintenance Program. He then answered questions posed by the Town Council.

### **F. Cultural Affairs Committee Request to Transfer Funds (Pidermann)**

Town Manager Ed Pidermann presented the report and explained that the Cultural Affairs Committee requested to move \$1,000 within their budget from one event to another. Vice Mayor Morera motioned to approve the request. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **G. Legislative Travel (Pidermann)**

Town Manager Ed Pidermann presented the report and explained that during the normal budget process they did not have the ability to allocate funds for the Town Council's Legislative

Travel. He further explained that after knowing that Councilmember Sanchez nomination was approved, he recommends that they transfer \$15,000 from the Town Clerk's office budget from line-item Special Election to the Town Council line for travel. He explained that this should be enough for each elected official to travel for 2 trips – one during committee weeks and for during the legislature session, including Dade Days. Vice Mayor Morera motioned to approve the transfer. Councilmember Herzberg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**17. ATTORNEY'S REPORT:**

The Town Attorney Raul Gastesi presented the Attorney's Report regarding their meeting with the Blasting Advisory Board. He also stated that the individuals who are penetrating the canal walls with a PVC line will be receiving demand notices.

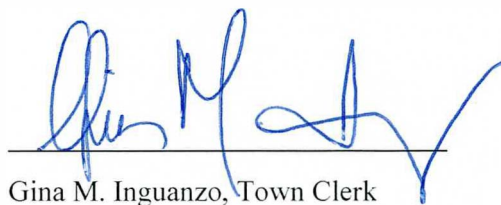
**18. ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Town Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 pm.

Approved this 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joshua Dieguez, Mayor

Attest:

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