

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Council Meeting**  
**March 18, 2025**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Government Center**  
**6601 Main Street**  
**Miami Lakes, Florida 33014**

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

Vice Mayor Morera presented a certificate of recognition to students from the Barbara Goleman Senior High School Mock Trial team. He explained that the students won first place in the Miami-Dade Mock Trial District Championship and that the team will be advancing to the State Final Competition in Orlando, Florida. Vice Mayor Morera also invited the Miami Lakes Bar Association and the Miami Lakes Town Foundation to come forward and present two checks to the Barbara Goleman Senior High School Mock Trial Team. He explained that the team needed \$4,652 dollars to fund their trip to the state championship. He stated that The Miami Lakes Bar Association presented the team with a check for \$1,000 and that the Miami Lakes Town Foundation Board Members presented the team with a check for \$3,652 dollars, fully covering the costs of the competition.

Vice Mayor Morera presented a proclamation declaring March 2025 as Colorectal Cancer Awareness month in the Town of Miami Lakes. He explained that colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States among men and women combined. He further explained that screening for colorectal cancer can lead to earlier detection and save lives by allowing for the prevention and treatment of this disease. On behalf of Mayor Josh Dieguez, Vice Mayor Morera proclaimed March 2025 as Colorectal Cancer Awareness month in the Town of Miami Lakes.

Vice Mayor Morera presented a proclamation to Ms. Lupe Bruneman and explained that she has been a dedicated healthcare professional in the Town of Miami Lakes, making significant contributions to the healthcare landscape through her leadership, expertise and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of others. On behalf of Mayor Josh Dieguez, Vice Mayor Morera proclaimed March 20th, 2025, as Lupe Bruneman day in the Town of Miami Lakes. Ms. Bruneman thanked the Town Council for this recognition.

Mayor Josh Dieguez presented a proclamation to Ms. Judy Farcus-Serra and explained that she has been a dedicated member of the Miami Lakes community serving on the Miami Lakes Veterans Committee for three years and has contributed significantly to the Town's events and activities. He further explained that she has chaired the reindeer run for the past three years, achieving remarkable success. Mayor Dieguez proclaimed March 18th, 2025, as Judy Farcus-Serra day in the Town of Miami Lakes. Ms. Farcus-Serra thanked the Town Council and the Veterans' Committee for this recognition.

## **2. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Town Clerk, Gina M. Inguanzo, called the roll at 6:30 pm. Councilmember Juan Carlos Fernandez, Councilmember Angelo Cuadra Garcia, Councilmember Steven Herzberg, Councilmember Alex Sanchez, Vice Mayor Morera and Mayor Joshua Dieguez were present. Councilmember Ray Garcia joined the meeting at 6:45 pm.

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

Councilmember Alex Sanchez led the prayer.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Angelo Cuadra Garcia.

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

Mayor Dieguez added Item 16L to the Agenda and respectfully requested for this Item to be discussed after Public Comment. Vice Mayor Morera motioned to approve the New Order of Business and Councilmember Sanchez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENTS: (Youtube )**

*(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.

Mr. George Quintana came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that Royal Oaks Park visitors have been bringing their dogs to the park where dogs are not allowed. He further explained that the Town should implement more signs within the park indicating that no dogs are not allowed.

Ms. Miriam Duman came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She requested for Miami Lakes K-8 Center to be renamed after former School Board Chair, Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman. She explained that Ms. Tabares Hantman was very dedicated to the field of education, that she pushed for the addition to the elementary school to make it a K-8 Center and she stated that Ms. Tabares Hantman served for 26 years as a board member and 14 times as the board Chair. She requested that the Town Council honor Ms. Tabares Hantman by renaming the school in her memory.

Mr. Fred Senra came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that the Optimist Park baseball fields are not in good condition. He urged the Town Council to consider allocating funds to make the necessary improvements to the park.

Mr. William Garciga came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is against short term rentals within the Royal Oaks community. He explained that the nature of short-term rentals can disrupt the sense of security and stability that families in the area value deeply. He further explained that the high turnover of tenants creates an unpredictable environment which can affect both the quality of life and the safety of the residents. He urged the Town Council to look into developing a code or legislation against short-term rentals within the Town.

Ms. Bonnie Cintron came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that nowhere within the Optimist Park agreement does it state that the resident's taxpayer dollars must provide for all the improvements in the reconfiguration plan. She further explained that the Town must provide a regulation sized high school baseball field. She stated that Miami Lakes residents should have been able to vote on the Optimist Park plan.

Mr. Carlos Andres came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is in support of new business item 16F. He explained that committee members would be allowed to have two unexcused absences. He further explained that committee members would have two opportunities to attend the meeting via video conference or telephone. He stated that he would recommend that the Town Council develop a code of conduct for those individuals representing the committee.

Mr. Nathan Padilla came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he advocates for the redevelopment of the existing underutilized tennis courts in Miami Lakes Optimist Park into multiple pickleball courts. He explained that pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports in the country and there is a strong demand for more pickleball courts within the Town. He presented the Town Council with a petition with 280 signatures from residents eager to see more opportunities for pickleball in our community. He urged the Town Council to consider the overwhelming support from our residents and the benefits this redevelopment would bring.

Mr. Dayan Jimenez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that on March 9th he had the honor of representing Barbara Goleman Senior Highschool and District 4 at the Perla Tabares Hantman 2025 Miami National College Fair. He stated that she is in support of the memorandum to rename Miami Lakes K-8 Center after Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman. He explained that the Town should develop a committee for the redevelopment of the Miami Lakes Optimist Park.

Mr. Abel Fernandez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is in support of not allowing short term rentals within the Town. He thanked Councilman Steven Herzberg for attending the Royal Oaks Homeowner's Association last week. He stated that the Town Council should look into a flat service fee for the maintenance of Optimist Park. He also stated that he is not in support of item 16E.

Ms. Ezperanza Reynolds came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She stated that she is in support of updating and reestablishing the engagement of HOA's and Condo Associations. She explained the importance of the Town Council attending HOA meetings. She stated that she is in full support of renaming the Neighborhood Service Districts to the Special Taxing Districts. She also stated that she agrees with removing the bike trail from Veteran's Park and that she is in agreement of not supporting the live local act bills.

Former Vice Mayor Nelson Rodriguez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is in support of renaming Miami Lakes K-8 Center after Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman. He encouraged the Town Council to vote in favor of this item. He stated that he is also in support of the 25-year Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. Jim Hamilton came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is in support of the item on the agenda to restore the funds used to balance the Town's budget back in 2023. He explained that with these funds, the Parks Department can start making the improvements that the park needs. He further explained that the Optimist Club volunteers have always supported and worked with the Town. He thanked the Town Council for their consideration on restoring the park funds.

Mr. Christopher Norwood came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he was previously the chair of the Youth Activities Task Force where he developed the Town's Movies at the Park event. He stated that 90 percent of residents voted to incorporate this Town so they could have local control of the parks. He stated that he is in support of renaming Miami Lakes K-8 Center after Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman.

Mr. Alex Ariano came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that the Town should consider how parks are being refurbished. He further explained that the Town should look into longer-lasting equipment, so it does not need to be replaced as often. He stated that the Town should figure out things better.

Mr. Mario Pinera came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that while he agrees that Optimist Park needs improvements, the Town should not put up the whole bill. He stated that he agrees with item 16D.

Ms. Lynn Matos came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She stated that she is in support of the item on the agenda to restore the funds used to balance the Town's budget back in 2023. She explained that with these funds restored, the Parks Department can start making the improvements that the park needs. She further explained that she has spent seven years hosting the Miami Lakes Food and Wine Festival in Optimist Park. She thanked the Town Council for their consideration on restoring the park funds.

Ms. Isabella Diaz came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She thanked the Miami Lakes Police Department for their attention to the crime occurring within the Royal Oaks community. She explained that she would like to request a reading of the license plates on 79th Avenue. She also explained her concerns regarding the Bob Graham Education Center school traffic.

Mr. Jeffrey Penniston participated in Public Comments via Zoom and explained that he is in support of the co-designation of NW 142nd Street.

Mayor Dieguez acknowledged an email that was sent to the Town Clerk, dated March 18<sup>th</sup>, regarding short-term rentals in the Royal Oaks Area. The Town Clerk shared the email with all the councilmembers earlier in the afternoon and made copies of said email and placed on the Dais.

There being no further public comments, public comments were closed.

## **7. APPOINTMENTS:**

Mayor Dieguez announced the following appointments:

Mr. Hector Rodriguez to the Economic Development Committee by Councilmember Alejandro Sanchez.

Mayor Dieguez explained that Former Vice Mayor Nelson Rodriguez's appointment to the Planning and Zoning Board requires a waiver. Vice Mayor Morera motioned to approve the waiver. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **8. MANAGER'S REPORTS:**

### **a. Police Report**

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

### **b. Public Works Infrastructure Report**

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

## **9. ATTORNEY'S REPORT:**

The Town Attorney, Raul Gastesi presented the Attorney's Report and explained that they are working on the overhaul of the procurement ordinance with Town Staff.

## **10. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### **A. Veterans Committee**

Chairperson William Perez presented the committee report and explained that the net proceeds from last year's Reindeer Run was \$37,600 dollars and gross proceeds were \$53,000 dollars. He further explained that the Veterans Committee would like to request the restoration of the Memorial Day line item into their budget. He further explained that they would like to request the Grant and Aid line item into their budget. He explained that \$18,800 dollars from the Reindeer Run will be going towards the Veteran Monument in Veteran's Park. He explained that the money donated to the American Legion Post goes directly to veteran families in need within the Town of Miami Lakes. He stated that the Veterans Committee is in the process of developing a website. He then answered questions posed by the Town Council.

## **11. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:**

None.

## 12. CONSENT CALENDAR:

Vice Mayor Morera motioned to approve the Consent Calendar, and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Sanchez. All were in favor.

### A. Approval of Minutes

- January 16, 2025 NSD Workshop
- February 18, 2025 Regular Council Meeting
- February 25, 2025 MLOP Workshop

These minutes were approved on Consent Calendar.

- B. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE TOWN'S FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026; AUTHORIZING TOWN MANAGER OR HIS DESIGNEE TO PURSUE FUNDING FOR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE ANY AGREEMENT IN FURTHERANCE OF ADVANCING LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXPEND BUDGETED FUNDS; AUTHORIZING TOWN CLERK TO REMIT A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION TO TOWN LOBBYIST, NCGA; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This item was approved in the Consent Calendar.

- C. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE IN CONTRACT FOR RFP 2024-05, CANAL BANK STABILIZATION PHASE III PROJECT TO ARBOR TREE & LAND, INC., IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$115,900.00); APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS IN AN AMOUNT OF ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$115,900.00) FROM THE STORMWATER UTILITY BOND CONTINGENCY RESERVE TO LINE ITEM (GL No. 402-463800-21S12); PROVIDING THE TOWN MANAGER WITH AUTHORITY; AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF BUDGETED FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This item was approved in the Consent Calendar.

- D. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE OF TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$25,000.00) TO WORK ORDER NO. 4, PURSUANT TO CONTRACT 2021-43 FOR CIVIL ENGINEERING AND RELATED SERVICES, WITH CALVIN GIORDANO AND ASSOCIATES, INC., FOR CANAL BANK STABILIZATION PHASE III PROJECT DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS; AUTHORIZING A LINE ITEM MODIFICATION;

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.

- E. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, CREATING AN AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLANNING THE TOWN'S TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION; AUTHORIZING THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO TAKE ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO EXECUTE THE PLANNING OF SAID ANNIVERSARY; PROVIDING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMITTEE; PROVIDING FOR COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE; PROVIDING FOR A SUNSET DATE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This item was approved on Consent Calendar.

- F. A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE USE OF RENTALScape SOFTWARE BY DECKARD TECHNOLOGIES, INC., FOR THE IDENTIFICATION, MONITORING, AND COMPLIANCE ENFORCEMENT OF SHORT-TERM RENTAL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES; APPROVING THE ANNUAL COST OF THE SOFTWARE; PROVIDING FOR FUNDING FROM REGISTRATION FEES; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This item was approved on Consent Calendar.

### **13. ORDINANCE- FIRST READING:**

- A. AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE TOWN'S FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 BUDGET ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE NO.24-330; PROVIDING FOR EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENTS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO TAKE ALL ACTION NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Town Attorney, Raul Gastesi read the title of the ordinance in first reading into the record.

The Town Manager, Ed Pidermann presented the item. He stated that the items on page 236 of the agenda provide a recap of where we are with or with fund balance. He stated that the fund balance reserve available for the Town Council to consider is \$1,559,364. He added that Town Staff has put together a list of recommended items to allocate those 1.5 million dollars.

Vice Mayor Morera then made a motion to adopt the ordinance in first reading as provided by Town Staff. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fernandez.

The Town Manager answered questions posed by the Town Council and started his discussion by mentioning that the 28 items on the list are not set in priority. He mentioned that the Town Council is the only one that sets priority and that the 25<sup>th</sup> Town Anniversary and Veterans Memorial are the only two items that are in order of priority because the Town Council approved those two items in the February Regular Council Meeting via New Business Items. Explanations were provided regarding the Impact Fee Study, the Salary Study, Renewable Energy Feasibility Study, MLOP Dedicated Pickleball Courts, the Litter Crew (Reinstated Enhanced Service) and the Mini Park Capital Program.

Councilmember Sanchez made a motion to amend the order of the list of items and moved #19 "Mini Park Capital Program (Phase 2 & Phase 3) up to the position #6. Mayor Dieguez seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Councilmember Garcia proposed for Town Staff to conduct the Salary Study through LinkedIn and their reports and to perhaps look into other existing vehicles that are available and less costly. He mentioned that he would like to fund for more Police Officers on the road. He also requested to get information from the Reforesting projects that have been done over the last couple of years- specifically, the root barriers and what is needed to prevent future damages.

Parks & Recreation Director, Jeremy Bajdaun, answered questions posed by the Town Council.

After discussion amongst the Town Council, the Town Clerk called the roll and the ordinance in First reading, Item 13A, as amended, passed 6-1; Councilmember Cuadra Garcia voted in opposition.

#### **14. ORDINANCE IN SECOND READING:**

- A. AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA; AMENDING CHAPTER 13, ARTICLE IV, DIVISION 3, TITLED "SHORT TERM RENTALS"; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION INTO THE CODE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (GARCIA)

Town Attorney, Raul Gastesi read the title of the ordinance in second reading into the record.

The Deputy Town Attorney presented the item and stated that this item is a revision to the short-term rental ordinance. He explained that one of the things that hampers our ability to really disallow short-term rentals in its totality is that we are preempted by Florida Statutes. He explained that per Florida Statutes, short-term rentals are allowed in municipalities; however, municipalities could regulate them.

Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella explained the changes to the ordinance, such as an increase in the registration fee, adding of the MDC Fire Life Safety Inspections, raising of fines for code violations, implementing stricter criteria for the suspension of vacations rentals, and that the



Town Manager has been provided with clear guidelines for revoking vacation rental permits. He also explained that the Town Council just passed a resolution approving a particular vendor to assist the Town's Code Enforcement team to identify which short-term rental is registered and abiding by the ordinance. He stated that this ordinance was reviewed by the Planning & Zoning Board -in their local planning capacity and they made some suggestions that have been implemented into the ordinance. Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella also mentioned that the idea of putting a noise box to record noise, as one municipality implemented it, might open the municipality to legal concerns. He stated that if the Town Council desires to incorporate the noise box, he can look into that option and into other electronic devices to deter noise and that he would report back to the Town Council. He finished his explanation by stating that Miami-Dade County does not require BTR's.

Mayor Dieguez then opened the public hearing. There being no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Councilmember Garcia made a motion to approve Item 14A and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Fernandez.

Councilmember Garcia thanked Town Staff and the Town Attorney for working on this item. The Deputy Town Attorney then spoke about the violations that property owners will be subject to and how these fines can accrue interest. He explained that if a person has a fine in their property that has not been corrected, they only have a certain timeframe to be able to make that payment and corrections. He also mentioned that the Code Enforcement team will be able to identify who the violators are with the assistance of the new software. Deputy Town Attorney explained that Code Enforcement oversees the enforcement of the ordinance and that the Police Department will address the noise violations. Deputy Town Attorney also explained that many of the short-term rentals are not necessary homestead so when the fine has become voluminous, the Town Council will have to give directions to the Town Manager, regarding what type of action they would like to take. Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella also spoke about the suspension of vacation rentals for multiple violations.

Major Gonzalez answered questions posed by the Town Council.

Vice Mayor Morera then made a motion amending Section 13-1635 (4)(b), to replace the word "or" with "of", for it to read "Suspension restrictions. An occupant may not occupy a vacation rental during any period of suspension of a vacation rental". Councilmembers Herzberg seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Town Clerk called the roll and the ordinance in second reading, Item 14A passed 7-0.

## **15. RESOLUTIONS:**

None.

## **16. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS:**

### **A. Dog Loitering Enforcement (Cuadra Garcia)**

Councilmember Cuadra Garcia presented his item and stated that some residents are concerned with dog loitering taking place in their neighborhoods. He mentioned that this is a health issue and that he has heard about a new apparatus (a camera) that perhaps could be installed in different parts of the town. He then made a motion for Town Staff to come back with recommendations of what can be done. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Herzberg. The motion passed 6-0; vice Mayor Morera was absent.

**B. Exploring to Contract Miami Parking Authority to Enforce Ordinance / Code (Fernandez)**

Councilmember Fernandez presented his item and explained that because we of the Town's contract with Miami-Dade Police Department, they can only cite tickets that break County ordinances. He mentioned that he would like Town Staff and the Town Attorney to explore options of contracting with the Miami Parking Authority to enforce commercial vehicle overnight parking, and swale overnight parking. He also mentioned that the Deputy Town Attorney had just shared with him an agreement of the City of Doral with Miami Parking Authority, that perhaps the Town of Miami Lakes could piggyback from this agreement, to solve these issues. Councilmember Fernandez then made a motion to this effect and Councilmember Sanchez seconded the motion.

The Deputy Town Attorney answered questions posed by the Town Council. He stated that if the Town Council approves this item, the Town Manager and himself would engage in conversations with the Miami Parking Authority, to discuss the costs of contracting with them. He pointed out that the Town of Miami Lakes does not have the size of commercial area nor the park issues that the City of Doral has, because the Town of Miami Lakes is a smaller municipality. He stated that he thinks that there would be some kind of fee for enforcement. He also mentioned that the Town Manager has been speaking with Major Gonzalez about this, so it would also be good to continue exploring this avenue as well. The motion passed 6-0; Vice Mayor Morera was absent.

**C. Co-Designation of NW 142<sup>nd</sup> Street (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez presented his item and explained that he met with Mr. Cody Penniston, the son of Jeffrey Penniston, and that he gathered a lot of information about the union known as Plumbers 519, based in the Town of Miami Lakes since 1973. He explained that Mr. Jeffrey Penniston has been very active in that Union, and he would like to co-designate NW 142<sup>nd</sup> Street after Mr. Jeffrey Penniston, being that it sits right next to their Union and that it would be a nice tribute to Mr. Penniston and to the entire Union. Mayor Dieguez then motioned to adopt this co-designation of NW 142<sup>nd</sup> Street, between 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the industrial park. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garcia. The motion passed 7-0.

**D. Updating and Reestablishing Engagement with HOA & Condo Associations (Herzberg)**

Councilmember Herzberg spoke about being able to communicate effectively with our residents and with their HOA's and Condominiums Associations and he mentioned that years ago there was structured bi-annual meeting taking place that he would love to bring that back. He then emphasized that he would like to work with Town Staff and the Neighborhood Improvement Committee (NIC) to update the contact database list -including their management companies and the actual officers of the boards, and to also update the list of where and when all the HOA's and Condominiums meetings take place. He then made a motion to this effect. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera.

Town Manager Pidermann stated that the resolution that created and established the Neighborhood Improvement Committee states that they are the coordinators of this matter. Town Manager Pidermann then stated that Town Staff will work with the NIC about this and that the HOA & Condo Associations, collectively with the Town Council, can decide if this meeting will take place once a year or twice a year. Councilmember Herzberg agreed and stated that he wants to give this a try and see how it goes.

Mayor Dieguez explained that when he was chairman of the NIC, the committee would oversee the Quarterly HOA Meetings with different topics and presenters and he mentioned that perhaps this can be reinstated by the NIC, because it is in their founding resolution and the committee needs to comply with their resolution. Town Manager Pidermann agreed and stated that he would ask the NIC to spearhead setting up one of these meetings. Councilmember Herzberg requested Town Staff to get the updated list of the Associations and their officers and the schedules of when and where they meet. Town Manager Pidermann added that the list should be updated every 6 months. The motion passed 6-0; Councilmember Fernandez was absent.

**E. Amendment to 13e1506 of the Town Code (Sanchez)**

Councilmember Sanchez explained that the Town Code as it currently states, in lots where the rear setback is 25 feet or less, if your setback is 20 feet, you can only go to 50 percent of your setback, in order to create a pergola or gazebo. He stated that everyone in South Florida likes to enjoy their backyard and to enjoy their backyard in a safe manner with shade. He stated that he would like to work with Town Staff to find an alternative for individuals that have limited space in their backyards, to try to find a middle ground between the 50% of the required rear yard, not going all the way to property line for rain purposes, but at least to be able to reach 5 feet from the property line. He would like to work with Town Staff to find a solution to be able to go a little further and have an area outside of their homes for them to enjoy. Councilmember Sanchez made a motion to this effect and the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera.

The Principal Planner, Susana Alonso, answered questions posed by the Town Council. She stated that the Planning & Zoning Board has seen a lot of variances regarding rear setbacks in the last few months. After some discussion, the motion passed 5-2; Councilmember Cuadra Garcia and Councilmember Garcia voted in opposition.

**F. Amendment to Committee Rules (Morera)**

Vice Mayor Morera presented the item and thanked Councilmember Herzberg for co-sponsoring the item. He stated that in the January 2025 Regular Council Meeting, Councilmember Herzberg presented Item 14K, which was about amending the Committee Rules. Vice Mayor Morera explained that coincidentally, he also was working on amending the Committee Rules, but he chose not to discuss them in the January meeting, because he was waiting for the Quarterly Chair Meeting to take place in early February, because he wanted to receive feedback from the Committee Chairs. However, he explained that when Item 14K came up in the January meeting, he notified all his colleagues that he had placed a proposed amendment to the Committee Rules on the Dais and he then supported Councilmember Herzberg's item. He was listed as a co-sponsor and subsequently, after discussion, the item was tabled.

Vice Mayor Morera explained that after the Quarterly Committee Meeting took place and they obtained feedback from the Committee Chairs, he drafted the modified proposed Committee Rules

and shared with the Town Council a New Business Item in the March Agenda. He explained that he eliminated a lot of useless references to the Neighborhood Services Districts Advisory Boards because they are no longer in play, he added -at the request of many Committee Chairs- under certain circumstances, allowing remote appearance for the committee members, He stated that he recommended to reduce the quorum requirement from 50% to 1/3 third. He stated that the bulk of the changes are in Section 10, which deal with attendance. He emphasized that committee members are volunteers who give us their time but simultaneously, they emphasized that they are volunteers that took an oath and decided to take on responsibility and that they are expected to be present at these meetings.

Vice Mayor Morera then explained that the proposed Committee Rules call for committee members to be removed automatically, if they accrue three unexcused absences of regularly scheduled meetings during the same calendar year; if they accrue three consecutive absences of regularly scheduled meetings during the same calendar year -regardless of excused or unexcused absences; and, if they accrue 5 absences from regularly scheduled meetings during the same calendar year, regardless of excused or unexcused. He also explained that his proposed Committee Rules provide a definition of what excused absences mean.

Vice Mayor Morera then continued to read into the record the proposed amendments of Section 10 of the Committee Rules and explained said amendments, such as attendance via remote appearance. He also commented on Section 11 of the Committee Rules, and mentioned that he added a Town of Miami Lakes Committee Code of Conduct, so that the committee members all adhere to them. After his detailed explanation, Vice Mayor Morera motioned to adopt the rules and Councilmember Herzberg seconded the motion.

Town Clerk Inguanzo asked for clarification regarding the Attendance Reports that shall be included in the Chairperson's Semi-Annual Report, as detailed in Section 10(f). Regarding this matter, the Town Council emphasized that attendance is vital and that the Committee Report will not be presented to the Town Council, unless the correct report -with the Attendance Report- is included.

Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella answered questions asked by the Town Council regarding the quorum needed to have a meeting. Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella stated that there is a Florida Statute with regards to municipalities, to the passages of ordinances and resolutions and several Attorney General Opinions, stating that it applies to committees. He also explained that physical quorum must be met to have a meeting.

Councilmember Herzberg then motioned to amend and revised the proposed Committee Rules, so they are sufficient to Florida Law regarding the quorum requirement and that remote appearance cannot count towards quorum. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sanchez and all were in favor.

Councilmember Sanchez then stated that committee rules should be reflective of our Town Charter. He made reference to Section 10(b)i, he then stated that the town committees should have the power to vote a committee member out, if a committee member has been absent three times in a year. He also pointed out that regarding Section 10(c)iv, there is already a law that protects military service in case they are called away to active-duty service, so he recommended for that to be removed from the committee rules, because there is a federal law that already contemplates it. He also recommended that instead of a calendar year, make it a 12-month rolling period for the 3 options stated in Section 10(b) i, ii, iii, instead of in a calendar year.

After providing an explanation, Councilmember Sanchez then motioned to amend Section 10(b)i, for the committee to first have the ability to decide whether to keep or remove the town committee member who has had 3 unexcused absences. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion. After discussion, Councilmember Sanchez withdrew his amendment to Section 10(b)i.

Councilmember Sanchez then motioned to amend the rules, Section 10(b) i, ii, iii, instead of calendar year for it to be a 12-month rolling basis calendar. This motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera for discussion. The Town Clerk called the roll, and the motion passed 6-1; Vice Mayor Morera voted in opposition.

Councilmember Garcia then motioned to amend Section 10(b)ii, for it to read “if they accrue 4 consecutive excused absences, instead of “3” consecutive excused absences. Councilmember Herzberg seconded the motion. The Town Clerk called the roll the motion died 3-4; Councilmember Fernandez, Councilmember Sanchez, Vice Mayor Morera and Mayor Dieguez voted in opposition.

The Town Clerk called the roll on the main motion, as amended, and the main motion passed 5-2; Councilmember Fernandez and Councilmember Cuadra-Garcia voted in opposition.

#### **G. Neighborhood Service District revert to Special Taxing District (Fernandez)**

Councilmember Fernandez explained his item and stated that in Miami-Dade County, it is referred to as Special Taxing District and he emphasized that the logical thing to do is to change the name back to the way the County and real estate industry uses. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sanchez and all were in favor.

#### **H. Removal of Veterans Park Bike Trail from Capital Projects (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez explained that saving money that otherwise would be allocated for this project would be better put toward other uses. Also, finding a place to put this trail would be extremely challenging. He then motioned to remove the Veterans Park Bike Trail from the list of future Capital Projects. Vice Mayor Morera seconded the motion, and the motion passed. All were in favor.

#### **I. Mitigate Parkgoers Taking Pets/Dogs (Fernandez)**

Councilmember Fernandez presented his item and stated that he is open to any ideas - possibly erecting more signs that state that dogs are not allowed in parks. He added that he is conscientious that the Town does not have a park ranger, but he is hopeful that it could be a possibility to include the Miami Parking Authority as part of their citation. Councilmember Fernandez made a motion for Town Staff to look into ways of citing folks that bring dogs to parks. Town Manager Pidermann stated that Town Staff will brainstorm and see what could be done to improve or look at the enforcement mechanisms. The motion passed 7-0.

**J. Approval for Use of Town Hall as Book Donation Location (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez requested permission from the Town Council to have a box placed in Town Hall for a student to use Town Hall as a donation location, for a project, which then the books will be given away during the annual "Back to School" Drive. Vice Mayor Morera seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**K. Formal Positions for and Against Various Tallahassee Proposals (Dieguez)**

Mayor Dieguez moved to waive the Special Rules of Order Section 6.10. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Dieguez presented his item and explained that he wants the Town to take a specific stand against certain legislation that has been proposed, the Live Local Act and the legislation that proposes to eliminate property taxes, -without some mechanism to pay for our Police and Fire. He then made a motion asking permission from the Town Council by an official act, and he requested the blessing from the Town Council and to take an official position against all the Live Local Acts that have been filled, so he can write a letter to the appropriate committee chairs and legislators. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera. The motion passed 7-0.

Mayor Dieguez then spoke about a bill that is circulating through the legislature, that would legalize accessory dwelling units, which could be the first step towards allowing efficiencies. He then made a motion asking the Town Council to take a position against this bill. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Morera. The motion passed 7-0.

Regarding the property tax bills, he asked the Town Council to authorize him to speak about the complete elimination of property taxes as it pertains to municipalities. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion, and the motion passed 7-0.

**17e MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS:**

**A. Update on Rock Mine Blasting Matters (Herzberg)**

Councilmember Herzberg presented the report and stated that when he visited Tallahassee with Vice Mayor Morera, they had a lot of meetings, and that they met with the next possible candidates for the CFO of the State of Florida.

**18e ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Town Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:06 pm.

Approved this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 2025.

  
Joshua Dieguez, Mayor

Attest:

  
Gina M. Inguanzo, Town Clerk