



**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The regular council meeting for Tuesday, September 28, 2021, is called to order at 7:01 PM. We're going to have a moment of silent meditation followed by Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge Allegiance.

All: I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Madam Clerk, may I please have a roll call, please?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Here.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Present.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Here.

Village Clerk Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-ward. Councilperson Martin will not be in today. Also present for the record Yenise Jacobi, Village clerk, Christia Alou, Village Manager, Joseph Geller, Interim Attorney, and Chief Magnusson. You have a quorum.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. I appreciate that. Moving on, next is approval of the agenda. Do I have any deletions or additions if not, do I have a motion to approve the agenda?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I move to approve the agenda.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion to approve by Vice Mayor Urbom. Do I have a second?

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Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. All in favor say, aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All oppose say, nay. Next, moving approval of the minutes from the last meeting. If everybody's looked at them. Do I have a motion to approve the minutes from the July 27th, 2021 Regular Council Meeting? Moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Vice Mayor Urbom: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Vice Mayor Urbom. All in favor say, aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All oppose say, nay. Hearing none, moving on. Moving on to acknowledgement of visitors and/or special presentations. The first one that we have is something that I'm very excited about. In a second, I'm going to go up to the podium, but last Saturday I was able to go to the beginning of what was the parade to recognize the Childhood Cancer Awareness Month which is in September and wonderful organization and foundation called Mystic Force, right? Mystic Force Foundation.

She's been here before previously not only for-- and the thing about it is that she not only fights and brings awareness for Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, but for all the cancer elements that we always have to go through and that we fight within society. She was out of town. She said she had to go out of town, but she was-- we're lucky, and we're blessed that once she got back in town, she's making time for us. I'm so happy that she's here. Silvia, will you please come on up, please, for us? [chuckles] I want her to come up and just tell you guys about some of her foundation and then the Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, how she got here and her story that brought her here which she told us.

[silence]

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Silvia: Thank you, Mayor, council. Some of you know my story, but for those of you who don't. This is my baby, Salvatore, and when he was four and half years old, he was diagnosed with stage four neuroblastoma cancer. At that time, we were given a 20% chance for him to live five years. Upon research we realized that the reason for those grim statistics was the lack of treatment options for his disease and, of course, the lack of treatment options was due to a lack funding for research. We vowed at that moment that we were going to do everything that we could to try to save our baby's life.

We started our foundation, started to raise awareness, started to raise funds for research. We opened a lab at the University of Miami where my husband's a neurosurgeon which we continue to fund to this day. In three and half years of treatment, my baby underwent 55 cycles of chemotherapy, 50 rounds of radiation, 12 surgeries. He had over 200 in blood platelet transfusions. He was treated in seven different hospitals across five different states. He, sorry, we did everything we could to try to save his life. Wherever there was a treatment option available for him that is where we went.

Unfortunately, my baby died at the age of seven, one month shy of his eighth birthday, but I vowed to make it my mission in life to try to save every child that I can and to keep them as happy as possible while they go through their treatments. We continue to raise awareness. We do awareness events not just in September because our children fight cancer every single day of their lives. Childhood cancer is the number one disease killer of children in our country.

The incidence of childhood cancer continues to rise yet the government funding for childhood cancer research is just about 4%. The government does not consider our children a national priority. We work hard to raise awareness and let people know what our children go through and how dire the need for funding for research is.

The mayor was at our parade last week, which included police departments from all over Miami-Dade County and we're so thankful for them for helping us to raise the deeply needed awareness for our children. Thank you so much for your proclamation, for honoring our children every year. The only way that our children will ever become a national priority and we will ever raise the necessary funds for them is to raise awareness. Thank you, thank you for honoring our children.

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[applause]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I just want to say and the reason why we're doing this with two mics I'm trying to stay the distance with COVID and stuff. I don't want to get too close, but on behalf of the Village of El Portal, we know it's not much, but we're trying to do whatever we can, and we would like to donate \$250 towards your foundation. We really appreciate all the work that you do around the neighborhood, around-- throughout our entire county. If anybody would have been at that parade the other Saturday, you would have seen all the police departments and even other elected officials. She brings the entire county together for such a great cause.

We really appreciate this, and we do want to present this to you on behalf of the village of El Portal and we'll be in touch. As I said that she not only recognizes and fights for continued awareness and acknowledgement of the childhood cancer, but of all the various cancers. I will be inviting you back. [chuckles]

Silvia: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We will continue to make this-- the thing about it is this is, and this is really what I want to say. Cancer is something that not only touches so many of us, but it's something that all of our families deal with and it just seems to be that one thing that the medical world, that a lot of elected officials just don't put enough money behind and at the same time simultaneously, just can't get a grip around to break through certain things to really make people get healthy when it comes to the cancers that they have to endure. It's an ongoing fight and it could be a frustrating fight.

Silvia: It's very frustrating.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It's a very frustrating fight, when you do not only see the lack of funding, but you know that with the proper funding knowing what government also funds other things that so much could be done with just a little bit more. [crosstalk]

Silvia: If I can just add one thing. Some of our childhood cancers continue to be terminal upon diagnosis. DIPG which is an inoperable brain tumor, Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma

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is considered terminal upon diagnosis. It is the same brain tumor that Neil Armstrong's daughter died from in 1962. In almost 60 years, there has never been any viable treatments found for these children. Their average lifespan is nine months and that's just unfathomable that we've done so much and can send her father to the moon and still not find any treatments for these children.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, Silvia. As I said, we really appreciate you and whatever we can do, we're a small village, for whatever we can do to help you in your fight.

Silvia: With a lot of love and support.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: With a lot of love and support. [chuckles] We don't have that many funds, but whatever we can do to self-support you, we're always here and we always have your back for whatever you need.

Silvia: Thank you.

[applause]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: In local elective type of fashion, whenever we do something to where we have a guest to the statue of Silvia, we do want to take a picture and we do want to present her not only with the actual check that the foundation's going to have, but we also want to give her foundation, the mystic foundation this check which shows \$250. Everybody come down.

[applause]

[background conversation]

Photographer: All right, look right here first. We're on three. One, two, and three. Don't move. One more left here. All right perfect, do smile. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much.

[pause 00:11:49]

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You guys, next we're going to move on to the next award with Chief Magnusson, if you would come up to the podium, please. Thank you very much, Sylvia. Thank you. Take care. Thank you so much.

Ed Hudak: Good afternoon, Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're going to move on the next award, you guys. Good afternoon. How are you doing? He's been in commission meetings all day. He's ready to go. He's like, "I'm used to this."

Ed Hudak: It's eight o'clock.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It's eight o'clock. This is the Lifesaving Award. The floor is yours. He'll explain to you what this is all about.

Ed Hudak: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Members of the Council, Madam Manager. My name is Ed Hudak. I'm the Chief of Police in Coral Gables. I'm here on behalf of the Florida Police Chiefs Association, where I serve as District 4 director. I represent all the city police chiefs here in the South Florida area. It's truly my honor to present the Florida Police Chiefs Association Lifesaving Award this evening for the award sponsored by the Harris Foundation.

This award is designed to recognize police officers for exceptional life-saving act. As you know, police officers put their lives on the line each and every day to protect their communities. Police officers also save lives. We are here today to honor one of those officers from your city that has done just that. If I would please have the honor, sir. If I can invite officer Angel Lopez up with myself and the chief, please.

[applause]

As officer Angel Lopez comes forward, I think I can remind those of you who don't know already, that on April 12, 2021, officer Lopez had ended his shift and was on his way home. While he was on his way home, he witnessed another vehicle sideswipe another vehicle and sent the car careened down into the embankment to the C-7 canal. Without hesitation, Officer Lopez immediately pulled alongside and prepared to enter the canal.

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Officer Lopez had no time to run back to his car and secure his gun or his radio at the time of the scene. He located a trustworthy citizen, which I'm glad to see that happened, and was able to hold on to his property. Officer Lopez slid down the embankment and entered into the water without hesitation. As he waited over to the submerged vehicle, he noticed that a female driver was stuck inside the car and was trying to get out.

As he reached through the open window, he was able to pull the female out of the guard window before the vehicle totally submerged. Prior to entering the water, he passed his gun belt on, as well as called Fire Rescue to respond, so they were on the way. When he got back, there was another bystander that actually helped, another good thing that we know here in Dade County, that somebody helped and assisted until Fire Rescue got there.

The embankment was very, very steep, therefore he had to sit and wait in the water with a woman until rescue could arrive, get a ladder to him as well as to her where he safely secured the woman to the board to climb out to safety. She was able to be tended to by fire rescue and lived through the ordeal. Officer Lopez is a bonafide hero according to his chief and those of us from the Florida Police Chiefs Association of the 900 members also concur with Chief Magnusson's assessment of this individual.

Because of his actions, he saved this woman's life and continued to show exactly why all of us take this honorable badge and oath that we take. You all should be very proud as we are of the Florida Police Chiefs Association. We award the life-saving award from behalf of the State of Florida and all of its officers and chiefs to Officer Angel Lopez for his life-saving incident for putting his own life in extreme danger to save this woman. Congratulations.

[applause]

Do you want to talk?

[applause]

Angel Lopez: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. It's like the chief says sometimes you don't have much time to think about things. Thank goodness that other individuals there is-- Like he said, just find somebody trustworthy, and it is what it is. Thank goodness I was able

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to go in there and get her out before the car sank and make sure that she didn't go under like I almost did. Anyways, thank you very much for the award and I really appreciate it. Thank you.

[applause]

Ed Hudak: We want to take a picture for the state if you don't mind, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The chief wants to say something or not?

Chief Magnusson: I will in a few, we got something else going here.

[background noise]

[background conversation]

Photographer: Look over here, look over here. Look over here.

[background conversation]

Sorry, move on, take a step. Take one little step forward. Okay, we go on three.

Participant: We go on three.

Photographer: One, two, and three. Hold on one second. Thank you very much.

Participants: Thank you.

[background conversation] [silence]

[background conversation]

Chairperson Lightfoot-Ward: Morning?

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No. I was [unintelligible 00:20:14]. In a second, we're going to invite Attorney Gibbons back there. We're going to have Chief Magnusson come back up for a couple more presentations, and that'd be it. Thank you very much, Chief.

Chief Magnusson: Good evening. This is always a very much anticipated council meeting this time of year, when one of two things happen, either it's the state of the village address, which is coming next month, and then maybe the meeting before we get to honor an officer that just did a little bit more than the others in a police department. Whether any department could have been the Gables City of Miami. Today it's El Portal, we're talking about El Portal. All the departments do it, and it's just a really proud moment to be able to do so to honor the people that work for you.

The problem is, I don't have one. I didn't say I didn't have any, I said I didn't have one. This year, there's going to be two, because you'll realize why it was so difficult to make that decision. I'm a die hard sports fan, a die hard of St. Louis Cardinals fan. I can tell you; how do you have two people? I can tell you I go back to 1979, Keith Hernandez and Willie Stargell share the MVP of the award, because they had such a great year that they said we can't figure out which one to give it to, we're going to give it to both and that's what happened. It does happen from time to time.

The strength that these two men that I'm going to introduce in a few minutes, they brought a strength to this department over the past year. As chief, this this problem I basically discussed with you now of who to pick, you wish in this job that, that every chief would have such a problem. It's really not much of a problem, it's really an honor. In the past three years, now we have four officers of the year.

They were all different officers now, which tells you that we're spreading the wealth, not because we want to spread the wealth, if it's there, it's there, if it's not, it's not. What it tells me is that each and every year, somebody new seems to be stepping up to the plate and just carrying a part of the department. The department works great together, but every now and then, it's just somebody as in this year, though, two people that were just a little bit above and beyond the others that guided the ship, as they have been since I've been here.

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Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

Let me just give you a little breakdown on the two people. Those two people are, you just met Officer Angel Lopez and the other officer, Sergeant Jairo Borrell. Officer Lopez, as you heard before, he saved a woman from drowning by jumping into a canal. He received the lifesaving ribbon from this department earlier in the year. Out of Tallahassee, the state of Florida, they honored him with the same thing just a few minutes ago.

He was also given the Miami-Dade Association of Chiefs of Police, Officer Of The Month back in July, which was nice because it was the first meeting that we held in person since the pandemic began, and it was the last one because shortly thereafter the spike continued and that we have not had any more dinners, and that may be a while till we have them again, so it worked perfectly. He insisted on an investigation, assisted in getting a squatter out of a house that basically moved in right here down the block on 87th Street. With his tenacity and his special way of doing things, he has a way with words, the people that were there, decided maybe it's best to leave.

They did and the owner was beyond grateful for that. We followed up with making other contacts. If this person or persons decide they want to wreak that havoc again, they're going to find themselves in handcuffs. I guarantee you; Officer Lopez will be leading the charge. He's the point person and continues to be on a tumultuous landlord-tenant dispute that's been going on off of 83rd Street. He's still working it out and assisting to a point where the victim who at times has been rightfully angry, but reaches out to this officer because he gave him a cell phone to help him out as best, he could, that's personal service.

Whether we can resolve it the way the person wants to immediately or it takes a little bit longer, just that added personal touch goes a long way. That tells you a little bit about Officer Lopez. Recently, he investigated a burglary to a dwelling here in El Portal where a power washer was taken. He followed some leads, it was the end of the day, he could have passed it off to somebody, but instead he found out the person was-- the vehicle came back to somewhere in [unintelligible 00:25:58]. He goes down there, sets up on it, by now it's later on in the evening. Gets to city of Miami over there, low and behold, we catch the offender. That's that tenacity. We're a small department but not short on a desire to help the community.

That's the reason Officer Lopez received the award. It could end right there, but it doesn't. We shift over to Sergeant Borrell, who's like on an engine room on a cruise ship. You ever been

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Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

on a cruise ship, and you see everybody dressed up in their whites in everything, and everybody's having a good time, what you don't see is what's below the deck. You don't see the people that might have the oil on them, they may be in uniform, but they have that oil on them, they're in the engine room. I'm telling you, if they're not doing their job, the ship is dead in the water. It's going to get hot; people are going to complain.

While it's nice everything in the cruise ship aboveboard, above the deck, below the deck, basically is what keeps the ship running. Sergeant Borrell's that chief engineer on that cruise ship. He's out there in the field too. He gets a lot of stuff done, he's the voice of reason, officers go to him for the wisdom of his years on this department and for helping them out in a number of things, along with Sergeant Sharp, they're the supervisors here. What he does also is he takes care of a lot of the intricate parts of a police department that you're not going to see on any television show, because it's really not all that exciting.

NYPD Blue had nothing about getting audited by FDLE, and the struggles that we have to go through to get certified, to get passing all these and all these other audits that come from a number of state agencies, he does it. He undertakes it, he's on top of it, he tells me what needs to get done and that's fine, because he knows what he's doing. I'd be a fool to say, "No, no. I'm telling you--" "No, no, you could tell me because you know better," and he does.

He gets these things in line here, he gets this done, he is making sure that all the El Portal Police Department personnel gets trained in these areas, so that we are not negligent in any one area as far as these audits go. He prepares the traffic enforcement details and the sheets, the statistics. He is also the special events coordinator for the department. Anytime somebody needs something extra, like they need officers or there's an issue going on or there's filming, he's the person. While Officer Lopez is is the glitz out there, what's going on behind the scenes that made this department run successfully too, and I knock wood as I say it is Sergeant Borrell. I'm beyond honored to give both gentlemen Sergeant Borrell and Officer Lopez, the El Portal Officer of the Year award.

[applause]

Chief Magnusson: Do y'all want to say some words?

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Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Sergeant Borrell: Thank you chief for your kind words, and thank you council and I appreciate this award, and I'm sure Officer Lopez does too. Thank you again.

Officer Lopez: Thank you again, thank you very much. Like the chief says, we're a small place but we do the best we can here. We have to reach out some time to do something extra, we take care of it, that's how we roll here. Anyways, thank you again for the--

[applause]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Don't go anywhere yet. I just wanted to say, first of all, you guys I use the word the black mask. Counselors, when I'm trying to get blue police officers, like I'm trying to get here, I got the blue shirt on. I'm trying to be here in dedication to all the awards that are happening today with the police department. I even tried to mix up. I think I have the childhood cancer pins here and I do have the thin blue line US flag here in dedication to all of you and the hard work that you all do.

The chief will tell you. Chief Magnusson will tell you that the chief, myself, Manager Lou that we speak on a consistent and constant basis and when we were discussing officer of the year it was no choice. All of us around at the same time were like, "We got to do two." We have to have dual ones this year. It was something that-- the decision we made right away. Both of you guys are wonderful individuals.

The way the chief explained how both of you are spot on. Officer Lopez has been out there, and he's received the awards and he's a great face for our village. All right, he's a great face for our village and Officer Borrell or Sergeant Borrell. I think it's Sergeant Borrell, you guys. All right. Sergeant Borrell to me is pretty much like-- he's not only the nuts and bolts, but Sergeant Borrell is the epitome of ethical standards and it's there and he has it and he will not let that ethical standard be diminished.

He knows what's right and he knows what's wrong. He sticks to it and no matter who you are, he doesn't show favoritism, he sticks to that ethical standard and he upholds it no matter what, and so I really appreciate you, Serg. I really appreciate you Officer Lopez and I have a couple of things for you guys. Hold on one second. You can open that up in a second, but

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Officer Lopez, yours, it says, "It is with distinguished honor that the Village of El Portal proudly presents Officer Angel Lopez with this Officer of the Year Award, 2021."

Thank you for your exemplary service to Village of El Portal, Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida."

Myself, the Chief, and the Managers did present you with that and we really mean all those words from the bottom of our hearts. Sergeant Borrell, not only the Chief, the Manager, and myself, Vice Mayor Urbom, Councilperson Pirela, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, we all want to say, "It is a distinguished honor that the Village of El Portal proudly presents Sergeant Borrell with this Officer of the Year Award for 2021. Thank you for your unwavering dedication and consistent professionalism. You are a value to our police department and community. We appreciate you."

Sergeant Borrell: Thank you much.

[applause]

[background conversation]

Photographer: All right. Perfect. Picture on three. One, two, and three. One more time. Big smiles. Smile with your eyes. One more second.

[silence]

Participant: Excuse me. Yours is also online. You're fine. We're good.

Photographer: Okay. Thank you.

[applause]

[background conversation]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, absolutely. Councilperson Pirela you might as well stay down here and Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward and Vice Mayor Urbom, Madam Manager. As

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you noticed the plaques that we all chose are black and blue. So blue being-- We're trying to do it the right way you guys. [chuckles] I do want to say before you move on to the agenda items. I do want to say that our police department and how it's improving, and it continues to improve and that improvement and continuing improvement is due to the leadership.

That leadership comes from Chief David Magnusson. Chief Magnusson is always there for all of us. He's always there for his officers. He's there for the council. He's always there for myself and the managers. We have meetings all the time and we discuss things all the time and we speak to each other all the time throughout the week. Him being there for all of us at the same time as he's there for all of us he also leads us in many different ways.

He leads all of us, and he shows all of us what good leadership is all about. Chief we don't say much to you, but we appreciate you, and so we just want you to know that, and we have something for you that myself, the council, and the Village Manager wanted to give you.

Officer Lopez: I want to take this opportunity to thank the village for the gesture they did to two young ladies that were here with a child that had cancer. I lost my mother earlier this year from cancer and my wife went through chemo and radiation. Okay. This year also and she came close, so let me tell you nobody knows how terrible that thing is unless it strikes really, really close, so I really appreciate what the village did to help them out and thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, Officer Lopez. I really appreciate that. For all of you all who are out there, for all of you all who are watching right now, sitting out here right now. You may say to yourself, "Man, they're presenting these awards. It's taking a long time. Well, it's towards the end of the year and towards the end of the year you present the yearly awards, and so this is the last one we're presenting, so I just wanted to say I appreciate you guys being patient with us. These are the awards to recognize very important situations, very important organizations, and very important individuals that we have here in our community. I really want to appreciate that. All right.

Right here it says, "To Chief David Magnusson, Village of El Portal Florida, 2021. Leadership in Law Enforcement Award for the chief." Chief David Magnusson, all for you. Also, again you guys, what did we do? Got the blue and we got the gold because your badges are gold, so blue, gold. We're trying, Serg. I'm trying here. [chuckles] What this is, it's a

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character like it's a person and it's a person shows the leadership of people, of individuals and therefore colors of a police officer and of leadership and the person. Officer Lopez, I'm trying to bring it together, Officer Lopez. [laughs] There you go, Chief.

[applause]

[inaudible chatter]

Participant: Congratulations.

[background conversation]

Chief Magnusson: I didn't know this was coming. I'm beyond flattered, very humbled, and in this position, I get the biggest thrill comes from recognizing those that work for me, so when this catches me by surprise, I'm speechless and that's good enough. Thank you very much. Thank you so much.

[applause] [background conversation]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: For this last and final picture. As we're all lining up. I do want to say very quickly as we're lining up for the last and final picture, that for the first time ever, for the officer of the year awards, we're going to give a monetary gift also with the officer of the year award for the first time ever and that will be \$250 a piece, going into both of your checks and Vice Mayor Urbom in elected official fashion, we do have those checks to represent that money that are going to be coming into your checks.

[silence]

[background conversation]

Again, thank you everybody for being patient with us. We're going to move on to Good and Welfare. Right now, we're moving to Good and Welfare you guys, if anybody has anything that they want to say, come up and say your name and address for the record. This is about anything that's on the agenda item, any of the agenda items. Come and say your name and address for the record and you have three minutes to say what you want to say.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

[silence]

Hearing none, moving on to the agenda. The first is H1RFQ for the village attorney position. We currently have an interim village attorney, and this was the RFQ that is to fill the permanent position or the full-time permanent position for the village attorney, we had two individuals or two firms that put in for the permanent full-time village attorney position. The first was Greenspoon Marder LLP, and the second was GJB which is Genovese Joblove & Battista.

I believe we have representatives from both firms here today. I gave out the RFQs at the Administration of Finance Committee Meeting, where we made sure they were all giving out Administrative of Finance Committee meeting so that we had a couple of weeks to go through them. I told you guys at that committee meeting to come back with any type of questions or comments that you may have for either firm.

First thing I'm going to do, I'm going to allow a representative from each firm to come to the podium and to introduce themselves and they can say whatever they want to about themselves. Then I'll open it up to the council for any questions or comments that they might have for either individual. Okay? First, Let's have up Greenspoon Marder LLP, a representative, who is our interim attorney, Attorney Geller.

Attorney Geller: Thank you, Mayor. Very happy to be with you tonight. We are certainly interested in a permanent position. I've been here for on and off, this is my third time serving the village, one of them was for a very long time. I care about what happens to the village, I care about its residents, I care about moving forward. We try to provide good service, we think in the period that we've been interim that we've been able to assist the Mayor, the Council, the Manager, and the Clerk in resolving some troubling issues that you guys have been dealing with for a long time.

I think we've seen some real progress on a whole bunch of things from sewer lines to moving forward with the FEMA reimbursement and getting some of the grants that we had taken care of and in line, dealing with outstanding issues. We have an office on Brickell. we have an office up in Lauderdale, we have about 250 lawyers nationally, many of them in Florida, our home base is South Florida.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

There are people available to step in and assist me if it should be a night that I was ill or way out of the country or something. I actually spoke with one of them today, the former Mayor of Miami Xavier Suarez who said he'd certainly be happy to come and step in if that was necessary. James Rauh, from our Downtown Miami office, is happy to do it. Glenn Smith has been here for me, a Veteran Attorney, Skip Miller. We have a lot of people, and we appreciate working with you, we would like the opportunity to continue, and I'll be happy when you get to the question part to answer any questions unless you want them to be now. Okay, thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Council.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Interim Attorney Geller. Next, we have a representative from GJB come up, Genovese Joblove & Battista.

Omar Bradford: Good evening, Mr. Mayor, Council. My name is Omar Bradford, I am an attorney. I'm of counsel with the law firm Genovese Joblove & Battista. I practiced in municipal law complex business litigation, governmental law in quasi litigation settings, throughout my entire 11-year career. I am pleased to be joined here with associate attorneys from my firm Joseph Eisenberg, Elizabeth McIntosh, and JP Bado.

Genovese Joblove & Battista is located just downtown. I am personally located just uptown. I live in Biscayne Gardens which is a short bike ride here to this very village hall, a bike ride that I make all the time. This village is meaningful to me on a personal level. I'm raising my children in this area. It's been my pleasure on behalf of the firm and on behalf of several different municipal clients such as the neighboring Miami Shores Village, the City of Hialeah, the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, the North Springs Improvement District among others to have represented both on the defense side and prosecuting matters in the interest of municipalities.

My core belief is that communities are not just important but essential to the growth of our youth and we will be focused as a firm and we will be dedicated and committed to when needed, having as many multiple lawyers here on-site as needed and we're just thrilled with the opportunity. I will say this, the village is in a good position because there is no wrong answer tonight. Joe Geller and Greenspoon Marder is a great firm, Joe is a great lawyer. Like he said, he's been here many times around the bend and I'm sure that he's done excellent

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

work. We are looking for the opportunity to come in and do as excellent if not more superior work in ways that this village needs. We, again, are dedicated and committed to what we do.

I am thrilled to have come up under brilliant lawyers such as Richard Sarafan and Alfredo Gonzalez, folks that I've worked directly with for the last 11 years and it's been an absolute privilege. We would love to have you as our municipal client, one that gets top priority, we would love for you to have us as your village attorney. You will see the dedication that is the foundation to Genovese Joblove & Battista.

I am the rare example of an attorney who for the entirety of my 11-year career, I've been with the same firm, and I think that's a testament to what Genovese Joblove & Battista means to me and means to this community here in South Florida. Good character folks, folks that work tirelessly and the fact that they've had me for the entirety of my 11-year career is a specific honor.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to be here. I would be remiss if I didn't say that I really appreciated what the village did for miss Sylvia earlier today with respect to the heartbreaking story of her son and the honoring of Officer Lopez and Sergeant Borrell. These things are fundamental, the honoring of Chief Magnusson. These things are fundamental to a growing community, and we make no mistake about it.

El Portal is a growing community, it is one of the more exceptional communities here in South Florida and it would be our honor to do everything that we can to keep moving the village forward and doing an excellent and tireless job as your next village attorney. We appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. All right. This is how we're going to do this. I believe that other mic is also on. What we're going to do, we'll have the representative from Genovese Joblove & Battista. We'll have you come to this mike here. Attorney Geller will have you come to this mic here. I'm going to first start with the council with any questions or comments that they may have for either one. This way to save time so people have to walk up and back and forth.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

The next thing that I'm going to do after the council, I'll ask any questions or comments they may have, I'll open it up to our residents to see if they have any questions or comments for either one. Then from there, I'll go back to the council, and we'll take it from there. Is there anybody from the council with any questions or comments?

Vice Mayor Urbom: I usually have a question or two. All right very good. All right. I believe I'll start with Attorney Geller. Would you describe Greenspoon Marder as having a specialization?

Attorney Geller: Specialization.

Vice Mayor Urbom: Yes.

Attorney Geller: No, we're pretty much a full-service firm. We have a lot of people in land-use zoning, we have a lot of people in government relations lobbying but we have a lot of people in real estate, and we have a lot of people in probate and estate planning. We have an awful lot of litigators. We have a cannabis group, we have-- I'm sure I'm forgetting a few really good specialties there too. We pride ourselves on labor law. We pride ourselves on being across the board as we've grown from just a South Florida firm to a firm that has offices in, I think it's eight states now. We try to pride ourselves on being able to handle anything that comes.

Vice Mayor Urbom: Very good. Then as you've been the interim attorney for this past almost a year now, do you still feel that the tasks that lay in front of the village are tasks that you not only feel confident in navigating but even with some enthusiasm.

Attorney Geller: I'm eager to get the rest of these things done. The village has to move forward and sometimes it's difficult to do that when you have difficult problems behind you that are trying to hold you back. We've tried to deal with each of those problems, we've knocked down quite a lot of them. There's still a few that have to get resolved. That's when you can really be bold and move forward and make the kind of progress that the citizens would like to see. I'm excited about the opportunity to do that.

Vice Mayor Urbom: Very good. Thank you.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Vice Mayor Urbom. Anybody else from the council.

Vice Mayor Urbom: [unintelligible 00:56:04]

Nickerson: Sorry about that Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Urbom: How are you doing? Thank you very much for being here.

Omar Bradford: Good evening, Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Urbom: Looking through your application, it seems that your firm also has a broad spectrum of, I want to say specialization because that's what was essentially the wording that was used in that. I know you did, and I've read through the application, but I'll give you an opportunity to speak just a little bit more to that breadth of ability.

Omar Bradford: Sure, I'm happy to. Genovese Joblove & Battista is a full-service firm. We practice in nearly every area of the law with the exception of family law. However, make no mistake about it. We are exceptional with respect to our municipal law background resume and exceptional with respect to our governmental relations side of the firm. We most certainly take great pride in that, yes, we are complex litigators, and some may know us throughout the State of Florida and the country is very effective litigators.

However, the governmental side, the municipal side is for me personally because when I first started at the firm, that was the first work that I got introduced to. That was my introduction to being a lawyer. I've always had a personal connection with it. It's why I have moved on to do substantial work in land use procurement law in particular. I personally along with my partner Alfredo Gonzalez have had some tremendous successes with respect to matters concerning zoning laws and land use issues, waste, and sewer issues, and also successfully won very high-level bid protest matters.

All of this has continued to grow my passion for this particular side of the law. Myself, like my colleagues here that have joined, we're multifaceted. We're certainly able to-- we know our way around a courtroom as much as we know our way around a complex transactional matter and in fact, Alfredo Gonzalez, would have been here tonight but he's in the midst of

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

working through a very complex real estate closing. I am again appreciative of the firm and the foundation that it's laid for me and the ability to be an excellent lawyer.

Again, I do want to emphasize that it is this lane of municipal law that is most meaningful to my practice because of the fact that it directly affects community. It directly affects the growth of this environment and for a variety of reasons that's very important to me and it's very important to my firm and therefore my firm is willing to put the full spectrum of resources behind being your next village attorney and being an extremely effective one.

Vice Mayor Urbom: Very good. Thank you. Then as you looked at the RFQ and made the decision to apply, did you do any research into our history here at El Portal? Did you take a look at anything that would inform you of what challenges we face and what our goals and objectives would be? Was there any-- you don't have to tell me necessarily what your opinions are on that. I'm just curious to know if you had done any research to that extent to understand a little bit of where we're coming from and where we're headed.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Candidly, what I lean on, is my personal proximity to the village, and what I've been able to see, whether it be the growing commercial centers that are happening on 2nd and the growing property values here quite frankly. For me, that's something that I have an interesting habit, I guess, they come into my email every day, so I look through these Redfin emails. El Portal is one that I specifically get an understanding of the real estate market through, by looking at houses and what they're selling for et cetera.

For me, that's of paramount importance, because that affects every single family here, and it, I believe, is something that must be maintained, and the village attorney plays a significant role there. The village attorney with respect to how we have operated in the past, we diligently are involved on the code enforcement side. We diligently are involved in making sure that the rules are followed with respect to the beautification of the area.

With respect to the history, I can be honest and say that I look forward to learning more about that. I won't sit here and suggest that I have a great deal of historical or institutional knowledge, but I do care about this community. I care about this area, and whatever the historical issues are, I know that my firm is very well equipped to manage those and handle

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

them well as we have, in Miami Shores village and others and I look forward to that opportunity.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: My final question is, with the size of the firm, you do seem to be certainly on the large end of the spectrum, and well accoladed.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: What would you describe as the interest in pursuing such a potentially small contract?

Attorney Omar Bradford: That's a great question, and that speaks to largely where I am, where the three individuals are in the audience here, that are my colleagues. We have incredible rigor for this representation because we are looking to grow our careers as well. I'm 40 years old. Math tells you that I could learn a lot from Joe. Math tells you that from an experience level, Joe's been a lawyer for longer than I personally have.

My colleagues, again, such as Richard Sarafan and Alfredo Gonzalez, they're cut from the same cloth as Joe, and my firm strongly encouraged me to step up here and to apply and submit our qualifications. Therefore, what you're going to get is a hunger that I don't think is surpassable. We are all looking to set out the blueprint for the remainder of our careers. We're all very passionate about the practice of municipal law.

We come from a perspective of, even though our firm doesn't have anything to prove, and even though our firm has legal giants in the municipal law field, the four of us have something to prove. We're going to be out to prove it every single day and we certainly have proven it with respect to the work that we've done historically for a variety of other municipalities. For us, this is no small contract. This is an important service to the community that we are ready, willing, and able to provide.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Very good, and then just a final question.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: You just said that.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Maybe yourself and Mr. Gonzalez who're named as the facilitators of this contract ultimately with the team, right?

Attorney Omar Bradford: Yes, sir.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Are either of you active real estate investors in this area?

Attorney Omar Bradford: No, sir.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: All right, that's it. That's all I have. Thank you sincerely.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much Vice Mayor, Urbom. Anybody else from the council? Any questions or comments for either one of the applicants?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. The floor's yours.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I'm going to go back and forth. I have different questions for both of you.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Yes, ma'am.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: My first question to you, attorney--

Attorney Omar Bradford: Bradford.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I thought so, Bradford.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Yes, Dr. Lightfoot-Ward

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Attorney Bradford, why do you speak of the El Portal as exceptional? Those are your first comments. You say we were exceptional. Why do you think we're exceptional?

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Attorney Omar Bradford: Well, aside from my perspective- I'll give you a little background. I moved to South Florida 15 years ago. I moved for law school at the University of Miami. I had attended--

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, we read it.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Yes, exactly. For me, the village of El Portal has always- just the name alone was always striking to me. It was a place that I was very curious about. Living in Coral Gables was interesting, and I had a unique, strong law school experience. It wasn't until I moved into this area that I felt the strength of diversity and the strength of a more urban environment. For me, it felt more like home.

I believe that it is an extraordinary place. I believe that it is an exceptional place. I believe that the natural beauty that you see here is really rich and unique and should be preserved. I believe that the leadership here is exceptional. I believe that the diversity of leadership that you see is important. We plan to and hope to represent a continuing of that diversity and that strength of diversity with respect to this village. I believe that the village is owed that, and the people will appreciate that.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you. Attorney Geller, why do you want to remain in El Portal as legal counsel?

Attorney Geller: Few reasons. First of all, that it's a challenge, because as I said, when we stepped in almost a year ago, there was a lot of problems, and there had been some things that happened that probably should not have happened. Digging out of that hole has been a challenge. Now that we've filled in a whole lot of that hole, and I'm getting to the point where we could start to see above ground and we can see the way forward, it's exciting to me to be able to see what this village can do with the right leadership, and where it can go and what it can accomplish.

Then the other thing about it, which is also how I would answer what's exceptional about El Portal is trees. The trees are unmatched. There's just no place like this. The trees, and the nature preserve, and the nature trail, the mound, where do you find them? You just don't. The trees make this place a tree city. It's a great town. It's a great village, great little place, and

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

over the years, I've known a lot of people here. Some of them are not still here, but they fought very hard to keep this place special, people like the [unintelligible 01:09:05] and just to name a couple.

It's just very meaningful to me. It's been in my bones and in my blood for a lot of years, and I'm very committed to the future of this village, and I want to see it be able to move to its potential. It's never really reached that. Even with good mayors, it never got where it could be. I think now, under this leadership, it can really go someplace, and I want to be a part of that.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you. My next question. Attorney Bradford, how does your firm avoid the spence and disruptions of litigation? That statement is written in your dossier. I'm curious, how do you do that? That's a broad statement that gave a lot of curiosity to me.

Attorney Omar Bradford: I'm very glad that you asked that. Look, litigation is unpredictable. It's expensive, and it's painful. We recognize that with respect to every litigation matter that arises. We recognize it even before it rises to the level of litigation. What we focus on are solutions, not running up long-winded fees or long-lasting cases for potential photo op in the *Miami Herald* at the end of the day, or the *Daily Business Review*. That's not really important to us. What's important to us is finding solutions for our clients. That's where we often, where we cannot always certainly, were able to resolve matters without getting into nasty litigation battles. I think that that's been seen or maybe not seen, quite frankly, because you don't really hear about the small victories that occur before something goes public.

Most certainly, we have achieved a number of those on behalf of other municipalities for circumstances that might've seemed untenable, might've seemed to be on a collision course toward litigation. We have creatively and mindfully found solutions that help the parties avoid what, for both sides almost no matter what, is the painful process of litigation.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you.

Attorney Omar Bradford: You're welcome.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Attorney Geller, do you have a working relationship with GJB? Does your firm have a working relationship with this firm?

Attorney Geller: Yes.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Explain that to us, please.

Attorney Geller: First, I want to compliment Mr. Bradford on his answer to the last question. I think it's exactly right. I think it's professional, and I think it's the correct approach. It's the same thing we've tried to do here. I'll add to it, that because this is a small village with relatively small resources, things that look appealing to vindicate a principle are just more than the taxpayers of this small town can handle, except in extreme circumstances. A small town like this can be a target for people like these giant short-term rental companies. They'd rather take on a town like us that has limited resources and think they can spend us into the ground, than take on one of the big cities or a county that has much greater resources.

Mr. Sarafan, who's been the attorney next door, is a long-time friend of mine. We've been in the city attorney community together over the years. In fact, he's the gentleman that I look to when I was brought in as interim to be the outside counsel to represent the Village. I have great respect for him. He's a good lawyer. I know Mr. Gonzalez for many years through a number of firms. When I had a conflict in a city that I represented, because I had represented a developer that was doing something in front of the city, and I got hired by the city, I turned to Mr. Gonzalez as special counsel to represent that entity. The names that Mr. Bradford mentions are people that I know and have worked with, and I have a lot of respect for them. They're very good lawyers.

Other than that, other than turning to them where I've got a conflict situation, we don't have any kind of an ongoing business relationship. Candidly, I think I've had lunch with both gentlemen, but I wouldn't say we're-- We and our spouses get together frequently and socialize, but they are good professional lawyers. I turn to them when I need others. They're my first choice for conflict counsel when a conflict exists because I have great respect for them and for the firm.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I have one last question. I asked the question, Mr. Bradford, because Attorney Geller was very honest during my first reign as official on this council. He mentioned to the council, when he didn't know, he mentioned just what he mentioned just now. That was well over 20 years ago. I recall that, but I didn't recall the name until I read and saw when you all had changed your name, but he mentioned that to us when he didn't know it was that firm that he had been through it. I just wanted everybody else to know what I already knew

Last but not least, **[pause 01:15:54]** I'm trying to be diplomatic. I didn't see any historical or institutional relationship with municipal governments in the dossier that was presented. Was that on purpose?

Attorney Omar Bradford: Well, we certainly have historical relationships with Miami Shores Village. In fact, one of the references I believe I included was from the Village based on my personal connections that are natural when you've been representing the Village for so long. In addition, Alfredo and I worked really diligently with the City of Opa-Locka through a number of their issues. It so happened that we were working on behalf of a private client. Some of the challenges that that city was facing a number of years back, we were empathetic to, notwithstanding. We did everything that we could, through our client waste management. We really tried to do everything that we could for that municipality.

We work currently with the North Springs Improvement District, the City of Hialeah. I think importantly, the County Commission right now, the commissioners, I've got a number of very close relationships there, whether it be Jean Monestime, who is the commissioner for my district, or Oliver Gilbert with whom my family is very close, Kionne McGhee, Keon Hardemon, I went to law school with.

I do think that that could be incredibly important and rich for the village if needed. The reality is those are folks that I'm close with. I am trying to be a stalwart in the community of Black lawyers here in South Florida. As a result, I have incredibly strong relationships including, I am one of the founding members of a group called The Overground. The Overground is a collection of, I would say, the most talented Black lawyers here in South Florida. We meet on a regular basis. We are here to lift one another up, and as a result, the

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

collection of all the resources and connections to different municipalities has opened up a wide array of personal relationships that I'm blessed to have.

I do think that all of that is material. I do think that, and I'm sorry, I most certainly can see that we listed a number of municipalities that we work with. From our perspective, we know that we've got a tremendous background and experience with municipalities. We've done great work for years. There's a reason why we have been the uninterrupted Village Attorney at Miami Shores for a number of years. I'm very fortunate to have worked very closely, as have my colleagues here with me today. Again, we're very excited for this opportunity.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you Mr. Bradford.

Attorney Bradford: Thank you, ma'am.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: You answered my last question in your previous. Mayor, since we have no one else here, unless you want to ask questions, I was going to ask them- if you have questions, I really would like to hear the closing remarks.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. I was going to open it up for the residents, though, first before they do that. Councilman Lightfoot-Ward, are you done with your questions?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I am, very much so.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Anybody else from the council? Councilperson Pirela, any questions or comments?

Councilperson Pirela: No.

Mayor Nickerson: You're good? First of all, let me just say thank you to not only both applicants, but thank you to Vice Mayor Urbom and Councilman Lightfoot-Ward. You guys asked a wide variety of questions and two of mine. The last question that I have, or comment that I have remaining is just, I have a major concern, and I just want to hear from both parties. We'll start with Interim Attorney Geller. Everyone from both parties as far as getting things in on time, getting things in with time enough for myself, the clerk. For everything to

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

be delivered on time so that the village is able to move forward in a correct process, and we don't have to put things off for later months and things like that.

I just want to hear about maybe a plan, or things like that so that we're able to efficiently move and get things in, and get things moving forward, so that the village doesn't fall to a position where we can't accomplish certain things because we have to push them off for later. In the past years even it's just been an issue that's been ongoing that I just want to hear addressed, that's all. We'll start with Attorney Geller, and then we'll come over there.

Attorney Geller: My basic answer is track record, and I think that the record shows that we've accomplished a lot. We've gotten a lot of stuff done. We've gotten a lot of stuff on the agenda. It was an awful lot to do when we started here, but I think we've moved forward on just about every front. We've done so consistently. We've done so with good results. We've gotten some very thorny issues resolved, and we'll continue to make sure that the remaining issues that are behind us and the ones that are in front of us are addressed in a timely fashion and are able to be put before this council so the council can make its decisions as a policy-making body, which is what it's here to do.

Attorney Bradford: Mr. Mayor, what your question surrounds is the issue of accountability. We are willing to commit to being fully accountable, so much so, that we are willing to put a body here. One of either myself, or one of my brilliant colleagues here on a regular basis such that there's never anything that slips through the cracks or there are some unnecessary delay on an important matter.

I appreciate that question because in the practice of law, it's certainly been for the last 11 years that I've been practicing and probably for a hundred years before that. There is a general sense in the practice of law that you can always file a motion to extend time, or you can kick the can down the road. I think one of the real reasons that GJB has been effective over the years is we reject that. We're trying to solve problems, and you're not going to solve a problem by trying to get more time or kicking the can down the road. You're not going to solve a problem by not showing the tenacity that's necessary to get results.

When it comes to myself, Mr. Isenberg, Miss, McIntosh, Mr. Bado, Mr. Sarafan, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Joblove, Mr. Genovese, Mr. Battista, we are focused on what we do. We take

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

pride in what we do. Therefore, there won't be any delay that's within our power, because that is fundamental to this job and to the orderly operation of an amazing community like this one.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Any last questions or comments from the council before I open it up to our residents? No? All right. Here and now, is there anybody from in audience that has any questions or comments for any of the applicants? How are we looking on Zoom?

Participant: [inaudible 01:25:37].

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're good? Okay. All right. Coming back to the council, as Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward said closing Councilperson-- Yes, you have a question?

Leslie Zigel: [inaudible 01:25:49].

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Come to one of the mics, and just say your name and address for the record. Yes, just say your name and address for the record. Come to the podium. Come to the podium. It's all good.

Leslie: Hi, my name is Leslie Seigel. I've been a resident at El Portal for several years. My question is- and pardon my ignorance on this. From what I heard, and I came in late, Mr. Bradford represents the village of Miami Shores, and this is the village of El Portal. Is there any situation where there could be a conflict between Miami Shores and El Portal? That's really the question.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me just say this, and they can jump if they want to. These firms usually represent multiple municipalities. For example, Miami Shores, the attorney that is there on the spot is Attorney Sarafan. It's not him, but his firm.

Leslie: Yes, I'm an attorney as well, so if it's his firm, it's him. It's not an issue of the individual there. I guess my question is, is there an inherent conflict? Is there a possibility of a conflict between the Village of Miami Shores and the village of El Portal? If an attorney is representing both villages, there's an inherent conflict. I don't practice this type of law, so I don't know, but it's a question I was just raising.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting**

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Start: 7:01 PM

Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

Attorney Omar Bradford: I think that's a great question, Les, and it's good to see you, by the way. As the world is so small, Les who is an incredible attorney, he's very modest, when I was in law school, gave me one of my first legal internships as it turns out. It's a good question. To the mayor's point, firms represent multiple municipalities all the time. I believe Greenspoon represents multiples, [unintelligible 01:27:53] and others as well. Many more perhaps than Genovese Joblove. The proximity factor, I actually believe [unintelligible 01:28:03] to the benefit of this community. They are our neighbors, and to be able to work well with one another, I think, is a tremendous benefit.

Again, I'm not the village attorney personally in Miami Shores. Richard Sarafan is. We have the opportunity to work in the best interest of this entire corridor, for which there are no conflicts that would exist simply because of the proximity. Just as there wouldn't be a conflict in the event that we were representing Hialeah or perhaps some of the other firms that any other firm might rep.

Attorney Geller: Nice to see you also Mr. Zigel. Again, as Mr. Bradford says, a great lawyer. It's not for me to weigh in on the question. I think it's a very good question. I, by nature, do not criticize others. I would just say to the council that you need to make your own decision as to whether or not you will be in sync with Miami Shores, or could have a disagreement that might affect your course of action in regard to Miami Shores. That's a matter for each of you to make your own decision about whether you have a concern about that. I do think it's a good question, but it's not for me to opine as to whether it constitutes any kind of a legal conflict because it would be very fact-specific, and you have to decide whether those facts might arise.

Attorney Omar Bradford: Exactly. If I may, it would be a fact-specific circumstance, but I most certainly would be taking an oath to this village. I would be this village's village attorney. Mr. Sarafan would be the Village of Miami Shores's attorney. The fact that we have a good working relationship is a benefit. The fact that I personally would be taking a specific oath as to this village, never would I let any issues concerning the proximity of the two villages be a negative factor in any way. In fact, I think that it would behoove me and behoove my firm and behoove this village to look at that as a positive thing, and be able to do things with our neighbors in a way that helps move this village forward. The suggestion, to the contrary, I do

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

not believe that there is weight there. Mr. Geller, I appreciate your diplomacy, but if you want to expound upon that, you're welcome to.

Attorney Geller: It's a decision for the council to make based on what they think might arise. It's not a matter for me to opine upon.

Attorney Omar Bradford: I appreciate that, but I just want the council to know that I will take great pride every day as will my colleagues in representing this village, and making sure that everything that we do, all the decisions that we make, have not one iota of any bias. I suppose what's underlying here is that at some point, the firm would be forced to choose sides or something like that. That's not realistic. I don't want anyone to be misled here by that suggestion that's based on the proximity, when in the alternative, we could look at this as a tremendous opportunity and a very positive thing that can help strengthen this position and strengthen the communities.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Appreciate that. We'll just leave it there. I'm looking at the website now for Weiser Road, and I'm also looking at the municipalities from-- I'm looking at Greenspoon Marder here, and then I see your firm also here. I'm looking at municipalities also. I think the only thing that would become a problem is if us and Miami Shores are in some type of legal conflict. We can look it up, but I don't remember the last time that Miami Shores and El Portal were in court, [chuckles] going against one another, but it's a great question. Anybody else from the-- Yes, come up and say your name address just for the record, and the floor is yours.

Charles Winters: My name is Charles Winters. Can I do this without the mask or no? My name is Charles Winters, I live at 377, 85th Street. I just have a very simple question. As a business owner, I have to know all my clients that I'm working with, and you guys are basically here to just have El Portal as your client. It's a very small municipality. You could probably drive through the entire thing in 10 minutes. I like to know from each of you if you've actually visited every street here and actually seen the residents, the houses, and what you'd be representing.

Attorney Omar Bradford: That's a great question. I'd like to jump in. As I mentioned, I live in Biscayne Gardens. I'm basically straight up North Miami, Ave, and just a little north of

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting**

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Start: 7:01 PM

Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

135th Street. During the pandemic, my number one social activity, was riding my bike through these beautiful streets. I'm extremely familiar with the geography here and the natural beauty and the diversity of the community. It's truly one of the reasons why I wanted to respond to this request for qualifications. It is an overarching reason, quite frankly, because I view this as my personal community as well.

My family, we spend time at the Citadel at the area, right around there. It's great for our children. We'd like to see more opportunity for our family to continue to grow right here. Again, I say right here because to me, this entire neck of the woods is my neighborhood. I appreciate that question. I agree that that's of tremendous importance. Again, my firm is also not far. I am based at the Miami office of the firm. My colleagues that are here are based at the Miami office of the firm. I do believe that when it comes to this community, we are very well suited to represent this community. I am very well suited to represent this community.

Attorney Geller: Well, first of all, as I said, I've been here on and off for very many years as attorney. I used to live also for many years across the causeway in North Bay village where I was the mayor. This was very much my neighborhood. Our cities, our municipalities cooperated on a lot of things, including sharing some police resources and other things. I've been to events in a number of the parks here, different kinds of events with my late friend, Mayor Daisy Black and others.

I think that I probably been on every street in this municipality at one time or another. Some of them a little longer ago than others. I can't really think of one whether it's over by the school or otherwise, that I've never been on in the course of the years. Been in a lot of people's homes in the village over the years. I think the answer is probably yes. I guess there might be one I haven't gotten there.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Is there anybody else from any other residence? How are we looking on Zoom? We're good on Zoom. Hearing none. Going back to the council. Before they make closing arguments, you guys or closing statements, I should say closing arguments. I'm thinking about two attorneys up here. It's like I'm watching TV. Before they make closing statements, any last questions or comments from the council?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We're good.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, since it was your idea, I will let you choose who goes first with the closing statements. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: [inaudible 01:37:58] I'm reaching out to him, right here. [crosstalk]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: There you go.

Attorney Omar Bradford: I'm with you Dr. Lightfoot-Ward. Again, above all, we're grateful for the opportunity to respond to this RFQ. We're a serious firm, and we're here to do serious business. There is in no way shape or form, and let me tell you again because I will be the village attorney, not anyone else, there is no argument that can be made that there will be any other prioritization with respect to municipalities above this beautiful city. That's what I am here for. That's what my colleagues are here for. It would be a tremendous opportunity and one that every single day, we would take seriously. We take seriously like our careers depended on it.

I appreciate the longevity of folks at firms like Greenspoon Marder. I, myself, also have had a slightly long career at Genovese Joblove, and it's been consistent. The reason is, I get up every day, and I focus on my clients, and I try to do the very best that I can for them. I have the benefit of working with incredibly knowledgeable, incredibly energetic, incredibly special colleagues. We prioritize personal relationships. I would look forward to having a personal relationship, and getting a personal connection with each of you, learning about your families, having you learn about my family.

I am an attorney, but I am not your typical, just looking to push paper individual as a man. Community means something to me. The growth of diverse communities means something to me. It's always meant something to me. It's how I was raised. That's the energy that you will get from me. That's the energy you'll get from my esteemed colleagues. There will be no mistaking about it that the Village of El Portal and Genovese Joblove & Battista's representation of the village as the village attorney will be a big deal at our firm. Yes, we do a lot of work. We have had tremendous successes, but it's going to be a big deal at our firm. It's going to be a big deal to me. It's going to be something that I'm going to take pride in, and I appreciate the opportunity.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Like I said at the outset, there is no wrong answer here. I respect Joe Geller. I could tell you my participation in trying to protect elections for years voluntarily. Joe was the leader of that. Joe would give direction and guidance with respect to that effort, and that's important. Joe is a pillar to the South Florida legal community, and I look forward to going above and beyond for this village day in and day out.

My firm, again, we are highly capable. We've shown it for years. We would appreciate the opportunity to show it right here, to show it to every single resident including even the small world of being in the presence of Les Zigel. We are here to show and prove. It's not something that we take lightly, and again, thank you all. We appreciate it, and we hope to get your consideration for this appointment. We will not let you down.

Attorney Geller: Okay. I got my start being a municipal lawyer right here in El Portal. A couple of members of the council, the late Daisy Black and my former mayor and my other friend, former Mayor Philippe Derosé, sat on a council that didn't want to hear them, didn't want to give them any opportunity. In fact, conducted its budget hearings with the front doors locked. They came to me and asked if I would sue the power structure in this village for violating the Sunshine Law. I agreed to do that, and we filed that suit. The guy who had been the mayor for years and his little tight clique quit, ran off to Colorado, and then they said, "They had a village attorney here who'd been here for 50 years until he died, and then they had an interim that didn't do a very good job."

They asked me if I would take it, and I said, yes. As I said, I've been here through three iterations. I could just say this to you, I'm not going to tell you who I know. I know a lot of people. I know a lot of county commissioners. I know a lot of my colleagues that are in the legislature. I know a lot of people that serve us in congress. I know a lot of people in a lot of places. I always try to put those connections, that knowledge at the service of this village, and I've done that. I've reached out to people, and I'm not so in love with myself that I want to tell you who each of them is, but I do want to tell you only one thing. My passion for the work I do burns bright in me.

I have some friends that have talked about they're going to retire. I got a 14 year old daughter. I ain't retiring anytime, anywhere, anyplace soon, but I don't know what these people would do in retirement. What do you do? Fish? Play golf? I'm much more interested

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

in waking up every day and finding unique problems to solve, and I'm proud of the fact that I can get those problems solved, and I can find a way, and I can put the knowledge and skill and contacts that I have for the benefit of this village. That's important to me. It's the kind of thing that keeps me fresh and keeps me sharp and keeps me moving every day. I have that passion, it's been burning in me since the beginning of my career in public service, and it burns in me still today.

I'll tell you council members; I want this job. I want to keep this job. I want to keep doing a good job for you. I want to do it because not just the professional pride, although there's a lot of that, but I want it because I believe in El Portal. I've seen it change. I've seen it grow, and I know what it can be, and you are close. You're on the verge of being able to make that next step, and by God, I want to be part of it when you do. I want this job, and I hope you'll vote for us. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you both. If there's no further questions or comments from the council, that was their closing statements, this how we're going to do this. At this particular time, I will ask for a motion from any of the council members and you can motion either one of the firms. Then there will be motion, a second, and then we'll go to a vote if we have a motion on a second, and we'll go from there. It's open to the council.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I move continuance based on the passion, commitment, concern, expressed, and we stay with Greenspoon Marder as our counsel.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Motion is made for Greenspoon Marder LLP. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: I'll second.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Our motion.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Pirela. Madam clerk, may I please have roll call, please?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. Congratulations on becoming the full-time permanent attorney.

Attorney Geller: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much for Genovese, Joblove & Battista.

Attorney Geller: Thank you all. Thank you, guys.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Tell Mr. Sarafan we said hello, and we appreciate him. Thank you very much, you guys.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Finally, we have a lawyer after two years.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: He was the man.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Now we've got a lawyer.

[background conversation]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you everybody. All right, we're moving on to H2. This is the village of El Portal water supply plan. If we could have a Camila who represents Plusurbia come to the podium, please. The floor is yours, Camila.

Camila: Thank you, Mayor. Good evening council.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Good evening.

Camila: This item is a request from the village to make amendments to the comprehensive plan by adopting the 10-year water supply facilities work plan based on the requirements set forth by the Florida Statutes 163.3167, item 13 regarding water supply planning. To actually get ahead of it and answer your question Vice Mayor Urbom, from last meeting, each municipality needs to adopt its own plan. The village did not have a plan prior to this one put forth before you, and it is responding to the regional water facilities plan by the South Florida Water Management District. They update their plan every five years. If this plan is adopted, the village will have to update their plan 18 months after the South Florida Water Management District updates that regional plan. We're looking at a potential update to the plan every five years. Are there any other questions about this plan?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead, Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Just for the benefit of those watching, what water does El Portal manage?

Camilla: Thank you. Well, the village is completely reliant on the county for its water supply. However, the village is required to implement conservation policies and practices which the village has incorporated in the recently adopted comprehensive plan. It's important to keep updating and reviewing those policies to being consistent with the county's plan. Thank you.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Vice Mayor Urbom, you're good? Are there any questions or comments from the council before I open it up to the residents for any potential questions or comments?

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: I apologize to you all. I have it here. I'm looking at page nine. I had to go back to the history. I'm looking at an August 3rd, 2020 memorandum from the village manager. On page nine it references Plusurbia continue to work on the water supply plan and comprehensive plan investigating whether to pursue the potential metering of parking on streets, et cetera, all of that stuff. I'm now wondering what is the water supply plan and comprehensive plan? What is it? That's all I could find, and I don't have enough information even know what that is. We got a dam around here somewhere. What is the water supply plan? I didn't see enough in the literature to give me some comfort. Can you help me?

Camilla: Yes, absolutely. The water supply plan is a work plan that the Florida Statutes require every municipality to adopt in order to make sure based on changes in each municipality that there's constant supply and enough for all of its residents. However, the village is 100% reliant on the county for its water. Even so, each municipality is required to have a plan, and the villages- most of what you'll see in the plan is a language required just to confirm that it's consistent with the counties. In addition to that, it is required that the village restate the goals, objectives, and policies from the comprehensive plan that relate to water supply, specifically, conservation practices that the village follows or that can be pursued in the future so that the water use can be lowered and therefore there are no issues from the county side from their supply to the village.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Mayor, let me see if I can get to the bottom of it. Because if I'm having problems dealing with this, and I have this in my background as a professional, we will not be building a water supply system.

Camilla: No, no.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Just check that off. That's gone. What we do now and what we've been doing, we have to reaffirm that every so many years. Is that what this is?

Camilla: Yes.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: This is a reaffirmation of how we intend to continue doing business with our water supply plan. Has nothing to do with the flooding. Has nothing to do with how our sprinkler systems don't operate anymore. It has more to do with consumption and whether or not we're being conservative in terms of use. That people don't understand when you just keep the water running, that's not the practice that we should be doing. I'm making these statements to say, am I on the right track about this water supply plan? It is, yes, we reaffirm we shall do things to be cognizant of our water supply system in a nutshell.

Camilla: In a nutshell.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: That's what I needed to hear, because too often, we see people running their sprinkler systems all night. That's county water. If you really look at where we are the closest, is right there in Liberty City. Am I right mayor?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: The big huge tanks in Liberty City is where we get our water supply from. We do not get it from North Miami. We do not get it from any of the other surroundings, but we have got to be much better about how we have our water. It is not the little river that we're getting our water out of. We as a village need to become very much more educated about our water supply because water systems throughout Florida are being, we say--

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Destroyed.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Destroyed. That is the perfect word. We need to get the word out. I even had personal. I even tell my husband, "When you turn the water on in the morning time you want to brush your teeth, don't just leave it running. Put the toothbrush under the water and turn it off." Do not brush your teeth. I'm being practical people. Water supply in Florida is going at a very dangerous level in terms of pure water. You keep hearing

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

purified water, that's sewer water made to be drinkable. We are not there yet. California is. We're not there yet. I don't want to get where we're drinking-- You got the message.

Camilla: Thank you.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you. I appreciate. I couldn't see anything, but I was hoping this is a reaffirmation of our commitment to how we use the county water, which is our water too because we pay taxes to the county. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Camilla: Thank you, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Anybody else from the council? Any questions or comments for Camilla? Seeing none. Any of our residents, questions or comments about the water supply plan? We're good on Zoom? Hearing none. Just for the record you guys, just if anybody wants any extra information, thank you very much Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward for bringing that up, the supporting document entitled *El Portal Water Supply Work plan* on the first pages of a supporting document just for our residents, it has the item. Explains the item on the number one. Number two, it gives the background for it. Probably about seven paragraphs. Then number three is a recommendation from Plusurbia.

Then the next page after that, it has the frequently asked questions regarding the water supply facilities work plans. It has about seven bullets under why update the water supplies work plan. It explains why updated. It has seven bullets there. The next question is, how is the work plan updated? It has a few bullets there. Who prepares the work plan update? When are adopted the comprehensive plan amendments do? What is included in the work plan update? What assistance will be provided to the work plan update?

Right there you have a link to the South Florida Water Management District website that explains that, and it goes on and on. There's a number of questions there. If anybody got those documents, it's right there on the first four pages. Again, thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward for bringing that up and you can find that information there.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: The comp plans on there too.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The comp plan is right after that. Right after those questions is the actual comp plan. That's there for you also. Again, that's in the supporting document entitled *El Portal Water Supply Work Plan*. Hearing nothing else you guys. Do I have a motion to approve the Water Supply Planning?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: So moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Was that Councilperson Pirela or Vice Mayor Urbom? Is that Councilperson Pirela? Councilperson Pirela. Seconded by Councilperson Pirela. Madam Clerk, may I please have a roll call?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Camilla, so you're going to stay right there for a second. The next one is the new application for zoning procedures. Go ahead, Camilla. The floor is yours.

Camilla: Thank you, Mayor. This item is a request from the Village of El Portal administration brought up by the village manager and the building official, wishing to incorporate a separate application for zoning applications that require more extensive review than typical building permit application, including site plan review, variances, and special exception requests.

Important to note is that this does not propose an amendment to the charter or any ordinance in any way. It is simply proposing a separate application but following procedures established by Chapter 17 of the village charter. This will help streamline the process and make it clear to all the applicants, how to proceed with any of these requests mentioned, which is currently not as clear simply because it is not the same process as a typical building permit application for other site improvements such as fences, driveways, et cetera.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Camilla. I just want to thank Clerk Jacobi, Manager Alou, everybody, for bringing this together and just with these new applications making everything more clear for our residents. Thank you, everybody, for doing that. Thank you, Manager Alou, thank your staff for me also, and Mr. Jean, also absolutely. Any questions or comments from the council?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you. I have to say thank you because, just helter-skelter, I see that it's a pre-application review, first. Is there a cost for the pre-application review?

Camilla: The pre-application is optional and there is. It is part of the fees established, yeah.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: All right. It's at the discretion of the department or request of the applicant. The pre-application review is at the discretion of the

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

department, meaning Planning and Zoning, or request of the applicant? Either/or, or who's taking over? I'm just reading what the paper says.

Camilla: Either/or. Usually, typically it's the applicant who will request a pre-application.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I see. You get a lot of those already?

Camilla: Yes, actually.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: They want to know the process and everything before they even get started.

Camilla: Yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: My next question is-- No. The observation is compliance with land use regulations and development standards. A standard thing before you issue a permit, am I right?

Camilla: Yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Relaxation of technical requirements of the code. In other words, is there an exception to something that I'm trying to get done and the answer usually is, "No, it's not?"

Camilla: That's for the variance request, yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The last one is, new uses or change of use.

Camilla: Yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: In other words, they come with one thing and then they start thinking about doing something else. For instance, myself, if I want to close in my garage, I close it in, but the real purpose is to make it a bedroom, different standards, different whatevers.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Camilla: [coughs] Excuse me. Garage conversions fall under variances, but special exception-

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I just made an example. I just made an example.

Camilla: Okay.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: In other words, we want to clear the air long before they get involved in the process. That way, the client, which is our villagers, and the department are on the same page from the beginning. That's what I see this is. Am I close?

Camilla: Yes, it's meant to clarify. Yes, thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Attorney Geller had a comment he wanted to make.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Thank you, Mayor. Yes, Dr. Lightfoot-Ward, you have it exactly right. This is something that's done, I'd say in most municipalities, more than many, maybe not all of them, but sometimes it's mandatory. I think this approach of flexibility is a good thing, but from the standpoint of somebody who's seeking permission, as you point out, the advantage is not just to be sure you're on the same page, but before you start spending a lot of money on plans and architects and all that other, you want to find out, number one, "Can I even do it?" Number two, "If I can, how? What do I got to do?"

It's a real opportunity for someone to make sure they're not wasting time and money going down the road. On the other hand, it allows the village both through staff and otherwise. Manager gets to weigh in to try to guide some of what's going to be going on. They may be able to say, "Well, you can do it any of these three ways, but it'll probably move quicker if you do with this one here," and it gives the village some real ability to help steer things in the way that it wants it and that the majority residents.

I really compliment Ms. [unintelligible 02:05:52] for a really good job. This is something that we have lacked, that other municipalities have had. This is one of those things we were just talking about, another opportunity to move this village forward, so it's a very good piece of work.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. We really appreciate that, Attorney Geller. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, were you completed with your questions and comments?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Are there any other questions or comments from the council?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: No. No.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, hearing none. Moving on to the residents, are there any questions or comments from the residents about the new application for zoning procedures? We're good? Moving back to the council, do we have a motion to approve the new application for the zoning procedures?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: So moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion moved by Vice Mayor Urbom. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Pirela. Madam Clerk, may I please have a roll call?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much appreciate that.

Camilla: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Next, we're moving on to Citizen of the Year nominations. First of all, shout out to our current Citizen of the Year. Thank you very much, I appreciate it. Shout out to our current Citizen of the Year, who is Elizabeth Fata Carpenter, she was chosen last year. In the past, you guys, the Citizen of the Year has always been chosen by the mayor themselves. This year, you guys know how I am about transparency and inclusion and things like that.

This year I wanted to open it up, and I wanted to say to the rest of you all, if you have any ideas of who the Citizen of the Year maybe should be, you don't have to think about it right now, but let's say, if you can get back to the clerk or the manager with your ideas about who it should be by Friday, October the 8th, if you can get back to them about who you think it should be and why.

Just a quick email about who you think it should be and why, or a phone call, but just get back to them by Friday, October the 8th, but just give your reasoning to why who it is. I, along with the manager and the clerk we'll get together, we'll make the final decision. I do want to open it up to the rest of the Council for the first time. I want you guys to be involved in this, all right? All right, October 8, get back to either the manager or the clerk by October the 8th, and the three of us will come together and decide.

All right, thank you very much for that, you guys. I'll be presenting that award at the October meeting. Guys, remember my State of the Village Address is right before the October meeting, so October is going to be another month, it's right before we get to November, and November starts with the holiday season and things like that. October we're going to be

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

wrapping a lot of awards up and things like that also. Moving on to H5, Vice Mayor Urbom, I don't know if you want to jump in here.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes. Item H5, Halloween this year. With the budget process, we essentially were left with a bit of an open-ended public affairs budget, in terms of similar structure as last year. When the pandemic hit and a lot of the public affairs activities were canceled or otherwise taken off the calendar, the Public Affairs Committee agreed to slash the public affairs budget, and use those funds where they were more urgently needed throughout the village. With the budget process this year, in a similar fashion, the public affairs budget was left less than intact, I'll say. Which is fine. We can manage.

With these larger events that we have throughout the year, this next one being Halloween, the discussion essentially is how the structure of Halloween is going to go this year. The way I see it, and I'm certainly open to discussion here is a similar fashion to the spring event that we had, where we would have households essentially have an opportunity to sign up as official hosts in terms of a place where people can go and expect to have a Halloween experience as far as the trick-or-treating and things like this for the kids.

Out of that would be born a map that would then be distributed to residents of El Portal only. Similar, again, to how the spring event went. Obviously, anybody who wants to keep a porch light on and have candy out is more than welcome to. There would be essentially an information sheet-- Once the host sites were determined, there'll be an information sheet that will go out to all the residents of how Halloween is going to work.

That information sheet would be a map as well as recommendations for how to basically set up your property so that people would know that they would be able to go and visit. In light of social distancing, it would probably be a protocol to the effect that a table be set up at the end of the driveway near the swale, what have you, so that you'd have less crowding of groups, around the front door, and things like that. There might be some adjustments like that to accommodate for social distancing.

Now, the critical piece of this is the budget. Things to consider regarding that would be need for police presence because of the large number of pedestrian traffic after dark specifically. That hourly rate, it will probably be one of the most significant pieces. Any materials that the

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

village wanted to supply to a host house signing up. Then the flyers, ideally there would be two. One flyer to announce how it was going to go, asking for people to sign up to be placed on the map that will be distributed later.

The second flyer going out would be the final rules of how the night is going to go. The map of where people can be sure that they would be able to go and have that experience and then the guidelines for anybody else who would just like to participate. Having said all of that, I'm open as always to discussion, suggestions. The way I say it is questions, concerns, compliments, complaints, any and all. I'll open it to the rest of the council to discuss how we might see this going forward here.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Vice Mayor Urbom, if I may. Just a couple of things. The first thing is like in your idea, how much of a budget do you need for the candy and whatever you need you think?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Manager, you'll probably tell him better than I would know but I'm thinking, ideally, we would have at least four officers at night. How has it been in the past?

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: In the past, we had actually event. In the past few years, we have not had an event. We just had candy at the table because it had been defunded some time ago. We had budgeted in the past \$200 for that candy table here at the front. Police officers is quite pricey, and we are actually having a big grand opening at the skate park that very same weekend. Our police are going to be over there. We really will have a challenge with providing police-

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Because of scheduling.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Absolutely. It's their big opening. It's a national event. It's televised. We are really called in to utilize our police there who are actually being paid off duty for that. We don't have a lot of police staff as you know. I'm concerned-

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: For that event, I know that the initial, at least within the council here, it was being announced as the 30th and 31st. I saw within the past few days that has been amended to the 29th and 30th. Is that correct?

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Yes, that is correct.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'm guessing to accommodate for the fact that they might have a better turnout for those two days where-

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: No, it's more to accommodate the fact that we can't hold the 700 people they were trying to invite and that we needed to make some concessions where they had to make a few concessions financially as well as considering our public safety capabilities.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Then maybe what I might ask the council is, is there a will among the council to have a Halloween event this year?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'll open it to the council. I'll turn it back to you in a second Vice Mayor Urbom. The first thing we will have to decide like exactly what would take place, we do decide the budget. The budget is always the main issue. With the other event going on, are we going to be able to get cops? How many cops will you need for the event? The budget is the first thing kind of?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Then light of that model, for example, the spring event, it was a morning event.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: [unintelligible 02:15:41]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: What we would have an option to do would be to make this a daylight hours event to increase visibility, and reduce the difficulty of having everybody traverse the village after nightfall accounting for the fact that you have people out on the street. It will be Halloween, so residents of Miami-Dade County should be aware that there will be people out and about, but at the same time, people typically expect that more towards the evening so people rushing from point A to point B to get ready for their own events that

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

day might pose a problem on places like Northeast 2nd Ave, Miami Avenue, 87th Street where it might be difficult.

You might have residents who feel compartmentalized where they may not feel comfortable without explicit police presence or other material, I guess, in terms of cars being made aware that there are pedestrians out and about. I believe it could be accommodated, in terms of hours, and the way the map works, to mitigate any issues with the pedestrians being out.

Now, beyond that, I think that the budget of \$200 is probably adequate because host sites, we can essentially put the information there. We still have gift cards as well from the spring event that could be distributed to some host sites. We have five of those. Those have already essentially been paid for, right? Those can either be used to give two host sites so that they can go purchase candy or some other fashion distributed or utilized.

I'll get with the manager for the total on that, but I know it's five gift cards, and I believe-- I want to say it's either \$20 or \$25 each. I'll confirm that and email you on what that is. I know it's either \$20 or \$25. I know that there's five of them. That much I can tell you. That may help a little bit. I would say we want to have some kind of decoration regardless for that weekend here at village hall, something to that effect. Some kind of decoration. I'm sure in the past when we had the block parties, I'm sure the budget was something like \$2200 or more just based on other events that we have similar size.

I would say if we did this for \$500, daytime event, limited hours, and then the critical pieces of the two pieces of communication, the one asking for people to announce that they're going to participate ahead of time. The second one, to lay out the rules of how it's going to go out, and the map of where people can be sure to go and have that experience. The cost of printing those materials because ideally-- I believe through the woman's club, we would have the manpower to distribute 8.5 by 11 pieces of paper twice. I do believe we have the manpower to do that. Then it's just a matter of the printing cost of flyering the entire village twice, so that cost plus the candy. Then if we were to model it in a way that we would not require police presence, then that is a scenario I see where this happens. I'll listen to comment.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely, I hear you. Right before you were saying that that's what I was going to go to because October 31st this year is a Sunday. Mostly in El

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Portal is mostly young children. The next day of school, so I don't even think that even if we had the police power and things like that, I don't even think we would even want them to do an event where they would have to be out on a school night. Essentially where school's the next day is essentially the school night. On a school night in the dusk hours of society. I think that maybe what we could do since-- because if we're going to do it like how you set up the egg hunt event or the Easter egg event, Spring Egg Hunt event.

If we're going to do it like that, then it's going to be mostly young kids, like how it was for the Spring Egg Hunt event. Therefore, can cloak it like a Halloween before Halloween type of thing. Maybe what might be the best idea, and this might sound outlandish, but what might be the best idea to where you won't need any police assistance is to do it Sunday morning or Saturday morning to where it's a morning event. What's that?

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: I don't mean to turn up but the sun and the kids dressed up, you got to consider that too.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, but if it's-

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: And you're walking.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Also, if the families got to get the kids dressed up in the morning and the-- because people are going to have events that evening. People are definitely going to have events to go to that evening.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I just think that the further it gets to it being darker like 5:00 PM, 5:30 PM, I just think it's going to get crazier outside. It's going to get more dangerous. It's going to be a lot of cars in the street.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: No, I agree. Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Sunday morning is like dead, it's more of relaxed, calm, there's not many people out on the street.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Right but accounting for church and things like this I mean would something--

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www.fullmooncreative.com
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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: What about Saturday morning?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Well, even the Sunday like 1:00 to 3:00 or even put it up against 5:00 like 3:00 to 5:00 in terms of people's expectations of when they can travel around on that map because the way with the Spring Event, we encouraged everybody to walk. We encouraged everybody to walk from-- essentially, it was a walking tour of the neighborhood, and it was really nice that way.

At the same time, we made it clear, if you need to drive from location to location by all means do that. Until we would have a list of volunteers, a list of host houses, we wouldn't really be sure as far as how that breakdown is going to work. Are people going to stay in Sherwood Forest only? Things of that effect. Are people going to stay on the west side only? There's nobody going to cross northeast 2nd avenue, there's nobody going to cross 87th street?

In that regard, if this is a bridge too far for us, we just need to say that. At the same time especially as we exit somewhat the pandemic, there's certainly especially this year going to be a lot of families with the expectation that something would be occurring. Again, one of my concerns and the reason for the flyer the neighborhood twice is because we don't really want to announce this to outside communities.

That is something the same with the Spring Event. We want to avoid that so that this is really an El Portal community event where the people of El Portal are aware of it and it's not going to be blasted on next door. It might be on El Portal specifically on next door, but it won't be blasted. Really the information truly is going to be in the form of an 8.5 by 11 flyer distributed by hand throughout the neighborhood. Dr. Lightfoot-Ward I--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead Vice Mayor. I just think that maybe next year-- it falls into Monday night, but maybe things will be open more next year, and maybe-

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Well, by next year hopefully we're back to the block party format.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That what I was going to say. I was going to say-

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: That was one of the best block parties in Miami.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's what I was going to say, I was going to say-- Exactly what I was going to say. I was going to say maybe just because of planning and things like that in time and the skateboard park and things like that and lack of police presence, maybe we should think about it next year because next year from the outlook that myself and the manager are looking at with the budget.

You guys will hear so much about it when I do the state of the village but there's going to be so much money coming into where the budget is going to be much better next year. I think that we can plan something better, we would go right back to the block party right here on 87, have a wonderful event, and so maybe we should just look to do that.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Then regardless of what the decision is, if that would be the decision, I still believe that there should be some form of communication to the residents that there would not-- I believe the expectation is there that something will take place, just because it's right-wrong or different it's Halloween.

I do believe that the expectation is there, and so if we're not going to do it, I just think-- it could be on the website. It doesn't have to be a dark rain cloud of an announcement, but at least to let the residents know that there will not be an event so that that way they could plan accordingly and not be counting on something that all of sudden the day comes they're like, "Wait minute. Nothing's happening?" Just for the benefit of the residents to be able to plan accordingly, we should make some announcement to that effect, and even a welcome announcement to next year's bash or something to that effect.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, I'll put something together. We'll put something together, put it on the website, tell them to have a safe Halloween, and get ready for next year's big Halloween block party coming back in 2022. Something like that.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Then while we're on the topic because it will come up without getting too much into a sidebar here. I do want to address one of specifically Dr. Lightfoot-Ward's concerns but it's actually a concern that I share as well. That is as the next one beyond

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

that is Thanksgiving which we discussed in terms of Turkey giveaway we'll deal with that in public affairs committee.

Just like the council to put our mind toward some manner of event around the winter solstice. Because of the number of cultures that have celebrations around the winter solstice, we should consider something that would be inclusive and that would be something that the residents would be able to participate in for that time of year. Anyway, I would like the council to keep that in your brain because it's coming up soon. Is it the consensus of the council then that we will forego an official Halloween event this year? Okay, all right.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll do all in favor say aye. Do I have a motion to forego-

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Well, do we want public comment on this?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, if you want.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes, I mean--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'll do a motion in a second, then we'll open it up.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Very good. Okay.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Do I have a motion to move the Halloween celebration to 2022, hopefully, back to the block party? Do I have a motion for that?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes, so moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion move by Vice Mayor Urbom. Do I have a second? Second?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Seconded by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. We'll do all in favor. We'll do all in favor. All in favor say aye.

All: Aye.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: But public opinion.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Back it out, back it out.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Before we have a motion, we have a second, is there anybody, any residents that have any comments about Halloween either 2021, 2022 how we are looking on Zoom? We're good on Zoom? My full moon brothers, we're good on Zoom? Thumbs up. All right. We have a motion, we have a second, we have no further comment on Halloween 2021 moving to 2022. Let's just do a roll call on that one as well. We waited so long madam clerk. Let's just have fun with it.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: It's going to be quick.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Roll call. Madam clerk, let's do a roll call.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to nine.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'll see you in 2022 for the block party. Moving on you guys, this is a resolution, we're in the resolutions and ordinances. This is I1. This is a resolution, interlocal agreement with Miami-Dade County circular shuttle. Attorney Geller, if you want to read that into the record, please?

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Yes, sir. Resolution of the village council, the Village of El Portal Florida, authorizing the village manager, the Village of El Portal to enter into an interlocal agreement with Miami-Dade County for the transportation circular pilot project shuttle to downtown transit project providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. This has been a long time coming. Vice Mayor Urbom remember we were on the town hall that time, the Zoom town hall where they were telling us all about it. It's a long time coming. It's one of the achievements I have them all listed out of my state of the village that I'll give in October but, Madam manager, if you want to expand even further, we're going to have a circulator shuttle come here to El Portal that will be going downtown. It'll be free of charge to the residents.

We're going to have two stops in the village. One right here in village hall. One over on the west side by Horace Mann. We're going to have awnings to protect from the rain and weather. When the residents are out there waiting for the shuttle to come, there'll be protection from the rain and the weather. Madam manager, do you have anything else you want to add?

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Yes. You've said everything. This may look familiar to you because in April of this year, you passed a resolution allowing me to take the FDOT Grant that is being utilized for this shuttle. Well, we are using surtax funds to do the match. Because we are using surtax funds, we now have to do an interlocal agreement with the county.

This is what's before you now is that you're allowing me to do the interlocal agreement with Miami-Dade County so that we can provide the match funds for the FDOT Grant that allows for the circulator. I know we've been talking about the circulator, for a while. We're still waiting for the equipment based on the pandemic and just things being delayed. We don't

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

have our electric van yet, but the moment we get it, we'll be ready. I ask that you please pass it so we can get our interlocal agreement executed.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Madam manager. We appreciate it. Any questions or comments from the council?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Let me say for the record, I am no longer on the CITT. I cannot hold two offices. I've been asked the question. Now, this is a perfect time. Cannot hold two offices. Notwithstanding, I was around when this idea came along about a couple of years now. I was a proponent of these projects. I have a few questions, nonetheless. What is the duration of the project shuttle since this is a pilot project? That's my first question. The criteria for continuance. That's my second concern, and what will determine success of this shuttle project?

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: The duration of the pilot is one year and is extended two additional years thereafter. The possibility of continuance I think you're saying what would determine it if it continues, ridership and success, we will be calculating the number of passengers, the routes, just the nuances of the pilot program to determine whether it will continue or not. We are going to be learning best practices from our other municipalities who have done this project before.

I know that Miami Shores had this for a very short duration. They didn't have the ridership. They postponed it and said that they will pick it back up after the pandemic. Yes, there's a delay in getting the equipment but we're also in a pandemic. I think that would also affect us as well. When that time comes, we'll be calculating the ridership and the particularities to our community, and how they're utilizing the service.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, since the village manager and I are having this conversation, I have a couple more concerns. I'm more concerned about the success. This is a magnificent opportunity. I'm part of the brainchild that brought it as an

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Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

issue, as a concern, as a possibility. I was on the CITT when the first shuttle went into effect. I'm looking at the city and I can't call it by name, but it's very successful today and most of them are.

Will there be advertisement on some way to let folks know because that's the word getting out continuously. Let's not assume that everybody has a computer and can use it. Will the word get out successfully? There's only 2,700 of us. I don't know what the benchmark is but I'm sure you probably heard what the benchmark is in today's standards, what the benchmark is for this shuttle and to make it work because I think all five of us, as well as that committee that meets when we're not meeting. What's that committee called Mayor?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The sustainability and resiliency task force.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The sustainability. Just sustainability alone tells me we're going to need some help. Just getting the word out that we need people to not only know that the shuttle is here, but to ride it. In that, that's a campaign advertisement that I hope that the surtax monies will also finance so that the project will be successful. I mean successful for a minimum. That's why I was asking how many riderships do we need to have? We're only just short 2,800 residents. That's all we are.

How many would it take to be successful, because if we can match that number or exceed it, it's a given. That's our surtax money, that doesn't go towards streets and other things. We need a number and we need a vigorous campaign to let people know the services here. If we don't use it, we will lose it. Usually, it doesn't come back because once a city understands it, that money is going over to the cities that are utilizing it, and we're small. We're a perfect example, can it work in a small city, or can it not? We will probably be one of the first to make that. We really got to put our feet to the floor and make the tires run.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me first, if I may, as far as getting the word out, it will get out to everybody. I'll take care of that. I have a brand-new push to just push out information through flyers and things like that. As a matter of fact, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, I believe I'm hitting your street tomorrow, but some individuals have already gotten those flyers. The first ones I've passed out with the social media information for the police department and for the village itself.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting**

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Start: 7:01 PM

Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

I've been hanging those door hangers on every single door. Out of my discretionary, I've ordered thousands of door hangers for all the flyers that are going to be coming. I haven't hit Sherwood Forest yet, and I haven't hit your street yet, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, but you'll see that. You'll see how these flyers are going to be starting to be distributed right there on the door of every household in El Portal so that it can't be missed.

There'll be another flyer going out next week-- yes, early next week. This weekend, actually. That will be about the construction that's going to be happening for the flooding, that we have flood construction starting October 3rd. That flyer will be on every door next week letting everybody know that that's coming, so they're not like, "What is this construction happening? Why is this?" We're improving flooding. We're fixing the neighborhood. My focus is always infrastructure and things like that. The word will get out there. As far as the rest of your question, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, I'll turn it over to the manager.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Thank you. The public education campaign is vital to the success of the program. In fact, is a requirement as we do the pilot. We've had a town hall meeting about the shuttle service. I'm sure we'll do many more thereafter, just to put the word out and to let people know about this being one of El Portal's resiliency measures. It really is.

It's something that's being promoted by our county mayor, as well the resiliency, improving transportation and alternative means of transportation and modes of travel. We're definitely putting the word out in paper flyers, meeting with people, and putting things on social media and on the website, of course. Hopefully, as time progresses, and we are a little more tech capable, we'll have a marquee that can put that information out as well. A digital marquee.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you, Madam manager.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. I really appreciate that. Any other questions or comments for the manager?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes, briefly. I do think this will be success because I think the need certainly is there. As far as the communication map and schedule will be honestly the two most critical pieces of all that communication. If people can find a map and a schedule

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Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

easily enough, then I think that will be the key to that success. Just a reminder that this is on the public affairs radar because there will also be screens on the shuttle that the village will be able to use for its own branding. We can even sell ad space to local businesses. It'll be opportunities for them as well.

Then additionally, something like this is exactly what is needed to alleviate the congestion issue in this county. It is beyond me how the western expansion of the Kendall expressway got approved. That is going to be the death of the Everglades and where are those cars going to go now that they are going to streamline all the traffic from Kendall you just have a brand-new bottleneck further up the road.

It's total foolishness beyond belief, and hopefully the success of a program like this will help demonstrate to people with thicker skulls that the future of human transportation is mass transportation. I love my car, I love my private time and my space, but it is absurd in a metropolitan area this size to build another expressway. It's just total stupidity. Anyway, I'm excited about this project and I do think it will be wildly successful.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Vice Mayor Urbom. Great point about the expressway over at Kendall. Any other questions or comments by the council? Hearing none. Any residents, any questions, or comments? Any visitors? How is it going on Zoom? We have one? We're good? All right. Hearing and seeing none. Do I have a motion to approve a resolution? I1 interlocal agreement Miami-Dade County circulators shuttle.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: So moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do you have a second for the resolution?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by vice-mayor Urbom. Madam clerk, may I please have roll call, please?

Clerk: Roll call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Madam clerk. I appreciate that. Next is resolution I2. This is the Craig A. Smith & Associates renovation proposal. This is another great win, Madam manager, for the village. Attorney Geller, read that into the record for us, please.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Excuse me. I'm sorry if I may, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: I do have a trouble with this resolution that's before us.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let attorney Geller. Read it into the record first and then right after that I'm coming right to you Councilperson Pirela. I'll come right that way afterwards.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Thanks.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I got you.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Resolution of the village council, the Village of El Portal, Florida authorizing the village to approve and accept the Craig A. Smith & Associates

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

parks renovation proposal, providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effect data.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Pirela-- Thank you very much, attorney Geller. Councilperson Pirela, the floor is yours.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Well, again, I have troubles, it caught me by surprise, actually to see the resolution here. I didn't think we went through the steps of getting quotes for the renovation of the park. I don't know, Madam manager, if we had to go through the whole process and getting a proposal from other vendors. Seeing here \$75,000 in front of us with that resolution already in place, I think it's a little too premature. That's why I would like to table these as a resolution so we can go through the whole process and how it should be done. A more open way I believe.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: If I may.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Madam manager, let me make sure you don't have to repeat, because I'm going to say something similar too, can I do that? Mayor, do you have any objection?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Then let me just-- I saw this proposed scope of services and proposed fee for professional services. I wasn't around probably when this first came up. I probably wasn't on the council. If I was, I don't remember. I do know Greg Smith. I know when he was on the council. All right? Excellent individual. This is not a personal matter. This is mainly what's process. I know he came before I got here since I've been here the second time around.

I was concerned about it just as he does, the map because it only dictates task one through four. I think it's four task, five task that basically he's writing, he's going to produce map of topographical surveys. I don't know why we even need it. What I do know is the topographical maps in Florida, the entire state of Florida has been mapped by the US

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

geological survey. 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles, these maps have turned seven and a half minute quadrangles, et cetera, et cetera, all that fancy stuff.

Each topographical triangle map is given a specific name. In other words, it's already exists. Why are we doing this? I haven't seen a proposal. I haven't seen people. Maybe you already did it and it just got lost with the COVID-19 stuff, but I have a real serious concern of this item coming up at this time without past knowledge that it was even on the radar.

I think in that memoir I mentioned earlier that you wrote back in whatever year that was, that date that you wrote a memoir. I think it was in it, but I think it's unfair to just simply say we got to approve it and I haven't even seen any bids for it. Maybe it already happened. Maybe they're old. I don't know what the answer is. I just know that this is what I'm talking about when we talk about the budget. That I didn't see it coming, and quite frankly, it put me off balance.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Madam manger, I'm going to let you come in in a second, but let me. What this is about, you guys, is improvements to the parks. It's not just necessarily about the service, it's about park improvement. We're going to be improving all of our parks. The reason why it in the budget is because this money is not a budgeted item. This is money that our taxpayers don't have to pay. This is one of the things that when I talk about how myself and the manager we've been going out and we've been fighting for so much money. When I first came in, we were fighting for so much money. Now the money's starting to come in. These are funds that are not from our taxpayers. These are funds from other areas, other places, grants, Tallahassee, Washington DC. We have funds that are going to be coming in more and more. We got funds for park improvement to improve our parks. That's what it's for.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Mr. Mayor, if I may. I know exactly where the money is coming from because I've been very involved with the project, the parks is actually into the public works department, which I'm a chair of. It's not coming from the budget or anything like that. That's why you didn't see it on the budget, but it is troubling to me to have gotten just a quote. I was in the conversations with Craig Smith and Manager Alou, with the presentation they did, we were awaiting for the quote, and again, I even asked the manager if we could

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

actually get more quotes and compare and see whether-- Make it a process like we were all supposed to do on everything, no?

I don't know if this is an item that needs to have the same steps as any other spends that we have to incur and to also-- I don't know if I'm comfortable spending-- I haven't seen even the plans or the drawings of what is that they're planning to do in the parks and charge \$12,000 in one, \$8,000 in the other one. I need to see plans. I need to see what their vision is for each and every part, not just because we got the money free from [unintelligible 02:48:03], now we don't care about how much it costs. We just have the money and throw it in there. No. Especially nature park, river stakes, those are parks that are not even parks.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: If I may, please.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Again, I'm sorry, Madam manager. I just ask to actually get quotes and go through the process as far as landscape and-

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: If I may, Craig A. Smith is our engineering firm. They have a landscaping architecture arm or portion to their engineering process. They're doing the surveying, the landscape architecture, and engineering service. That's something that I can't do on my own, but I'm utilizing our engineering firm to do so. We have an engineer that does work here in the village. This is their price for doing this work for us.

We do want to do the renovations. I've been talking about the renovations. We've all been talking about these renovations for at least two years now. It's been in my managers' report every month. We had the meeting with Craig A. Smith went through line by line. What each part was to be planted there, what was to be designed there, that was presented to the council as well in my memo from 2020. I'm just moving it forward. I also have Craig A. Smith on the zoom, but I think they're lost connection twice, but let's see. Perhaps he can better answer some of your concerns.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: While you're looking, Mr. mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, councilperson.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I hear you. I'm sympathetic to it. I'm just concerned years down the road, auditor comes in and he says, "Did you do a bid on it?" We'll say, "No." When I look at the numbers, one through five, they don't match up with the task amount that's being asked. That troubles me. Mayor, you know we are **[unintelligible 02:50:23]** about what we do in The Village. You know that we get audited. You know that we want to protect our manager as best we can, but this is like it fell out of the air.

Yes, it's in your reports. Yes, I've read them. Yes, all of that. All of that is true, and I appreciate that, but when I look at the numbers of the proposed fees for each park, and at the same time look at the topography survey and the numbers don't match, it bothers me. Why is being pushed so quickly? The fact that we have an engineer, "I want to improve the parks. I want to keep them improved." That's not the issue. The issue is, should we get audited? Will a basic question be asked? Did you go out for bids on this?

If you did, do you have documentation on it? That in a nutshell says, that's an open wound for me, despite the fact that we have an engineer on task. He would be the one leading the effort and then advising us on what should be done once we see what others are proposing to do. Every time I see something from Mr. Smith, I'm always like, "What are we doing here? Why are we in bed?" Listen, it gives a different impression to the residents when they say, "Why only CAS? What is this?" You just explained it to me, "He is our engineer," but he doesn't necessarily have to be the one that does the project unless it's a competitive bid.

Village Manager Christia Alou: Understand, he's the project manager, because he is our engineer. What would go out to bid would be the construction, the actual work to be done will have to go out to bid. He will assist me in preparing those RFPs or RFQs, whatever is necessary to do that, but there has to be payment for the project management of this. As well as the surveying, the architecture, and the engineering services. That's **[unintelligible 02:52:29]**

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: This total cost then is more than just 41,000?

Speaker 3: 75,800.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: It's 75. Gee, willies. That's my whole salary.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. If you look at the next page, you have the surveying cost of 27 and the project coordination cost of 7,500. Let me just say this. I have no problem-- What I was explaining was what this was actually about. It wasn't about necessarily surveying, it was about park improvement. That was the first thing. Second of all, just let me say this, Craig A. Smith-- Craig A. Smith is an engineering firm. It's not Greg Smith, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. They were never on the council. Craig A. Smith is an engineering firm that--

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Yes, it was a person.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, he was. It was a Craig A. Smith.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, but I'm saying it's-- Yes, but not this one.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay. I appreciate that.

Village Manager Christia Alou: [unintelligible 02:53:12] I think he's [unintelligible 02:53:19]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'm being clear that he was never on the council. Craig A. Smith is not-- Yes. He was never on the council. Let me just say this, and like I said, I don't necessarily disagree with what you guys are saying, but-- I'll come to you right now, Vice Mayor Urbom, but let me say this though. Us using Craig A. Smith and Associates in the way that we do, you guys, is like the way we use Plusurbia in the way that we do. We are an engineering firm that we use for these type of items, for all types of items engineering-related. That's Craig A. Smith and Associates, we've had them for a long time.

Everything with design and architecture and stuff like that, we use Plusurbia. If we say, "Okay, Plusurbia we want you- Camilla and Juan, we want you to be the guys to go ahead and do something," they might do it in-house, they might hire another firm that they know to help them, but they bring us back the results. When they do that- and you see madam [unintelligible 02:54:24] you're shaking your head up and down. When they do that, we don't tell Plusurbia, "Well, how did you get this? Did you put it out for bid? Who helped you with this?" Things like that.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

We could either have it where we have certain companies that we've contracted, like Craig A. Smith and Associates, like Plusurbia, and we entrust them with the process. As the manager said, it's not like they were going to go do the construction themselves, they're not doing the project themselves. They're the project manager. When we get to the construction phase, that's when they'll bring back the quotes of the construction companies that they'll use, and we'll pick which construction company we want to use.

We do have certain companies that are contracted, and you don't want them to do the work like this and they bring us back the cost, they bring us back the plans and things like that in order to start the project, in order to get it started in the design phase. We're talking about upgrading our parts. They have to, just at least, do the survey and things like that so we can start to do the design phase. Then they bring us back rendering and things like that, how are they going to upgrade the parts. We're not even at that point yet.

Village Manager Christia Alou: Craig A. Smith is on the line now. They are on the Zoom, if we need.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Attorney Geller.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Thank you, Mayor. There is a statute in Florida statutes, called the CCNA, the Consultants Competitive Negotiation Act. What it says is that municipalities and governmental entities may enter into what are called continuing contracts for the rendering of professional services. Not any and all, by the way. For instance, you can't do it with lawyers, even though lawyers are under professional services. Certain kinds of professional services that consultants render, including architecture, engineering, landscape architects, and I think there's a couple others, are allowed to be under what's called the continuing contract.

We're clear, there's nothing that says you can only have one firm under a continuing contract. You may have several engineering firms if you feel you have the need, but CCNA says that the selection of the firms that will be providing services to municipalities must be done on the basis of an RFQ. That's why, frankly, I thought it was so odd when this village used an RFQ for attorney services. It's typically done with an RFP which has a price component. That allows you to look at price, and people make their proposals.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Under the CCNA-- [chuckles] I know you got that one Councilman Pirela, I know it. Under the CCNA, you may not do an RFP. You must do an RFQ. You must make your selection, or sections, you can have multiples, based solely on qualifications. That may seem a little counterintuitive, but there's a reason. Cheapest architect is not necessarily who you want. You may not want very, very best architect, although probably a good idea, but you're not stuck when you select somebody.

If you can't reach an agreement on price for certain things, you're allowed to go on to the second highest ranked proposer, based on qualifications. Or even the third, or you can start over again. Cheapest architect may mean the roof falls down on the people who are in there, so you must make your selections based on experience, qualifications. You may not bid to the cheapest bidder those certain professional services covered under the act. Now, if you have a couple of firms under continuing contract, you may be able to go to them and say, "Hey, what would this one cost me?"

I don't think we have more than one, because, honestly, we don't really do all that much engineering work. If you have a concern about that, councilmembers, you can ask that we go out again and pick additional or more firms to have on standby, so to speak, but you don't bid these kinds of services, engineering and architectural services, because the paramount concern for them is safety. As the manager explains, you have a firm, you have a proposal from the firm, you're not obligated to accept that proposal. You're correct if you don't like it or you have some reason to think it's improper. You can choose not to approve the proposal you receive, but once you get the plans drawn, once your professionals do survey- another example by the way surveying.

Once that happens they will draw the bid docs. They will help as part of their proposal to administer the bidding and construction, because it's supervised by an architect, an engineer your building official etcetera that can be based on price. Again, assuming that you're only going to pick a qualified person to do it, but that one you can competitively bid based on price, because the consultants who are going to oversee it have already drawn plans. It's not improper for you to question this proposal.

It's your discretion to approve it or not. You will have bidding for the construction services which will be a great deal more than just planning and engineering them, but you may not get

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

competitive bids from anybody who's interested in the work to do your construction- excuse me- to do your design services, because that would violate the CCNA statute which is not a stupid statute. It's there for a very good reason. Sorry to be so long-winded in that.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, thank you Attorney Geller.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: With all that being said, thank you very much, but to the naked eye it would've just simply said, "Associates Parks Renovation Program. This is a renovation proposal." You start looking at the caption, the brief caption, then you begin to look at the numbers, and then you start looking at- and a light bulb ought to come on. That's what my fellow person is saying, "A light bulb went on."

Didn't sound right, didn't look right, didn't feel right. What you said, Joe, brings it to the light of what's going on here. No, we don't just do. We have an engineer firm. We have Plusurbia for planning and zoning. We understand that, but that is not how it's presented. When I did the basic- just real basic research, and this says, "Topographical maps in Florida."

The entire state of Florida has been mapped by the US Geological Survey 7.5 minute in a quadrangle. That means a film, you can see everything. Why do we need to pay someone? I'm just getting beyond where my colleague is talking about. Why do we have to pay someone to do a mapping of the topography when it's already there, and he's charging us for it? Why couldn't he just simply look at what's there? Tell us what we need to know about it.

We've not the first time we're doing these parks. We've done these parks before. What kind of tremendous thing is going to be required for this kind of a budget? This is 75,000? Come on--

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: It's not for mapping, but Dr. Lightfoot-Ward the answer to your question is not one that I have, but my understanding is you have Craig A Smith and Associates on the Zoom, I think that's an excellent question, but they may be an excellent answer. You ought to give them the opportunity to answer your questions.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I appreciate that. I just wanted to make that comment because I'm waiting for that response.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: That's a good question.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes, no. If I can jump in, the topographic survey is more for architectural and engineering, yes, but we're not planting any equipment or anything on most of the parks. It's just plants. If CAS and comment. Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: If we could bring Craig A Smith and Associates over.

[pause 03:04:19]

Mr. Rubio, are you there with us? Hold on one second we're going to turn you up a little bit. He's with them.

Mr. Rubio: Can y'all hear me?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, we can hear you. Were you able to hear the question, Mr. Rubio?

Mr. Rubio: Yes. As far surveying and the **[unintelligible 03:05:11]**, the scope is trying to follow the guidelines that The Village manager put in a memo from what was needed for each park. The work at the parks, again from what we understood, was more involved than just limited planting. As fat as the-- For very generic purposes, I have-- Obviously, I've used the US quadrangle maps, but they are fine for contour and they're not anywhere detail enough to be site specific to redo the landscaping and put the amenities that the landscape guidelines **[unintelligible 03:06:13]** a memo was requesting.

There is some earthwork involved or going to be involved. I also have James Santiago on the line I believe, from James Santiago Landscape Architect. He would be a sub to us. He will be managing his work, and he also has a **[unintelligible 03:06:43]** on board to identify trees and be involved with those **[unintelligible 03:06:52]**.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Again, we could not use a quadrangle map for that. It's just obviously, the size would be too small and there's just not enough lines in between to make the determination. We could go back and revisit the scope, and perhaps reduce the scope to not have include all those amenities that were talked about in the park and come back to the council if the council wishes.

If that's what it would take to survey those parks, they were very specific to what the scope entailed, but [unintelligible 03:08:02] down with the manager and Councilman Pirela, to revisit the scope of and perhaps greatly reduce what is wanted in those parks.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, do you have any more questions for me?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, before I move to table this.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Is there a deadline on the use of the funds- these secret funds that obviously don't know what they are or where they're coming from, but they're not coming from taxpayers' money per se. Can we table this for a minute? Because Mr. Rubio, his voice, his instructive nature, his presentation just now said they need to look at it again, because he's heard our comments and I think he recognizes why it's such a "Mystery" to the council at this point.

I would appreciate it if-- Unless there's something that would preclude, because of a deadline to spend the money, we need to have them look at this thing again. Because if you get a bunch of neighbors that like to plant trees and plants, I bet you 10 to one we could do it ourselves and it didn't take all of that. Because whatever happened to those parks especially the one over by- with the white rocks in them.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting**

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Start: 7:01 PM

Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

I don't know who did that, but that was pretty. It don't seem to be anything real critical that needs to be done to that one. I'm talking about right here in Sherwood Forest. I'm talking about that one, but over there where the nature trail is, oh, yes, there's lots to be done over there for sure. I live right there, but I think you need to look at this differently and present it in a way that's comprehensible to the average person, because tell me if I wasn't sitting up here, I'd be sitting down there and say, "What?" Do you want to do what? The plant. Plant? I would be indignant. I'm trying to be polite up here, but I would be indignant when I see a number like that and you ain't been done in work, yet I would be totally indignant. If I was just sitting out in the audience instead of sitting up here on the council. Can we move to table this with for further information and directions?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. I felt motion in a second. First Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, let me allow a manager to respond if she would like to and then let me go to Vice Mayor Urbom.

Village Manager Christia Alou: The Village of El Portal follows the Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation master plan for parks planning. Councilperson Pirela and I met with them and went through every park here in The Village of El Portal in 2020. From that meeting, I took notes were viewed all of the recommendations from those planners and compiled a memo that I distributed to the council. I also put on The Village website. It gives recommendations for what is to be planted, what should be removed, what parts need a little bit more care, such as the Tequetas Mound, needs to have specific work done to it that will require archaeological oversight.

The Sherwood Forest Park you're describing is not to be changed. We're actually going to utilize the existing plan, because that was renovated about 15 or 20 years ago. We're going to use those exact footprints and just do the planting. Again, plants were put in or installed that do not fit that location. Because of the water levels over there, the flooding, that's another issue that needs to be improved in that park. In the memo, it goes through each park and details what needs to be planted, what needs to be done.

Some trees need to be removed, some paving has to be redone and the source River State Park is also one that needs a lot of addressing. I came before you trying to get the deeds to those two parks on the west side so that we can start doing the renovations. That step took a

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

long time. We had to put this aside, get the deeds. Well, we weren't allowed the deeds, but we did get the authority to do the renovation. That was presented to you in that case. Now we're at the point where we're ready to move forward. I'm open to whatever you would like to do. There is no deadline for the use of the money. Cavista funds are to be used federal money. We've also applied for grants. We do have options and we do have a little time.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: There's one more wrench to throw in here is that sites three and four, the Sherwood Park, and the Tequetas Mound both lie within the archaeological designated site. If we are going to now officially through ordinance, I believe be holding residents also accountable to that reality. It's just not the Tequestas Mound. This is 87th Street south to the canal. This is northeast 2nd Avenue East to this Village Hall. That entire area is an archaeological site and any work where digging might take place has to be countered that way.

I'm also in favor of tabling this and that is a discussion. I think should be had with Craig A. Smith and any service to be able to know that they are fully aware of that reality and any additional cost, because that's a lot of time to take into account on even just a simple landscaping project now dealing with an archaeological site. I believe that reality is going to be shocking to residents. It seems to be left out of the discussion here of these parks.

Village Manager Christia Alou: It was [unintelligible 03:14:31]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I know.

Village Manager Christia Alou: We have [unintelligible 03:14:33]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'm with you. Anyway, just to be sure that that certainly is properly accounted for. Then I do understand the need for the surveys. Additionally, even though this has been a directive for two years, once the surveys would be complete, I think we'd be at a next stage of specific approvals from the council regarding what is going to actually go into each of those stages. Obviously with as much public input as possible. Additionally, the tree board is not scheduled to meet until January. We could meet before

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

that. I'm also curious to know if Robert Ruano specifically was involved in any communication with Craig A. Smith, because of his ability to know which plants would be becoming available for free from the county through the tree planting program. There's other resources like that as well we could be taking [unintelligible 03:15:32]

Village Manager Christia Alou: Well, Neat Streets is the part of Miami-Dade County, Parks and Rec and they were involved in the site visits and went through with us.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Ruano was there.

Village Manager Christia Alou: Robert Ruano is aware, because he works with Neat Streets for our tree grants. We did have the county. In fact, we really wanted the county to do. We hope to get them to do the project management, but they don't have the staff and they didn't have the time. They did tell me that on a number of occasions. We had to utilize our own engineering services. If you want more information, we can bring this back. I can provide you these memos that I provided a few months ago, and we can go through these with you. That is not a problem. There is no deadline. I just wanted it to move forward since we have gotten so many steps checked off already.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, you guys. Before I ask for the motion, if there's a motion to table for the sake of time, you guys as always, we're going to open up for public comment before [unintelligible 03:16:39] take a time it's already, like 10:18. Use the public comment, the way it goes is that you guys come up with a public comment about this particular item. I'm going to allow the residents here to come up and make a public comment. You guys can make public comment about anything at all so that we respect your time as much as possible. I understand it is getting late. Let's come up you guys name, address just for the record and the floor is yours. Come up to the podium, please.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor while, he's coming to the podium, do we own these parks, because the room is hot. We don't even own these parks and how can that be so? Do we own these parks? Are they part of The Village?

Village Manager Christia Alou: They're part of The Village of El Portal inventory, but two of the parks the ones on the west side do not belong to The Village, per se. We have the

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

authority to do the renovations on that. I brought that to the council. I made much reporting about those parks, because they are considered right of ways [unintelligible 03:17:47] unutilized boats.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I know about the nature trail.

Village Manager Christia Alou: Those two the source River State Park and the nature trail.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you, sir. I appreciate your patience.

Ian Hayes: Ian Hayes, 376 Northeast 85th Street. First of all, thank you guys so much for everything that you do here. This is like three and a half hours in it's so tedious. It's mind-boggling that you guys do this for so. I know it's thankless in many ways, so we appreciate it. I know, the residents here have been waiting a while. I believe we're all here for the same reason. I think there's eight households represented. I'll try to be quick and direct.

Basically, this is about short-term rental. We have a concern, we would like to know what is the status of legislation or code enforcement or whatever may be in place, or what we can do. The reason why is there's a property that was just purchased in Sherwood Forest and it's become a party house. There's been a lot of issues in the past two weeks. I think everybody here could tell stories about speeding cars and fireworks at 4:00 in the morning and music videos and intimidating neighbors and things of this nature. If you could help us understand how we as residents can participate in making sure something goes into effect, so this doesn't continue and that other houses don't go into this process. Thanks, appreciate it.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'm going to turn to attorney Geller in a second. I'm not going to say anything. Let me just say this the council will tell you that this was brought to be started at the previous planning and zoning committee. I had two items on that agenda and that was signage in the business district where we're going to buy signage in the business district. The second level is all about short-term rentals. At the committee that happened a couple of weeks ago, we had Plusurbia, who's going to go back and design the language for us to fight against that and he was helping out legally so that we could do it legally. That was coming back to the November committee meeting, which is the second Tuesday in November. It comes back there, and then if it passes there, it will be passed for certain at

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

November council meeting. We'll have something in place to where we could fight and do what we can. There's something I can't say legally, but we'll fight and do what we can when it comes to that.

Ian Hayes: What as residents can we do to be heard so that we-

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Come to the meeting. [unintelligible 03:20:00]

Ian Hayes: -feel that we're being represented-

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Come.

Ian Hayes: -properly?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Well-

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, real simple. Come to the meeting.

Ian Hayes: We're here.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Come to the-

Ian Hayes: The eight of us are here.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: No, no, no. This is not the night for the meeting. When we meet as a committee, we want you here, because we feel just like you all. That's why we're fighting, but I need you all to be here for the discussion. If that's why you all are here, [hits table] thumbs up, because that's what we're fighting. We know, we feel the pain ourselves on our block.

Ian Hayes: Okay. Is there anything that we can do in the meantime? We've been told by the police just to file or just call if there's noise complaints, which sometimes is the case, but then there is speeding cars and then there is intimidating people to the-- It seems like every time

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

we try to do something, they're like, "Go to the council meeting. We can't really do anything." In that meantime, what do you recommend?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Like I said, the process has already started and so they're coming back with the language in the November committee meeting and then it hopefully passes there in the November council meeting, we'll have something pass for sure, for sure. That being said, continue to call the police you can, if there's something there, continue to report those type of situations also, because that helps us with our case. Attorney Geller. Go ahead. I see your hand up.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Okay. Let me try to be as straightforward about this as possible.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: I hope I don't offend anybody by saying this, and I don't mean the people in the room. The fill in the blank with a negative word that implies that people lack certain fundamentals-

Ian Hayes: Respect--

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: -who run this state, are doing this to you and it's no accident. I serve in the legislature, but I'm a Democrat and they don't listen to us. I won't say who 'they' is. You can fill that blank in too. The fact of the matter is that the Florida league of cities, 400 cities across the state, plus counties, have been fighting this issue for not months, but years, because cities and counties ought to have the right to pass things, to control what's done at these places. You come here, you want them to protect you, but as is the case on a bunch of things these days, the people who run Tallahassee prohibit it. They have passed a law that says, "Local government can't stop this."

The reason they say is, "Oh, that's private property rights. It's free enterprise. You can't stop somebody from using their property to make money off it." Now, that's not true. We stop people from doing all kinds of things that they could money on. Can't run it as a brothel, you can't run it as a bar unless you get very particular liquor licenses. Why should you be able to

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Village of El Portal

Council Meeting

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Start: 7:01 PM

Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

run it basically as a cheap hotel? But that's the law they've passed. Now, after fighting for several years, there have been a couple of real minor things that have dented that law. You can make them register and charge them a little money for registering, it's what Miami Shores does, that's going to be coming here. That's not nothing, but it's not what you're looking for, or any of us are looking for.

You can enforce certain basic safety measures. If there's a pool, for example, you can make sure that the drains have drain covers on them, because there have been instances particularly of young people with long hair, mostly girls, but not always, who get their hair stuck in that drain and drown, so you can enforce that one and you can make them say who the owner is and give you more than some P.O Box in New Hampshire and have to have somebody that's local and that's on-site, but you can't just shut them down or fine them, because they're past the law that says you can't do that. We have been fighting that law because cities ought to have that right and counties. It didn't help, frankly, that Miami Beach, when you could, because now they say, "Well, if you had the law before 2011, we're not going to make it be repealed," but most people didn't, it wasn't that big. Miami Beach passed something that said they could fine people \$10,000 a night.

Well, that may make sense on Pine Tree or on the Intracoastal, but it kind of horrified a bunch of legislators who said, "We got to do something about it," but not my caucus. The fact is it's a fight that continues, it's a fight that continues every year and more needs to be done, so what else can you do besides come here? Because you can come here and they agree with you, but just like the gun laws in this state, if I can editorialize, that are ridiculous and crazy, but they say, "Oh, no, that's people's rights," and a whole bunch of other things. What you can do is get your friends, your neighbors, your family, and start writing to the speaker of the house and the president of the Senate in Florida, not Nancy Pelosi. In Tallahassee, the speaker of the house is Chris Sprowls, the president of the Senate is Wilton Simpson, and try to start flooding them. Now, I don't know, honestly, that they're going to give a damn how many they get, but what can you do? Those are the people who could change this law even if they didn't let you do anything, they could let you do something. That's who can change the law, that's who can make it better.

In the meantime, there are laws. Noise is one. Trespassing is another, if somebody's coming and walking on your property. The thing is, officers need to see that. Speeding, because

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

you're out of a party house, you don't have the right to speed. Yes. One of the things that the mayor, the vice mayor, the councilmembers, the manager, have talked about, when you come and identify a place and say, "When is it hopping?" Or if you get wind of a flyer that says, "Big party, Friday night at 8:00," you can tell them and they can talk to the chief and they can say, "Let's have a couple of folks out there and keep an eye on what's going on, maybe not at 8:00, maybe at 10:00 or maybe at midnight and see what they're getting away with," and the laws that are on the books can be enforced, but what you want, the people running this state won't let you do and you got to try to maybe, maybe, with enough pressure on them, they would back off of this stuff. That's the straight scoop here. They're for you, but there's a law, a stupid-- Well, it's a public meeting. I'll try to watch my language. I could use a lot of other words and I won't do, that's the dignity of a public meeting, but if you're still here when this is over, I'll use all of it until you **[inaudible 03:28:53]**.

Ian Hayes: Thank you so much for that explanation. It certainly helps us understand why, and I certainly would not expect anybody here to agree otherwise that it's an issue. The question is, how can we get creative with these intelligent minds to watch out for our neighborhood? We like Sherwood Forest, we like El Portal for what it is for families being able to walk dogs, kids walking around, and if we have issues like that, it's a new group of people every night, every few nights, something like that, so it's-

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: **[inaudible 03:29:29]**.

Ian Hayes: -an on thing.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: **[inaudible 03:29:30]**.

Ian Hayes: What-

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: If they're coming in your property, and improperly, adversely affecting your Petunias, **[inaudible 03:29:47]**. That is trespassing **[inaudible 03:29:53]** try to get the police to come and look **[unintelligible 03:29:58]** responsibilities **[unintelligible 03:30:02]** the police officers in the world, but if you've got a party, you can identify and **[unintelligible 03:30:07]** flyers, you can pass them out. That's how people know, one of the ways. When you see it on the internet, let the office know **[unintelligible**

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

03:30:17] these people are so crazy, some of them, they do a lot of stuff [**unintelligible 03:30:25]**

Ian Hayes: Sure.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: They won't stop this kind of stuff [**unintelligible 03:30:29]**

Ian Hayes: Man, it's just an ongoing battle with neighbors and whoever the next person is because for example, the one house that brought this up for the eight of us that are here is listed as, 10 people can sleep there, it's got a pool and so on and so forth. I don't know if there's something around parking possibly because the day before- two days ago, there were 14 cars that were in everybody's in guards and then we asked the police.

They said, "Well, technically they're in the swales", but then Sherwood Forest was laid out before swales even existed in 1924, so I don't know if there's creativity around that at least in this particular place. I don't know how that works for the other areas of El Portal; I don't know. We'll show up at the meeting, but anything that you guys have that we can help you with or you could help us with, you can see we've been here for almost four hours, because we care and we want something done, so thank you.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: No, I appreciate it.

Adam: I just want to say one thing, and-- Hi, my name is Adam, I'm at 360 Northeast 85th. The property that Ian is talking about happens to be my next-door neighbor, so a couple of things that you said, first being my ex-girlfriend's father owns a place in Tavanir, a small community in the keys and their residence has a strict policy against Airbnb rentals. My understanding is, the next-door neighbor was abusing that policy and that house was foreclosed on, so I'm assuming there is some law in effect that communities can create a policy that says that 50% of time spent in a residence has to be lived-in, versus the other 50% that cannot-- in other words, there has to be a ratio--

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Was there a law before 2011?

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, its probably associations, a lot more- yes- to say, because my sister-in-law owns a property in the keys also and they rent most of the units Airbnb and it's up to the association whether they allow them or not.

Adam: Right well, I'm not 100% sure if there's an association, I just know that in that community and it's a very small community so I'm not sure if there is an association or not, but there is a law that says that there has to be a certain ratio. Maybe you're unaware of the law, I don't know, but if that can be researched at some point, I think, the challenge that I have personally is, this is a brand new thing.

This house, I think it's 358 Northeast 85th has been there, I've lived in El Portal since 2012, in my house since 2012 and this house has been it's had squatters in there it's been vacant for 12 years, I think the entire time I've lived in my house there's never been anybody that actually lived there. About three or four years ago actually Ian and a group of people came in and renovated the house. I don't know if you guys know which house, it is beautiful white house right there on 85th and finally it sold.

Then that person rented it, but it wasn't a short-term rental, it was a regular rental and then they moved out. He sold it to this new guy who I met, who said, "Oh, no, I'm moving in", and he has been Airbnb it for the last three weeks and I'm talking 4:00 AM parties at the pool, blasting music, and it's just last weekend there were 40 people 30 40 people in the house.

It's a concern and I've got my first kid is coming, being born and I don't want to live in an area anymore, that is going to allow this type of-- Yes, it's for the first time I'm like considering moving, because if I have a neighbor that is-- If we allow it to happen it's very bad for the neighborhood. I was hearing the other attorney that talk about how this neighborhood is so different than any neighborhood in that I could that I know of in Miami, we got to protect it.

We can't allow residents to buy these investment homes which is-- I'm all for investment homes, but then short-term rental these things out, it's bad for the neighborhood it's bad for the neighbors. I do believe that there is a there is some law out there that can prevent this

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

type of thing from happening, it's going to ruin the neighborhood, because everyone will leave and then you'll become an Airbnb neighborhood.

It's just something-- I want it to be taken seriously, we're all going to come on November, but I really think that it's a big deal and I just want to make sure that there's things that we can do to, I don't know if it's tickets or some, "Hey, you can't do this" and find the guy or whatever. He doesn't even live here, he lives in California, so that's the situation. I know he's here for the same reason we're all here for the same reason. Thank you.

Jay Rivero: Jay Rivero, 225 Northeast 86th Street. It is a shame, it is concerning that with the exception of Dr. Lightfoot-Ward, you three have been here for almost what, two years? I've been texting the chief I've been texting the manager since 2014, I've addressed the fact of the Airbnb behind me, okay? There's been parties, there's been fireworks at two, four o'clock in the morning that sound like cannons, and I have told you guys to do something about it. There's ordinance about parking on the grass.

I got to notice one car parked on my grass years ago, you guys don't know about that ordinance, right? There's ordinance or issues with code enforcement and nobody has done anything about this house or the ones behind me, the one behind me has an eight-foot fence, which I've addressed with all of you and you've done nothing. You guys need to get your act together and I'm changing that word act for you to fill in like attorney Geller has said, okay?

Not only the issue of the Airbnb, you have a code enforcement officer that you, Councilmember Urbom, called the Pitbull, that drives around, but hasn't done her job. What can be done, pass the damn ordinance to restrict partying after 12 o'clock, review the ordinance about parking on the grass, parking on private property. I don't live near that house, but from day one that I saw a fancy car, I knew that it was an Airbnb, and I was expecting this to happen.

Review your ordinance, make your code enforcement person do her job, that is correctly, and her name is Michelle not Pitbull and don't penalize us, because those Airbnbs, make them register and charge a big amount of money. Those Airbnbs are devaluing our neighborhood and I told you all that since 2014 and it hurts me to hear you say that this has been brought up a few weeks back in Planning and Zoning.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

I've addressed this in an open Council meeting, I've addressed with the chief, a new property I've identified, I know this, because I walk the community, some of you have not, so please get your job done or the elections is coming up and somebody's going to take your job to get it done. That's all I have to say. Oh, and by the way, I'm Republican and I did not vote for Trump.

[laughter]

Charles Winters: Hi. Charles Winters, 377 Northeast 85th Street. The only reason I'm coming up here, I'm agreeing with all my neighbors here, but I know you actually can do something, and you have done something. Right now, I am doing a big renovation on my house. I had to hire a contractor from across the state. I brought them over here and I paid for an Airbnb in El Portal. It's 87th or 89th Street. After their first day of working, they went to the Airbnb. They used the code in the house, and someone called the cops on them. The cops escorted my contractors who had the Airbnb, they actually were there, they had the receipts and everything, off the property and they asked them not to come back there.

They didn't do anything, just walked in there. They were Hispanic. They were contractors. The police officers told them to leave. I don't know what went on, but I can give you probably the number [unintelligible 03:40:42] of the date. They did not write them any tickets, they did not do anything bad to them, but they told them they were not allowed to be there even though they had a receipt from Airbnb, and everything for that place, including the code to get into the house. You guys, follow me? Something has been done for other Airbnb's and they did it to me, this just two weeks ago, in El Portal. Maybe we could figure out what you guys did to me and do it to other people?

[laughter]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I don't know what happened. This is the first time I'm hearing about that. There's no policy in place right now for Airbnb's.

Charles: There's no police report. I went to the police officers, and they explained to me that no was filing charges or anything. I had to find another lodging outside of El Portal [unintelligible 03:41:29]

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I apologize for that. I have no idea what happened in that case. This is the first time I'm hearing about it. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: If I can summarize.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, and then I want to say something else. Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll let him speak first.

Richard Glazer: Good evening. I'm Richard Glazer. I'm in 389 North East 85th Street. I want to go on the record that I am in support of my neighbors as well and very concerned about this, the cars speeding by the fireworks. Again, I'm not going to be repetitious. I did read through, and forgive me for mispronouncing it, the charter **[unintelligible 03:42:20]** the charter. I'm no attorney and I did not stay at a Holiday Inn Express last night. I'm going to tell you it's hard to read through.

There is a provision in it that shows a business district along Northeast 2nd. The other areas is residential and then commercial, it goes on. I think there's four different sections. There is a line in there stating specifically about inns, and bed and breakfasts only, only in the business districts and not in the residential sections. I don't know how the laws can be written and looked at in this regard, but I'm sure it was written before 2011 initially. It was superseded that. I'm sure we can do a little bit of research and possibly with your help or with some other attorneys if we need to but to even form a--

I know the power of a homeowner's association is much greater than some of the laws that are written. Maybe we start petitioning to build a homeowner's association within Sherwood Forest, and the other districts if it's not the entire city. I'm willing to pay dues and do some formal formation of some way of combating this. It's got to be taken care of. I realize there's not a law written in there that prevents it. There's not a law in there, at least in the city, that allows it.

Before there's a law written that specifically allows it, we need to write a law that specifically prohibits short-term rentals in some fashion, to what degree we can. The homeowner's association, I'm certainly willing to throw my two cents, and I mean literally my two cents in,

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

with an attorney if we need to, to start looking at formulating a homeowner's association within Sherwood Forest. Thank you for your time. I know it's late. You've got a lot of business to take care of. Thank you very much for your time.

Adam Simon: I have one last recommendation for the speeding problem that goes on. Oh, sorry, Adam Simon, 360 North East 85th. Speed bumps. You've got them on North, I think it's 6th Avenue. You have nothing on Northeast 85th Street. I'm noticing a lot more kids on Northeast 85th Street. You've got some new residents that have moved in with young kids. 85th Street has a big problem with people just flying through to cut across to get to Biscayne Boulevard from Northeast 2nd. Speed bumps may be a solution to slowing cars down so that it's less dangerous so something to consider. I know you mentioned you were big on infrastructure, and it might be something to look at.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Vice Mayor, let me say some real quick. First of all, I just want to say thank you to everybody for your comments. As far as the speed bumps, we've already started a traffic study, Madam Manager will tell you. To do any type of traffic calming, we had to first do the traffic study, because we can't just go and just throw speed bumps in the road. We can't go and just put up stop signs where we want to. We can't go and change the speed limit signs when we want to.

We have to first do a traffic study, then take that to the county and show the county, "Look at what's going on in El Portal," via the traffic study then, "We want to do these things." They'll look at the traffic study and say, "Okay, now we see. We're allowing you to do these things." We have to get permission from the county, but that's already been started.

Adam: [inaudible 03:46:26]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Already been started. Traffic study has already been started. As far as everything else besides the gentleman right here that mentioned-- What did you mention? You mentioned the-- I forgot what it was. It slips my mind right now. Besides a gentleman in the dark blue shirt, everyone else, what you came up and said, we've already started working on. I would never cut anybody off. I would never cut anybody short, but

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

everything that you guys said in the committee meeting earlier this month-- We have committees every other month.

In the September second Tuesday committee meeting, we had the Planning and Zoning meeting. I [unintelligible 03:47:16] the Camilla lady that was standing right here earlier who does design architecture in Planning and Zoning, she was here. All those things' you guys mentioned, we started to talk about. I'm going to want to put it on the agenda. We instructed her, "Go back, write up language, bring it back the next committee meeting." We do every other month. The second Tuesday, November, she's bringing back language.

We even spoke about how many beds are in each property. We can tax per bed for Airbnb's, and we can charge them high fees per bed. Let me just say this. I didn't want to say this on the record. Look at attorney Geller's face looking though. He's like, "Be careful, man." I didn't want to say this. Essentially, and Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward knows this, essentially, we're looking at not only options, but we're looking at all options within pricing them out of El Portal. [unintelligible 03:48:33]

Speaker 2: [inaudible 03:48:34]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Now, I'm not supposed to say that legally that you make laws to price somebody out.

Adam: Oh, but keep it a big secret by saying-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I understand but because they came up here and they were saying so many things I want them to know that-- I think the narrative was that we're not doing anything and we need to start to do something, but the process has already started. I'm not saying this in a negative way, but you guys came to one meeting too late, basically. Because if you guys would have been here the second Tuesday of September, you guys would be like, "Oh, this is exactly what we came to talk about. They're talking about it already."

Adam: [inaudible 03:49:20]

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We appreciate it and we appreciate you guys staying so late and we apologize for that. We have full council meetings once a month on the last Tuesday where we have to do everything in these council meetings plus, we had a lot of awards given at the beginning that took up a lot of time. Everything's started. The process has started. What you guys need to do or should do is to come the second Tuesday in November, it comes to the Planning and Zoning Committee meeting, which is the first meeting, so at 6:30 PM. November what's the second Tuesday? November 9th maybe or something like that.

November 9th, 6:30 PM, Planning and Zoning Committee meeting. We're going to be discussing all of this information that you guys were talking about that we were already talking about. All these different options we're going to have it all written out, and then we're going to all debate amongst ourselves, but you guys will be there and you guys will be able to give your opinion, like, "Oh, we should add this. Oh, no, this one is not a good idea. We shouldn't put this one in it but maybe this one over here is a good idea. We should put this one in the language." We're going to come up with a language to where we can, close Attorney Geller's ears, to where we can make our way around the state.

All right, that's all I'm going to say. [laughs] Where we can make our way but we're doing that. We'll come up with all those type of options. As I said, we even came up with the option that day with charging per bed. Not only them coming, right, Madam Manager, to have to get a permit for Airbnb. We're talking about charging per room, charging per bed high amounts of money to where people are like, "Man, it's super high. We don't even want to go there." All the options you guys talking about we talk about; we're come up with all those type of options to get around the state law.

It's already been started. The process has already started. Don't think that up until tonight we weren't doing anything, because the process had been started. We really appreciate it and just come the second Tuesday of November, 6:30, Planning and Zoning Committee meeting, you guys can get up and give your opinion. You'll hear the language that we have, and you guys get to say, "Oh, but you know what you guys are forgetting? What about this also?" We can put that in the language. Then that second Tuesday, that Tuesday committee meeting, if it passes there, then it goes to the full council meeting for November which I believe because of Thanksgiving, that might be the next week or something like that. It comes quicker.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Female speaker: The 17.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Comes the 17. Once we pass the November committee meeting, then we're looking to pass it right away full council. Once you pass the full council, then it's in.

Speaker: [inaudible 03:52:10]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Don't worry about it. It's the first meeting, and I will have it the first thing, I promise you.

Female Speaker: It may be the only thing.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It may be the only thing. I'm doing that and I'm trying to tackle the signs on Biscayne, getting signs in our business corridor because right now we don't have anything in place and I don't want it to where we look up, and years from now people have bright neon signs on Northeast 2nd. The signs in the business corridor, we don't have stipulations for them right now. I'm trying to tackle those two things at the same time, that's what I'm trying to do. We appreciate you guys. Thank you very much. Thank you, we appreciate you. Thank you very much. Thank you for coming out.

Speaker: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We appreciate you.

Speaker: [inaudible 03:52:50]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, take care of the rest of you guys. Have a good night. Thank you very much.

Charles: Sorry, I'm up again. It's late. [unintelligible 03:53:01] The baby's asleep.

Speaker: Can you say your name and address for the record?

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting**

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Start: 7:01 PM

Meeting End: 11:31 PM

Meeting Length: 04:30:11

Charles: All right, Charles Winters, 377 North East 85th Street. I wrote this down so I'm just going to read it out. There's a new Florida State law that prohibits local governments from investigating anonymous code compliance complaints. It's known as Senate Bill 60. The law went into effect July 1 and specifically states that a code compliance officer may not initiate a potential violation investigation that stems from an anonymous complaint.

Last week, upon seeing our code enforcement officer writing a ticket for a neighbor, I asked who initiated the complaint. She said she couldn't say because it was anonymous. I'd mentioned there was a new law, but then she said that there's an El Portal resident that has the ear of an official in the village and they, basically, talk to someone and then our person gets nudged to go in that direction. I said, "This is unlawful." As a law-abiding citizen, I'd like to request some government oversight. No citizen should be able to circumvent the law because they are friends of a government official. Can we find a way to be proactive in upholding the law and protect our homeowners?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me just say very quickly that, first of all, our code enforcement officer who knows about this is very adamant about that law. Because we get code enforcement complaints from residents about other individuals in the village, and we had a lot of problems. It's calmed down. At first, a few months ago, we had a lot of problems with residents saying that they saw something in somebody's house, and then her telling the resident, "I'm going have to put your name in the report because of this new law." I've been in the office where I've seen her enforce it, and get in an argument with the resident doing the complaining because they want to stay anonymous, and she was against that. I've seen that with my own eyes-

Charles: You know what she said last-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: -multiple times.

Charles: -Thursday or Friday. She was writing a ticket for someone--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: What I'm saying, I hear your story. It's not that I don't believe you. It's just that I've been around her on multiple occasions where it just goes against what

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

I've seen her do in my actual eyes. The village manager will talk to her about it and ask her about it. She's usually consistent in the opposite direction.

Speaker 5: [crosstalk]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Maybe that day she was-- I don't know, but the village manager will--

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Okay, and also, I'm sorry but because a resident had come up and started talking to me when you started talking so I didn't hear everything but I'm assuming this is about the anonymity of Code Enforcement violations being reported. It's no longer allowed by state law, so we don't do that. I know Miss Shahryar has been on top of that. She isn't even including--

Charles: [crosstalk] She's the one that told me last week. I was asking her why she ran a ticket for someone [unintelligible 03:56:12] deceased person's house why they were writing them a ticket. She said someone reported. I was like, "Who reported it?" She was, "I can't say because it's anonymous." [unintelligible 03:56:22] State Bill 60, et cetera, et cetera. She's like, "Well, someone above me has a friend who has an ear for them and someone's, basically, circumventing this, and they send me out on patrol because this person tells someone else and that and that person tells her."

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: I'm sorry to hear that because that is something I'm not aware of. I'll speak with Miss Shahryar for sure about this. If you wouldn't mind just coming over when you are done speaking, we can exchange information so I can follow up with you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, and I know, Vice Mayor, you've been patient so I'm going to let you talk. Let me just say this though. I've had pushback because residents have called me and said, "I got this violation, this, this, and that, this, this, and that. Can you take it off? My house has been like this for 10 years. Can you take it off?" I told everybody. Let me tell you, the village clerk has been there when a resident or a business owner called me to get something done, and just like I told her, I'm stopping that whole legacy of favoritism. I don't do it. I don't do it. That whole legacy of favoritism, I don't do, and I've been getting a lot of pushbacks from residents.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Because I say when they come to me, they call me for me to fix something, I got a violation, can you fix something, I don't know how it was in the past, but I've stopped that entire legacy of favoritism. I don't micromanage anybody. I don't micromanage the village clerk. I don't oversee her. I let her do her job. The village manager, I don't oversee her. I let her do her job. I don't come over top of anybody and see what's going on or try to manipulate the system for people that I know or people that I like or things like that. I tell everybody that and I got a lot of pushbacks. I got a lot of people who used to like me don't like me anymore, because I told them.

I said, "I'm not doing the favoritism thing anymore. Don't even contact me. Contact the code enforcement officer. Contact the village manager," because that whole legacy of favoritism is done with me. I don't know her saying that. I don't know where she would have gotten that from, because I'm really adamant about not putting political pressure on any part of this department, any department of this government. I don't put any pressure. I leave them alone. Ask them. I let them do what they want to do. I let them run their departments.

I don't come as the Mayor and say, "What are you doing? How are you doing this? I don't want it done this way. I don't want to do it that way. Make sure you do this. Make sure you get this person off. Make sure you get this person, don't give this person a violation." I'm totally against that. I don't know why she would even say that. Like I said, those two things I don't know if that day she was like losing her mind, but those two things are things that I've never seen them do, and they know how adamant I am about starting a new culture of non-favoritism. They know that. Sorry, you went through that. Attorney Geller.

Attorney Geller: Mayor, let me just say in defense of Miss Shahryar who's not here, that I see cases all the time where someone says something, meaning one thing, and the person who hears it hears it different. That doesn't mean anybody is not telling the truth. It's the same as that kid's game called telephone. People are not very clear communicators. They're not trained. I'm not questioning the gentleman for a moment. He knows what he heard. There's also the question of what was said, and was it effective communication? I just want to point that out. Maybe there's no miscommunication, but Miss Shariar might say, "Oh, those words were misleading. I shouldn't have used them. That wasn't what I was trying to communicate."

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, Attorney Geller. I'm going to go to Vice Mayor Urbom right now, but I need a motion to continue the meeting, you guys. It's past eleven o'clock. Do I have a motion to continue to meet?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: So moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion by Vice Mayor Urbom, second by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. All in favor say, "Aye."

In unison: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All opposed say, "Nay." All right, Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll just say that I'll get with Manager Alou to talk about that, specifically, probably because, look, as far as Officer Shahryar goes, I can tell you that she was threatened by the husband of former mayor over code enforcement. She asked me specifically, "Should I acquiesce to this threat?" I told her, "Absolutely not. You have the support of the Council." I agree that this goes against all of my experiences with Officer Shahryar. I will probably follow up with the manager just to find out what that specific incident was. I also agree with the attorney.

I can tell you from years of waiting tables, I'm sure no one really cares about the opinion of a waiter, but I will tell you that you earn a master's degree in communication while waiting tables. I have witnessed hundreds of thousands of miscommunications over everything from a cheeseburger to where's my wallet. I'm concerned by the story you tell enough that I will follow up with the manager on this. I know you were speaking with people in the back, but I'll say it again, Officer Shahryar specifically has come to me specifically with an incident where she was confronted by someone essentially claiming to have authority over her. She stood up to them and did not acquiesce. Outside of that, I'm sure we'll be moving on here.

Charles: I'm not trying at all to go against her because this is more of along lines when I asked for the name of the complainer, it was anonymous. I was very specific, "Tell me who the name is." There's no miscommunication there. Who made the complaint?

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: You understand it is possible in that moment on the street, she may not have either had the name available or was not aware entirely of where her authority lied and being able to just tell you that--

Charles: I read the law and I showed her.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem. We'll get to the bottom of it, you guys.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Again, that conversation on the street is not a courtroom. I'll say it again because I have no compunction whatsoever about saying this. She was threatened by the husband of our former mayor over her citing their property. She talked to me and said, "Should I acquiesce to this threat?" I said, "Of course not. You have the full support of the Council." I agree with the mayor in saying that all of her behavior demonstrated to-- I'll speak for myself. All of her behavior from the time she's hired until I saw the manager's September report with all of her citations listed, verbal included, verbal, courtesy, all of it.

Until I speak with the manager and probably with Miss Shahryar in the same room, I would not be able to comment on-- I certainly was not a witness to this. It is concerning enough that I personally will follow up with the manager and Officer Shahryar, but I do want you to understand that when it comes to her specifically, she's easily the best code enforcement officer we've had potentially ever in this village. I now have a newly painted wall, and new landscaping because I was cited by Officer Shahryar. All we're saying is--

Speaker: I was going to congratulate you a lot. House looks nice.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: All I think that we're trying to express is that that does not match with her behavior. However, it sounds like it might be something outside of the norm that maybe it might not even be something to do with the current council, but she told me-- I'm not going to ask you, but it's something that we will get to the bottom of because it is concerning. I'll even say it's alarming. The story you tell is alarming. That should be outside the realm of possibility for our code enforcement officer to be susceptible to that.

Speaker: Excuse me, sir--

Speaker: Was it her again.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Speaker: I'm sorry. If I--

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Hold on.

Speaker: What's the address for the Airbnb?

Charles: I gave the name.

Speaker: Yes. [unintelligible 04:05:38]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I got Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Attorney Geller: Mr. Winters, is it possible that the anonymous report was filed with the city prior to July 1st?

Charles: No, because it was about [inaudible 04:05:53]. Let me go back to what you're saying. Let me repeat what I said before. I'm actually not talking about her. She's doing her job. This was not about her. She was letting me know that there are people above her that are pushing her in a direction.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll get to the bottom of that.

Charles: One citizen who used to do, apparently, a lot of anonymous complaints has the ear of someone and that someone pushes her out to go do certain things.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: That's helpful to know.

Charles: It's not her. She's doing fine. I'm not complaining about her.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Got you. Okay.

Charles: I'm saying that she let me know this.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: That is very helpful to know. I personally take incredible issue with that. I will be looking into that. I really, really appreciate.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're trying to change all cultures from the past. There's like [inaudible 04:06:50]

Charles: I'm not going to be on blacklist [crosstalk]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Not at all.

Charles: I suddenly have 10 code violations next week.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's exactly what we're talking about.

[background conversation]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Look, we're incredibly happy, honestly, to see everybody here tonight because, for so many years, there was an environment of nobody walking through that door and everything being done with not a single resident witness. This has really been refreshing to have people come in, honestly, with complaints because it's nice to see the residents back in the meetings again, and productive things can happen out of that. We cannot do this without resident input. It's invaluable to have residents come in and bring things to our attention. We certainly would never discourage you to do that.

Charles: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you. Do I have a motion to table the Craig A. Smith and Associates renovation proposal?

Councilperson Pirela: Yes, motion to table, I2.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The resolution I2. Motion to table made by Councilperson Pirela, second by Vice Mayor Urbom. We have a roll call to table the Craig A. Smith and Associates renovation proposal. Resolution I2.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Councilman Pirela, when you said aye two, did you mean you too want to [crosstalk]

Councilperson Luis Pirela: No. The resolution time. [laughs]

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll Call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilperson Pirela: Yes.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Oh, I'm sorry, Darian. I apologize deeply. My stupid joke distracted me. I want to advise you parliamentary. Motion to table means that something is there [inaudible 04:08:47] I don't want to tell you when to do it. I just want to be sure you know the option. You may wish to use the motion to postpone to a time certain, which means it automatically comes back up. If you want it to postpone it until the next council meeting, you have the option of moving to postpone to a time certain when you table something, it may mean it's not going to come back.

Speaker: Okay, I'm sorry.

Councilperson Pirela: What I want is to have quotes for the ward.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Listen. Hold on. Let's table it because we don't know the time that's going to come back. Sometimes it might take a long time to get. It might take two months to get. No, you're good. No, we appreciate that because we know that for next time. Let's just table it because whenever it does come back, I'll just put it back on the agenda.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: You need a motion to take it from the table. You can agenda that the first motion would be to take the item from the table because it's laid on the table.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I got you. No problem.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Speaker: That's what tabling means.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's what tabling means. We'll table it for now. It'll come back at a later date once we get the quotes.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: I apologize for [crosstalk]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No. You're good, you're good. That's what you do.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom. Pirela already voted.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Question of clarity. You'd like quotes for what? What do you want quotes for so I can know.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: The renovation of the parks.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: You want to get quotes from the engineering firms?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes, because this is just the work-- I'm sorry. This is just the work for renovations. This is not even the construction work, I understand. Again, what I have asked you actually was if we could get more quotes for--

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: For engineering?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Well, the architects for the design of the project.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: I'll send you the [crosstalk]

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: But that's what this is.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: You can't get quotes for architectural, engineering or landscape architect, whatever.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Or bidding process to have more participation, to see who comes out. Doesn't this have a price?

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Those particular services are exempted from [unintelligible 04:11:14] take them based on price.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: [unintelligible 04:11:19] we would draw a motion.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: That's what I [unintelligible 04:11:22]

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: [unintelligible 04:11:23] a motion, you can table the item is what you're going to do about it. [unintelligible 04:11:28] we take [unintelligible 04:11:30]

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: We already got two votes.

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Three.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: That's a three. Okay, one left.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Listen, I was in the middle of roll call. We need to finish roll call that comes before. You can finish your discussion after, please. Vice Mayor Urbom already voted. Now, the only one is Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: It's three to one.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Next is Resolution I-3. This is the holding cell conversion authorization. Attorney Geller, you might want to read that into the record.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Yes, sir. Item I-3, a resolution of the village council of the Village of El Portal, Florida, authorizing the village to approve and accept the Leading-Edge contractor services proposal for a prison cell conversion at the Village of El Portal,

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date. Mayor, I should make a note here in view of the previous discussion. On this item, the manager did obtain three bids. The lowest bid and the second lowest bid are quite close in price. However, the lowest bid in offering his bid indicated that he was very busy, this was a small job, and he was not sure when he could get to it.

The manager felt that that was something that essentially disqualified that proposer from being responsive and responsible. I think that price was \$5,000 and the second lowest was \$6,100 so it's, A, a small amount of money, B, close, but I just want to note it's under the three bids. Three bids were obtained but when the cheapest one, basically, took himself out of it in that the second one was close and it's not much money, the manager went to the second bid, in effect having taken the first the lowest out of consideration.

My view is that that's a proper thing to do. The bids were obtained but I want the council to be aware of what the background is. Usually, you go with the lowest bid but if they say, "This is the price, but I can't do it," you don't hire them.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Turn over to the village manager, you guys. Sometimes the problem is that we're so small and the job is so small that the larger companies might have a lower bid but then when they look at their schedule, the job is so small, the bid is so low that it's not worth our company coming in and spending the time doing it because they have bigger jobs they can do. That's why a lot of times, we get the bids but then we lose the bids. That's what happens. Madam Manager, the floor is yours.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Yes. You both described the situation very well. That was the issue with these bids. We did receive a very responsive proposal from this company, Leading Edge. They are responsive, and they will show up to work, and do the work. That has always been our concern in past in getting contractors to do things. People don't show up or they take off with the deposit. They have a good risk track record and theirs was the second lowest. We want to go with this firm so that we can expand our seating in response to COVID and just the growing need of the building department. I ask that you please approve this authorization since it is outside of my spending purview.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Any questions or comments from the council?

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: [unintelligible 04:15:34] move the resolution.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Vice Mayor Urbom. Any last questions or comments? We're good? Are we good on Zoom? I don't see nobody. We're good, thumbs up? All right, we have no residents in the audience. Madam Clerk, may I have a roll call, please?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirella?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk. I appreciate that. Next resolution is Resolution I-4. That's the resolution for village attorney services. Attorney Geller, you might want to read that into the record, please.

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Okay, I'll only read it.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, Councilperson Lightfoot.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Yes, let me read it in. Resolution of the village council--

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: [unintelligible 04:16:18]

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: I won't take this [unintelligible 04:16:20]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, no problem. Does anybody have a problem with jumping to I-5 first?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I move this to make this resolution regarding the attorney, the last resolution.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem. Do I have a second?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, motion second. All in favor, say aye. All opposed, say nay. All right. Moving on to Resolution I-5. We'll come back to I-4. I-5 is the FDOT state appropriation for traffic-calming rotunda on the west side of the village. Again, this is free money that we got, you guys, to put traffic calm on the west side, over by the Horace Mann School. We're going to put another rotunda, like how we have out here in front of Village Hall so that people just aren't zooming up and down the street. They'll have to slow down and take the rotunda.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: [unintelligible 04:17:03]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: [laughs]

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: A resolution of the village council of Village of El Portal, Florida, authorizing the village manager of the Village of El Portal to accept the appropriations from Florida Department of Transportation, FDOT, for a traffic-calming rotunda on the west side of the village, providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I have a motion by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I have a second by Vice Mayor Urbom. Do we have any discussion, a question, or comment from the council? I'm hearing none. I see nobody on the audience. Do I have anybody on Zoom? We're good? Madam Clerk, may I please have a roll call, please?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirella?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Moving back to I-4 resolution, resolution village attorney services. Attorney Geller, if you could please read it [crosstalk]

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: I was going to read it, but the fact is you actually voted on this already. You just need to fill the name in here. You took the vote.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: The resolution says, "The resolution of the village council, the Village of El Portal, Florida, authorizing the village to approve and accept that we--" No, I'm sorry. I'm looking at the wrong. You have the--? Okay. "A resolution of the village council, the Village of El Portal, Florida, approving and accepting village attorney services providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date." In essence, the resolution is the same as what you voted on. You just need to insert the name of your 4-0 vote. We'll have the clerk do that and have that duly signed but you really [unintelligible 04:18:28] twice.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely. Yes, absolutely. You guys, the reason why the resolution is here like this is because I put it as an agenda item because I didn't want our guests to have to wait so long because our resolutions on ordinances come later in the agendas. That's why the resolution is so further down in the agenda, but we already did the vote earlier. That is what it is. All right? Very good.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: So that's part of the record that we did already vote [unintelligible 04:18:52]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. Do you guys want to do a roll call just to make it perfect? Let's do a roll call to make it perfect. Do I have a motion?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You got a motion.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Vice Mayor Urbom. Madam Clerk, please have a roll call on the resolution?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirella?

Councilperson Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Congratulations, again. [laughs]
Moving on, village manager report. Madam Manager, the floor is yours.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: Thank you so much. I'm going to make it brief because you all have received this morning my manager's report. It is 13 pages so I'm just going to cut to the good parts.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I read all of it today.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: They're all good. Thank you very much, Vice Mayor. Let me skip that because we just talked about it. The SkateBird Miami Skate Park will be hosting a large event, October 29th and 30th, from 12pm to 6pm. That is a major development for the Village of El Portal. Our police department, the building department, and I conducted a site visit at SkateBird Miami to ensure that the fire chief approvals will be required before their special events permit is provided.

Something that also goes to the Airbnb activities that were reported here by our residents is that when there are large events, there needs to be a special events permit and police on site, and without that these people can get some kind of sanctions. These people who are running Airbnb and having big parties and activities. Also, we are enforcing the business tax receipt. I

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

know it's not much but it's something. As long as there are six or more beds in a facility or in a home that is doing Airbnb, we can enforce that.

One of the members of the council did not anonymously report something in her neighborhood and we were able to get footage and photographs that allowed our code enforcement officer to go and make a citation. Unfortunately, the people were very happy to pay a \$500 fine for not doing the business tax receipt and continue to do business. I think now they're in compliance but just be wary that, again, fines and the fees for these permits are going to be key to ensuring that people are in compliance and that they do the right things.

Additionally, at that particular short-term rental that was discussed tonight, Miss Shariar did make contact with the owner and has required that they get a business tax receipt.

Also, tonight we discussed the comprehensive plan, and we passed the water use plan. This month we were made aware that the state of Florida is now requiring a development of a property rights element for our comprehensive plan. I'll be working with Placerbia in preparing that, but it's not due until next year but there's a lot that goes into the planning of such. In fact, we're having some webinars and classes on what that property rights element should be. We did get our Ford F150 truck. We're now considering branding for it and making sure that Miss Shariar's vehicle or the code enforcement vehicle and the public works truck work together and they look good, and they represent the village well.

I've had a few people weigh in on what it should look like, and I appreciate that so thank you, but it will be the seal and a nice connecting brand for us to be happy and proud of. As Mayor Nickerson mentioned, the construction, we did a pre-construction kickoff meeting back at the end of August for Southeastern Construction to get the construction award to do the Elhardine stormwater improvement in that area and so that will start in October 2021. We're hoping for an early October date for starting but materials has been the issue with their start date. We'd hoped they would start in September but just getting materials, again, in Corona, in times of CIVID has been very difficult.

We will be distributing flyers for the construction. Mayor Nickerson made the request to get those flyers out as soon as possible and we want residents and visitors alike to know that the

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

roads will be closed in the Elhardine area. They will be coordinated with our local police, only local traffic for that area during the construction and we will try to make it as painless for the residents as possible but the win for that community will be less ponding, less puddling, and a lot safer road travel for them.

Lots of RFPs and things happening but I do want to just give you an update. As you know, I did a request for proposals for financial services this month and the deadline was on September 23rd to have received proposals. I received one proposal and that was not satisfactory to me.

Speaker: Very good.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou: I don't have a recommendation to make to you today. I do have a plan to remedy this, and I would like to now talk to a recruiter because this is a vital part of what we do in administration of finance and I really want to identify the right firm to do our financial services. I'll be bringing something to you soon and also engaging a recruiter to assist with that. I've done a myriad of things from coordinating records productions with our IT contractor and attending meetings with The White House about our ARPA fund usage and a number of other things but if you have any questions, please do contact me.

I have talked to a lot of you individually about things that are happening in the village and if anyone ever has any questions, please reach out to me directly so I can give you a good explanation of what's happening. Also, it's helpful because I get your insights as well. Then I know Councilperson Pirela knows that I have changed some things up sometimes by getting a different perspective. Let's keep the lines of communication open. That concludes my report.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, Madam Manager.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, [inaudible 04:26:12]

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, of course, the mayor managing committee and attorney reports are so informative, is it anywhere in your heart to put them up further than last? Sometimes this is stuff that everybody wants to hear and yet we get here and by this time we're yawning and carrying on and then I have to perk up again because I'm listening, "Whoa, really? Is that what they want?" It seems to me that these are too important for them to be down here. When we finish with the agenda, we should be good in welfare and get out of here. That's just my thoughts.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll look into it. I can look into it. I'm the one that scheduled the agenda so I'll look into it. The only thing I would say though is just keep this in mind for everybody, I try to put things on top of the agenda that have guests. If there's going to be anything that-- Most of the rest of the agenda includes other people like Placerbias here or Craig A. Smith or there might be residents or something like that. I try to get our guests out of the way and then leave just us alone at the end, so we don't have guests waiting. Just think about that because if we put it towards the front and we take up the time doing the reports, we're going to have guests here longer toward the end. That's the only thing I would say think about, but besides that, I have no problem with that.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, because it's not like it was before. We had these boring reports, you know what I'm saying?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, I understand.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We had real reports.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: There's a lot going on. I hear you. I hear you but I'll look into that. I definitely do like to get our guests earlier and out of the way so that they don't have to stay for the rest of the meeting with us. I'm going to bypass my report because of time, and I'll just do it in October. I'll consolidate both reports in October and do it at the October meeting because it's just so late I'm not going to go through my report, you guys, and keep you guys here any longer. Attorney Geller.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you.

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Village Attorney Joseph S. Geller: Thank you very much for your confidence. I will do my very best to continue our forward momentum and that concludes my report at this late hour. Thank you. I'm happy [unintelligible 04:28:24]

[laughter]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Perfect. We appreciate you and welcome and thank you. Let me just say back we had a committee meeting and and Councilperson Ward made a great speech about Attorney Geller and what he meant to the village, and we were looking into motioning him to become permanent at that particular time. I just wanted to say just for the record that in the past, we've had different situations, Vice Mayor, in the past administrations, where somebody would be interim and they'd be promoted to permanent and you have residents out there that would say, "You guys should open it back up."

The way I try to do things, you guys, I try to just do things way out in the open. This is what I try to do, I try to take away everybody else's excuses. Now Attorney Geller is permanent, we went through the process, what are you going to say about it now? Now there's no question. Now you can't say we rammed anything through. Now you can't say-- You understand what I'm saying? I just like to go through the process. I know it's frustrating sometimes, but I like to do it this way because, in the long run, this way is safer for everybody, for all of us.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: It's the same with the short-term rental issue.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Same with the short-term rental issues.

Councilperson Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: [inaudible 04:29:35] They went through a process.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Exactly, we got to go through that. We have to go through the process. I know it's frustrating but you guys there's always a method to my madness. I appreciate you guys. Good in welfare. Do we have anybody on Zoom? No. Shout out to the people at Full Moon. You guys still awake? Shout out to Full Moon, it's all good. Let's get out of here. We got no good in welfare. Do I have a motion to adjourn? I have a motion to adjourn by Councilman Lightfoot-Ward, do I have a second?

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**Village of El Portal
Council Meeting
Date: 09/28/21
Meeting Start: 7:01 PM
Meeting End: 11:31 PM
Meeting Length: 04:30:11**

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Vice Mayor Urbom. The regular council meeting for Tuesday, September 28th, 2021, is adjourned at 11:31 PM.

[04:30:11] [END OF AUDIO]

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