



**Village of El Portal
Budge Workshop
Date: 09/06/22
Meeting Start: 7:00 PM
Meeting End: 9:08 PM
Meeting Length: 02:08:52**

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, you guys. Good to see everybody here tonight. The official Village of El Portal Budget Workshop for fiscal year 2023 is called to order at seven o'clock PM. We're going to do the moment of silent meditation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

[pause 00:00:20]

All: I pledge allegiance to my 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 roll call.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call, Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Anders Urbom was coming in late. Councilperson Pirela.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Martin.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Present.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Also present for the record, Yenise Jacobi, Village Clerk, Christia Alou, Village Manager, and CFO, Taubenfeld.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. We have one agenda item, which is the budget workshop, the proposed budget. Do we have a motion to approve the agenda?

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

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

Councilwoman Darian Martin: A second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: A second by Councilperson Martin. All in favor say aye.

Council Members: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All opposed say nay. Hearing none, moving on. Good and Welfare. Usually, our first Good and Welfare is for individuals who want to speak about what's still on the agenda item, but I know there are individuals here who want to come up and speak about a different subject. This is that time to do so. I'm given that special time to come up. Come to the microphone. Say your name and address for the record and the floor is yours as far as whatever subject you want to talk about.

Thomas Pulliam: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you.

Thomas Pulliam: Hi, Village. Hello. I'm Thomas Pulliam. I live at 205 Northeast 86th Street. My partner and I moved here from Los Angeles, California, December of last year. Very happy to be part of this community, first time homeowners. Really excited about that. Also planning to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in remodeling our property, and that's been in process for a little bit, but super excited to have all that going. I have a couple of points I'd like to bring up. First of all, I noticed when reviewing our Village's charter Section 7.05, it mentions every decade.

As of March, 2012, the Village will be revising the charter and we'll have a commission of not less than seven Village residents every 10 years. I just have a general inquiry about what the status of that is if that's ongoing for this year. What's happening there?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me jump in there. We did a charter review about a decade ago and nothing ended up being changed, but we was talking about recently for this fiscal year that we were looking to start the process again.

Thomas Pulliam: When is that happening?

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's going to be taking place. We're going to be starting to talk about that toward more of the middle of the year, more about around springtime we'll start to dive into that a little bit more.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Excuse me, Mayor, if I may. We actually just finished the review for building permits and all of that that was outdated since 1984, so we actually worked. It was a lengthy process, so we finished with that and that's what we actually were doing this past year. We started with building the permits and all of that, those fees and all of that.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Pirela, but I think he's more focusing on the charter itself. Remember that time, you guys, we were speaking about the vice mayor position or the term limits and things like that. He's talking about all those type of things in the charter, which brings on the residents as far as being part of it and that's what he's talking about.

Thomas Pulliam: It was last done when and when is it coming up?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It would be coming up later this year as far as looking into it. We have to understand that the whole charter review process it costs. Whatever comes out of that, we have to make sure it coincides with whatever elections are coming up and things like that. All that stuff, to be part of the charter, it has to go through the ordinances through the process to where you got all these residents will be voting on the different changes in the charter if those things are going to be changed. To make a long answer short, we will be going into that and looking into that as we get into more of the springtime months in 2023.

Thomas Pulliam: That's not within 10 years.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The last minute it was done, it was approximately about 10 years ago.

Thomas Pulliam: The charter says March, 2012. Is our Village attorney here for a legal question?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, he's not here.

Thomas Pulliam: Okay.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It was done then. Nothing was changed on it then. I understand what you're saying. It is 2022. We started the discussion with that. As Councilperson Pirela just told you, we already started speaking about or we already started reviewing and updating things that are in our charter, in our code and things like that. As far as what you're speaking of, which I know what you're speaking of, you're speaking of the full panel.

Thomas Pulliam: Yes, Section 7.05.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You're speaking of the full panel charter revision review.

Thomas Pulliam: Yes, with seven Village residents.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, and that right there, we're going to be looking into doing coming into the springtime.

Thomas Pulliam: That's something I would like to be involved with. I'll follow up with the Village attorney, but it's still unclear to me if that's within the 10 year stipulation.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll be looking into that into the spring.

Thomas Pulliam: Thank you for that.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem, Mr. Pulliam.

Thomas Pulliam: Also, I want to address, since we moved here in December, obviously, we are being taxed at current market value rates, which is the highest the Village has ever seen. Because of that, we are particularly interested in how our funds are being spent. That's also why we're here today at the budget workshop meeting. It's interesting quite the disparity between the different tax rates as well, different members being capped and whatnot, so I'm very interested to see what the total increase in funds going up into the Village's accounts are and also how that will be allocated.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Are you referring to the different residents that some homesteaded, different rates?

Thomas Pulliam: They're capped 3%, yes, after you homestead

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: After you homestead, yes.

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Thomas Pulliam: Yes, che cap. The last thing I'd like to bring up is, again, since we've been here since December, I've had to file two police reports, both reports I've had to get corrected. They haven't been done accurately. Never experienced this before in any place I've ever lived. It doesn't make me feel safe, it doesn't make me feel protected. I'm also having to follow up multiple times with the police in order to get the reporting accurate, which is really disconcerting for me. Also in terms of enforcement, I did a public records request from January to end of July for violation citations, all that stuff.

The Village only recorded 12 violations with a total citations of \$200, which by my math is not paying for code enforcement or for a lot of the staff that we have here. I really feel like the manager's abdicating their supervision and that really frustrates me considering they're not an elected official. I also have a question of when do reviews come up for unelected staff of the Village and how does that one work?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You're talking about for the public request you were referring to with the citations, that's code enforcement citations you're referring to.

Thomas Pulliam: I also got police citations, yes, and I received 12 from January 1st, 2012 to this July 31st, 2022.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You got 12 total for police and code enforcement together?

Thomas Pulliam: Yes, with total citations valuing \$200.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Okay, I'm going to look into that.

Thomas Pulliam: That's very disconcerting for me again as a new resident here who's paying the highest taxes ever in the Village and not being supported by my local police who I'm paying for, who are right up the street here. Not getting support from the local government, the manager, code enforcement, et cetera. I know code enforcement's been replaced. Part of that's been because of me. The previous code enforcer, Carlos, showed up smelling of alcohol multiple times to our house when we called them for different code violations and whatnot. Also, a lot of the code violations reported were not actually on the public records request.

It's like if I'm calling code enforcement or the police, is it going anywhere? Because it doesn't look like it. On top of that, you might have heard that at the Citadel recently last Thursday, there was a person who was killed on a bicycle by someone on a car and I know that we've had

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lots of issues with speeding and other things here as well. Again, my question is where's police? Where's enforcement? We have all these ordinances that we're paying for and can't get nothing done. It's really frustrating.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, so as far as the speeding goes, we just got speed laser guns, and those are going to start being enforced very, very soon. As a matter of fact, the police officers were already doing enforcement on North Miami Avenue, I believe, previously and on Northeast 2nd previously, which are the two highways besides 87th Street where we have the most speeding. They started doing that.

There's some police officers, and you guys may remember when we had the public safety committee meeting, that there's some police officers have to be trained first in those laser guns because if they go out and they give tickets, certain police officers who have not gone through the updated training of the laser guns just to be able to get that certificate. If they don't get that certificate, then their tickets will get thrown out in court because they have to show the certification through certificates, but the speeding thing is already done.

As far as what you're talking about where the the police were writing the reports and your reports were not done correctly or were not accurate, I don't know anything about that, but I want to say I apologize for that if they were not done accurately. Madam Manager, she knows that certification and training are my top tier things. As a matter of fact, they're so top tier that I've added more money to the budget for that for our police department for all the training and certification that they need because I want our officers to be the most trained and certified officers possible.

As far as what you're talking about, you getting the response were not being taken care of when it comes to your report, one report was about, which was unfortunate, which you guys have heard me talk about, Bobby's Law. I gave you guys that last time at the end of that last meeting and said we're going to be bringing that up. You guys start to look at that and see what question and comments you had about that. That was last time. That's coming up and that, unfortunately, it was sad to hear and see what happened to your cat, Bobby.

Thomas Pulliam: I was also bitten.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: He was also bitten by the dog who attacked and killed Bobby, but that right there is being dealt with. I don't want you to think that you're up here, you're

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saying that people are ignoring you or not sensitive about the things that mean the most to you because I am. I just want you to know that I am and I'm doing something about it.

Thomas Pulliam: I do really feel you are. My complaint is about, not you,-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I hear you.

Thomas Pulliam: - it's about other members of the Village, including code enforcement, police management, other stuff.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: As far as code enforcement, the individual's not here, right? Like you said, you feel like they're the big part of it.

Thomas Pulliam: The last seven months I've been paying tax dollars for someone who is not efficient.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I hear you, but what we can do is we can fix problems that are here. We correct those problems and we try to look forward with those problems being corrected. I just want to say that I'm doing what I can and I'll continue to do everything I can to help you out with everything that you need. It's a process, but I'm not saying it's a process like nothing could be done about it right now. I'm putting things in place and we're all putting things in place and I'm changing things around and we're changing the culture and we're changing the way things used to be in the past. I just want you to know that with that being said, and then the second problem it's a much more convoluted problem where it's with the fence.

Thomas Pulliam: My neighbor trespassing on my property and me calling the police saying trespass and them interrupting my business with my landscaper, and the police not citing any violation saying it's a neighbor dispute when I have photographic video evidence and witnesses, third party witnesses, including my landscaper, who is a part of that. I'm just seeing all the power structures in the Village, abdicate their power. That's why at the start of the meeting, I was asking about the charter revision, when is that happening?

How can we make this more efficient working for everybody, but also those with outside voices like myself? This is the budget workshop, there's less than 1% of the Village here. Then as I explained earlier, obviously, I get to pay a higher percentage of taxes, which I'm happy to do, but I want to see a community that supports us, and we're not seeing it

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I think that I am supporting,--

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Oh, I do. I thought you were just handing me. Mr. Mayor, can I ask the gentleman? Could you repeat your name for me?

Thomas Pulliam: My name's Thomas.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Thomas. Exactly what part of the charter do you have an issue with or is it more the day-to-day functioning of the Village?

Thomas Pulliam: I have an issue with it being a manager run Village.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: You would want to change the complete-

Thomas Pulliam: Possibly.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: - structure.

Thomas Pulliam: Then I also have Web 3 ideas to enable that as well, which I'm very happy to share at a later time. However, the entire charter, it's convoluted. There's a lot of inconsistencies. There's so many rules and ordinances about fences, nothing about trespassing. We're a bird sanctuary, but dogs and cats can be roaming killing the birds, whatever. It's just the entire thing needs a scrub and I have it. That's why the charter has Section 7.5 to revise it every 10 years.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I definitely get that. I just want to make sure that we give you an accurate idea of what your best remedy is. If it is an ordinance that we're talking about, that's a more immediate fix that we can talk about right now. When you talk about revising a charter like the mayor stated, there is a lot that goes into it because the effort is to revise the entire charter, and then take all the revisions to the ballot at the same time. It's just a longer lift than if you had a sticking point with one particular thing that might be changed via ordinance.

If you're talking about, essentially, the structure of the whole thing, then yes, definitely, that's something that you can look at revising the charter with, but definitely, it would be something that contemplates a longer period of time. I just wanted to figure out exactly what your issue was and how best we can address it, but what you're saying is true. A lot of cities and municipalities don't have this automatic review of the charter. It is more something that is spurred by either outcry from administration or from the community members itself, but since

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that is stated in our charter, it's something that we have to do and we have to think about whether or not we do want to have that automatic review.

Thomas Pulliam: My question for the lawyer, who's not in attendance today, would be, is the charter even enforceable considering it's not being reviewed for the charter for every 10 years?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I'm not going to step on the attorney's toes and I'll let him speak to that, but I do believe that we would still be a city and we would still have a charter. It would just be this one clause, it's not the entire thing is thrown away. Just this one clause is what is not being adhered to. I think I have your issue and I think in general, beyond the charter issue, I sense that you want a clear access point to impact how the city is being run. Is that fair to say?

Thomas Pulliam: Yes, we're only 500 people, age 18 plus. We can actually participate, be involved. Thank goodness for all of you who are volunteering your time, but no one else even ran. That's the state, how can we have civics? How can we have a proper functioning community, society, whatever, without involvement.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: That's so true.

Thomas Pulliam: Also, I've heard from a lot of neighbors since I've gotten here too, a lot of complaints about historically the Village, which is really tap people out and not wanting to be involved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's historically. That's changed though. Mr. Pulliam, that's changed.

Thomas Pulliam: Great.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That culture's changing.

Thomas Pulliam: This building should be full. Why are we even paying tax dollars for this when look who's showing up today.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead, Councilwoman Darian. Go ahead.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Okay. I was just saying, I think historically is a really important word because I think it is a brand new council and I think there have been and there

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is an ongoing effort to create easier access points for members of the community to participate. Our meetings are a lot shorter. We have a direct messaging system that's coming up. Marque that's outside, the mayor makes sure that he sends these flyers and informationals about what's happening. For sure, it's a two street, but I think we're creating an environment that eventually when residents like you go out there and say, "Hey, they do listen. It is a responsive way to get what you want out of your community.

I think if you spread that word, hopefully, more people show up and they'll discover that there are reasonable access points and also reasonable people. I don't think that we should not have a charter review commission if it states that in the charter. If you want to talk about a different structure, I think you should be able to talk about a different structure, and if everyone agrees, I think that should be it. I sense a lot of angst and I share that. I'm sorry that that's your experience in the Village because I do want everyone to quietly enjoy the Village. Your complaints aren't falling on deaf ears. We definitely are listening and trying to figure out how to make it work for you as well.

All of your complaints I've noted. I'm sure my colleagues have noted. We want to engage in the conversation, and hopefully, there'll be more people and you'll come back and hold our feet to the fire on some of the things that we're talking about this evening. I'm sorry about the cat, I really am.

Thomas Pulliam: Absolutely. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me just say for the record, Mr. Pulliam, before you leave the podium that everything that you hold dear, everything, as Councilperson Martin said, as soon as you came to me and discussed what happened, unfortunately, with Bobby, I put that ordinance in motion and worked hard and we're almost done. We have a conversation that we have to follow up on soon about that before we get to bring it to the council, but as she said, anything that is right there that we feel like is an emergency, I'll put into an ordinance and we'll attack it right away.

Thomas Pulliam: Yes, but, again, my complaint is the enforcement.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I understand.

Thomas Pulliam: I'm not seeing the enforcement. We have tons of ordinances. Again, from January 1st to July 31st, there was only 12 reported.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I understand. The last thing I want to say for the record also is that I have a new initiative called Connecting The County where we've been going around. We're going to every single commission and council meeting from every other municipality in Miami-Dade County, all 34, or 35, including Miami-Dade County. Let me just say just for the record just so everybody knows out there, these meetings that I've been going to, and I go to the to the county commission meetings all the time, when things are good, you don't really see a lot of individuals at meetings. When things are bad and terrible, that's when those village halls and those city halls are filled to the tee.

The same thing with the county commission meetings. I've been to county commission meetings where there was like four of us in the audience. I'm like, "This is a county commission meeting, there's like four of us in the audience," but let there be something on the county commission agenda, Madam Clerk, Madam Manager, that's something that's going to affect many individuals and things like that and that's when you get the size and stuff like that. Just historically, throughout government, usually, if people are pretty satisfied, you really don't see them in these village halls and city halls won't be packed up like that.

It's usually when people are very unsatisfied, and that's when you'll see these village halls and these cities halls really be packed. A lot of people, you guys, they come home from work, and especially El Portal now, it's mostly young families. They come home, they pick up their kid from practice or whatever, and that's what it is, but let me tell you something, if we're messing up, though, they'll make their way to village hall. They'll make their way to city hall to come and show their opinion about what we're doing, as you did today which we appreciate.

Thomas Pulliam: What is the recourse to take against village staff if they're abdicating their duties or not enforcing, specifically, police officers, police chief, village manager, building clerk, any of those paid staff positions?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You have every right. What you can do is you can write an email to us. Write an email to me or write an email to us about what's going, and specifically the situation that happened and specifically what you feel like should happen, or what went wrong in that situation and we can take it from there.

Thomas Pulliam: That's the formal complaint process that the Village has?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That would be the complaint process, would be to write to us.

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Thomas Pulliam: Okay. Thank you everyone for your time and attention. I appreciate that.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Is there anybody else for Good and Welfare, you guys? That was a special Good and Welfare, but this is Good and Welfare is for the agenda item, for the budget. The first Good and Welfare usually always is. All right, hearing and seeing none, we're moving right along, you guys. We're going right to the agenda item, and the first agenda item is the budget. There's a budget workshop, you guys. We have the first budget hearing next week, and then we have a second budget hearing after that. You guys open your budget pages up.

The first page that I want to go to is the general fund revenue, that is, if nobody has a question about the budget summary. This is the budget summary, look right here. It's the plain white sheet that's vertical. Everything else in the budget summary we'll see when we go by the line items by department.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mayor.

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

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Before you really get started, I noticed that you had department heads on here, and when we see this again, can we also have it, I don't want to discuss it tonight, that they have maintained the certifications necessary for the positions? That's my comments on the department heads.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely, 100%. We'll definitely do that. Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. That being said, you guys, I want to go to the general revenue page. This is the first page, the blue general revenue page. Council or anybody in the audience, do you have any questions about the general fund revenue page? I'll give you guys a second to look over it.

[silence]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Are you speaking to the summary?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'm speaking to the--

Councilman Luis Pirela: The first page. Page 3.

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Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay, we're going over to page 3. I got it, thank you. [silence] I have a question. I have several questions about each page almost.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're going to go page by page.

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: How we did it last year when we did the workshop last year. It was on Zoom last year.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I noticed we're showing a 10.72% increase in the budget, is that basically because of inflation or what? There's a variance between-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, the variance?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: - the two years, and I'm curious as to 10.72%.

Harry Taubenfeld: Harry Taubenfeld, chief financial officer. I can answer that question for you. The majority of your increase is coming from ad valorem taxes, so the increase in property value generated some additional revenue for the Village. One other line item where there's a big difference would be the amount that's budgeted for the off-duty detail for the police officers.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Could you say that again so that when someone's listening to it or looking at the at the tape in itself. You're saying, basically, we have not increased it. The value has been increased. Say that again.

Harry Taubenfeld: That is correct. The millage rate has not changed. It stayed flat at 8.3, which it's been at 8.3 for at least 10 years. The increase is due to the property tax increase, so the ad valorem, the taxes. That generated a big portion of the increase in the general revenue fund.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Very good.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me say for the record, for the off-duty detail, you guys, off-duty is a wash. Off-duty is when our officers work off duty at a different location. For example, let's say, if our officers work off duty at Dolphin Mall, then the way it works is we'll get charged. We'll show the off-duty from the payout to the cops, and then Dolphin Mall will pay

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us back for the off-duty because it was at Dolphin Mall. It just sometimes takes a while for their payment to come in, but off-duty is always 100% wash.

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

Harry Taubenfeld: To add to that, we do not pay the officers until we actually collect payment from wherever the service is being done.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I just know sometimes it takes them a while to get it, [laughs] but off-duty is definitely 100% wash. Are there any other questions, you guys, for the general fund revenue?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes, I do have a question. Bear with me, my screen is going in and out. For code enforcement revenue, I see the year to date we've realized around \$34,000, but we're only anticipating a \$15,000 revenue next year. What is that? Did we increase enforcement this year or--?

Harry Taubenfeld: There was just one fine in excess of \$30,000.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Oh, that was outsized?

Harry Taubenfeld: Yes.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Okay.

Harry Taubenfeld: Sorry about that.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Exactly, and we couldn't expect that to be duplicated next year.

Harry Taubenfeld: Correct.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Okay, got it. Then another question about the copies line item, what exactly is that?

Harry Taubenfeld: The building department charges fees to make copies, whether it be for plants or permits or stuff like that.

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Councilwoman Darian Martin: Okay, thank you.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Which line item was that? The copy?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: The copies.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I see it, okay. Is it normal for that to have that type of increase. Am I missing something?

Harry Taubenfeld: For which line item?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The same one that my colleague just asked about, the copies.

Harry Taubenfeld: We budgeted \$200 For this year, and we actually raised \$1,293 through July. I'm expecting \$1,000 for the next fiscal year should be a good amount.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Do we know why it changed so dramatically?

Harry Taubenfeld: I don't know. My guess is that there just has been more requests.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: There have been more requests, I see. That aligns what the gentleman has just talked about, that the activity is there and this is the budget that shows that. We didn't do that much and now we're getting more requests. Make sense to me. What is the echo? What's going on? Do you all hear the echo?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We have to also remember also, you guys, that remember, it wasn't until recently when we did the cap that we got those two full-time front desk building department clerks. Let me tell you I'm here every day. I've been here since this morning, since 8:30 AM, so every day we get many more. There's so many more people that are moving into El Portal nowadays. We have little businesses going up, you guys, and so the activity at our front building department is so much more than it used to be, so much more than it used to be.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: This is the kind of thing we like to hear because at one time, it was just like a ghost town.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, it was like a ghost town.

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Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Knowing that, number one, folks know that we're here, and number two, that they know that we are truly a city. A small one as it may be, we're doing things. I noticed it in the budget in and of itself, I'm sitting here with 2020 to '21 budget and how we came up with the '22 budget. Now I'm looking at the '22 to '23, but then my comparison went back to the actual FY20. Do you see what I'm saying? What we don't have here is the actual 2021 where you wouldn't have to because we've been consistent in how we've been handling the funds. I have no complaints. I have questions, but I have no complaints. We are literally still 2,700, a little more than that, residents, Mayor?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: 2,700. I came into this Village. Yes, that's the last one on the web. It shows we're 2,700 residents in this Village. That's speaking for itself. When I moved in, it wasn't that many people. It wasn't 2,700 let me tell you that, but that will cause us to have these waves as I like to think of it. Moving forth with, I have no other questions about this first page.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward and great points being made. As Mr. Pulliam is one of those individuals, you guys, people are moving in and they're getting a lot of work done on their homes. Our front desk building department with those permits that are being pulled and El Portal was like a crazy location when the housing market just went bananas.

You guys might know, there were people that have been living here for 20 years that I knew, 30 years that sold because when they first bought their house, it was \$250,000 and they sold their house for \$930,000 and moved to North Carolina or South Carolina, and so we're begin in so many new families, you all. Our building department is really [crosstalk].

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Mr. Mayor, if I may. I think also with that influx, we have to be aware that maybe customer service training has to be boosted because a lot of people that are moving in have quite different expectations on what their experience should be like. Our intentions are there, but maybe what we need to layer on is just some training that's very customer service-targeted that will leave everybody satisfied with their experience at that front desk.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely. I concur, Councilperson Martin, great point. Training is one of the things that I've been speaking about for a while now. Thank you very

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much. Any other questions for the first-page general fund revenue before we move on to the second page? I am hearing none. Let's move to the second page. Flip that page, you guys, it's the council page. Any questions here?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I have a question. The travel and per diem line item, it jumped from \$3,000 to \$7,500. Exactly, what kind of travel are we anticipating or what does this contemplate?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Last year, three of us went to Tallahassee. Even though three of us went to Tallahassee, Madam Manager, I think there's something in here also that you might be able to explain, but a lot of this workshop, you guys, and a lot of this budget, what's in here is forecasting. Forecasting what is most likely to happen. I think that going forward, I think, especially with the being reelected, I think that Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, I think that your self, Councilperson Martin, I think we're all going to become more involved. I'd rather be safe than sorry. I don't want to under budget.

I don't know if you all are going to be joining us this year going to Tallahassee as the three of us did. I know Clerk Jacobi was there and Manager Alou was there last year. Just in case, I want to make sure that we are covered for any type of travel that anyone might want to do when it comes to legislation or any type of conferences or anything like that. We don't have to keep it there, but I just wanted to be more safe than sorry so that later on, we're not trying to, not necessarily scramble, we're not trying to say we went over budget or trying to find somewhere else to pull the money from or anything like that. I would rather us budget it, have it there.

I think we're going to become close to it, if nothing else, because as you see, the year to date, we're like \$3,000 now. I think that with yourself and with the Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward if you guys decide to travel, I think that we at least need a little bit more travel. Let me also say this for the record. I don't turn any Manager Manager receipts into the Village at all. I don't turn any receipts into the Village at all. I don't know if I'm going to be the same next fiscal year because you guys, I am all over this county, Madam Manager, about at least three days every single week going to meetings. Driving all over this county at least three days every single week.

I don't turn in no gas receipts. I'm driving my own car and I'm talking about a meeting at Homestead, then a meeting in Miami Gardens, and I'm back here for a resilience meeting. I may next year start turning some receipts as my predecessor used to turn in all her receipts. I

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just haven't and I've been all over the place for the past couple of years I've been mayor and I haven't turned in one receipt for anything, but I might do that next year.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I get that. Similarly, I haven't turned in anything, but I know that you definitely go a lot of places. I just think if we were effective with three, we probably need to have a discussion about which three council members are best suited to represent the Village instead of contemplating us all traveling. I don't think that in any way you should have to cover the expense of riding around this county, but I don't know if we were effective with three if we need to contemplate all of us traveling, but that's just my thought.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I have no problem with the three, but I want to be more inclusive.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: For sure.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I don't want to just assume. I don't want to get to a point to where the three of us are going and somebody else is going and somebody else is going, and then there's a convention or something, and then somebody's telling a councilperson, "Oh, no, you can't go. We ain't got the money for you to go."

Councilwoman Darian Martin: No, I completely get that. That's just my viewpoint on it. Maybe everybody else is comfortable with travel point.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I understand what you're saying. Maybe I wanted to be too safe than sorry. Too safe, Madame Councilperson.

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We can bring it down if you guys want to. Go ahead, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I noticed that "we're afraid" is misspelled and I want to know what the council discretionary funds are about. I appreciate my colleague speaking to the travel part of it, but I don't know what council discretionary funds look like. I don't know what that is.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Council discretionary fund, that's something that has always been there. It has always been there. We actually have that in our charter that we all get

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discretionary fund and it is \$10,000 because it is \$2,000 a piece. You can only use that for anything related to Village business. Let's say, for example, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, if you want to throw a jazz in the grass event at Horseman on a cool December night, you can use your \$2,000 towards that event because that's for the Village.

You can't use it. It's not your personal money, you can't put it in your pocket. Can't use it for anybody really outside the Village, but you can use it for anything that will benefit the residents of El Portal, and we all have that and that's per charter.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's good to say that on the record because a lot of people didn't understand it last year.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem. Any other questions, you guys? Remember, this is the workshop. If there's anything, even after tonight, you guys, go home and you see, and you say, "You know what? I think that probably should have been higher or lower." You can contact the manager, and when we go into our first budget hearing, which is the actual hearing, this is the workshop where we're just working it right now, the hearing is next Tuesday.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes, and that's one of the things I pointed out to the CFO about that line where it says "adopted" is misleading because the community could think-

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes, that it hasn't been adopted.

Councilman Luis Pirela: - it hasn't been adopted, so it has to be changed to a proposed or to be determined or whatever. I think that's all.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, we'll do that. I think that because here, it says "proposed" on the first page. The head page says "proposed".

Councilman Luis Pirela: Under the line for the fiscal year of 2023, it says "adopted". That hasn't been adopted yet.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I hear you, but under the budget summary, it does say "proposed" also.

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

Councilwoman Darian Martin: What I will say is I like the discretionary fund line item. Discretionary is also misspelled for the record, but I do like that because I think last year during our budget cycle, we definitely gutted the events. I do think this is a very flexible way for us to either satisfy a need in the community or create some sort of community event, which is awesome to do, so I like that item and I will definitely remind myself to use it more, but I would drop that traveling per diem item to about \$5,000.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: \$5,000?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I think increase might be a little scary to anyone.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: \$5,000 sound good to the rest of you all?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, I agree with that.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: \$5,000. \$5,000, can I get a motion for \$5,000?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You have.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Motion by the Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Can I get a second for \$5,000?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: No second. Oh.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Martin. For \$5,000, since we're dealing with money, let's do a roll call Madam Clerk very quickly, \$5,000.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call, Councilperson-Martin.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes.

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Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: No.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, I guess so.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes four to one.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, thank you very much, you guys. Any other questions for the council item? Council.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I trust that you're taking notes on this one. All right, so we're down from 43 to--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're down to 38?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We're down to 38. That's why I'm asking. You take \$5,000 from the balance.

Harry Taubenfeld: No, [inaudible 00:42:40]. My understanding is that reducing it by \$2,500 down to \$5,000.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's right, reducing it.

Harry Taubenfeld: The total number will be \$41,400.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, that's right, reducing \$2,500, my bad. We're trying to take off \$5,000. Slow down, Mayor.

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Councilman Luis Pirela: What about their retirement plan? I guess we were discussing that and whether we need it or not if it was needed. I personally don't think it should be something that should be there. It's \$2,900 almost?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Retirement contribution?

Councilman Luis Pirela: Retirement contribution. It touches expenses, I don't know.

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

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: This is the FRS.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes, this was a cynical action taken by a previous this administration, and in my opinion, I would be encouraged to address this in the future and figure out a way to go back to the way it was, but for this specific line item right now, I think there's other fish to fry in this budget. Can we undo the FRS tonight or in this budget? Is it that simple?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It's not that simple, that's the problem.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I don't imagine it is.

Harry Taubenfeld: I don't believe it's that simple. It's my understanding that once you're in it, you have to stay in it, but I can definitely inquire.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Right, because I think even the status of the council was adjusted to accommodate this. This definitely needs to be addressed in the future, but I don't know that it's going to get accomplished in this budget.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'll bring it up to, you guys.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We don't want to work for free.

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Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, because once you understand what that pension is, then that makes the difference, but a lot of people don't understand what that pension. It is a pension. Florida Retirement System is a pension. How we got in there, I'm not concerned. I'm more concerned with the validity of it at this point.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, we'll definitely bring that up at a future committee meeting, you guys. I'll make sure I have that on the agenda, all right?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: All right.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Because I know that getting that FRS is not just getting that FRS like tha, you have to adjust with that. All right, any other questions, comments for the council? Department?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Turn the page.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I'm all inclusive, my brother, come on. You have to do the same thing. You have to come and say your name and address for the record so that the transcripts pick it up.

Thomas Pulliam: Okay. My name is Thomas Pulliam, 205 Northeast 86th Street. I'm just going through this as well.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go on this page, though, for the council page. We're going to go page by page, so you have a question for another page, we'll get there.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We're in number three.

Thomas Pulliam: Page 3, yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Page 3, yes. Oh, we're on the previous page, okay. There you go.

Thomas Pulliam: There you go. I didn't know I could participate.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, go ahead, you're good.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes, you can.

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Thomas Pulliam: Okay. I don't understand how, one, two, three, the fourth column, year-to-date, so mid-year, how are we going over budget over the adopted budget on some of these? Oh, sorry. This is revenue, sorry. My question is if I did a public records request and the information I was given was we only collected \$200, how was it showing \$33,000 and judgment and fines is showing \$36,000? I know you said there was a big outsized fine or something, but that also didn't show up on the public records request.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's why I was confused when you said that it was only \$12,000.

Thomas Pulliam: I asked for January 1st through July 31st, that was the information I was given, and now I'm showing up at the budget workshop. The numbers are completely different.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's why I was so--

Harry Taubenfeld: I'm sorry to interrupt, Mayor, but the fiscal year here starts October. Without looking at the detail when the actual came in, it's possible that it came in and would be the fourth quarter calendar year, but first quarter for our fiscal year. Does that make sense?

Thomas Pulliam: Is October 1st?

Harry Taubenfeld: Yes.

Thomas Pulliam: Okay.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's when it starts.

Thomas Pulliam: That's all I have. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem. Thank you very much. All right, you guys. Let's move on to Administration and Finance, that's page 5. I'm going to give you guys a few minutes. Any question, just let me know.

[pause 00:47:04]

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

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me go to Vice Mayor Urbom first. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, you'll be next. Vice mayor.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: With executive salaries, just if there is a quick explanation of why we are over budget on something like a salary.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Harry Taubenfeld: Sure. I'm sorry, did you want me to answer that?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, you can or I can. Go ahead.

Harry Taubenfeld: The council approved back in February the monies that were owed to the Village Manager. There was a three-year period where we did not honor the contract, so we trued it up back in February.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: If you guys remember, we were out of contract.

Harry Taubenfeld: The proposed rate for next year takes into account the increase noted in the contract.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Right below that, the regular salaries, that's the office administrator. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Is that a question? Was that a question?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, I'm making a statement. I'm saying right below that, just for everybody to know, regular salaries is the office administrator just in case people didn't know.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, I know you had a question.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: No, that was a question, you answered my question.

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Councilwoman Darian Martin: I do have a question. In the line item "professional fees-other", what is contemplated here? What are these fees?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Professional fees-- Go ahead.

Harry Taubenfeld: It's anticipating. The current year's expense was related to the refinancing of the note with Synovus. The assumption that I'm making here is that with the addition of the 2020 audit, which should hopefully happen in the next couple of weeks, we'll have the opportunity to go back to the bank and get the loan restructured and not pay the exorbitant interest rate that we're paying.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Okay.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You guys will see in my State of the Village address how important the audit situation is for us.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'm going to the next question.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, go ahead.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Bank service fees we are 300% over budget it looks like.

Harry Taubenfeld: [inaudible 00:49:43]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We can't hear you.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Forgive me, the bank service fees looks like there were 300% over budget.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Bank service fees?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Harry Taubenfeld: Those were fees that were related to an old Bank of America account that the Village still has. It's the operating account, I've spoken with them, they overcharged the municipality. I'm in the process of working that out and trying to get a credit. I can't speak for how much, but we had one account, they were charging us for like seven, eight different accounts, service fees. Could I try to claw back and get as much as I can for that?

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: That certainly sounds like bank of America.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: At one point we did have many different accounts in the past, many, many, many moons ago, but we've been consolidating everything. Madam Clerk, we were finding cell phone accounts we were paying for people who are not only not here anymore, people who have passed on. When I became mayor, [unintelligible 00:50:43] People who have passed. When I became mayor and we're bringing in, we're just cleaning up everything and trying to consolidate and clean up everything. Any other questions, you guys? Page five.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes, so I do have a question going back to the executive salary. This is assuming that the increase for this year will be 8% anticipating whatever the merit is by the contract, is given to the manager, so it's including the 3% [unintelligible 00:51:17] assuming the 5%, it's also in, and that's because we- We got it. We brought a current to 115,000. I don't know if this will be part of the discussion, but I see the funds that were paid were a little bit over \$80,000, right? For the manager to bring the manager current to this year, the auto pocket or from the Village.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: From 91 to 103?

Harry Taubefeld: Well, the payment was two parts, there was a salary, and then there was a PTO payout.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: PTO.

Harry Taubefeld: If you combined the two, I believe you're pretty close to that number. I don't have the exact number in front of me. It's on the gross.

Councilman Luis Pirela: It was 23 plus 54, right?

Harry Taubefeld: 23 plus 54. It sounds about right.

Councilman Luis Pirela: That money-

Harry Taubefeld: No, no, I'm sorry. The gross on the second one was less, the gross on the second one was about 47.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Oh, Sorry. Thank you.

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Harry Taubefeld: It was about 75.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: On that note, I don't think we're treating the managers right. I really don't. She has a contract that's now four years old. Nobody's looked back at it again. I don't think that's fair. I think three years we should be diligent about the person that actually runs this village for us. Not only that, other contracted employees here need to have theirs looked at too, mayor, and that's not a put on anybody or anyone, that's just conscientiousness that things don't remain the same. They really don't. It would do good to look back at all the contracts, make sure we are not just trying to operate three years behind.

Things have changed. Take note of that. Other than that, Mr. Mayor, I have one question about the negative 50% on the repair and maintenance line item.

It is one of two negatives. Did we save money there, or it looks like we over expended in '22 for the repair and maintenance, and it only came to 5,000, commended for that. We want to take notice that we may have budgeted for it, but we didn't need it, doesn't mean we won't need it in the future. It's just that, did we get new equipment or something like that? What did we get? What made the difference in us not spending 10,000 when the year before it was-- [laughs] well, you don't even want to know what actual 20 was. You want to stay right here with this number where we have this negative 50%. What was the magic number for that? Also in the membership in publications, what was the magic thing about those two that makes them negative?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I can't speak-- sorry. Oh, I'm sorry.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Repair maintenance, you're talking about?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: One is repair maintenance, yes.

Harry Taubefeld: Just as a reminder, I started with the village back in December. The budget was obviously prepared for the current fiscal year that we're in. I can't speak to how they came out with those numbers. In preparing the budget for this current fiscal year, obviously, I looked at the historical, I looked at the current run rate and I also sat down with the department heads. I would just credit the reduction to just watching our dollars, making sure we're only spending money where we really have to.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Not only that. I want to give kudos to the manager because the village manager, you guys, she's been working hard here. Sometimes when I'm back there in the office with her, she's continuously doing classes and getting more certifications for her management position. That being said, even though those classes and things like that--previously we had 2,420 going to next year since she completed so much this year she doesn't need the same amount next year.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you. I'm sorry, my [inaudible 00:55:42] most commendable. All right, Mr. Mayor, I think I've had my questions answered in terms of the negative numbers-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: -on this chart.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Councilperson Lightfoot-ward. Madam manager, maybe if you move your microphone to the edge of the table a little bit. Because I know when we speak, we have to get you on record. Well, we'll try to get you on record.

Madam Manager: All right. I'll try to speak loud.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Maybe from there, just keep it like that. Maybe right there. It'll be good. All right. Moving on. A good five? Five, come on.

Thomas Pulliam: Thomas Pulliam, 205 Northeast 86th street. Several items here on page five, the first one, executive salaries. That's just for one person or multiple people?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's just for one person. Yes.

Thomas Pulliam: 36% increase in one year is unfathomable. Who gets that? People, it should be a public servant, not here to be making money.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We were out of compliance with the contract for the manager. What happened is when I became mayor and we all came on council, there were so many things that the village was doing and was out of compliance. Things that people had oversight of, people had overlooked for years and years and years. When I came in and when we all came in, we are looking at everything. We're looking at all of our contracts. We're looking at everything that's been out there and we're bringing everything current to where it legally needs

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to be. If things would've been done right and correctly, she would've had those smaller raises over those past five years, over those past three to five years.

Councilman Luis Pirela: I'm sorry, Mr. Mayor, basically 8% per year. Starting out, when the village manager started here, her salary was \$85,000. It wasn't raised all the way to bring her current until actually the beginning of this year.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The problem is that-

Thomas Pulliam: Why was that not in the original budget then, if we knew it needed to be caught up, why was there not a budget at the beginning, in October to make up for it? How come it's showing-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Because last October or prior to last October was when we were still going through everything, seeing what we had to clean up, seeing we had to get together. We're doing so much because even, for example, there are so many individuals and companies that we have working for us that we haven't done an RFP or RFQ for them in years. We're going to go back and revisit all of that.

We're just trying to clean up everything. Again to make a long story short, if she would've been kept current year after year, you guys, how most businesses do, at the end of every year, you have to go through somebody's PTO. Are you going to take the time off or are you going to get paid for your time off? You make a decision. The previous council under the previous leadership, they had let that slide for so long. When we came in, we're trying to clean up and bring everything current and just clean up everything. That's why in one year-

Thomas Pulliam: I didn't realize it was so messed up before.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, yes. It was. [laughs]

Thomas Pulliam: That's helpful, but I would also say 8% year over year, that's not normal. Private sector, you're getting 3% to maybe 5% unless you're getting promoted or you're going to another position, 8% for Florida here, that's really crazy. This is a really inflated salary for the lack of management I'm seeing. I would really like that to be reconsidered. Or again, when we have an opportunity to revise the village charter, which is supposed to be done every 10 years, starting March 2012, to look at other forms of government where we're not shelling out

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this much money, putting everything on one person to do everything. Moving on I have a question around the professional fees other. \$19,250 was spent. What did that go to?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You want to say it again? All right. We had to refinance. I don't know if you know about the previous administration and the FEMA debacle.

Thomas Pulliam: I've heard a little bit.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Okay. Since the FEMA debacle happened in the previous administration, when I first became mayor, I was mayor for how long, you guys? Two months when we got that \$600,000 in, right? Maybe a couple of months before we got that \$600,000. We got some money in. As soon as I became mayor, we all-- The council, we got some money in from FEMA. We have still money left over from FEMA that we're waiting for. Until that money that comes in that we're waiting for, we had to-- The previous administration took out a loan with Synovus to cover the money that the village had lacked from not getting the FEMA reimbursement. Does that make sense?

Thomas Pulliam: It does. It's just the title here I would say is not very transparent.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We can change that.

Thomas Pulliam: It's barely bearing in and would leave a lot of question marks for anyone and anyone in the village who is not here tonight.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We can change that. Professional fees other. We change it to the Synovus refinancing FEMA or something like that.

Thomas Pulliam: Great. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: FEMA re--

?Speaker: [unintelligible 01:01:21]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: [unintelligible 01:01:24] retainer.

Thomas Pulliam: It's still not transparent to members who are new to the village

?Speaker: For the residents it's still vague. It's still very vague for residents.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Synovus refinancing FEMA. I want FEMA next to it somewhere.

?Speaker: Refinancing.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: [01:01:43] Valid point, Mr. Mayor. It's a valid point.

Thomas Pulliam: Moving on, the repair and maintenance line item, I know was discussed. I have seen in Sherwood Forest Park, a lot of stuff like the lights not on, the fountain not working, whatnot. I don't know if that's part of that budget or not.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That wouldn't be here. That'd be public works. That'd be public works.

Thomas Pulliam: What is repair and maintenance limited to? Just Village Hall?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, limited to Village Hall.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Administration and Finance.

Thomas Pulliam: Got it. Okay, thank you. Maybe this was brought up too, but the line item that's plus 275% current charges other. What is that? \$2,000 was budgeted, \$9,000 has been spent.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: \$2,000, \$9,000.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You see it?

?Speaker: I'll have to get back to you on that. I don't have that detailed information.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: That was going to be my final question before moving on as well.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mine, too.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: [unintelligible 01:02:34]

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?Speaker 3: I'd have to get back to you in a minute.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: [01:02:39] Being fully aware more than anybody probably in this room, as far as the difficulties and challenges created by previous CFOs and former mayor, to have that kind of discrepancy in a vague line item, very sincerely needs to be addressed with clarity. I agree with the resident to the point that when we come to these vague titles and these line items, we've burned every bridge that ever existed when it comes to vagueness in our budget and there has to be outrageous amounts of clarity going forward sincerely.

?Speaker 3: No worries. Point taken.

Thomas Pulliam: That's all I have on page five. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Mr. Pulliam appreciate it. Everybody good on page five, we move on to page six?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Yes. Let's go on to page six.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Page six. This is planning. This is just **[unintelligible 01:03:24]**, you guys. That's what this is. I don't know if there's any questions. Pretty much stays the same.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Let's be clear before we move on to -552% is based on the real number of 615 matching what we anticipated. Yes?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right. Page seven, you guys. This is Village Clerk. Any questions here?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Tell us what's going on here. It's almost a 30% increase. I'd already said the Village Clerk was underpaid but let's talk in the public sector.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The Village Clerk is still underpaid. If you notice her year to date is 47. She's not getting 68 this year. The Village Clerk is well behind her raises that she

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should have been getting. That being said, what this is-- I think I said this before, you guys when we were speaking about the travel. A lot of this stuff is possible forecasting, okay?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We're talking about a salary here.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Talking about salary.

[crosstalk]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I agree the clerk is underpaid, but we have not had any discussions with concrete dollar amounts in terms of--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, we have not.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Then, where did this number come from?

?Speaker: I can tell you. Simple assumption here is assuming that the Village Clerk is going to be working a full 80-hour biweekly pay period at her current salary. Again, budgeting in not-- I'm sorry, just seeing where the hours have been ranging in the high 20s, low 30s on a weekly basis, some peaks, and valleys, the assumption that I made here was 40-hour work week at her current rate.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Martin.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We got a full-time Village Clerk, right?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Previously, your hours didn't hit 40 a week.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi No, no, no. As you know, sometimes monthly we have four meetings. I also have a contract. I've been working here. I'm the longest-working employee you guys have. I've never even asked for a raise. I leave it up to the council where it merits. I also have a contract that, as I said, for the past years, it hasn't been honored. 68,640 is what he came up with my current pay. No raises, no nothing. This is what would be. The problem is

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that you always see 50, but it was never adjusted. For the past few years, you're used to seeing 50, 50, 50 but never adjusted.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Madam Clerk, how many years have you been working here?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi Almost eight years.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Almost eight. It's never been adjusted. All right. As I said, you guys, a lot of this stuff, I don't want to get to the point to where if we say we want to bring the clerk current, or we want to bring the clerk full time or whatever we want to bring the clerk-- because in this year, and you guys will see this a lot more when I do my State of the village, we're going to be in cleanup mode. We're going to straighten up everything that has been left behind that we had no-- It wasn't our problem. You know what I mean? We're going to go through contracts, we're going through RFPs, we're going through RFQs. I want to update as much as we can in this council while we're here.

That being said, as I said before, a lot of this stuff is I want to get to a point to where things that we're going to be bringing up and tackling, for example, the clerk doesn't have a job description, me and her are going to be working on a job description. She doesn't have a job description on record. We're going to bring a whole bunch of things current. I don't want to get to a point to where we start to have these discussions about bringing things current, and then we vote on something and it's like, "Oh, that wasn't budgeted or that wasn't--"

What I wanted to do with this, you guys, was paint the worst-case scenarios. You see what I mean? When we get there, it's like, it might even be less than what we saw or what we see, but these would be the worst-case scenarios. I understand. Go ahead, Councilperson Martin. I see it on your mind. Go ahead. Say what you want to say.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: No, I'm moving on to video recordings.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, are you?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes, that's what's on my mind. If someone else has a comment about the salaries, then.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I do. See, this is reason why we got reelected. All five of us, this not ever happened. We've been cleaning up since we got here. It's been a

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mess. It's not fair to the administration. It's not fair to the clerk. It's not even fair to the village. That's why we all got reelected. That was the word on the street, you all are cleaning stuff up that had not been done before. We have a lot of credit going to not only the manager, but the mayor, the vice mayor, and all three of us, somewhere doing something hearing what needs to be done.

We did not start the problem but we are determined to fix if they'll let us. This vote of confidence this time is why we're all still here today. I just want to say right now, Mr. Mayor, we don't have a chance to say it anymore. I want to thank the villagers for having that much confidence in us. We're not here up here for show business. We're up here to do business. That's all we care about because we know when we asked them to elect us, which they did, you and I know that nobody ran against us. They knew us.

If they didn't, they found out about us. We found ourselves in a little bit of something and thanks to people like Urbom and my colleague here to my right, and the mayor is why we're here today. Not because we don't have anything else to do, but because we came with a commitment to clean up, and budget is basically one of the aspects that allows us to do that. Thank you very much.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, I want to say also Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, and you will know this, that cleaning up is the hardest thing because you get all of the angst and anger. You get the blame from the previous administration that messed everything up, and then while we're cleaning up, we have to deal with that and so cleaning up is not the fun part. Whoever comes after us, after we've cleaned everything up, they are going to get all the praises.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: You're saying this isn't the fun part?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's just how that goes. That's the way things work with us.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I do have one small comment because I understand the village is looking at the budget and seeing the percentage increase. It gives you pause. The thing about that is the salary is tied to the individual for now. It also is tied to the city and our ability to compete against other municipalities and finding worthwhile candidates for these positions. If you look outwards, even to similarly sized villages and cities, our staff, they are not running to the bank. They are not getting the high-end of the salaries, so part of it is honoring the contracts and remaining competitive as far as the market salaries for these

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positions are. I'd say somewhat competitive. The numbers can give you pause, but I would urge anybody that is feeling that way to take a look at some of the other salaries in other municipalities received by the clerk and the village manager. That might help put things into perspective here. I do have a question about video recording if you want me to move forward as well.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Of course, go ahead. The floor is now yours.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I was wondering what this number contemplated. Are we going to continue doing these hybrid meetings? Is that what the \$15,000 is for?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. First of all, you guys know that we've stopped doing the hybrid meetings. A lot of the money was the hybrid meetings. Some of the money, I'll just give a quick example, the hybrid community workshop that we did for short-term rental. Because it was hybrid and with everything involved, the mayor signs the check. If the mayor is not around the vice-mayor has to sign the check. That was \$2,000 for that one meeting because it was hybrid. Everything's live, YouTube's live, Facebook's live and everything like that, both the transcripts and everything. We've stopped that. Most of what you're seeing here, you guys, we also have to remember that-- remember you guys we're back with all those audits, so we're --

Let me just say this very, very quickly, Manager Alou, and myself, Madam Manager, for the past couple of weeks have been in meetings and spoken to individuals about funding that was supposed to come our way and because the last administration and the previous CFO didn't have those audits and were so far behind, Madam Manager, we have lost out on hundreds of thousands of free dollars because of the past. That being said, part of the problem with the audit, so as they're going through and giving us a lot of the problems, we need to make sure that when they look through our meetings and things like that, Madam Clerk, that we have the transcripts and stuff like that. Our public records, our transcripts are also on point.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: This is for archiving purposes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. This is for archiving purposes. We have to have these meetings transcribed so that we have that for the audit and for the public records. We need to keep those on file.

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Councilwoman Darian Martin: Do we also have these video recorded meetings readily accessible to the public on the website?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Perfect. I can get behind that expenditure.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Majority of these go on the hybrid meetings that we won't have anymore.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I really do like that. I think it also helps with what Thomas, I forgot your last name, what you were stating as far as people being aware of what's happening. If you can go home and click on that meeting and get the lowdown, that's something.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: That was one of my pet projects when I got here. It wasn't available and I said we need to know how we're more transparent to the public and they can watch it at their own leisure. Just for the public to engage.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Kudos to you. That was a great idea.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: That's something I definitely wanted to have.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: As a new council person, the YouTube channel was invaluable. I watched tens of hours of meetings to catch up and see what was going on.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor I have one more.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely, go ahead councilperson.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: One is on plaques and awards. Can we bring that number down? Got a lot of flack on it from people that had copies of this. I just want to know if we can lower this because \$4,000-- \$800 was not enough. Let's be clear. It was not enough but to have a 400% increase, I think we ought to cut that in half. Let's stick with where we were. We were almost at \$4,000, but let's just say it wasn't as positive for the people that weren't receiving. People that were receiving them, we definitely appreciated that. I'm one of those people, but let's see if we can do something with that. That may not be the most important thing in the world but it speaks a different story out in the public. I'd say we cut it in half.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: You say we cut it to \$2,000?

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I think it should just stay where it is, personally, because I think outreach is very important. I think that also we'd be going this year to reach out and be with different municipalities. I think recognizing people while they're still here and outreach and things like that is very, very important for El Portal being one of the smaller pricipalities. Whatever the council wants. There's a motion to bring it down to \$2,000. Is there a second?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second Councilperson, Martin. Madam Clerk, please the roll call.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Martin?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Pirela?

Councilperson Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: No.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes three to two. On that note, I've also asked for it to be moved from the Clerk's budget to Administration because I have no authority in giving anybody or awarding anyone the plaque. That would be under the Mayor.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Do we need a vote to move that?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No. Anybody else for page seven?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes. One final question. On the last item, the advertisement, I guess my assumption was that the increase had to do with it being an election year. However the previous budget was also \$10,000 so I think this is for the Clerk if you could speak to the advertising budget.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: It's for the TRIM. The TRIM is very expensive. It's over \$7,000. I'd also like to add that [inaudible 01:17:58] some advertising for RP's so that's also a piece of advertising that-

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I guess then my final question is, is the \$1,620 of year-to-date accurate?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: We haven't done the TRIM.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The year-to-date numbers are only through July.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Okay.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Once we do the TRIM, that takes the biggest pieces over \$7,000. I'm glad to say it here even though-- [crosstalk]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We voted on what the TRIM's going to be, we just haven't advertised it yet.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Correct.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: All right.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll be doing that really, really soon. Anybody else for page seven?

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Thomas Pulliam: Thomas Pulliam, 205 North East 86th Street. Just one more comment on the salaries. I was able to do a quick Google search salary.com. Median salary in Miami of the city clerk is \$47,862. Top 90th percentile is \$58,439. Are we saying that the clerk is on the top? I understand we need to be competitive and there's a history of raises not being implemented. Are we saying the clerk is in the top 1% in all of Miami?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: No. I'm saying we need to not look at salary.com. We have to take a look at, and it's public record, Miami-Dade County. Just go to different municipalities if you want that. That's something that we can create for you, but that's not an accurate reflection.

Thomas Pulliam: I guess I would just rationale for how salaries are developed to have transparency in that, to understand okay, yes, they're deserving to work this X amount of money, and it's competitive and we've done our homework.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: For sure, we do our homework. I don't want you to tie the salary too closely with the individual, right? Individuals can have their position or lose their position. If somebody lost their position and we needed a new clerk. If we advertised in this market, the salary being \$40,000, the quality or the caliber of the candidate would be lack luster at best. We wouldn't be competitive in that arena. Then we would have to do some maneuvering because we would be below market. What I'm saying is that if you go across Miami day county and ask what clerks are making, even the village clerk in the neighboring municipality, you can get a more accurate reflection of where we should be to be competitive. Now, a different analysis is the person who's holding the position now functioning up to par in this position.

That's another-- you can have an opinion on that and the mayor expressed to you that you can reach out to us and let us know why you think so or not. That's something that the council can move on, right? We employ, the manager and the chief police serve at our will as well as the clerk, I believe according to our charter. I think those are two different analyses. Are we where we're supposed to be in market? I would take the salary.com out of the equation and get some real hard numbers. Then also is the person who's in the position, the person that we wanted the position, two different analysis, both of which you can chime in on. I don't want you to like muddle the two.

Thomas Pulliam: I appreciate that. I aligned with that analysis you just gave. My request though is just for more transparency for the taxpayers in understanding how these numbers get

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generated. It's a lot of effort. It was really quick for me to jump on salary.com. I understand that isn't necessarily a great point of reference but I would like, when these numbers get proposed to actually in a workshop, have how that number's being generated so we can evaluate it versus just looking, at a sheet, seeing that, 30% increases for our-

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I'm sure that was done initially when the clerk was hired. I think from what I'm understanding is that-- and I too am relatively new to the village. My husband and I and two boys have just been here since 2017, but I think that there was a contract that wasn't-- that contemplated smaller increases and those increases were not realized. In an effort, this council is trying to do right by the person who has done the work and who should have received it and didn't receive it. I think that not only is that a good posture as far as just being a good employer. Also I think it staves off any legal ramifications that someone might pop into someone's mind. I think all of this is in an effort to protect the village and yes, it looks like a big number, but that's because before the smaller increases weren't brought to pass.

Thomas Pulliam: That's fine. I would just, again, hope and expect that, in a document like this, that rationale would be included [crosstalk]take this group time care and try to-

Councilwoman Darian Martin: No, the time is not an issue. I want you to get it and feel comfortable with what you received. I think the CFO also is challenged by-- he's creating these line items. If we are too specific, it can only happen once. It would be a line item for refinancing of a specific loan that might only happen once. He's trying to create these broad categories. I do agree with you that some of them could be a little bit more refined. I think there's a challenge there as well. The format of this is like this, we're going through these line items, but maybe we should contemplate maybe a supplementary document that goes into more immediate aspects of these line items. We hear you for sure. I'm doing the best that I can to clarify and hopefully it hits.

Thomas Pulliam: I appreciate it. I'm still curious of that background information and would like that to be validated. How would that be done? Public records requests?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Background information on what the-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: On why the clerk started out at 53,000

Thomas Pulliam: No on, so for instance, the contracts that our staff have with the village and what those percentage of increases were. I also wonder, have they not been presented with new

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contracts or is that not something on the table? Then all the background on how the numbers are-- the salaries are figured relative to competitive markets.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I think that that's-

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Actually, I think I have, because every year-- I'm sorry to interrupt. Every year, the clerks association, they do a compensation study, they never want to list me because I'm the lowest paid. The neighboring cities make 120,000. You can public request that. They always tell me, don't feel insulted, I'm like, I'm not. They never want to. They're like we'll just put you to the side. Based on what council per I concur. I left for a little bit and they advertised the position for \$50,000.

The people that you would have applying, I have nothing against McDonald's employees, Ross employees, Target. Those were the people that were applying for the position. I have nothing against them. It's just that the specific position I hold, it's very-- it's the one that leads brings in from the council, with the residents that, you've put in public request. I've tried to answer it to the best of my ability, but that's not the only thing we do here. As a clerk, I do things that other clerks don't even do either because we just-- we're small. We know we wear all different hats. What I make is what a deputy clerk makes at other locations

Thomas Pulliam: What is the association?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Florida clerks.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: You're also certified.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Also I was certified too. I became certified.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes, you're being modest, but this is specialized work. When you read the job description, it seems like, I can do that. There are so many deadlines and specialized pieces that if the clerk doesn't do what she's supposed to do, we're not-- everything that we're doing over here is like null and void. I urge you also to pick up that phone and call Miami shores. I mean, it's-- or look at their budget. It's listed in there, what their top level administrative staff is making. Don't take our word for it, do your due diligence.

Thomas Pulliam: I would also say all those other cities are so much larger as well. I mean, we're really tiny.

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Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Yes. Even the city next door, she started-- actually, I've been here, I said, almost eight years. She started a year ago and she makes almost the same thing I do. She's only been there a year.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: A larger city's going to have a clerk's office with staff.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I was just getting ready to say that, what we do and all of us here, but what we do on a daily basis, madam manager, madam clerk, we do things-- like I do things you'll never see, no other mayor in Miami-Dade county do the type of stuff that I do. Walk around their own flyers. Do this, do that. No other mayor in Miami-Dade counties doing that. No other clerk does the type of stuff that she-- no other manager does this type of stuff, because we don't have the staff. Every other place that you're saying is bigger, go into their clerk's office. Look at the deputy clerk and then the assistant to the deputy clerk. You know what I mean? Assistant manager, the assistant to the assistant manager. They do so much less than what our clerk does. Other places they do so much less than what our manager does. They do so much less than what the mayor does in other places.

Councilman Luis Pirela: No, I'm sorry. Part of clarification here, that's what not where, so what we, these numbers 68, 640 is reflecting here is just an estimate. It's not like the the clerk is going full-time and actually getting increase, the salary increase to 68,000. She's still remaining a part-time employee.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: That's another thing. I'm the only part-time clerk. I do what everybody else does on, part-time but obviously it's not only part-time because I'm here most to begin with. We're one of the ones that have the most meetings and I appreciate you coming and questioning because that also puts in perspective where I'm at. Like I said before, we're one of the ones that have a lot of meetings. For a small municipality, there's a lot of work that gets done here. I've been to other, because I like to see what's going on in other places I've been to other meetings.

I talk to a lot of clerks and the surrounding cities around us. I didn't input that number and I like anybody else looking at it. I was like 36, I'm like, I didn't ask for a raise or I haven't gotten a raise. I was surprised myself. Then I came to the conclusion that what happens and since he's brand new, he projected that I was going to be here, but I haven't gotten an increase. It's just my salary projected full time hours, which they fluctuate because obviously when I'm here for, in a whole month, four nights, like we are tonight, that's going on that kind of.-

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Thomas Pulliam: Got it. Understood. I appreciate all the context everyone's been giving, has been really helpful. I would just still request for more transparency and maybe even a development of, a rubric or a codified system of how raises actually happen. I mean the village has been around what? 90 years? [unintelligible 01:29:52]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I need Mr. Mayor. I'd like to make a comment to the council. It addresses specifically what the resident is raising. So yes, this particular council works very well together. We've made a lot of progress, have done incredible things in a short period of time. One area that is desperately needing improvement from this council, that is lacking severely, is we are not performing annual reviews of our chartered positions, the manager, the attorney, the clerk.

Annual reviews of the charter positions, which I believe is possibly a requirement, which we have not been doing is, in my opinion, the concern the resident has highlights the need for this. My opinion is that, yes, we do have a top 1% clerk, without a doubt. I absolutely could never have been even remotely considered successful or feeling like I'm doing anything positive in this position without the clerk's help. The truth is, no one cares about my opinion.

My opinion can be that we have a 1% clerk, but really, who cares? Nobody cares about my opinion. The truth of the matter is that there does need to be a rubric, and we actually have that standard in place. We're just not using it. My message to this council is that that should become a priority, because it's not fair to the manager, to the attorney, or the clerk. Then additionally, it's not fair to the residents when they're like, "Let's have some clarity and some reasoning behind these judgments."

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I completely agree.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I think we should be doing that. Kudos to you, Vice Mayor Urbom.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely, Vice Mayor Urbom and Councilperson Martin. Let me just say for the record that that's what's going to happen, because you guys remember, what she said with this 353,000, that was eight years. Her contract hasn't come before us to even discuss that in eight years. That's the reason why it's remained to where it is.

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Largely because we haven't had a review.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: When we have the review, then it'd be adjusted. Vice Mayor Urbom, might remember this but, because previously, Madam Clerk, we were trying to get everything on point with that. There was a previous council person who used to be on the council back then and she messed everything up when it came to us trying to do a process that was a fair process.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: She wanted to keep it at 50.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That councilwoman who was previously on here, just not the mayor, but that councilwoman. Again, we got to clean up all of this and do things the right way.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: It's incredibly important.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's what we're doing.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Anybody else?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Anybody else, Page 7?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Move to Page 8, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Page eight public affairs. Any questions, comments?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: As the chair of this committee, thank you for not raising that amount.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem. Sounds good.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Emotional activities are different. You all saw what I post. It may not even require that, but thank you so much for your support in my understanding of what public affairs really is.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem.

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

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Anybody on Page 9? This is the police. I'll give you guys some time to look over.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: While everyone's looking around, I will just mention that the reason for regular salaries is that we're finally very close to being fully staff, whereas previously, we were critically understaffed.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely, Vice Mayor Urbom. Very good. Thank you for that.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, I'm looking at off-duty detail. It's already been explained how we get that done. You talked about off-duty [unintelligible 01:34:04] budget.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That speaks for itself since he's already said we don't get the money until we get the money, that type of thing. The other one is, I'm just going down the line with the salary, with the repairs and maintenance. It seems that we still don't have it under control yet, or is this pocket money just in case things start breaking down? That's a question for the manager. It says repair and maintenance, and I'm not really sure what that is in the police service. What is that?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Harry, repair, and maintenance, I know there's some car washing in there and there's some other items in there. See if [unintelligible 01:34:51] you want to jump in.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We're talking about the fleet more than we're talking about-- People are talking about fleet.

Harry Taubenfeld: It's maintenance for the new fleet through enterprise. We have the enterprise offers a maintenance program.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It should say enterprise next to it.

Harry Taubenfeld: That's where a good portion of that money is being spent.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: This is the warranty on the vehicles?

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Harry Taubenfeld: I would say just maintenance, not warranty.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We have a line item, it says repair and maintenance vehicles.

Harry Taubenfeld: That's the line item I'm referring to, repair and maintenance vehicles. Repair and maintenance would just be anything that's within the police department, anything that they need to fix within their little office space area.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: All right, I understand that. Now, if I may continue forthwith. I'm noticing uniform and cleaning. The budget adopted is 6200. Now that we're fully staffed, the percentage is increased because of the fully staffed or because of expenses as well?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead.

Harry Taubenfeld: No, you go ahead.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It's because we're fully staffed and it's because of, we're going to remain fully staffed, and being fully staffed, one of the things that we will have to do is help the officers with their buying uniforms, and also getting them clean.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: If I may, in that amount? I just think it's a tremendously different number.

Harry Taubenfeld: This past year, there's also a lot of turnover. Every time we're hiring a police officer, we have to buy a whole new set, whether it's from [unintelligible 01:36:31]

Councilwoman Darian Martin: We're anticipating that turnover continuing?

Harry Taubenfeld: I'm not anticipating it, but again, I'm hoping that it's not going to happen.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: You're just being cautious?

Harry Taubenfeld: Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I told you a lot of this stuff, you guys, is better safe than sorry.

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Harry Taubenfeld: I'd rather be cautious and overestimate, than not have enough down the road.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: A lot of this stuff is better safe than sorry. That's how we were looking at. When we started putting the budget together, we were looking at a lot of things, better safe than sorry. If you guys want to decline, lower things, then you can, but we wanted to give you guys a lot of worst-case scenarios, better safe than sorry. If we get to the half of the year through or the end of next year we do the budget again, I would rather see a bunch of surpluses, a bunch of "Oh, we didn't even use that," that way we know.

You guys got to remember, the reason why it's like this time and it won't be like this next time and any other year after this is because we are in the crux of the cleanup. We are in the crux of setting everything right. After this year, once the real numbers come back at the end of this fiscal year that we're doing right now, in the fiscal year 2023, once the real net numbers come back, they will know for next year exactly where we stand on everything.

Right now you guys, we're in this period where we're in a cleanup phase, so everything's in flux. We don't know the hard exact numbers of what everything is going to take, but I didn't want to under budget.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I see you. I have another question if I may.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: On the machinery and equipment line item. Year to date, we spent 148,000 What was the machinery or equipment?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: A lot of that right there you guys, is funding. If you guys remember, a lot of the stuff with the equipment and machinery, that's the stuff that we were always resolutions when we were getting the funding and stuff. When that money comes in, it's allocated, then that's going to come off of that. A lot of that's fine.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mayor Omarr.

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

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, I'm looking here and this is my last comment on this, line item 5216400 rentals and leases, rental and leases. Do you see it?

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I'm looking at the previous years, and there was a whole lot more than what's here. What is that? What are we renting? What are we leasing continuously? What are we doing?

Village Manager Alou: [inaudible 01:39:24] We are leasing the arcing that's right here on the side of the building. That's a lease that we have not been paying regularly in the past but we will be paying and continuing with that lease so that we have the parking that's [inaudible 01:39:43] that's probably the railroad that we're renting now. It's not [unintelligible 01:39:49]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's right. They're allowing that?

Village Manager Alou: Yes. For our lessee-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're paying for it.

Village Manager Alou: Maybe we're leasing that and then we can utilize that. [inaudible 01:39:59]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay, because the railroads are different in terms of governmental, whatever, you know that. You have to be so many feet off that railroad. All of that's been taken care of. Because if you telling me what I didn't know. I didn't know. You tell me what, I did know, we're in there right away.

Village Manager Alou: That's right.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's not good.

Village Manager Alou: No, no. That's approved because it's a certain visit, but we keep our fleet vehicles there so that nothing else is utilized in that area.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I think she's saying that's not good because it's not guaranteed into the future.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's what I'm getting at because-

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Village Manager Alou: [crosstalk] safety or guaranteed. I understand. We will utilize some parking. See we're very--

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: [unintelligible 01:40:45] business to the landlord.

Village Manager Alou: We wanted to haul out all the old cars so that our staff can at least park here so that residents can take [unintelligible 01:40:53] the side of the building. We're just trying to minimize [unintelligible 01:40:58] but for now, it's there and we do utilize it.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Because I know a lot about railroads and that distance from that is not good. Council, we need to be looking at alternatives because that is close to that railroad. If a hazard happened right then, it's coming this way. If it's on this side, it's coming this way. Okay for now.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right. Let me just say a quick great thing about the railroad, El Portal, you guys, we are only one of the only municipalities that actually fought, and we got that horn to be silent when it comes past.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: That's right.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: There's not many municipalities that had that happen.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's right.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: For us to be so small and get that type of respect, that shows we have good outreach.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That speaks volumes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right. You got to keep that in mind.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That speaks volumes. It does.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're like the little internet could.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: All right. I've got a few questions I can put into one if that's all right.

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Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You can come up while he's asking. Come on, go ahead.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: By all means. Oh, he can go first. That's fine.

Thomas Pulliam: Thomas Pulliam, 205 Northeast 86th street. I'm actually surprised the salary of the police chief so much lower, like half that and it is actually declining. It's like half that of the village manager and then it's in decline negative 4.76%. What's up with that?

Village Manager Alou: May I?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, you can.

Village Manager Alou: Our police chief is new to this position.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Hold on, for this one, we can take this microphone.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Harry, turn your microphone on when she speaks and maybe her voice will be able to carry it.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: There you go.

Village Manager Alou: Our police chief is new to the position. The 78 was for a former police chief who had received an increase during his tenure here, but he retired. Now we are starting afresh with the new chief and as time goes on, we will see some change, but he's within his first year. We aren't doing an increase at this point.

Thomas Pulliam: Got it. Thank you, but I'm still shocked, is that competitive with the market, we're able to get good police chief at this salary?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We were lucky in the sense that our police chief was our former Lieutenant. When our police chief retired, our Lieutenant simply moved up into the police chief position.

Thomas Pulliam: They're qualified for the job?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely.

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Very much so.

Village Manager Alou: I think another thing we'll have to review. You're right, that's not competitive. If it was somewhat different or new, but [unintelligible 01:43:41]

Thomas Pulliam: That number seems really low for a chief of police. Then for the regular salaries, how many individuals does that account for?

Harry Taubenfeld: 12.

Thomas Pulliam: Thank you. Just a general question, but related to the sick pay. Nothing was in the budget, but then \$31,000 was paid out. How can money get paid out if it wasn't in the budget? How does that work for the village?

Harry Taubenfeld: A big, sorry, a big portion of that was the PTO cash out for the previous police chief. That's not something that gets budgeted. That's just the one-time thing. The officers also get to catch their PTO out when they leave.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're also currently in negotiations-

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: With the union.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: -with the new police union. A lot of that stuff we'll be figuring out as we go on to it.

Thomas Pulliam: What's the process? Is there just a miscellaneous fund in the overall budget that that money comes from? If it's not actually budgeted, how does that money then actually leave our coffers and go there?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That will come through our contingency, our reserves, that's how that would come,

Thomas Pulliam: How does that authorization is what I'm asking come about?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Well, authorize that comes per our charter and things that the manager is the head of administration. Anything that falls under administration, which the police department falls under administration, that falls under-- they're her employees essentially. Just because we have a manager, right in the village.

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Thomas Pulliam: Just at the manager's discretion.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's the manager's discretion.

Thomas Pulliam: The money gets authorized. Got it.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Then if it's over a certain dollar amount, she would require approval from the council.

Thomas Pulliam: Do you know what the dollar?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: It's \$5,000.

Village Manager Alou: \$5,000.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It depends on that.

Thomas Pulliam: That's all. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: My questions are we're along the same lines because, Mr. CFO, I am not a nervous person. However, I do have a generalized anxiety disorder, but when we see things like a vacation pay with no budget and then an allocation, but almost more concerning for me is when I see for example under bullets invests, we have the \$2,400 budgeted. There's nothing listed for year to date. Then the department requests the same, it makes sense it'd be the same next year, although we don't see any numbers for this year.

In the past, when we've gone through these budget hearings, there have been innumerable examples of when the answer is, oh, well-- almost no answer. On these spots where the year to date is blank, I know we've been educating in training our officers, things like that. Could you speak to just a little bit of why it is that we would not see a year-to-date total?

Harry Taubenfeld: Without speaking to them specifically about the individual line items, I'll be strictly hearsay at this point. What I will say to you, it could be one or two things. One, it hasn't been spent yet. Remember these numbers are only through July. Again, maybe the chief makes his purchase in August, September time. I don't know.

That's number one. Number two, I also maybe call a little bit of a learning curve. Me being new, I may account for things a little bit different, not specifically bullet and vest, but I may

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account something for it a little bit differently than maybe my predecessor may have accounted for a particular item. I'll go to what the mayor was saying earlier, as far as cleaning up. Part of what I've been doing also, obviously I'm sure all you guys know is a lot of cleanups.

It's letting things and making certain assumptions along the way and trying to make sure that going forward, everything is done properly and then you will have everything in its proper place.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Very good. I do want to say that I very much appreciate you being here. I understand that you've put your reputation on the line before for other municipalities. I'm sure that you're aware each day that your reputation is on the line here as well.

Harry Taubenfeld: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I do want to say in that comment that I do very much appreciate your being here.

Harry Taubenfeld: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me just say, for the record, you guys very, very quickly for a lot of things, [laughs] bullets, vests, armor, all that type of stuff, the clerk's going to kill me right now, [laughs] but I already have the vast majority of those resolutions coming. All right. I already have the vast majority of those resolutions coming. All of that will be coming out of funding. It'll be coming out of funding, and it's not going to be coming out of our budget coffers.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: You know that a lot of what I say is honestly, I try to get things on the record as much as possible for the benefit of the residents, especially in that for our YouTube channels

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Of course. No, I'm glad you did that. When you see things like that, like Councilperson Martin was saying before, equipment, bullets, vest, things like that, it's going to come from funding that we're going to get you guys. All right? Don't worry about that, it's not come out the budget. Anybody else on page nine?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: 10, please.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I said 10, please.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Moving on to 10, I'll give you guys a couple of seconds to look over this. Any questions, just let me know.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: On this, the first time I have is also for public record and that is just for the benefit of the residents to know that the reason the year to date and the code enforcement officer, essentially salary is so far under what was adopted is because, for most of this fiscal year, we did not have a code enforcement officer.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We didn't have.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Now that we do, well, we have a great code enforcement officer who is

in a position to stay with us for a while. The requested amount is to ensure that we would be able to retain a great employee.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Didn't have. That's another cleanup we're doing. All right, you guys.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We have, Mr. Mayor.

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

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We have postage.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, we have a new one now. We do have one now in place. He's very, very good. You guys will probably meet him. Next council meeting, we'll make sure we bring him in. This is very, very good. Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: No, that's not my question.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, what's the question?

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Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Postage.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, postage. Oh, okay. Go ahead, Madam Manager.

Village Manager Alou: Code enforcement officer. We're behind on so many things, special master items, all those things. We've got to send out more certified letters. We're doing that now. We're going to need the postage. We may even need more than this, but we're feeling safe with this number for the moment. We have a lot of things coming up, including short-term vacation rental. That's going to require a lot more follow-through in terms of the certified letters and postage.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Again, this is more cleanup, Madam Manager. Like I said before, whatever council comes after us after we're all gone, you guys from these seats, whatever counts comes after us, they owe us a party because how we're cleaning up everything for them. Everything from them is going to be a piece of cake. Anybody else for page 10?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I want to ask one question about-- It's a Kudo more than anything [unintelligible 01:51:34] negative workers' compensation. We have a safety program, obviously.

Village Manager Alou: Oh, yes.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Thank you. That's it.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely. Thank you very much, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. I appreciate that. Anybody else page 10?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: One final comment.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Go ahead.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Again, back to the first line item there. We've had previously two, even three really great code enforcement officers as well. We were not able to retain them. They individually helped us make significant steps into the future. We would have loved to have had any of them stay. We were not able to retain them. We certainly hope that we think we got a strategy and a plan to be able to retain our current fantastic code enforcement officer.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Very good. Page 11, you guys. Give you guys some time to look over that.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Cost of living in the first one is anticipated. Yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The first one, regular salaries?

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: What was your question?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Cost of Living. Why is it high? What's this 81?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That right there is part of the resolution that we did. That's not coming from any taxpayer dollars. That comes from federal funding that we received. That's where that's coming from, you guys. That's part of when we did the agreement to bring in cap government with the building and we outsourced the building department, the front desk, and we outsourced our public works department.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Should regular salaries have something like what you just said as an explanation that this is not?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I think that's a summary type. I think that's what Councilperson Martin was talking about. We need to do maybe a separate sheet apart from this, because I don't know if you can fit all that into this, but we could do a separate sheet.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I think that would be helpful.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Mr. CFO, would it be appropriate to have two line items versus one regular salaries, general funds, and the other regular salaries funding or grant [unintelligible 01:53:44]?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Federal funding.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Federal funding?

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: You tell me if I'm wrong, but would that solve anything or simplify anything? [unintelligible 01:53:52]

Harry Taubenfeld: Not really.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Okay.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We need to know what it is when we're asked because regular salaries and I'm looking over here 15%. The mayor just said we talked about federal money, too. Break it out, put it together. One way or another has to be something that even the person is looking at it can say, "Oh, I see."

Harry Taubenfeld: I'll put a footnote on the sheet.

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Because we meet pretty often, the three of us, CFO, [unintelligible 01:54:26], and Madam Manager, maybe what we can do, I'll look through. I've made notes on everything that was confusing to people. Maybe we could do like a separate summary sheet or something like that. One paragraph.

Councilman Luis Pirela: I'm sorry, and again, that contracts gave us two employees that we didn't have before ever in the history, I guess of El Portal.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely.

Councilman Luis Pirela: We got one a salary, including retirement and everything, all the benefits totaling about \$50,000, to now getting an engineer and a public work staffer for \$81,000. That will actually--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Extremely good point, Councilperson Pirela. That is for two professional employees.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay. There you go.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We outsource our front desk and we outsource our public works department to an outside professional company. That's for a public works engineer that-- Madam Manager, do you remember the days when every grant, every piece of funding was all

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on your head? We used to be in meetings every night, right? We used to be in the meetings. We used to be writing them out late at night. Now at least we have somebody who's an expert who can help out with those things. Absolutely.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Wonderful.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's for two individuals, you guys. Absolutely. Anything? Anybody else on page 11?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I have a question about the repair and maintenance on Village Hall. What did we spend the \$32,000 on?

Speaker 4: [unintelligible 01:56:05] the AC.

Village Manager Alou: Oh, yes.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: The AC?

Village Manager Alou: Certain things like the air conditioning units.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The AC broke twice. Remember that?

Village Manager Alou: Right. It broke a couple of times and we're waiting for a state-- Actually, we've got a federal grant to replace it, but we haven't gotten all of the engineering items done before we get to that part. We have had to repair that twice.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: We're coming up with a plan where it's not just band-aids, right?

Village Manager Alou: Oh, right. That's why we've got the federal funding to replace it. We also have a lot of milestones to meet before we can get those monies in. We're also getting a generator and some other things, but until we can get everything crossed off the list, we won't be able to do that. In the meantime [unintelligible 01:56:48] we could not function without air conditioning.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Oh, of course, we couldn't function either. Those were rough meetings.

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We are working towards funding for a 100% Village Hall redo from foundation to--

Councilwoman Darian Martin: That's my point, is that we can continue to piecemeal this thing or really think about how to make this a place that is functional for the long term, which I think is a worthwhile spend.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We even haven't ask--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We do, 900,000.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We have an ask out of Tallahassee for [unintelligible 01:57:24]. We're definitely making significant efforts to completely remodel from top to bottom once and for all [unintelligible 01:57:34]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: This is Vice Mayor Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'm still upset we lost the sanctuary, but it's all right. It may be blessings and curses. It looks like it could have cost us more [unintelligible 01:57:43]. This is such a good location.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Before we tear this beautiful structure down.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll never tear it down.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: All right, because this made-- I've been looking at historical properties in the village, and we got one right here in Village Hall.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We definitely do.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We got this.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We definitely do. Very good, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Absolutely. Mr. Pulliam, name and address for the record.

Thomas Pulliam: Thomas Pulliam. 205, Northeast 86th Street. I just had a couple of questions. The third to the last one. Transfer out MOE or M-O-E. What does that stand for? What is that?

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Harry Taubenfeld: That's a transfer to one of the other special revenue funds that the town has. I believe it's the transportation-- Hold on a second.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: It says MOE.

Thomas Pulliam: None of that was [unintelligible 01:58:38] was that no longer relevant.

Harry Taubenfeld: It's a transfer to-- Last year, they budgeted a transfer to the CITT fund. It's a special revenue fund that the village has. We're not forecasting to do that this year.

Thomas Pulliam: Okay, got it. Then the contingencies. I'm just curious. How come what's been spent is so much lower than what was budgeted?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Nothing was necessarily spent. [unintelligible 01:59:05] Nothing was necessarily spent. What happened was our previous CFO, he put the wrong [unintelligible 01:59:12]. Basically, that came from another part of the budget. He had messed up the budget and put the wrong amount in different areas in the budget. When we were going through the budget, we were like, "This doesn't make any sense. This shouldn't even be." We kept pulling money out from places that it was-- The numbers didn't add up. For example, let's say if it was like, say, police department or something like that, and then we would see it and we'd be like, "Then, this is way over. Why is it not adding up the right way?" We would go through it and then we start to realize, "Oh, well, this shouldn't even be here. We need to pull this out." When we did that, it built up the contingencies but it built it up in a way to where we went back and looked at the budget and tried to put things in the right places under the right departments, it started

to even out to what you see here.

Thomas Pulliam: Got it. That \$100 is basically reallocated.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's basically what it is.

Thomas Pulliam: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Mr. [unintelligible 02:00:11] Let me just say for the record, you guys, when you see the regular salaries that we went through with the two workers. Also when you see the repair and maintenance village hall, we're talking about we're going to get that federal funding and things like that or whatever. That's another

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thing I want you guys to keep in mind when I was saying that we wanted to do this to the project, the worst-case scenario, and things like that.

This even shows that because if I wanted to project the actuality of it, that \$81,900 is not coming from the budget. That's coming from federal funding. You see what I mean? I didn't want to keep it off. I'd rather it look worse than it really is to us. You know what I mean, o that we're not looking at it, and we're not thinking that it's better than it actually is. I'd rather be way more safe than, sorry.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I hear you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Way more safe than sorry, but a lot of this stuff is going to be federal funding. It's not even going to come out of the budget. Everybody good with page 11? We're going to page 12. All right, I'll give you guys a couple of minutes to look at it. The building permits that very first one, that's also cap and you guys understand the building permits the way the contract works. It's a wash. It's how we were talking about the off-duty detail for the police department with cap, it's a wash. What comes in is washed out and that's how that works. We don't lose anything.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's right. This is a self-sufficient fund in every city.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Couldn't have said it worse-- Couldn't have said it better, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Couldn't have said it better.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Very good.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Very good. This is a great council, you guys. How often do I say that? All the time. I really mean it. [laughs]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Same thing with the transportation revenues coming off for the gas tax.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh wait. Well, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, you're the expert when it comes to that, you know how that goes?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I'm the expert when it comes to this one, and listen, you all have made us proud. I served on that board for 15-- Well, that council, that trust

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for 15 years. When they got to El Portal, it's like they always say, they never have to worry about us.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's right.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You're keeping it alive, Mr. Budgetman.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, you remember when you retired I was there.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You were there. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's right. I'm always this-

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You didn't want me to retire, but I can't be here and be there too.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's right. I was right there when you retired. I appreciate that. I wouldn't have been anywhere else. I was honored to be there.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Does that take us to page 15, since we already just talked about CITT and [crosstalk]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Well, we're going to 13 right now, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, just in case anybody has transportation fund revenue questions, this is pretty straightforward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Balances itself.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No problem.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: 14?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: 13, 14, the rest of the budget, you guys it's pretty much the general stuff. It's like the stuff we don't control in a way. [laughs]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: That's right. Exactly.

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Harry Taubefeld: It's all restricted.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It's all there. [laughs] 13, 14, any questions?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Only question I have of this one, Mr. Mayor is, is this the same as the water and sewer project that's going to line up with stormwater?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Where are we looking at, 13?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I'm at 15.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Where are we looking at, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward? Oh, at 15. That's stormwater?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes. Let's talk about this.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Because that's right on the horizon.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The stormwater. The one that we are talking about, the water drainage system or something that I fix, you all have heard about it. Is there a correlation in this figure of fund that basically pays for itself or not to be overly concerned about that at this time?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No. Did you want the wastewater to septic sewer?

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, you can jump in, Harry, but septic sewers is not the stormwater.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I know it's not, what I'm saying is there going to be a problem as we move forward. Stormwater is just that and septic to sewer has an impact. I'm just trying to see things in a broader sense. If this is what's happening, we need to keep our eyes on the future because it's coming this way. Straight up, 3rd Avenue. [laughs] It's from the-- not 3rd, at 2nd Avenue, it's coming straight up at us. We're ideally suited and I just don't want to misunderstand or somebody says, "Why didn't you all think of this the first time?" We

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couldn't have thought about it because we don't have anything like it, but it's coming. It will affect stormwater.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Do we anticipate any funds or otherwise in terms of movement on septic to sewer in the next fiscal year?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We always go for different things. You never know what's going to come through and when. We signed the contract, Madam Manager last Monday, we signed the contract to put the pumping station.

Village Manager Alou: Oh yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We signed that contract. We're going to start to pretty much break ground pretty soon, you guys [crosstalk] On the southwest end of the school, signed that contract with Miami Dade county public school. That's going to be moving forward.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Having a line item in place might be necessary.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I see what you're saying. Maybe we'll have wastewater. We could start a wastewater page if you want to, but because all that will be-- anything septic to sewer is going to be either funding that we're going to receive or it's going to be things that's going to be done. Like that great deal where we're making with the--

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We could always [crosstalk]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll keep that to ourselves.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Nightmares, leave the nightmares.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll keep that to ourselves for now.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We can always ask the Northeast for the money.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The Northeast second great deal that we're we're putting together.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Do you hear me?

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: What's up?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: We can always ask [unintelligible 02:06:27] for the money.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Exactly. [laughs]

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Turn [unintelligible 02:06:31]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll definitely do that. Councils Lightfoot-Ward, we'll definitely do a page for wastewater just to prepare for the future. Thank you very much for that. Very good point.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The last page is 16 or am I just one step ahead? [laughs]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We have a 16 and we have a 17 and that's it. 16, 17, 18.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Self-Sufficient fun control point. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: As we get close to in here, Mr. CFO, again I do want to say my comments earlier certainly were not directed at you, only really for the benefit of the public. I have to say that this has been the most clearly presented budget that we've seen in a long time. I certainly want to give you credit for that and Manager as well. It's been real and it's been fun. I don't know if it's been real or fun, [laughs] but it has been much easier going with a lot less drama that's taken place in the past, and certainly both of you sitting there deserve a lot of credit for that. Thank you.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, the last two pages are like the previous two. I think this kind of information ought to be at the front [laughs] instead of the back. Because it is just balancing out. That's a wonderful thing. Really appreciate you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely. Any last questions or comments, you guys? We're good?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Yes. We're good. This was an excellent, excellent compared to the last process or it felt like we were perpetually chasing our tails and trying to wonder what's going on. This was really good. Thank you so much to the manager, as the CFO. We appreciate you guys.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely. Thank you very much, you guys. All right. We're moving on to the last. Good and welfare. This is the time right now anybody can come up and talk about anything at all. Anything at all, anything at all in your mind? Here we go. Here we go. Here we go. Going once, going twice. Sold. All right, you guys, we appreciate it. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

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

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

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Martin. How many times do I have to say I love this Council? It's the greatest council I've ever been on. All in favor, say aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All opposed, say nay. I'm hearing none. The village of El Portal budget workshop is adjourned at 9:09 PM.

[02:08:52] [END OF AUDIO]

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10001 NW 50th ST Suite # 202 Sunrise, FL 33351

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(954) 742-2622