



Village of El Portal
Regular Council Meeting
Date: 02/28/23
Meeting Start: 7:00 PM
Meeting End: 8:16 PM
Meeting Length: 1:16:23

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, everybody. Good to see everybody here tonight. The regular council meeting for Tuesday, February 28th, 2023 is called to order at 7:00 PM. First, we're going to do the moment of silent meditation followed by the pledge of allegiance.

[silence]

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

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela.

Luis Pirela: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom.

Councilman Anders Urbom: Present.

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, Christie Alou, Village Manager, and Joseph Geller, attorney's running late. You have a quorum.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Madam Clerk, I appreciate it. Next is approval of the agenda. We have a really small agenda tonight. Motion to approve?

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Moved by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Second?

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Martin. All in favor say, aye.

Council Members: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All oppose say, nay. Hearing none, moving on to good and welfare. For good and welfare, you guys, there's two individuals that I know want to speak, maybe even three, I'm not sure. Because we didn't have presentations originally, so there's not a presentation portion. Usually, the way agendas work is if we're going to have that situation then it'll be there, if not, then Clerk Jacobi removes that section of the agenda. We'll do everything under good and welfare tonight. Good and welfare, first up, Gustavo Cruz.

Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, I don't know if you want to say a few words. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward reached out to me, spoke to Mr. Cruz. He's the Executive Director of the Military and Veteran Affairs. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, if you want to take it over. Come on up to the podium, Mr. Cruz, good to see you. We spoke a little bit a little while ago. I appreciate you. We saw each other outside and was talking also. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, the floor is yours.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: He's awesome. He is absolutely awesome. I couldn't resist it. Now, I walked right through the door couldn't highly remember who he was until I got up on the podium. I apologize to you but he's awesome. He is absolutely positively awesome. Give them an introduction. They don't know who you are. I had a good time-- hours visitation with this gentleman. He was very generous.

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Gus Cruz: Thank you, ma'am, appreciate it. Thank you, Mayor, for having this time. My name is Gus Cruz. I'm the Executive Director. Hereof I work for the county for military and veteran affairs. My mission there at the county is to help serve the military and veterans here that live in Miami-Dade County and naturally in the village here. Speaking with Dr. Lightfoot-Ward there is a need here in the northern part of the county, and sometimes areas that are neglected for us for services. My purpose here is to make a connection with the village to have assistance for maybe the Miami VA to come out here and provide that at a future date.

So we could have a connection here for any services that you might need. It's something that you have to understand that a lot of the veterans don't reach out to the VA because they just feel that it's not for them. It's not and then it ends up being that they are in need of critical medical care. They end up going to Jackson. Jackson says, "Listen, we're very limited on what we can do." We're trying to reach out to the veteran community to do preventive maintenance medical care for them. It's one of the outreach, like I said, I work for the county, I do not work for the VA, but I assist them, and that's one of the outreaches that we do.

The other part is that I wanted to put things on your radar as we say. April 1st and Sunday, April 2nd, the Wings Over Homestead Air reserve base is going to happen. It's a free and open event to the public, free parking, free event. There's a static displays, they have bombers, they have transport units. It's really a family event. You're right on the tarmac, you are on the base, you are right on the flight line. The Thunderbirds are the ones there headlining the show. For those that haven't seen the Thunderbirds, you could Google them. They're an incredible demonstration team. Very professional. They have other demonstrations, World War II demonstrations.

They also have the US Army Golden Knights parachute jump, precision jump. It's a great time. It's open to the public. Anybody is welcome. I would get there early. The gates open at 9:00. The show starts at 11:00 and it ends at 4:00 PM. That is one event that I wanted to put on your radar. The second event is the air and sea show which is right here your next-door neighbor at Miami Beach that's going to happen on Memorial Day weekend, that's Saturday and Sunday. Those are the major events that we have here in the military community that's coming up and I just wanted to do that.

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We could do that. I'd be more than happy to send some information to Dr. Lightfoot so you could put it on the village's website. Like I said, it's a free-- I know it's a little bit far from here but it's good. Really we haven't had an air show here of that type at the base in five years because of COVID and just to do that. The next one would be scheduled for 2025. It's a two-year-- every two years they come. If you ever been to one it's an incredible show, a great time family event. They have stuff for the kids to do. It's just a good time. Thank you for the time. If you have any questions, I'd be more than happy to answer any questions if you have any.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I do have a question for you.

Gus Cruz: Yes, ma'am.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I just want to get a real good grasp of the services that you offer to veterans. Is it just medical services or what else?

Gus Cruz: No, ma'am. The reason that the office was created was because we were having a lot of veterans. Miami-Dade County has about 77,000 veterans living here. What was happening was about 12 years ago a lot of the veterans were coming back from Afghan and Iraq wars and they needed a lot of services. The county was getting the mayor's office and the commissioners' office were getting indited with calls and nobody really had somewhere to go where folks could follow up with them. That's why this office was created. I assist with them with finances if there's financial help.

Housing is a big one as we all know here in South Florida. There's finances that we could help them out. Education, FIU is the largest student-veteran university in the state. They have something somewhere close to 10,000 student veterans there. What I'm trying to say is that there's a lot of-- when folks go out to serve in the military they like to come back home here to Miami. They have family here, they have their roots here, they want to study here, they want to work here. There's a lot of need because the transition coming from military life to civilian life sometimes takes a little bit of adjustment and that's where my office helps them out. I just coordinate services for them.

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Councilwoman Darian Martin: That sounds amazing. It seems like you guys are a one-stop shop and provide wrap-around services to veterans.

Gus Cruz: Yes.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Is there a really quick phone number that I can take down just to get in contact with you-

Gus Cruz: Yes, absolutely.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: -or to pass out to veterans who I might encounter?

Gus Cruz: Yes, I'll have the card, but my number is 305-375-4493.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: 4493?

Gus Cruz: Yes, ma'am.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Awesome. Thank you for doing this great work, and I'll definitely pass this number out to any of the veterans that I might encounter.

Gus Cruz: Absolutely. We're here to help and support them. Very thankful. I was talking a little bit with the mayor before and sometimes coming from a military background, veterans are very reluctant to ask for help.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Of course.

Gus Cruz: It's same thing, medical, housing, educational, whatever. They're very tough to get through, but that's what I'm trying to get outreach. Thank you for-- it was just an incredible connection with Dr. Lightfoot in order to get those services for that. We also if it's not direct VA services or educational services, the county also has our community action and health department. They have support mechanisms specifically for the veterans. These are services that we try to help out in any which way we can.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Thank you.

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Gus Cruz: I'm here for whatever the village needs, and I'd be more than happy to work with you.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Don't go anywhere too fast. Mayor, this is who I was talking to and went to city hall with. He was so genuine. I walked in the door, but I didn't know I was a veteran. I just played it off until he says, "Are you a veteran?" I said, "Yes, that's why I'm here." More importantly, it's so much information. The outreach is limited in staff, but the information is abundant. I don't know how to do that. I just know that as the public affairs chair, I need to make connections, and one of the connections is veterans' interest.

They will not come, they will not come forward because it's the way we're trained. We're trained that way. When they realize that there are opportunities-- you're a veteran-- when they realize the opportunity is there to enhance the lifestyle because lots are coming back with very serious and their pride is there. You get trained like that. You get brainwashed like that. It's hard to break those habits. It was a very good interview. I don't know how we can actually know who in El Portal are veterans and talk a little bit about that.

Gus Cruz: Yes, ma'am. That's a little bit difficult because veterans need to self-identify in order to receive the services. However, the VA does a snapshot of veterans in a zip code, so in this zip code, you do have a lot of veterans. It's just that they need to self-identify with the VA. I'll give you an example for myself. I'm a county employee, I don't use VA services as of right now because my employer provides medical services. Even though I'm still registered with the VA I don't use VA services as of right now.

The day that I'm going to retire maybe I can do that. The reason that the VA is saying there's some is because there's some registered. I would say another 10% to 15% that are living in this area and the zip code that our veterans they just not identified with the VA. That's the only way that we can really track them, so it's really an underreported data that we have on veterans.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: More importantly because they don't know the system. I didn't know the system. I was out of the system for almost 40 years. Then when I didn't have insurance anymore and got very ill that's how we

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ended up at the VA. What I'm trying to do being a former employee of the VA is to get the word out-- everybody in the village. If you got a veteran that's next door if they're flying a flag every time Veterans Day come up we're very obvious at that time that we engage. We're a little bitty city. Wouldn't it be tremendous if the news went out that El Portal is one of the most we call veteran-oriented villages in the county, cities in the county? Then that might encourage others because the benefits are really you earned them you need to use them, but they don't know. You and I will always talk-

Gus Cruz: Yes, ma'am. Absolutely.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: -how we do an educational program to get the people to know that we really do-- and I'm included. We really do appreciate their service to the country. Thank you so much.

Gus Cruz: Thank you, ma'am.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I just want to say Director Cruz before you step down, first of all, we have your name, say your address for the record. We need that.

Gus Cruz: 111 Northwest 1st Street, Suite 1034, Miami, Florida 33128.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. We needed that for the record. I just wanted to say not only thank you to yourself, Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward we really appreciate it. You gave me that call it was really nice and it just brings everything together. Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward when we had an informational exposition I passed that flyer out about veterans and I had our pictures on it. Remember that?

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We both had the same idea. We always wanted to push this forward. I think I have a wonderful idea myself, Clerk Jacobi we've been planning two mixers. There's going to be a mixer coming up. There's going to be a mixer for seniors in El Portal. We're going to have it right here in the village. We're going to have a senior mixer here. We haven't decided if it's lunch or breakfast yet,

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it's going to be on a Saturday. We also have a new resident mixer coming up. We should do a veteran's mixer.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Of course.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Bring them out.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: They want to leave them out. I want everybody to see first.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Bring them out. We should do a veteran's mixer Jacobi we will start planning that also. We have two mixers coming up. That was a surprise. That was part of my mayor's report that those flyers were going to appear on your doors. As you guys know you wake up, you look outside, you see those plastic door hangers. Those flyers are going to appear in your doors really soon. We have those two mixers coming up. We're going to add a mixer.

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're going to have them come here. We'll feed them. We'll all get together and we'll have a good time. That'll be a good way of bringing them out.

Gus Cruz: Absolutely.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I appreciate you.

Gus Cruz: Veterans Day is November 11th.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I know.

Gus Cruz: That's a good time period to have something like that.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That'd be wonderful.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The date never changes.

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Gus Cruz: Yes, date never changes. Sometime in November.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We appreciate you. Thank you very much, [unintelligible 00:15:19]

Gus Cruz: Thank you, Mayor. I appreciate your time and I appreciate the council's time for being receptive.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're honored.

Gus Cruz: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Next up we're going to go back to some holiday caroling. The president of the El Portal Women's Club, President Fruitstone's going to come up and she has something she would like to say about that particular day.

Maribel Fruitstone: I am Maribel Fruitstone 157 Northwest 88th Street. This is long time coming because this is from December 22nd. I wanted to call our fabulous police up. We had a beautiful caroling through the village.

[applause]

What was most meaningful about it was the amount of support that we had from the police force. It wasn't just one car stopping traffic, letting everybody go through. Chief, I'm going to say it was like 15 cars or something. It was crazy. It was really crazy along with the parents following along honking their horns. Plus they also had the Fire Station 30. I will probably have to get in touch with someone to Fire Station 30. I do have a beautiful with sincere gratitude from us to you and thanks and your department, we really, really appreciate it. You made this 7th annual even bigger and better than it ever was.

Let's keep it going. Then the only other thing I wanted to say is we do have a movie night coming up March 11, so hope to have everybody there. The last one is we would love to be involved with the vet-- because as part of our program with the state of Florida and our affiliation with the federation, we do celebrate Veterans Day and we do partner so we would love to partner with you in those events as well. Let

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us know and we would love to support all of that with what the village does. Thank you so much. Hit us up. All right, thank you. Did you get it?

[applause]

Something always happens when I'm up here because now this thing just fell. I'm always so goofy. Come, come, I'm always so goofy.

Corporal Sanon: [unintelligible 00:17:40]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me just say while Corporal Sanon is coming up, we do have a few veterans that are on our police department. Corporal Sanon is a veteran, Corporal Vivez is a veteran, and we also have Officer Canela is a veteran. We have veterans on our police force also.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Very nice. Perfect. Thank you.

Maribel: Thank you.

Corporal Sanon: Thanks again. I appreciate it.

Maribel: Thank you. We have veterans that are members of the **[unintelligible 00:18:10]**

[applause]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, come on up my brother. Say your name and address for the record. I appreciate it. The floor is yours.

Munir Ingram: Thank you. Hello, my name is Munir Ingram. My address is 1705 Northwest 107 Street, Miami, Florida 33167. I come to you today on behalf of not only the citizens but residents of Little River Farms Association, and also the surrounding cities and communities. There is presently a potential land development that is going to fill 29 acres of the Silver Blue Lake. The land development is in Miami-Dade County it is Lake Sana Development. The hearing number is Z2022000012 is in District 2. The proposed land developer is trying to partially fill 57.14 acres of Silver Blue Lake that will directly impact the Little River canal.

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The Little River canal borders not only Miami Shores but El Portal. I live in the northern region where Miami Shores village owns. I spoke to them at their council meeting on February 21st, 2023 to inform them that this land development is happening. The second hearing for this particular land development is going to be on March 16th, 2023 at the Gwen Cherry Boys & Girls Club. I'm not sure if you're aware of this proposed development, but it will directly impact the sea level rise or the water level rise of the Little River Canal, directly impacting my neighborhood, Miami Shores Village, and also El Portal.

More in particular EL portal because that water of 29 acres being filled will have to go somewhere. Those canals and stormwater drains are directly connected to the Little River Canal. My purpose today is just to inform El Portal Village, the residents, and council, that there is a proposed development already in the works. It's called Lake Sana Development. The information, once again, the hearing number is Z2020202200012. Please look into it. The next meeting, like I said, will be March 16th of 2023.

I just wanted to say my piece before I go to our Little River Farms Association meeting tonight to inform you all that this will directly impact not only the water pollution and also the water level rise of the Little River Canal. In Thrive305 action plan by Mayor Levine, she speaks about improving water quality, improving the Biscayne Bay. If this development goes through it will directly impact the quality of water and wildlife that live and thrive in Little River Canal. Also the runoff that's going to be created in Biscayne Bay and also going to raise the water level along the houses that are built along the canal. Go ahead, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. It's Lake Santa like Santa Claus?

Munir Ingram: It's S-A-N-A

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: S-A-N-A.

Munir Ingram: Yes. Lake Sana, S-A-N-A Development, LLC.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I got you.

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Munir Ingram: Let me see if they have any more information. Go ahead, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The meeting that's on March 16th at Gwen Cherry Park, do you know what time it starts?

Munir Ingram: 7:00 PM and it says, plans are on file and may be examined at the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources entitled Master Plan Lake Sana Development, prepared by Design Studio, LLC. It's more information you can find out there, but like I said, they're proposing to fill in-- Silver Blue Lake is approximately 80 acres on the map. Where Little River Farms in this area is located it says unincorporated, but we are there as a community, but also they're trying to fill in 57 acres, or potentially 57.14 acres of this lake, like I said, that will also have a direct impact on El Portal. As a neighbor and as a friend of El Portal I wanted to make you guys aware so that you can do your due diligence and speaking your concerns about this matter. Thank you for your time. I appreciate it. You guys have a good night.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We really appreciate it. We're District 3, we're not District 2, but like you said, it rolled right down so we really appreciate it. We're going to have to reach out to the District 2 commissioner also not only our District 3 commissioner.

Munir Ingram: Thank you, sir. Thank you, council. Y'all have a good night.

Council Members: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you. Take care. Really appreciate it.

Munir Ingram: You're welcome.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right. You guys, moving right along to the consent agenda. The consent agenda is simply the meeting minutes from last meeting. Do I have a motion to approve the consent agenda?

Councilman Anders Urbom: So moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Moved by Councilperson Urbom. Do I have a second?

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Councilwoman Darian Martin: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Martin. All in favor say, aye.

Council Members: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All oppose say, nay. Hearing none. Moving right along to the reports, Manager Alou if you have reports.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Also present for the record Joseph Geller, Village Attorney.

Village Manager Alou: Thank you Mayor and Village Council. We haven't had a very active month of February. I don't even know where to start, but I'm going to start because there's lots to report. The Village of El Portal has an active request for proposal out posted on our village website and on demandstar.com for parks renovation and preservation projects for general contractor. The proposals for this RFP are due March 8th. We will be moving forward with our parks development project once we see those proposals and commence a committee for selection.

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela hosted a community meeting to review the park's renovation and preservation plans on Saturday, January 28th. It was very well attended. Lots of questions and answers coming from county Miami-Dade County archeologist, Jeff Ransom, our senior engineer and project manager, Orlando Rubio, and our landscape architect, Jim Santiago. A lot of good things happening and soon to happen with that park's renovation project. The sanctuary property, according to the property managers reported today that things are progressing slowly.

The plans remain substantially the same in terms of providing a restaurant and offices at the location at Northeast 2nd Avenue. They are waiting on final material selections and next steps to follow the process to submit the site plans application to EL Portal. That's an ongoing project. With that, we'll come a sewer conversion for Northeast 2nd Avenue. We're excited for that plan to move forward. The next item is that the Village has conducted a traffic study this month through a contractor, plumber, and associates. The report conclusively found that the village roadways,

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the village streets, that's the numbered streets support a reduction in speed to a 25-mile-an-hour level.

That is good news for us who feel like the traffic is too fast on those roads. We will be presenting this report to Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works awaiting next steps. We hope to get that reduction. The Northeast 2nd Avenue mobility study is underway through a grant that we receive. Again, once completed we will be going to the county to then, I guess, explore the possibility of the painted side or painted crosswalks as we've discussed several times in the past. Things that will improve the look on Northeast 2nd Avenue and also lower the speed limit or encourage slower traffic and make this a more walkable village.

We've also conducted some repairs on the pavers at the Northeast 87th Street intersections that have those brick pavers. We just completed the roundabout and the contractor worked on the Northeast 87th and Northeast, I think it's 3rd Avenue intersection. We'll be working on Northeast 2nd Avenue very shortly. We will be repairing some potholes in the very near future. We're just awaiting some date from the selected contractor to do so. Lots of things happening in El Portal that are more immediate and some things further down the pike.

We love to see progress no matter what. In terms of the department, the village, El Portal Police Department will be receiving its new Tahoes. We're having addition to the fleet, the Tahoe SUVs with custom El Portal Police Department graphics were finished and assigned to police officers and supervisors. We will be looking pretty sharp on these streets of El Portal, and hopefully, that will line up with the soon-to-be lowered speed limit. We also welcome new full-time police officer Jack Rodriguez, who has just completed phase one of his training.

He's the best of the best fresh out of the academy and fresh face for the village of El Portal Police Department. We're happy to have him join our ranks as a full-time police officer. I could give you a lot more information on code enforcement, but I'm going to let you take a look at that because there is so much happening in code enforcement, and our new code officer, Mr. Simmons, who is here with us tonight-- I'm not going to call upon you tonight because you have a lot going on in your department. We have a lot happening in terms of short-term vacation rental research and providing content in that respect.

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Also just addressing some of the needs in terms of lien settlement, in terms of just getting people up to speed and up to code where necessary. That's been a tremendous improvement from what we've had. We're happy to have a lot of progress in that department. Just an effort that I know Mayor Nickerson will speak more about, he's hosting a collaborative effort with the Miami-Dade County Coastal Mayors of Biscayne Bay meeting here in the village hall tomorrow. We're excited to see what comes from that leadership.

The Village of El Portal was included in the Miami-Dade County reasonable assurance plan led by Miami-Dade RAP coordinators, and this is just another piece of the puzzle when we're addressing resiliency and sustainability for our village but also for Miami-Dade County. Many voices working together get a lot more done than one small voice. I think through our mayor's efforts and him getting out there in the public eye and talking to other municipalities and getting best practices, and bringing that to the village has been tremendous in getting that recognition we need for our village and the C-7 canal.

I know that the mayor and the members of the council are conducting their own outreach to residents regularly. The village departments and I have prepared research and content and support for many activities and events that you had, such as the parks renovation community meeting in January. Also, Councilperson Martin hosted a second short-term vacation rental community workshop just last week, Thursday, February 23rd for which code officer Simmons and obviously our Village Attorney, Joseph Geller were the stars of the show.

Lots of work happening in that respect, but we are also providing those opportunities for education in our community. Just to round everything out I just have a little bit of good news that the state of Florida has begun funding the Village of El Portal again with our monthly revenue shares because we are up to speed on our audits and things are moving forward. We're happy about that with reinstatement and things are progressing quite well.

We're happy to finally be in a place where we're shining and we're receiving those funds that we did not get for a couple of years because of some missteps with staffing, but we're moving forward and on to better days. If anyone has any

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questions for me I'm available. You can contact me directly and the manager's report will be on the village website. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you. Any questions for Manager Alou? Okay, you guys, moving on to the mayor's report. Get us out of here-- I'm going to keep it really short. There was an executive session. It was the first executive session for the coastal mayor's alliance. All the mayors that are living on the water and they had that in North Bay Village a few months ago. Tomorrow's a second executive session for the mayors that live on the coast. It's about water quality tomorrow and that will be here in village hall at 11:00 AM.

You guys are welcome to come even though I break the rule for y'all, I love y'all. Even though it's a mayor's executive session you guys can come and nobody's going to say nothing. Madam Manager because it's in our place and if they got a problem with it they can leave. [laughs] All of you guys are welcome. Unfortunately, it's not open to the public because it is an executive session for the coastal mayors, but if you guys want to come 11:00 AM tomorrow here in village hall, okay.

You'll see mayors that have-- everybody's coming, Surfside, Bal Harbor's mayor, Key Biscayne, of course, Miami Shores, Biscayne Park, North Miami Beach. I believe Santiago is coming too, I have my list at home. It's like 10 different municipalities are coming. It should be good tomorrow, we're talking about water qualities is the topic tomorrow. We'll be talking about that. Clerk Jacobi, the *Miami Herald* reached out to me, [laughs] and then the *Miami New Times* the day after that.

The county, Madam Manager, for some reason decided the other day to vote for the proposed train station stops. The *Miami Herald* called me because they said mayor-- Clerk Jacobi was around me when this happened. "What do you think about the train stops? Do you think that El Portal was left out of there?" I said, "First of all, I didn't even know that the proposed train stops was being voted or went through." He said, "Who's your county commissioner?" We'll just leave that at that.

Then I went and found the map. It's the Brightline station, the MiamiCentral Brightline, the one that if you take El Portal's shuttle it goes right down there just by the way. Wynwood Design District, now the Wynwood stop is on 29th Street.

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Attorney Joseph Geller: Where's the closest one did you say?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The Wynwood district is on 29th Street. The next up is Design District on 41st Street. 29 to 41st, how many streets is that?

Attorney Geller: It's 12.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: There you go. There we go from 41st to the Little Haiti stop which is 61st Street. Then there's a huge gap that just passes by El Portal Miami Shores to North Miami and North Miami campus FIU stop.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: We ain't having it.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: This is what I told you and the first thing I told the-

Attorney Geller: I think they called the El Portal-- yes.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, it's a huge gap. It's a huge gap. When I told Clerk Jacobi, the first thing I told the *Miami Herald* reporter I said, "To me," I said, "Not only is this disrespectful." I said, "I feel like the young child that was abandoned outside of the church in the movie." You're talking about El Portal Miami Shores. Now with Biscayne Park, Biscayne Park also Councilperson-- North Bay Village. These are not only a lot of individuals you're overlooking but these are booming upcoming communities.

Councilman Anders Urbom: Shorecrest.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Shorecrest, they just happen to pass by. Thankfully, we're in the proposed phase of this, but they voted through like this is all they want. Just like tomorrow we're having the mayor's executive session for the coastal mayors. The coastal mayor's executive session was started by Mayor Levine Cava, myself, and Mayor Brent Latham. That's how it was created. This is the second session. First one was in North Bay Village.

We're meeting Madam Manager with the business owners up and down 79th Street. I'm going to start-- what they said madam manager, they said Mayor Nickerson we want you to lead this. I'm starting executive sessions to fight for or understand why

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they deny all of our neighborhoods with this huge gap for the rail. That will not only bring more business, more stops, more traffic to our area, but it's more convenient for all of these communities right here just passed by. That's going to be coming up.

The day after, the morning after I had the interview with the *Miami Herald*, The *Miami New Times* called me, Clerk Jacobi knows about that also. I spoke to them and told them my frustration with that also. Let me just say this and this is the last thing I'm going to say about this. We're going to move on it's a short meeting. We'll get out of here. Madam Manager, Madam Clerk don't let the smile fool you. We've had a lot of networking outreach, all this executive board, this, mayor of the year that, all this type of stuff just because for all elected officials out there.

Just because I smile all the time don't think you're going to run over El Portal. Don't think you're going to run with other individuals within this community, because friends can quickly turn not to friends if people aren't treated correctly. We just want to figure this out. We want to start the process. Can't force them to do anything. Don't understand why the commissioners didn't reach out to us about this but we're just going to get an explanation why.

Look at that coming up in the near future you guys, all right. Let's enjoy tonight. The next meeting is going to be a lot of ordinances and resolutions that didn't make the cut, [laughs] Madam Chair of expanding and zoning for everybody else didn't make the cut on time this time. The rest of the March meeting, hopefully, it's going to be full but hopefully, we can get through that pretty quickly also. Anybody else got anything to say before we move on?

Councilman Anders Urbom: I just had a calling for good and welfare.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We'll get to that in a second. Moving on to the next report, Attorney Geller, attorney reports.

Attorney Joseph Geller: Nobody's sued us lately and we have not found it necessary to sue anyone.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. We've also been doing the FOP and we have more FOP, that's the police contract negotiations

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that are coming up so we're going to be doing that also. That being said, going to good and welfare. I'll start with Councilperson Urbom then I'll go to the audience if anybody has anything to say you guys come to say your name.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mayor, before you do that, the chief standing right out there, I want to know how they feel about FOP since it's coming up anyway, how they feel about being in that union.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Well, all right. Well, let me just say this first. The chief's not part of the bargaining agreement. The chief won't be part of, it's the officers who are part of it. It's the corporals and the officers. The chief is not part of the FOP agreement. We're still in negotiations. I'd rather on the record, not really talk about that right now, but it is going to come out soon.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You forget I was a city manager, I know that, but I'm saying before we even get to that place, if someone was here in the village right now they can tell us how well it went because you remember they went from one union to the next union a couple of years back.

Attorney Joseph Geller: Councilwoman, I'll be happy to give you a thorough briefing, and the same for any member of council who'd like to know where we're at. They are confidential negotiations. We promised the FOP that until we have a deal, we're not going to try to go to the press or the public to affect our ability to-- we have to bargain in good faith with the union. Going public about the state of our bargaining could be viewed as an unfair labor practice but that does not mean I cannot brief any of you. Of course, remember in the final analysis, any deal we reach with the union is completely public. It comes before this body, it's advertised, any member of the public has access to the document once it's recommended to the council and you get to vote on it and every citizen gets to sound off on it.

It's an entirely public process once we've completed our bargaining with the unit, or if unfortunately, which I hope will not be the case, but if we have to go to impasse because we cannot reach a deal. I will just say for the record, we are very optimistic. We will not have another impasse. We have been bargaining in good faith and so have they and we're getting close to having a deal. Again, I'll be happy to brief any of

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you and at the end, it's a completely public open, transparent process before it can be approved. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. Councilperson Urbom you wanted to say something.

Councilman Anders Urbom: Yes. The clerk sent an email recently about a-- I think it was a resolution in a nearby municipality. It was a resolution to essentially protest Governor DeSantis's decision, or at least the board that he's responsible for to effectively alter, eliminate, or otherwise change curriculum as it pertained to African American history specifically. I would like to encourage our council to do a similar resolution. I personally feel very strongly that there needs to be voices in opposition to this. I would just offer that it would be my wish that this council would do a similar resolution.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Urbom, everyone. What you should do, Councilperson Urbom forward that resolution that we got. I know which one you're talking about. Forward it to the attorney, have a phone conversation with the attorney and you guys work it out to get it prepared for the next meeting.

Councilman Anders Urbom: Very good. Thank you.

Attorney Joseph Geller: If I might, Mayor let me just say councilperson. Having served four years with Rick Scott and then four years with this guy, the list of crazy stuff, not my first word, that he's done is longer than my arm. That's as good a place to start as Annie, but boy, there's lots of them. I used to think this guy's got to be better than Rick Scott. Who knew?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. Anybody else? Good and welfare [unintelligible 00:45:00].

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Just like a second on that, I definitely support the inclusion of that resolution and share the sentiment.

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

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Martin and Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. This is about the AP, African-American course, and stuff like that. That being said, moving to the ordinance, anybody have anything they want to say? Come into this microphone. Say your name and address for the record and the floor is yours.

Attorney Joseph Geller: That one's on.

Pascal Depuhl: Pascal Depuhl, 177 Northwest 90th Street. I just wanted to thank you for the short-term rental workshop. Councilman Martin who put on, Attorney Geller, Councilman Pirela who was there. I thought it was very mutual beneficial and other than a few people very courteous and very helpful workshop to work through the ordinance and help us to get to the next reading. I just want to say thank you.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: Awesome. Thank you so much.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, guys and thank you for that, Councilperson Martin.

Pascal Depuhl: Yes, thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Make sure you say your name and address for the record.

Attorney Joseph Geller: This one right there, microphone I think not--

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Maybe not.

Charles Winters: Test. All right. Charles Winters, 3077 Northeast 85th Street. Hi guys. so this March marks the 10-year anniversary of me moving into El Portal into Short Forest. Thank you.

[applause]

Very excited to be 10 years here. I love the neighborhood. I love my neighbors, I love the place, everything about it. I've been a part of a lot of different meetings over the last 10 years and I've seen a lot of things that were said by past council

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members, past mayors. I wanted to remind you, guys, what some people said in the past and see if we can look at it again.

When I bought my house, I bought the coal under the ground. I had mushrooms growing on my floor. I had wood windows, no AC in the house, leaks everywhere, cracks in the walls. It was bad. We were living in one room and little by little we made this house perfect where it's awesome now. Through this whole repair process, we pulled permits the whole way. Our AC, our windows, our roof, and we did everything by the book. Now, if you don't know, in the last 10 years, I've had two, not one, two large oak trees fall in my house. We're talking about the big ones.

The first one that fell was because the code enforcement approved a fence that the person nailed the fence into the tree. Eventually, it rotted the tree and the tree came down, hit the house. The second tree that fell in the house it was cut incorrectly and so water started coming down the trunk and eventually a hole, the trunk was this big and you could stick a six-foot pole into the ground where the trunk was. Because of this, I've had some experience and I had to actually fight a long legal battle with roofers after we actually had the code enforcement inspectors approve a roof that was leaking everywhere.

They actually put nails in every single shingle in allowing it to leak all over the house. It got approved by the inspector and then I spent five years fighting it. Then having a tarp on my roof for five years, I actually had the last code enforcement officer come and tell me I had to remove the tarp while it was still in a legal battle and said I should just caulk the roof and take the tarp off because someone in the neighborhood complained. Well, I spent \$80,000 out of my pocket just to take the tarp off and re-roof it before the legal battle was over. Three weeks ago I had an arborist come out to my house and look at trees because I have a lot of these oak trees on my property.

I have three very sick oak trees. One of them had another hole this big inside of it and he says, next windstorm, this tree is going down on someone's house. He gave me an emergency notice and I had the tree removed. I left the stump there if you guys want to see it. Big hole, you can make a big fish pond out of this tree stump hole. We went through the proper arborist thing. We sent our email to El Portal

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before, it was saying, "Listen, this is happening now. We're going to have this cut down."

They said, "Okay, we understand." There was a whole bunch of complaints that went to the office, but they said, "He filed proper procedures and we're not going to do anything about it." Thank you so much. Unfortunately, one of the other neighbors decided that what I was doing was immoral and contacted Miami Dade County Code. I had them put a violation of my house and they tried to fight me. I sent the same paperwork and they removed that violation. I've had to deal with this fighting and trying to get the house to where it is now, with not only some neighbors that are upset about the trees, and I understand that, but some of the codes that have caused these trees to come this way. Some of the laws in the past allowed certain things to happen in the houses.

They allowed the limbs to be cut a certain way or not to be used by a tree-trimming arborist or something like that. Just like they allowed cloth wiring back in the day or whatever. The bad drywall from China. The reason for me telling you all this is that 10 years ago, they made a promise that they were trying to make it easier for neighbors like me to improve our homes, to make it to where we don't have to fight tooth and nail just to get simple things done.

I protected my neighbor's home by cutting down a tree that was basically in my yard but going over his house. I want your help. I want us to make it easier for homeowners to do simple work on the house. Do simple things. Right now there's certain laws, plumbing, and certain building structure codes are allowed to be done if it's under \$500, but nothing's under \$500 but within new inflation, \$500, you get a fence done.

Now that same offense is \$10,000. We need to improve something that allows neighbors because I'm not a house flipper. I'm not here to flip. I'm going to be living in this house. I'm old and I'm going to die there just to let you know. I want to be able to do work on my house. I was wondering if, because they said in the past they were going-- I'm rambling.

I'm trying to get it easier for us. Is there a way we can maybe pass ordinances or code or something that says, okay, you lived here a certain amount of time? You're

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not a two-year house flipper, four-year house flipper. You're here living, maybe if you're going to spend \$2,000 and do something or a thousand, you don't have to go through the whole permit process.

I don't know if you remember, I had to remove drywall from a leaky roof two years ago. I got permission verbally from the office and then I got cited for it and then I went, I said, "They gave me permission." Then the officer said, "Well, we fired those people" I said, "That's not my fault. I got permission to do it."

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Let me say a couple of things. Attorney Geller had his hand up. I think he wants to speak. The first thing is that in the past, and this is one of the problems in the past. In the past, if you guys remember, everybody that worked at the front desk were hired by us, but they were hired by us at a certain financial level. Certain salary level to where they weren't professionals.

Since our administration's been up, the front desk has now outsourced the cap government who are professionals. The first thing is we have no control over to tell them, "Okay, you can't do the permit for that. Can't do because now it's outsourced to the front. This is outsourced." Now that's a good thing because before we could only start people off at like 30,000, \$31,000.

We didn't have people working at the front desk. It was too weird, two problems. First of all, we didn't have people working at the front desk that were ultra professionals that knew what they were doing. You see what I'm saying? That's the first thing. The second thing was that we had inconsistency, which is what you're talking about.

Those people were gone because since we paid so low, we would have somebody here first, a manager would have to go through the resumes, then she would hire somebody, then we have to train the individual, then next thing we know, the individuals here for three months. Then they're like, "Hey, I found a job paying 50 at Fort Lauderdale." Okay, then we got to do resumes again, then we got to train again, then we got to, and so it was just terrible. That's the reason why so much stuff in El Portal got messed up.

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Now we have a professional front desk and they do things consistently, they're professional because it's outsourced. If now one person, Dina she got pregnant and left. They replaced her with somebody else who came in because it's from that company, it's not us anymore. We don't have control over telling them. That's one answer to your question.

We have no control over telling them, Okay, for these things now don't give permits anymore. Or they don't have to pull permits anymore. We just don't have the control over that type of stuff anymore. I think one of the other questions you're asking though is for things like, because you mentioned the trees is one of the questions you're asking is if the tree is sick or there's an emergency that you have to remove it, then you're looking at the problems that you're getting from the neighbors or is that--

Charles Winters: Let me go back to the first one. With the first one, I'm asking for Cozy Pass, the changed old codes that were passed a long time ago. The minimum, let's say in West Palm Beach to do work without permits is \$2,000. We should have a code like that for us. Right now, if you work with any building contractor, they're all charging you 5, 6, \$7,000. The prices are nothing.

If I wanted to repair the dormer wood that was rotting on my house and I got pulled over by an officer, they walked up to my house I think eight years ago and they said, "You can't be doing like I have rotting wood on side of my house. I'm just replacing the rotting wood." I had to basically go back and forth banter for two hours. He finally said, "Okay, you can continue." We saying we need to pass a law, allow certain price gaps, and if homeowners are doing it themselves or not bringing in laborers, we should find ways that we're allowed to do it.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right. You're talking about the code itself, just the V code. We have already, I'm coming to you right now Attorney Geller. We have already our individuals [unintelligible 00:55:48] is going through the code. We've talked about this a couple of times. They're going through the entire code to give us suggestions and updates and things like that because so many things are out of date. That probably would help solve what you're talking about.

Charles Winters: It would be great if you [crosstalk].

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: They're currently doing that and they're going to bring those codes back to Chairperson Martin's planning and zoning and they're going to bring those back to-- Chairperson Martin, I'm going to let you come in in a second. Chairperson Martin's planning and zoning and through the code enforcement also, but they're working on that and that might be part of that answer. I'm coming to your Attorney Geller. First, let's go to Chairperson Martin.

Councilwoman Darian Martin: I was just saying what you're describing sounds incredibly frustrating. Although the mayor did a great job of explaining why it happened, it definitely shouldn't happen. You should be able to rely on the information that you're getting. In addition to that, I think it's reasonable to say, "Hey, there are pieces in the code that may be applied like 20 years ago, but not now. It's not a good fit."

Well, that's exactly what we're trying to do in the planning and zoning committee meetings. It's to identify that. It's a gargantuan task to just do it unilaterally. If there are pieces of the code that you know, a hundred percent this just ain't right. I would love to have a conversation with you to pinpoint those areas. While we're going through **[unintelligible 00:57:11]**, we're trying to group like things together so it's easier for us to do large-scale changes that bring us up to date and make it easier for villagers to improve their property.

For sure, we still need to have some controls and uniformity in how this happens but would love to talk to you about those pieces that you've identified that just don't work. It seems like you've done the legwork to find other municipalities that have provisions that you think do work. We can look at that and engage in that conversation if you have time after the meeting to just chill for a little bit so we can exchange information and figure out how to go about getting this information together. That would be great for me.

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Charles Winters: I would love to. Thank you. Then the second thing you were talking about was the trees. I know we had this discussion and I was part of that meeting then you had this closed group that we had the oak tree that went down in the middle of the street and everyone went up in uproar. I told you I've been trying to bring my trees back to health for many years now, trying to make it so they're there because I moved his neighborhood and I love the trees here.

I have some of the most oak trees on my property in all of El Portal. I've already had two fall. I've had to remove one now. It dwindling. I think the main thing here is that I tried to go through the right channels and with the neighbors, I told all my neighbors the day before, I said, "Listen, you guys can walk over, you can put your hand down the oak tree.

You can do whatever you want on my property to check this thing out. I'm not doing it. I have to do this fast though because soon as a wind storm happens, that tree falls, it can kill someone and I can't wait any longer. The person who put the complaint in isn't one of my neighbors. They live I think 7, 8, 9 blocks that way and 10 blocks that way. They're in El Portal.

I got their name, thank goodness because our current governor passed a law that says that you have to not have anonymous complaints anymore. I found out which neighbor hates me, but that's okay because all my other neighbors love me. The main thing here is, with all of this happening, they received a lot of phone calls when the tree was coming down.

You said there was quite a bit. They knew they got the ARBs letter ahead of time, they did not record a violation, but they also didn't record all these people that were making the notices against me. I think everyone needs to be accountable to each other here. We are in a very small city. I think we have seen almost everyone that lives here. It's that small. I'm always happy to work with everyone and I want to do everything within the law. I also want to find a way that we can all get along and not have to fight each other over things that could possibly kill each other. That's why you guys are doing the resolution for the 25 miles per hour on the road. You're worried about people's safety. Same thing with removing of the trees.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I think that, and I'm a turnover to attorney Geller, you can come in, but I think that the first thing is safety first. I think that's first and foremost for anything. You did things the right way and as long as you did things the right way, which you did the right way and you look out for the safety of you and your family then we'll back that we filed that and we'll back that 100%. I think just do what you have to do. As long as you're doing things the right way, you have no problem here.

Charles Winters: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Attorney Geller.

Attorney Joseph Geller: Well, certainly sir, it's true that there are some things that the village does still control. We control the village code and people who work for us, whether they're in-house or outsourced, have to follow the village code. That's what these five people say it is. I don't want you to feel like there's nothing that can be done to address some issues because the people who work for us in-house or outsourced must follow our code. Some years ago when Hurricane Andrew hit this community and did insane destruction in South Dade.

Charles Winters: I was here.

Attorney Joseph Geller: I was down there, I drove around giving stuff out. It exposed even in the South Florida Building Code, which was the strictest in the state, tremendous flaws that allowed people to get away with substandard things. As a result of that and some other things, the state adopted a Florida Building Code and we and the whole rest of the state are subject to the Florida Building Code. As much as we can adopt things that are part of the village code, there are things that are mandated by the Florida Building Code that we cannot change. Now I can't tell you off the top of my head because I ain't a know-it-all, whether that minimum \$500 amount is something that's just in our code or is--

Charles Winters: Miami it is \$500 West Palm is \$2000 Miami Springs is also \$500 then they have. There's different amounts per--

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Attorney Joseph Geller: You've done your homework. I yield to superior knowledge. It would seem that if other municipalities have different numbers that it's within the power of-- and Clerk Jacobi-- would you just repeat that list one more time sir, in the amounts?

Charles Winters: West Palm Beach is \$2000 before you need to get the permit. Miami-Dade was a hard one to find, but it was specifically for **[unintelligible 01:03:12]** \$500 for-

Attorney Joseph Geller: Same as us.

Charles Winters: -plumbing, mechanical building, non-structural, anything \$500 under does not need a permit.

Attorney Joseph Geller: The same as us though.

Charles Winters: Yes. A lot of people--

Attorney Joseph Geller: You mentioned another one, I thought Miami Springs?

Charles Winters: Miami Springs is the same there. There is another one with Brevard County, everyone has a slight different thing.

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Attorney Joseph Geller: Well, it may be from the sound of it and we can do more research on it certainly. It may be that the Dade County Code prescribes \$500 because we have a home rule provision for Miami-Dade County that gives the county commission control of things here that the state can't even get at. We can check that if we have the authority then the council can look at making that change. If it's mandated by the county or the state in that circumstance we can't, but we can certainly check that further Mr. Winters as far as the specifics of the amount. Now, if you have other suggestions about ways in which the code is being-- it's supposed to be a minimum, it's supposed to be a protection against those homeowners who don't do the right thing and from the sound of it, that sure doesn't include you, but they still have rules. If there are other suggestions, as the mayor said, we are having our planning consultant review the code, this would be a great time for you to send the manager, the clerk. You certainly send it to me. We'll make sure it gets to the planter to plus RBA.

You don't have to undertake that, but if there are specific suggestions, this is a terrific time for you to make them. As far as the trees, I'll just offer this suggestion. Dade County has a very strict tree ordinance and anytime they're not consulted there can be a problem because they hear from people and they need to come out. I would say that what the village can do, we have our issues sometimes with Dade County on the tree ordinance. That's one of the reasons we have our own code enforcement and don't rely on them, but certainly, it would seem that we can do a better job in communicating. The village does have an arborist that we use. I would say that perhaps mayor and council and Madam Manager, we can try to publicize better that if someone is having a tree issue like you were having, we can't get around Dade County and frankly we shouldn't.

I'm glad they have a strict tree ordinance even if it's occasionally applied in a misguided way. We can do a better job of letting people know they can come to us, we can put them in touch with an arborist like the one that works for the village. There's nothing that would stop them from being retained. We can also provide guidance and information to you to make sure that you or another homeowner in your situation knows they have to reach out to the county. Because if you reach out to them before they reach out to you from some neighbor, then when a neighbor calls them they can say, "Oh that's the winter's home. We heard about that. I'm sorry

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sir madam, those are sick trees we checked and they're dangerous and they're sick and they have to come down."

Charles Winters: I just found that out. I got to go to El Portal code, I got to go Miami Dade, and Florida Code. I have to give three different municipalities.

Attorney Joseph Geller: Well, Florida code governs you but the Florida code, you don't need to go to the state of Florida to get permits, permission, or anything. The village will review it. The county, we're--

Charles Winters: We have to submit. Let them know every--

Attorney Joseph Geller: The thing is, as long as you get to them first, then if they get calls, they're going to know what's coming and they're going to have the info.

Charles Winters: How many entities do we need over us? That's the one thing.

Attorney Joseph Geller: We can do a better job of putting the word out in our newsletter or otherwise that if you have tree issues come to the village and when you do, we can make sure whether it's Mr. Simmons or code enforcement or who or our building official, whoever, do a better job of helping guide residents to say you're cool with us, but you need to go to the county. We can't go to the county for you because we don't represent you. When you contact them, you can certainly say to them, "I've been to the city, they have the info and we can support what you're doing," you or any of your neighbors if it comes up again or anybody else that's here. There are things we can do better in terms of communications and I'm sure that, that the council and the manager are going to undertake to do those things and make sure that the next time you or someone, you've learned the hard way, but the next time someone has a problem, that we can make their path a little easier by giving them better information.

Charles Winters: Thank you. Do they want to say something?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, guys. Thank you very much. Appreciate it. Is there anybody else for good and welfare? Come up, state your name and address for the record. Either one. Doesn't matter.

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Jacomina Depuhl: Good evening. My name is Jacomina Depuhl, 177 Northwest 90th Street. Not planned but you mentioned the Brightline thing. It just happened that six days ago in the Miami Shores Village community Facebook group. Somebody posted this new map of the Brightline and then the whole discussion, all the villagers of Miami Shore want, the majority want to get the stop in Miami Shore. Then somebody named Dan Marburg says, my understanding is we were approached, but past administration turned it down. El Portal was selected. That deal fell through. I think there's still a chance for a stop here in Miami Shores and I have asked that manager look into it, so that's their manager. Then somebody else-- one second. The guy that posted it, John **[unintelligible 01:10:30]**. The Herald stated the El Portal station at 79th Street had designed challenges, but I thought the El Portal station was to be located where the old mobile home park was at 87th, not 79th. That's the confusion. Then it says that the stop that was proposed in the past was 79th Street and Northeast 4th Avenue.

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela: Actually, there were some--I guess it was like five years ago when they started talking about the stations for the Brightline. They did mention and there was a sketch for the stop to be on 82nd, 82nd, and closer to the river. For my understanding for what it-- some of the buildings that are existing there. I guess they were planning to buy that piece of those two buildings and then make the station there. Then they started saying, "I heard about moving it to 79. That was the last time I heard anything from the Brightline stations," and all of that stuff right there.

Jacomina Depuhl: What is the El Portal deal that fell through?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: At one point they did want to put it here.

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela: 72nd doesn't belong to us.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Well, at one point they wanted to put it here where the old trailer park was. They have the room to build a station right here and because of the owners of that property, that's why the deal fell true. Fell through all that.

Attorney Joseph Geller: The former county commissioner who was a former mayor of El Portal County.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Jacomina Depuhl: She was against it. That person was against it?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, she's asking because you mentioned that. Did you mention that because the commissioner?

Jacomina Depuhl: Commissioner was against the commissioner was against this deal?

Attorney Joseph Geller: No, no, no, no. We had a county commissioner who had been mayor. Now, so probably that's why when Councilman, Vice Mayor Pirela says that there was consideration given for a stop right by us. When you had a county commissioner who was a former mayor, that was probably somebody who was extra pushing that when that was being looked at five years ago.

Jacomina Depuhl: Why didn't it go through at the trailer park?

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela: It's private property.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, El Portal doesn't own, that's a private property so it just fell through it. Dan Marberg, who you talking about? That's the Vice mayor of Miami Shore. That's who that is. I'll be in contact with him also. Like I said, we're going to continue to get together and just figure out what's going on. There's a big gap that would service a lot of individuals.

Jacomina Depuhl: That would be great for the community. It would increase all our property values. Also for the students there in university.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes. Like I said, it's the connection to over the causeway to North Bay Village. You're talking about a lot of individuals, not only on this side but on that side also that needed. Thank you very much.

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

Attorney Joseph Geller: [inaudible 01:13:27] not deal. They're building it and that's great. They're building stations, but getting them to add one station, that's not

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something, and this is not about getting a private land to be. Well, I'm getting them to getting the commission to vote.

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

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

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Where the trailer park was, we know that it was sold without any vote of the council as I recall it. Now you correct me, Joe, I'm if I'm wrong. That was really the only property that we actually had in the village period. When it didn't even go on the referendum, I was totally and remain pretty upset because that's when that person decided to pull down what was there. Everybody know it was someplace. I know it was something you eat at or something when they pulled that thing down. All I remember is being at the in the audience, the day that the former, the mayor at that time of El Portal was saying, "We just sold the property." I'm going, "I don't remember that being a referendum. I don't remember it being whatever," whatever the situation was, it was sold. That was the only property that we had that we could have--

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela: No, that was never El Portal.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: The trailer park?

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela: Yes, that was just an annex.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: An annex.

Vice Mayor Luis Pirela: El Portal but not properly or by El Portal municipality.

Attorney Joseph Geller: [unintelligible 01:15:01] leans on it, but not ownership.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Okay. All right. Back it up. I stand corrected. Still, when it went through on this council that it was sold. It was a confusion as to who owned it. End of the issue.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much.

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Attorney Joseph Geller: We sued them for unsafe conditions in that trailer park. It was partly because of us that they ended up vacating the trailer park is where the people were living there.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: It was atrocious.

Attorney Joseph Geller: Nobody had to live. That's one of the few times we did go to court and we succeeded in enforcing them to stop having exposed electrical wires and standing water-

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

Attorney Joseph Geller: -and all other terrible conditions.

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: You're welcome.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, Attorney Geller. Thank you very much, Vice Mayor Pirela. Anybody else for good and welfare? All right. Hearing none, do I have a motion to adjourn? Motion to adjourn by Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward, do I have a second?

Councilman Anders Urbom: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Anders Urbom. All in favor say aye.

All: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All opposed say nay. Hearing none. The regular council meeting for Tuesday, February 28th is adjourned at 8:17 PM. Take care of you guys.

[01:16:23]

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