



Village of El Portal
Regular Council Meeting
Date: 05/23/23
Meeting Start: 7:05 PM
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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: [silence] How are we looking, you guys? Okay. All right. Madam Clerk, we ready? We good?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Did you happen to hear from [unintelligible 00:00:30]?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: He said he's in worse traffic than usual. I'm going to move some stuff around. All right. Okay. Good to see everybody here tonight. The regular council meeting for Tuesday, May 23rd is called to order at 7:05 PM. Madam Clerk, may I please have-- oh, no, we're going to silent meditation and pledge of allegiance, then we'll do the roll call.

[pause 00:01:04]

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

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Here.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Present.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: [unintelligible 00:01:40]

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Martin.

Councilperson Darian Martin: Present.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Also present for the record. Yenise Jacobi, Village Clerk, Christia E. Alou Village Manager, and the Village Attorney is running late.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, thank you very much. I appreciate that. Next is approval of the agenda. I do have a couple of adjustments. I'm going to move F1 down to F2 and we'll have a new F1, which will be the owner of the skate park Jonathan Strauss. Then F1 now would be F2, and the new F1 would be the skate park-- not presentation, but skate park address. Also Madam Manager I know that we wanted to also remove--

Village Manager Alou: H7.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: H7. Parks. We're going to remove H7.

Village Manager Alou: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I believe that is it. Depending on when the attorney gets here. I'm going to try to get our visitors out as quickly as possible. We're going to approve the agenda with everything that's going to be on here. We're going to go over in half on here. Because of the attorney, there may be certain things I might do

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first just to keep everything moving. Do I have a motion to approve the agenda as is?

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

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

Councilman Luis Pirela: Second.

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

Council Members: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All oppose, say nay. Hearing none moving on. Next is good and welfare. This part right here for everybody who's going to be speaking for the agenda item, you will get a chance to speak. For this part right here though, first good and welfare, if anybody wants to say anything on this particular agenda you can come up and say your name and address for the record. You have three minutes to do so. For each agenda item though, you will have a chance to speak on each agenda item when we get there. Anybody for the, first good and welfare? Seeing, hearing none, moving on. Acknowledgment of visitors and/or special presentations. The new F1, Jonathan Strauss, come up to the podium. Say your name and address for the record and the floor is yours.

[pause 00:03:57]

Jonathan Strauss: Hi, everybody. Check. Everybody hears me? My name is Jonathan Straus. I'm the owner of Skatebird Miami. I'm on 533 Northeast 83rd Street. My address is 725 92nd Street. I live in Surfside. The reason we go to work every day and the reason why we created the park is to give a great platform to kids from the El Portal community in Florida. I have Liyah Sweet here. Say hi, Liyah.

Liyah Sweet: Hello. My name is Liyah Sweet Jade. I'm 11 years old and I live in El Portal my whole life. I'm living 300 Northwest 87th Street. Skatebird Miami has gave me a really good opportunity to skate and attend their camp, and I just want to thank them a lot.

Jonathan: Say what you love about Skatebird.

Liyah: Oh, I love it because it has a lot of nice people and people that are willing to help you.

Jonathan: We get very busy all the time trying to make the park survive and make the park a staple thing in the community. We're very proud of what we've done. I haven't been able to come to address everybody and I should do it more often. In talking with the mayor a few weeks back, I wanted to do this, and always show the community that we have an open floor plan. We're here with our open arms and we want the community to participate, want them to be a part of it. In the short year and three months that we've been open, or a year and four months, we've accomplished a lot. I wanted to give everybody that update. We opened a skate park that is now an iconic park. It's being talked about by pro Skatebirders around the world. We've been visited by six of the top 20 pro Skatebirders of all time.

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Tony Hawk hasn't been there yet, but I'm sure he will be there. We've created a great platform for families to come and partake in an awesome space.

Yes we also have some concerts and night events that have happened that are great also because it provides an outlet for the underground artists, the one that's trying to make it in the world. We've become a great venue for that art and culture. We're very proud that the village pushed us towards it, and we're about to open a really cool food concept called Hungry Birds in the next couple of weeks here. We'll hopefully get our final inspections approved by Friday.

Then we'll start training and creating more jobs in the community because of it. I'm proud that today we have 14 employees at Skatebird and hopefully we can continue to grow and add that for the community. It's truly done what I envisioned it could do, it stimulated and gotten more development to want to happen. Hopefully, that development is responsible and they go along with what we have created, which is a great homegrown organic type space that's accessible to everybody.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Mr. Strauss. I really appreciate it. Ms. Sweet, I know that you've been coming up very quickly and she hit the ground running-- Chante, how you doing? [laughs] Everybody knows Chante Sweet, one of our longtime residents sitting here. I know you couldn't be more proud of your daughter because when I go out there, I'm like, "Whoa, who is this, I see a professional Skatebirder already."

It's really wonderful. El Portal we're growing and we're developing. Now individuals like yourself and your business put us on a national stage and give us national recognition. The ESPN has been there for championships already. We look forward to a wonderful future and more development with the community, and we're going to have those things coming up that we spoke about.

Councilperson Darian Martin: Mr. Mayor if I may?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I was going to turn to you guys.

Councilperson Darian Martin: Okay. Awesome.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: The council.

Councilperson Darian Martin: First of all, Liyah, awesome to be able to get up in front of all these people and speak so eloquently. I'm so proud of you and I'm happy that you've been a member of El Portal your whole life.

Liyah: Thank you.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I hope you stay here for the rest of it. Also, I hosted my son's birthday party at Skatebird, such an amazing venue. All of the parents that came commented on the food and how unique the atmosphere was and how great the staff was. I think that's another great thing that you guys offer and that we should be aware of. It's a cool place to throw a birthday party and to hang out with your family on weekends.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Anybody else from the council?

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

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

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Gentleman at the back. Asking you to come up and express your concerns as we discussed this-- as I was walking in the building. I have the mic-- okay.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, he needs a mic.

Scott: Sure. Hello, my name is Scott and I am on 8525 4th Avenue Road. Basically, this is my first town council meeting that I've joined. I saw Anna outside and she invited me to the meeting, basically. My concern is basically, just with regards to the noise that is created by Skatebird. I appreciate that it is a wonderful establishment that I think brings a lot to the community as a skate park. The issue I believe is that for me we have a lot of noise created from the skate park that is from the loud music events that are created by it.

Definitely, I love skateboarding and I appreciate what the establishment brings to the community 100%, but my concern is with the noise that's created by the loud events that happen on specifically Thursday and Saturday nights. Wherein we basically are kept up by the loud bass that is rattling our houses-- my own house and other people on that street. There's a lot of loud bass that is the problem, and then we also hear the emcee who is on the microphone.

We hear everything that they're saying, there's cursing going on, and loud things of that sort. I wasn't really prepared for this, to be honest, so I didn't really prepare exactly what I wanted to say. I have an opportunity, I guess, to address this and wanted to do so. I don't believe I was hoping that maybe there would be some sort of solution being able to be figured out, such as-- oh, sorry.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, go ahead. Go ahead.

Scott: Such as potentially some soundproofing, et cetera. I know that there has been a few times where they've been asked to turn down the music and it has certainly helped. If there's some way to measure the decibel level, et cetera, I think that that would strongly help.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Soundproof is something that we've been looking into.

Jonathan: We're very cognizant of the noise and the issues that it creates. We are a full privately-funded facility, we haven't received any public funding. We need some of the events to happen in order to generate the revenue to offset the expenses that it was. However, we are looking into sound mitigation options, we're writing up a plan. We are also-- we had a sound engineer walkthrough to see how we can keep all the sound on-site rather than leave offsite.

We've made new requirements to events where we're only going to utilize the sound that we provide for events, so that way we have full control. I apologize for sometimes it has gotten out of hand, but we do work very closely with the police and we do get it turned down soon as it creates an issue. We're doing things and we want the community to be open and come talk to us more often, come visit us. We're

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not the bad wolf in the corner of El Portal. We're a space that wants locals to succeed.

That's why we've created these little retail pods that a local can create a new concept or do things like that. We want the collaboration of the community. That's the primary thing for it. By voicing your concerns, it helps us do better and we are trying to figure out ways to be able to control the sound if we're going to keep with those events. Those events are not necessarily our priority. Our priority is to create a space that gives locals a platform to succeed.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We do look into measuring the decibels. Manager Alou knows that, with the police department. I get all the calls. They call the mayor and so he knows I call him right away, and we get the sound turned down right away once the sound goes that high. Can you say your address again, for the record?

Scott: It's 8525 Northeast 4th Avenue Road.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: 85th, okay.

Scott: I'm directly across from the train tracks.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Directly across, so City of Miami?

Scott: No. El Portal.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: He's in the annex.

Scott: Yes, directly across from the train tracks there's the four houses right-- it's on-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Oh, okay. 85-

Scott: 25. Yes

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: -25. Okay, yes.

Scott: The issue has been that when we have called and when we have tried to address it, it has not really been addressed properly and the noise continues all night. I have been in touch with Fitzgerald--

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Officer Simmons, Code Officer.

Scott: Yes. We were going back and forth about how to handle it, but nothing has really changed so far. I think this past Saturday night there may not have been an event. It has happened pretty much every Thursday and Saturday for past several months. There's really hasn't been any improvement when we have tried to follow the steps necessary to ask them to turn it down. Because they continue to say that there's a special events permit and that the special events permit essentially allows them to do this. Of course, I don't believe that that should allow to have the neighbors kept up at night.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Special events permit allow a particular event to happen until a certain time, but it doesn't affect the decibels though. The decibel levels which is why-

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Mayor, if I could.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: -we're here to address and talk about.

Scott: Exactly, exactly.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, who was it?

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes, may I? I don't want to miss the opportunity, especially with these many residents in the room to remind everyone, 305-4-POLICE is the non-emergency number. 305-4-POLICE, for example, would be a fairly expedient way to lodge a noise complaint. That dispatch will notify El Portal officers, whoever's on duty, they'll go and make a call. 305-4-POLICE, we spent a couple of years even with the transit-- we used to have a cell phone that people would call the officer on duty. Now 305-4-POLICE is the quickest way to reach El Portal officers on a non-emergency line.

Having said that, I'm chair of code enforcement. We will take that information, as far as number of noise complaints. We will use information like that to make determinations on changing ordinances and things to that effect. I will say that within the limit of the current ordinances, that might be what we're up against. I managed restaurants for a long time and if I had somebody leave who had a complaint and they did not tell me, a manager about it, or one of my staff who did not relay it to me. Then that person went out and told 12 people they had a horrible experience, so I've always encouraged people to lodge-- to be perfectly honest. It's been nice to see a resurgence of residents coming in at other committee meetings to actually lodge complaints. It's a good sign that people are interested in participating with us up here on the council. Having said that, I will say that the gentleman here who runs the property, I will say this is not his first rodeo. He has done this in other places. I hope that through the dialogue that took place tonight, you can see that there's already steps being taken.

There is an acknowledgment of that dichotomy. For me personally, I live just a few blocks 89th right over here, I hear the music, I also hear the Citadel. I've been living in Miami 21 years. Now, I have four kids, and I am not as close but it's nice to hear live music. [chuckles] I enjoy live music. I think it's critical to a successful society. Now if I was right next door to it, then it might be of a different opinion. Regardless, I am glad certainly to have Skatebird in the community. I think it's an important cultural event that's taking place in real-time. In that regard, it is a morphine thing, even as he's discussing. Hopefully, we can at least see that there is an opportunity for resolution. There you go.

Scott: Can I respond quickly? I have called the non-emergency number as I've been instructed to do every single time. Unfortunately, it hasn't really come to any avail. I do also love live music. It's one of my favorite things, actually. At the same time, it's different when that is keeping you up when you are trying to go to sleep and that sort of thing. Sometimes there's different types of music and not necessarily the type of music that I would want and to hear constantly. Two days a week is a little bit hard. What I guess was hoping is that there would be some way to figure out because it seems like what has happened, I know that there are things being discussed as far as ways to help this. Potential I'm not sure what the sound curtains would entail, and so forth, but it seems as though since this has been happening for so long that

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nothing is really-- I'm sorry. That it is being treated in a way that is until something happens to fix it, it's being allowed to continue without really any limitations on it, where it feels like that should be the opposite.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: You've just outlined the primary struggle of code enforcement because people see code enforcement paying attention to this, but then not to their issue. All I can say about that is I've been up here on the council for a little over four years now. This is a large unwieldy vehicle. You don't really want your local government or any other government to make sudden turns because it's not balanced that way.

I guess what I'm trying to convey is that the complaints that have been lodged, I see emails, I'm copying on these issues. I'm not by any stretch of the imagination ignorant to the realities of the complaints that have come in specifically regarding noise, specifically regarding Skatebird. To that, all I would say is that you're not going to see some lightning strike of change.

For example, will we see you again at a future meeting? Who's to say? I will tell you that residents coming in and putting their voices in these meetings there's only five of us, and there's not very many people who speak at each meeting. Plus, any resident whoever wants to come in and speak at our meetings, you do have a captive audience of people who can make decisions.

In that regard, I'll just say, not just related to Skatebird and noise complaints, but a lot of our ordinances we're in that process. We have the most consistent code enforcement we've had in a very long time. Also, with that came a backlog and we are just about up to date here, and we have a phenomenal officer. I believe even we have something like 30 cases going to magistration.

There was a 10-year backlog of inactivity in code enforcement. There has been a lot of change in the past few years. With that change has come different realities for us. One of those has been a beneficial one, and that we have a much more consistent code enforcement than we've ever had before. All I can say is that while you might not feel it, I assure you that people are aware, paying attention, and taking action when possible.

Scott: What would you say if I wanted to continue to try to find a resolution for this, what would be the next step?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: You have an open invitation to go and visit with the business owner anytime, he might be there. That I would suggest would be the very next step. Beyond that, I would encourage you to come and speak with us again. We'll let you know that if you do make a noise complaint, the manager becomes aware of it, code enforcement, obviously, police department, myself as code enforcement chair. It is registered, it is registered. I want to assure you of that.

Scott: Sure. Is there a certain decibel level that is-- is there a way that it is current action plan to-

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: If that discussion begins it would be over a series of committee meetings, most likely in planning and zoning regarding a change to a specific ordinance. In this case, it would be noise ordinance. Something like that is possible. Honestly, from beginning to end it could take a year, a year and a half.

Attorney Geller: Councilperson.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: He's going to tell me not to put out any timelines.

Attorney Geller: No.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Okay.

Attorney Geller: Not a bit.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: All right.

Attorney Geller: I was just going to say it could possibly go through planning and zoning, but it might also go through code enforcement committee.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Okay.

Scott: Just so I'm clear, the current ordinance is not being broken because from my understanding I read the ordinance. It seemed to say that if it can be heard from 100 feet or a distance away from the property that that would be breaking the ordinance. I guess my question is, is that accurate that that is the current ordinance?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: You would certainly be welcome-

Scott: I measured the speed distance and I'm over 1000 feet away. It seems to be quite further than what the ordinance states is permitted.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I don't want to drop into litigating this specifically here tonight, we do have a full agenda. Whatever the ordinance is now, my understanding is, whenever you're asked to comply or notify that they're out of compliance, then they are doing everything within their power to be in compliance. From a code enforcement standpoint, I'll just tell you, it has not seen that Skatebird is been adversarial.

However, always acknowledging of those sensitivities. Now we're good. Now we're diving down a deep, deep hole of property rights. At the bottom of that hole is a parsing of what exactly does ordinance say, do we want a new ordinance? If we want a new ordinance we can either absolutely mechanisms to go down a path and change the ordinance.

Scott: Okay.

Councilperson Darian Martin: Just to layer on top of it, I do want to say that two things can exist at the same time. This can be an amazing thing for the community, but still be a significant nuisance to some people based on their proximity. I don't want you to think that we think in any way, it's normal for Tuesdays and Thursdays for you to be bumping to music that you don't want to bump to at two o'clock in the morning. We understand that. I do think the task at hand now is for you to let us know when that noise is impeding your ability to quietly enjoy your property.

I'm sure that Mr. Strauss is here and he has his business and he wants it to continue and be successful. He'll hear those complaints. Then at the same time, if council is

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hearing that that's not the case that he's not being responsive. I'm sure there are mechanisms that we can explore to make sure that it's a situation where everybody can be happy in the village because I do love Skatebird.

I also think that you should be able to sleep. That's a really important part of life. We hear you and I receive the emails too. We'll start thinking about between code enforcement and planning and zoning ways-- and Skatebird-- thinking about ways in which to make it such that everyone's just having a really good time with this being in the community because I love Skatebird as well. Thank you again, Liyah, you did an awesome job.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Anybody else from the council? Hearing none, anybody else from the audience?

Merlin Brooks: To the council, good evening, and to our villagers, good evening. My name is Merlin Brooks. I don't really want to speak on the Skatebird and stuff. What I need to really find out, has the ordinances changed? I'm here maybe a little too long, 39 years. The ordinances were, you can have your parties, you can have whatever you want to have, but 11 o'clock that's it. As Mr. Eckerd the former mayor used to say, you're having your party, your neighbor is not having a party. I do agree with that. Now if the ordinances has changed, I don't know. Anyway, that's not what I came up here for. I like to see the young people in the Village of El Portal. I've been speaking about them for the past 25 to 30 years. I've been asking for us-- I have no children here, no grandchildren, no great-- nobody, but all the children of El Portal are my children. I've been asking for the village to have a library for our kids. We need a library for our kids. They went about putting on bird names and all these things.

I don't find that necessary. We never know. One of the kids that we're preparing for today can be the mayor of El Portal, can be the president of the United States. Let's think about them and let's try and do something for them. I'm going to say it again. We need a library for the kids. Some of the kids, they're from single parents. The parents is working two and three jobs. The kids could come to the library, do their homework, read books, and keep out of trouble. Let's be concerned about the next generation. Thank you.

Jonathan: Ma'am, we have free Wi-Fi at the park, and all those kids are welcome to come and study at the park, no problem.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I was just going to say, first of all, if anybody else wants to come up, let's just stick to the first good and welfare is about agenda items only. The second good and welfare is about anything that you want to talk about at all. Second of all, for a library, let me just say that Madam Clerk, Madam Manager, Vice Mayor Pirela, Councilperson Martin, Ward, Urbom, we had the little library for a long time. Nobody ever came. If anybody knows, kids today would rather just go on their phone than to walk down the street to go to the library. That's the second thing.

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The third thing is, infrastructure-wise, are we going to carve out part of village hall, council hall, and put a library put books against the wall right there? That's just not feasible, infrastructure-wise. I think the skate park like you said, they have Wi-Fi there. I think that's a great solution. If anybody knows kids, they whip out their phones in a second and look up anything they want to know. We do have that little library out there. Madam Clerk, we change books for a couple of years.

Madam Clerk you change the books all the time when you come in. It's not being used in that particular. We do have-- yes, that's right because of when we're here, it pulls up. The bookmobile comes every week. Madam Manager, when the bookmobile comes and we walk out there she's not here. **[unintelligible 00:33:22]** Deborah Tompkinson is the only individual that goes to the bookmobile- and Gigi. Just infrastructure-wise, the village hall is a small place, and we do have news coming up in the future that we're expanding, Madam Manager. A lot of people don't know about that, but until then, just infrastructure-wise, we don't have that. Attorney Geller.

Attorney Geller: We had the bookmobile when I was in North Bay Village. It is a really wonderful thing. It's not so much as what Ms. Brooks said about a place for kids necessarily to do their homework because there's not really tables. As far as being able to get access to books, it's just a wonderful thing. It would be great if we could find a way to make more people aware that it's coming and when it's here because you can check a book out. Then a week later if you're ready for another book or two books or whatever, bring them back and it's right here. Maybe it needs better publicity, but it's a wonderful thing, the bookmobile.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: That's great you said that Attorney Geller because I'm just looking. I say you know what, Madam Manager, my new flyer packets are going out starting tomorrow with the whole article about your home. Your award-winning home is going out in the flyer packet that I'm starting to put out tomorrow with some other information. Also with Madam Manager, in our flyer packet, we're going to have the "Be proactive, not reactive." We're going to do sandbags and everything for hurricane preparation. We're going to start doing it now so that when hurricanes come everybody has what they need already.

That's the flyer going out. I had created "Be proactive, not reactive." I'll also put this in that flyer packet. Thank you very much, you guys. Anybody else for any agenda item? You good or you got-- I appreciate it. Thanks a lot. Ms. Sweet, thank you very much. Good to see. I'll see you soon out there skating. All right, future pro right there. Anything else good and welfare for agenda items, everybody? Hearing seeing none. Let's move right along. We are all for good and welfare. Let's move to F2. This is the architecture award. All right. If I can have the council come down to the podium right here with me, please.

[pause 00:35:50]

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Madam Manager, you can come join. [laughs] You all hear me. We're good, we're good? All right. El Portal has always been a special place. El Portal has always been a unique place from our Tree City USA, our peacocks from the blue street signs, and all that stuff that we brought into play. El Portal is also unique as far as its homes. There's other places where you go where you have new type of developments and things like that. I'm not going to name any other municipalities because I don't want to diss nobody, you know what I'm saying?

When you go to other places, it's like cookie cutter. Everything looks the same. Every house looks the same, every townhouse looks the same, and things like that. When you drive through El Portal-- look, I'm mobile now, Clerk. When you drive through El Portal, you see the difference. You see all the homes that are from the early 1900s, the 1910s, the 1920s, and you see the different personalities of the homes. Well, we also have new homes that have personality. Not only do we have new homes that have personality, we have award-winning homes that have personality. Now is your time to come up.

[applause]

Internationally Award-Winning, Best Architecture Single Residence, Best Residential Property in the United States of America.

[applause]

Hold on. That's just the second. She got three awards, you guys. The third was Best Residential Property in Florida. The name of the property-- go ahead and clap.

That's right, all three awards.

[applause]

Not only winning internationally, not only winning for the best residential property in the United States of America but also Florida, the Sunshine State. She racked up all the awards. She was like the person on Grammy night it's like, "Come on back up. Come on back up. Come on back up." That's what she was doing. We're so proud and we're so humble that this property is in the Village of El Portal.

[applause]

This right here, it states, it says, Best Architecture Single Residence International USA, Florida, Best Residential Property United States of America, Best Residential Property, Florida. You are valued and appreciated for your architectural expertise, and as a resident of El Portal, we appreciate you.

Ezgi Fitos: Thank you so much.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very, very much.

Ezgi: Totally honored. Good evening, mayor. Good evening, council members. Good evening, residents of El Portal. What a journey. We found out about this amazing place, Village of El Portal about four or five years ago. It was like love at first sight. Peacocks walking on the streets, and seeing the Indian Mount with that amazing canopy of magical trees. I think there was a reason why the Indians chose

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that spot. The ancient wisdom, they had incredible technologies for their time to pick the best livable areas on earth, and they picked that area for a reason.

I totally second them and I believe that El Portal really is a wonderful, wonderful place to live. We had this vacant lot and it had been vacant forever, so it was a question of how this contemporary piece of architecture is going to fit into its context of El Portal. I totally agree with the mayor. Village of El Portal has a very unique eclectic selection of architecture from different times. In that way, actually, a contemporary architecture might as well fit into this selection of architecture that we have in our village.

The idea came from again combination of the ancient wisdom that is coming from Italy and Pompei, where the houses are built in a courtyard style, and they are private from the outside and more introvert that the life goes inside their courtyard. The fact that the vacant lot had been vacant forever like had been waiting for us. The idea came together with the walls facing the 87th street being covered with creeping figs, which took us a while.

With two little boys, we had to settle first and then plant those figs, which are obviously a very, very important part of the architecture. The idea was a house under the camouflage of the landscaping, those two walls with the wood opening in the middle, which actually refers to the gate of El Portal because the village of El Portal used to have a gate back, I think until 1948, if I'm not mistaken.

Which was unfortunately damaged by one of the hurricanes and had never been rebuilt. It's perhaps another project for our village. The idea was to replicate that gate with the wooden gate and offer a bridge from the past to the future of our village. I'm proud that we've been able to accomplish that. I would like to thank everyone for their support because obviously, we got the whole support of the city at that time. We took a risk, which I think paid off.

When it was about the award program I was talking to my husband and I said like, "There's no way we can win an award like that because there are so many important houses built with huge, huge budgets. How can we just compete with this?" He was like, "No, no, no. You have to submit. You have to submit. You never know." "Okay, submit." Then after two months, I got the phone call saying, "You won awards." At first I thought they made a mistake. I thought they would call me back and say we made a terrible mistake, but luckily this didn't happen and there we are.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Absolutely. [claps]

Ezgi: Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you Northeast Miami Court, my lovely neighbors. I love you. Thank you for coming and supporting us.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Neighbors don't go anywhere because we have a couple other things for her and we're going to take some pictures. We'll take some pictures also. Does anybody from the council might maybe have something that you want to say?

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Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I'm Dr. Lightfoot-Ward, congratulations. My house was in the same situation back in 1951. I just learned yesterday, meaning sometime this year. I just learned that mine was the first house built in Glendale Manor, and I've been asked by the county to submit it as a historic property. Keep that in mind, 50 years from now, okay, because that's what it took. Congratulations to you.

Mr. Mayor, unless you have somebody else in mind, it looks like it's going to go through, and we will have a historic property in our development area. I'm looking at my colleague here because she's in the same quadrant that we are. Yes? Yes. It was just amazing that it's my house. I just asked the county and they go, "What?" I said, "Yes," and they said, "We're working it." I'll let you know how it goes through, but thank you. Now you know what to look forward to 50 years.

Ezgi: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. I know that right here Councilperson Martin and Manager Alou want to make a little presentation to her.

Councilperson Darian Martin: Oh, go ahead. I'll let Manager Alou do it.

Village Manager Alou: I was not at all prepared for this, but on behalf of myself and Councilperson Martin, and actually all the members of the council and the El Portal family here in [crosstalk]. Yes, we want to just share a little something for your home, and hopefully, you'll share some photos of that beautiful home, we'd love to see it. Congratulations, I know it was a big effort and you went through two different councils to get it made, but it was well worth it. Congratulations.

Ezgi: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. That's some goodies for you to take back home and celebrate tonight. I know that Vice Mayor Pirela and Councilperson Urbom have something you want to say.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Just want to say congratulations, and we're glad to hear that your neighbors are the best part of the house. Neighbors are the best part of El Portal for sure.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you, guys. We appreciate it. What we're going to do, we're going to do the next item very, very quickly, because we just have to pass it really quickly as the second reading. The reason why we're doing it like this, let me explain really quickly, is because after we pass the next item, we have to take a break anyway because we have to sign the papers, Madam Manager.

Since we have to take a break anyway, let us do this next item very, very quickly.

When we take the break, we can do all the pictures, and we can do everything.

We're going to do that really, really quickly, so you guys don't go anywhere. It'll take like five minutes, I promise you. I hope-- I'm looking at my council members, I hope.

[chuckles] All right, you guys, we're going to do that and then we're going to take pictures right after that. All right?

[pause 00:47:22]

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All right, you guys. Next is the consent agenda. Do I have a motion to approve the consent agenda?

Councilperson Darian Martin: So moved.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Moved by Councilperson Martin.

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

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

Council Members: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All oppose say, nay. Hearing none, moving on. Next agenda item is the second reading, the ordinance for the bank loan renewal.

Attorney Geller, if you want to read that into the record.

Attorney Geller: Yes, sir. Item H1 an ordinance for second reading on bank loan renewal. An ordinance of village of El Portal, Florida, authorizing the issuance of a capital improvement refunding revenue note, series 2023 of the issuer in the principal amount of not to exceed \$695,551.21 to refund the issuer's line of credit; providing that the note shall be payable from pledged revenues; authorizing and delegating to the mayor or village manager the sale of the note to the bank pursuant to the terms and conditions of a financing agreement with the bank; approving the execution and delivery of said financing agreement; providing for the rights, securities and remedies for the owner of the note; making certain covenants and agreements in connection therewith; making such determinations as are required to afford such note "bank qualified" status; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. I don't know, Madam Manager, if you want to chime in very quickly, this is our second reading.

Attorney Geller: Mayor, our council that is council for us as borrower is also present. Linda Herring from Bryant, Miller, and Olive is in the house.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I was going to say that next thing. Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. I appreciate that. I'll just go to the council. Council, do you have any questions or comments for either of the individuals involved?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: No, sir.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: What about from the audience, any residents, visitors have any questions or comments? Hearing, seeing none. Do I have a motion to approve ordinance H1?

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

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

Councilperson Darian Martin: Second.

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call Councilperson Martin?

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Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot Ward?

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela?

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes by five to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. At this particular time, we need to sign those papers you guys, and then we'll take some pictures of our award-winning homeowners. I want to do a 10 minute recess, do I have a motion to approve a 10-minute recess?

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

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

Councilperson Darian Martin: Second.

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

Councilmembers: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All opposed, say nay. Hearing none, 10-minute recess you guys.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: What are we doing in 10 minutes, taking pictures? [crosstalk]

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, you guys thank you very much. We're bringing everything back to order at 8:10 PM. We're moving on to the next item. Their home, the article that features their home, and the awards and things like that, I'm putting in my next flyer packet that will be on your doorknob. That'll be going out, starting tomorrow. You'll be able to read all about the home and see the inside and things like that.

The next ordinance is H2.

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: Item H2, second reading on illicit discharge an ordinance of the Village of El Portal Florida relating to illicit discharge to the stormwater system as provided here in providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for conflict and repeal, providing for codification, providing for severability, and providing for an effective date. Second reading made.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. This is the second reading. Does anybody have any questions or comments from the council? Hearing none. Any questions or comments from the audience, residents, visitors? Hearing none. Do I have a motion to approve ordinance H-two?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: So moved.

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

Councilman Luis Pirela: Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Vice Mayor Pirela. Madam Clerk, may I please have roll call for that one H2.

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

Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward?

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela?

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes five to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Moving on to H3. First reading, H3 dog restraint leash law.

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: Item H3. First reading, dog restraint leash law, also known as Bobby's Law. An ordinance of the village of El Portal Florida relating to signs and advertising revising chapter four, animals, and adopting a new section of chapter four as provided herein, providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for conflict and repeal, providing for codification, providing for severability, and providing for an effective date.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. I'm going to ask, Mr. Pulliam to come up to the podium while I'm saying this. This came about you guys because there just all of a sudden started to be a, not all of a sudden there's started to be an uptick of residents, owners walking their dogs with no leashes and these dogs, not only attacking people and causing damage but also killing other animals, killing pet cats and killing other animals.

Our current ordinance wasn't strong enough to be able to elicit the rules and elicit the penalties that we needed to stop this situation. That seems to be over the past year and a half, a couple years in an upswing unfortunately that is causing more harm to our residents for people that just will not put their dogs on the leash. Mr. Pulliam say your name and address.

Tom Pulliam: Yes. Hi everyone. My name is Tom Pulliam. I live at 205 NE 86th Street. Good to see everyone tonight. This ordinance has been almost a year in the making. My spouse and I moved here from Los Angeles a year and a half ago and within the first couple months of living here off-leash dogs came into my yard when I was mowing the grass, attacked my cat, attacked myself, killed the cat turned out these were dogs of a neighbor.

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Fortunately, one was wearing a tag. We were able to locate them, contact animal control, all of that stuff, which is great. Living in Sherwood Forest, there's a lot of people with dogs and enjoying the environment also a lot of cats really everywhere. We do already have leash laws on the books and whatnot but I guess it hasn't been strong enough because I still see people too to this day who are not on bicycles and their dog is just running free or they are walking right with their dog with leash in hand, or no leash at all.

A year after Bobby's death which was June, 2022, we do now have a stronger ordinance which I'm hopeful really for the enforcement of, and just like general awareness for the safety of the community a lot of kids walk on that street going to the tot lot. There's people of all ages there. There's also not even a dedicated sidewalk, it's a dangerous street already.

Just beefing up our off-leash dog laws as we can, as a small community definitely seems like a prudent and wise thing to do especially considering my personal history being a victim of it. I'm sure a lot of other people know stories that have happened as well. Thank you very much.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Mr. Pulliam. Thank you very much for coming to speak. You definitely aren't the only victim, at least there's been four other individuals where their animal ended up dying because of a dog off a leash. There were two other individuals that were bitten by dogs off the leash where they had to go seek serious medical attention in the hospital.

Thank you for representing all of them and yourself. You guys, this is the first reading. You guys know from first reading, the second reading, little things can be adjusted and things like that. We're looking for any large discrepancies you may have with this or questions or comments, opening it up to the council. Hearing none, opening it up to the audience any questions or comments?

Hearing none, this is first reading and we'll have to come back for a second reading before it is official and the ordinance passes fully. This will have to come back for another reading next month during the council meeting. Do I have a motion to approve the first reading of ordinance H3.

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

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

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll second Second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Second by Councilperson Urbom. Madam Clerk, my peace have roll call please.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Martin?

Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom.

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela?

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes five.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, appreciate that. Moving on to resolution H4. Attorney Geller.

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: Yes, mayor. Resolution H4, an intergovernmental agreement as to lowering the speed limit. A resolution of the Village Council, the village of El Portal Florida, Miami-Dade County authorizing the village manager to enter into an interlocal agreement with Miami-Dade County to obtain the county's approval, authorizing the village to install and maintain 25 mile per hour speed limit signs as outlined in the agreement authorizing the village manager to execute the agreement, providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much Attorney Geller. You guys it's been a long-time coming. Before we get to that just from what we just did passing that first reading of the dog ordinance, I just want to thank the entire council for making El Portal safer because there are a lot of little kids also that always play around so having dogs off of leash is a dangerous thing.

This right here, you guys, long-time coming traffic study, people are asking for a very long time about speed bumps, about lowering speed limits, and things like that. We did the traffic study. We've been waiting for that for decades. We did the traffic study now we're moving, and this is the first step madam manager, if you want to take over.

Village Manager Alou: Yes. Thank you Mayor Nickerson, and thank you Council. It was a long time coming but we finally got here. The traffic study was completed by David Plummer & Associates. We have a representative here Mr. Juan Espinosa who worked on our project and worked hand in hand with me in the Public Works director Mohan Thampi to execute a fantastic traffic study as well as a mobility study.

Mr. Espinosa is here today to also just give you a quick presentation of what was found from those studies and to give us a snapshot on some ideas that they are recommending. If we could just give them a moment unless you would prefer to go ahead and vote on the item, Mayor Nickerson first and then allow it or how would you like to do it?

Juan Espinosa: Good evening, Mayor and Council Members. My name is Juan Espinosa. I'm with the firm of David Plummer & Associates with 1750 Ponce de Leon in Coral Gable. With me tonight is my colleague Nicole Sandoval, which is the project engineer working on this project. We work on two different projects for the

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city. The first one was getting the speed limit on the residential street reduced to 24 miles per hour.

In order to accomplish that, there are certain requirements that the state of Florida needs to be met in order to be able to reduce the speed limit, so we did a lot of data collection. Seven-day traffic counts and speed data on 11 locations around the city. The average speed was actually 26.8, which makes it qualified to be able to reduce the speed limit to 25 miles per hour.

Some of the advantages of reducing the speed limit is of course allow for pedestrian and bicyclists to feel more comfortable on the road, reduces the severity of crashes, reduces emission, less noise, and improve the health by allowing people not to be able to bike and walk. That was the first study. That report was approved by Miami-Dade County so the city is ready just to implement the process.

The second study that we did was the NE 2nd avenue mobility study that was a grant provided by the TPO. The goal of that study was to improve the safety for all users of the road, improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, increase livability, and encourage economic development. Some of the concern when we look at the corridor where there is no bike lanes, there was few pedestrian enhancement, and there was a lot of high-speed on 2nd Avenue.

Some of the solutions that we came up with was doing a road diet. That's basically reducing the number of lanes, providing dedicated bike lanes along both sides, providing mid-block crossings for people could be able to cross safely the road, and provide high visibility crosswalks to encourage more pedestrians. We came up with three different alternatives for the corridor.

All of them provide one lane in each direction, turn lanes at the intersections. The first one also provides dedicated bike lanes on each side of the road and allow for a raised median in the center, then the regular sidewalk. Again sidewalk, bike lane on each side, one lane in this direction then on all the intersections.

Sorry. The second one provides again one lane in each direction, turn lane at the intersections, bike lane on each side, but this one provides a landscape buffer between the bike lane and the sidewalk. The third one again, one lane in each direction, turn lanes, bike lane, and a wider sidewalk, which is about 10-foot sidewalk.

We also again want to recommend providing high-visibility crosswalk in all the locations along the corridor, and I think it's very important to provide at least one mid-block crossing on the corridor. That's only provide mobility for pedestrians, also people that ride the bus will be able to get off on any location and cross the street safely. That's all I have. This study is still under study so we haven't finished that one. We just wanted to get your opinion and if you have any questions let me know.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Questions and comments from the council you guys?

Village Manager Alou: May I also Mayor Nickerson? Me.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, oh.

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Village Manager Alou: Mr. Espinosa presented three options or opportunities for us for our NE 2nd Avenue corridor. As you know we have some development that is coming. The Village Plaza is coming very soon. Those plans have been submitted. They are under review from planning, zoning, as well as the building department but as we prepare for that, this is very timely.

I don't know how we want to do it. We want to get a decision to one because I think that will be a part of finalizing this report to the county so that we can then apply for whatever opportunities we have from them to do this road diet. I would like for you all to just take a moment, think about it, you can reach out to me and give me your ideas or thoughts on which of the three were provided. I will be providing you the mobility study as well as the traffic studies under separate headings.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Does everybody remember the three, you want to show the three again?

Juan Espinosa: Sure.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Personally I like vegetation, so I think with some--
[laughs]

Juan Espinosa: The main difference are, so all of them have one lane in each direction, turn lane, and the dedicated bike lane. The difference are whether you want a center median, which would be around five foot. Sorry, that's that one, whether you want landscape on the side of the road. Sorry.

Councilman Luis Pirela: In the center median.

Juan Espinosa: Or you just want a wider sidewalk so those are the three options.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: My option is no wider sidewalk. We need some greenery in El Portal, especially along that corridor. I'm down to the other two options and I think the center medium might be the one.

Councilman Luis Pirela: The center medium might be the one.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: It looks beautiful as you're driving through. You have that center medium and you have the vegetation in the center would be my suggestion.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Let me ask, because on the meeting that we had with Miami Transit, the meeting that we had, we were discussing about having a parking on NE 2nd, a side parking on the road.

Juan Espinosa: On-street parking.

Councilman Luis Pirela: On-street parking to reduce the amount of lanes and also-

Juan Espinosa: That could be an option. We didn't provide that option because being more residential, that's why they have it south up here which they provide their on-street parking. Without this being more residential, I don't know if you have a need for parking or not, but we didn't think so.

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Councilperson: Because that area is commercial, NE 2nd, so I think it will be wiser to have actually on-street parking and that will reduce the amount of lanes anyway and we can have the medium.

Juan Espinosa: If you put the parking then there's no room to provide for the medium.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes, because we were saying that, Manager Alou and myself, we've been working for about, man, six, eight months, on the painted crosswalks. We're looking into the painted crosswalks to where we can-- Because you have painted crosswalks, it might be painted green or blue. I don't know if you guys have seen that before. It lends to a lot of traffic-calming effect.

I encourage you all to go look them up, painted crosswalks, because when I explain it, it sounds like it might look like cheese or it sounds like it might look like, just not visually [laughs] accepting, but if you go look at it and look at how it's done, particularly on the West Coast, you'll see how they look and you'll see how it lends to traffic calming and things like that.

We were looking into painting sidewalks. When we were looking at painted sidewalks, they gave us that option. We're talking about Miami-Dade County now. They said that they actually told us before they gave us the option and then they decided for us, Madam Manager, if you remember, and told us no to the bike lanes. If you remember that.

They told us no to the bike lanes when we were talking to the county because they were talking about the business corridor and they were talking about that aspect of traffic and the speed and things like that. This is a good study, I think what we're looking at now. I think that's something that we just have to really also consider being that is NE 2nd, it's the business corridor and do we want bike lanes there on that street or not?

Village Manager Alou: Let me ask also, Mr. Espinosa, are there bike lanes to the south of us?

Juan Espinosa: Yes. That one has bike lanes and parking.

Village Manager Alou: Yes, that's a bike lane and parking.

Juan Espinosa: Correct. It would be ideal to be able to continue bikers biking across the river and continue the biking. The parking can be provided on one side but you will lose the median, so it will look basically what you have just south of here which is parking, a dedicated bike lane, and one lane in each direction.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Do you want to follow that from Miami Shores all the way to here? It will look like one--

Village Manager Alou: Yes, it'll look the same. There'll be the continuity but we won't have the median so that's the green that we may have to give up. Okay. Well, so maybe you can give us a schematic that would just show bike lanes as well as the parking.

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Mr. Mayor, I know you'll be shocked. I've got two cents to throw in.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: No, no, you're good. Let me just say one more thing, Councilman Urbom before you say something. Yes, I think it's something that we should really think about because although it will be a continuation from Miami Shores or from city of Miami as you drive down towards 82nd and 79th just to see how it looks. I think that it's always been a beautiful thing when you know you hit El Portal. You know what I mean.

When you hit those blue street signs, you hit the trees, and you know you hit when you hit El Portal. I think there's something else that will actually lean to that that you hit El Portal and we're more tranquil, and we're more serene, and we're more relaxing and things like that when you hit us. I think that's something we should keep in mind. Councilperson Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: All right, I'll start my timer here and I'll keep it brief. Okay, I got the nickname the driver when I was 16. I've driven across this continent several times. I have more than eight years on my resume where my job in Miami Dade, Tri-County, Four counties. Palm Beach to Key West, Sarasota, Naples. I didn't mess with Orlando too much but, I've walked more miles in Miami-Dade County than most people who've lived here for perhaps 50 years.

I know that sounds arrogant but I'm very genuine when I say that. This specific stretch of road that we're talking about, is NE 2nd Avenue from Miami Shores boundary to the canal. It's actually an incredibly unique piece of road. It's a throughway. It's a major throughway. You've got Miami Avenue. Next, you've got to cross past I95 and get to 7th Avenue. Then beyond that you're into the West avenues. The only option east of 2nd Avenue was Biscayne. There's three avenues east of I95 to shuffle all traffic that moves north and south twice a day.

My concern with the raised median in the middle is that it's going to create a possibility where traffic needs to leave the street and can't. Those days where someone killed on 95 and all the traffic floods into these two avenues. Other emergency situations where cars or even emergency vehicles might need to turn around. I would be reluctant to put a raised median on NE 2nd Avenue just for that reason.

When we're talking about the bike lanes, this is the way I see it. This is how parking should work on NE 2nd Avenue to facilitate future commercial development. It should be a fluid lane. There might not be anything like that in the world yet, but maybe we invented a fluid lane. We also have Jitneys. Okay. We have Jitneys, we have buses, we have bikes, we have skateboards, we have pedestrians. Now we have hoverboards. We've got all of it.

If we're going to create a situation where people can come and go and visit businesses on NE 2nd Avenue which is the vision and the goal here, then perhaps fluid lanes on the outside where traffic is not allowed to park but essentially is an

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extended loading pickup and drop off zone. You would have a Jitney blocking the bike lane, frequently. You'd have a bus blocking a bike lane frequently. If we did something like parking, now you're completely eliminating the space for use other than stationary static parking.

I would love to see something like a fluid lane with signage where people understand, you can use this lane to traverse the area. If you're dropping off great, if you're picking up fine, if you're traveling through even better, but there needs to be that accommodation because again if you put a median race in the middle, when that Jitney stops, everybody stops.

We do need to accommodate that traffic because if we create a situation where the traffic has nowhere to go, then we're going to get an increased level of cut-through traffic through the neighborhood looking for the next way. Then everybody hits the canal because people don't know the area. There needs to be an accommodation for that heavy flow of traffic twice a day, and account for the possibility that there could be something that would stop a lane and there needs to be alternatives. In three minutes and 32 seconds. There you go.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much Councilperson Urborm. Any other questions or comments from the team?

Councilperson Darian Martin: I do have a question. Just getting this correctly, the safest option for pedestrians would be that center median. Is that what you're saying?

Juan Espinosa: All of them would reduce the width of the road so it would be safer. That will provide a refuge when you're crossing so you will be able to cross, stop at the median, and then continue crossing. Always when you have a raised median, the road is always safe for people. Drive lower because you have a barrier next to you, so it reduces the speed of the [unintelligible 01:14:40]. It's always safer for pedestrians.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I think that's important to know because-- I understand the plans that we have for NE 2nd, but I also know currently what it's being used for. There's a lot of moms traversing that area, and I think it's important to try to make it as safe as possible for the people that are currently using it. From what I understand, the projects that are coming online along that corridor, they've already accounted for parking, correct? Exactly, they have contemplated this and there are also requirements that they must provide based on what they are building and what that usage is. I do think that parking is important, but definitely, my primary concern would be the safest possible experience along that corridor.

Juan Espinosa: You make a good point. When you have parking that makes it more unsafe for pedestrians especially kids.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I can imagine.

Juan Espinosa: They hide behind parked cars, so they can be seen while they're crossing the street. It provides an impediment for pedestrians, and bicyclists

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because people tried to open the door when they're parked and there's a bicycle coming. There's a lot of conflict with all three parties.

Councilperson Darian Martin: All bad complications. I see all the points but I do tend to lead to this iteration of it with that center median.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: She is right about the median though because then you don't have to cross the full distance in one shot. You can wait for traffic on the near side to clear, make it halfway, and then wait to get it. I definitely acknowledged that that is significant benefit for pedestrians.

Juan Espinosa: The median is not continuous so all the intersections will be open. You can still turn.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Don't forget that we have a lot of kids crossing the streets from the school. I was very surprised when I saw that mainly on 88 or 87. Yes. Definitely, something that will be safer for pedestrians will be great.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: I like your report. Okay. It deals with two very difficult streets. However, I just happen to live behind Horace Mann Middle School. You said in your report if the calculated 85th percentile speed is between 29 mph and 33 mph a supplemental investigation needs to be conducted before a recommendation is made. That street, 3rd Avenue is very dangerous. That Street is a racetrack every morning. I live on off that street. I live right on 3rd Avenue. I hear and I know what it is how difficult it is to cross the streets that we're talking about. I appreciate you putting in their a recommendation will be made-- Investigation needs to be conducted before recommendations made. I would hate to see a problem, a death. That Street is extremely dangerous. Going to work-- I'm retired. Am I right or wrong? They're going through that street as though it's a runway every morning.

The police is to be commended. I asked them to stand guard right outside of Horace Mann middle school, and they were there, and then they're called away. Don't you know the drivers know when police are not there? That's a dangerous street and my house is not gated. My house is part of the roadway and I'm very concerned because that's the back of the school. That is the very back of Horace Mann Middle School. That's a dangerous street right now. Am I right or wrong?

That's a very dangerous street. I appreciate that, but I had hoped that that percentile would justify why we need attention within the residential, not just the business. I'm all for what you just did, but the residential part was seemingly taken for granted especially that street. Keep that in mind for me. Would you please sweetheart?

Juan Espinosa: I Will.

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

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Any other questions or comments from the council? Hearing none, any questions or comments from the audience residents? Come on up.

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Thomas Pulliam: Thank you, Thomas Pulliam 205 NE 86th Street. I have a question. Will there be a crosswalk at 85th across 2nd Avenue, and also was a roundabout explored as there's no stoplight there?

Juan Espinosa: That wasn't in part of this study. The mid-block crossing, the county which regulate the crossings, they have to be separated from one another by 300 feet or 600 feet, depending on the roadway. Because the signalized intersection already have a crosswalk, you cannot have one in the median block. We try to put one between-- you can cross at the signalized intersection, put a mid-block maybe between 89 and 90 to provide an additional crosswalk of the road. You cannot put one in every block.

Thomas Pulliam: You do know that people are constantly crossing there because they want to cut across and walk on 85th and 86th Street.

Juan Espinosa: I understand-

Thomas Pulliam: Okay, but what are you able to make **[inaudible 01:20:37]**?

Juan Espinosa: -it's just that it's a county requirement. It's just based on the spacing of the crosswalk. We can try, but they probably would not accept it. They will expect people to walk to the signalized intersection and then cross, which I know people don't do, but those are the rules.

Thomas Pulliam: The possibility of a roundabout, how does that get explored?

Juan Espinosa: That has to be analyzed at the one location in-

Thomas Pulliam: 85th Avenue and 2nd Avenue.

Juan Espinosa: There's a process. The county has a process to provide roundabouts. It's part of the traffic calming the city will have to apply. You have to do the study. Then the neighbors, all four neighbors are on the corner, have to agree. They have to be a vote. They have to agree on having that roundabout. Therefore, this is a possibility, it just have to be presented to the county.

Thomas Pulliam: That's the same for a business district, the businesses need to agree [crosstalk]?

Juan Espinosa: The **[inaudible 01:21:33]** qualify, yes.

Thomas Pulliam: Okay. Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Mr. Pulliam. That's a good idea to look into a roundabout there. We'll look into it. We have one going up by Horace Mann so we know the process. In Northwest, 2nd, we have one going up over there. Any questions or comments from the residents, audience? You guys good? Any last questions or comments from the council? Hearing none. Madam Clerk. [silence] All right. Do I have a motion to approve Resolution H-4?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: **[unintelligible 01:22:11]**

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

Councilperson Darian Martin: Second.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Vice Mayor Pirela. [chuckles] Madam Clerk, may I please have a roll call for Resolution H-4?

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call, Councilperson Martin?

Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Oh yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela?

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes five to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: I love this council. If you have been asking for traffic comment for so long--

Juan Espinosa: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, y'all. Here we go.

Village Manager Alou: Thank you, Mr. Espinosa.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Thank you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Resolution H-5, you guys.

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: H-5 regarding building exterior painting resolution of the Village Council of the Village of El Portal, Miami-Dade County Florida providing for the exterior painting of the village hall property for the Village of El Portal. Providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Manager Alou, this is you.

Village Manager Alou: Okay. Thank you. As the village is changing, we're out here doing our very best to get a lot of these projects off the ground and improve the environment for the residents as well as the workers. The village hall, we have painted here and there and we've done some light renovations to the best of our abilities, but we feel like at this time, it's really time to paint the exterior. It hasn't been painted in the seven years that I've been here, and it was pretty old even then. We want to take down awnings and make it just a nicer place for our residents and for workers. We believe that just painting the exterior will put a refreshed look in this time. We ask that you consider the painting of the village hall exterior. Our public works director is here and he has explored these proposals with the public works coordinator. We offer them to you and we hope that you'll accept.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Any questions or comments from the council?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot: Mr. Mayor?

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

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot: I don't think the city manager has to apologize for anything. She's right. I just wonder what color it's going to be. That's all. [chuckles]

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Purple and green stripes, I think.
[laughter]

Councilperson Darian Martin: I do have a question.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot: He is silly.

Village Manager Alou: [inaudible 01:24:27] this pallet, just the gray or the light gray [inaudible 01:24:31].

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: While we're passing around colored pallets, is there any other question or comment from the Council?

Councilperson Darian Martin: I have one. I saw that in the documents, we're suggesting or recommending FCL, is that correct? Is that the recommendation?

Mohan Thampi: Yes.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I noticed that their quote is about \$2000 more than ETAFa or PITU. It appears as though they're providing the same services. I'm wondering what justifies the additional \$2,000 spend.

Mohan Thampi: Carlos-

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Say your name and address.

Mohan Thampi: What's that, home?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Say your name and address.

Mohan Thampi: Oh, Mohan Thampi, Public Works Director for EL Portal.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Say your address?

Mohan Thampi: Address?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Mohan Thampi: Here, El Portal [chuckles] and Coral Gables, 500 NE, 87th Street. It does look like it's the highest price, but Carlos Agera, who is our public works coordinator, obtained these quotes. He just left for the Miami Heat game. That's why he's not here. I'll answer the question. He gave you a table. The table, two of them did not include materials. Then, that threw out somebody about the \$4,000 and the \$8,900 which is-

Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes, but also two of them appear to provide the same exact thing that-

Mohan Thampi: They didn't provide the paperwork. Only FCL Construction Group provided the insurance proof and the license. From our experience, we prefer to go with the company which had provided a documented license and insurance because some of the vendors we have been getting when you hire them and then you find out that their license are with somebody else.

Village Manager Alou: That's right.

Mohan Thampi: In this case, they provided the--

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Councilperson Darian Martin: I definitely understand that. Could you just point me to where I would see that because it seems as though it's saying everything is included, but I admit I could be missing something. Where is it on this matrix that they didn't provide the insurance?

Mohan Thampi: It's at the bottom. Carlos wrote, "I recommend using FCL Construction Group. They included all materials and sent me the insurance proof and license." When he requested it, they sent it. I guess he didn't get it from the other two guys.

Councilperson Darian Martin: This is the second time this has happened to us. I know that you don't know because Carlos is at the Heat game but this is the second time that we've received a document that shows a large number of people responding to a quote, however, then, it's doodled down to just one person that provides all the necessary information and that is always our highest quote. It's just really hard for me to wrap my mind around the fact that there's only one person that can paint the village hall, and it would have to be at a price that's \$2,000 above what appears to be where everyone else is falling. That's just an undesirable situation that we find ourselves in now. It's the second time that we've done it. I don't know what we can do on that end to just make sure that we are definitely taking a look at more than one company when we're considering expending city funds. That's a comment for the manager.

Village Manager Alou: As I've explained this to our public works director and public works coordinator the same frustration. I think the issue is, I believe Mr. Agera has had some trouble "receiving proposals". By the time he gets them, it takes us quite a bit of time to get these proposals from him, so once he gets them there incomplete. We go back, "Can you please get him to do--" There's a lot of back and forth with this. Mr. Thampi has attempted to work on this as well as the bathroom quotes with him as well as our building official.

Sometimes the quotes come in as they are written and they may not have anything on them so then we have to go back, "Please add this. Please consider this." Then you're waiting for them to respond. Some don't or you don't hear back from them. He's giving us what he's receiving, but we are also requiring that materials include certifications or licenses, those kinds of things. Most of them don't provide that. It is frustrating.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I get it. I just wonder how wide his net is. I can get that when it comes to something like building a tot lot bathroom. When it comes to exterior painting, I imagine that there are a large number of people that are licensed and also qualified to engage in this activity. The whole point of competitive bidding requirements or us going and finding different quotes is to make sure that not only are we getting the best possible price, but we're making sure that we are making ourselves aware of and available for business with persons who may have not historically had an opportunity to contract and do business with the city.

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I just want to make sure because this of course could just be coincidental, but also this could be, I don't know pattern of action that I wouldn't be pleased with. I would love to see more than one responsive bid and pricing that is somewhat within the same area so that we can compare apples to apples. At this point, it just seems like we are always just being presented with one option and that option is always the highest bidder and that's problematic.

Mohan Thampi: I'll make a suggestion. We have our legal requirements like when you purchase something you say that, when you make the quote you need to submit these documents along with the quote . If we prepare something like that the Village's requirements.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I've reviewed our procurement code, last time especially because of what happened in the last meeting. I had the manager, send me the procurement code, I reviewed it. I do think that there are certain things that we can do to tweak that procurement code to just make it do a little bit more of what I envisioned this being, but I do want to state my issue with this on the record.

Village Manager Alou: I'd like to also add even with my frustration, I contacted Angie's list directly, this is the thing because I said, "Listen this shouldn't take--" it has taken actually a year to get these quotes to you today, a year. For various reasons, I think a large part of it is the coordinator. I said finally, "I'm going to Angie's, you sit here with me and we'll discuss what we want. We'll put it in the request and then we will start getting quotes."

We did and we had people come out, they look at the place, they asked the layout and those things. All of that is then provided and then there were to provide the quotes. We got two, we needed three. He went out and found some more, so this was the process for getting these quotes and sadly it came to this.

To run an RFP for something like this size is not the most equitable thing. RFPs are time-consuming and they're costly because of the advertisement. We do have the option of doing a request for proposals which is more on a lower level of project such as painting that we're able to just obtain three quotes and so that's the way we went with this as well. I just didn't realize that it would be so difficult for our coordinator to execute.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I appreciate that. I appreciate the explanation. I also think we need to look at whether or not it's difficult, our coordinator, or just difficult.

[inaudible 01:33:39] and see whether or not there is another way to do this thing that might be a useful thing for us, but that's the end of my comments.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Councilperson Martin, any other questions or comments from the council?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor I'm with the manager on this one. I love my colleague when she asks the right questions because she's going to get the right answers, don't matter. Seems to me that when you ask for quotes, I'm going on my experience sitting where you're sitting now that they have to send

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you what you asked for. When the deadline is missed, that's the end of it. If they fail to send what you need, you have only what you have to go with.

That's what we've been dealing with, yes? Do you ever see in your research where these companies who are seemingly derelict in providing you with what we need to have, if they're deliberately chasing us or because we're so little, they don't think that we're paying attention? I'm with my colleague here. I want to see what they bid. I want to know that they've been certified. I want to know that they're keeping up their license.

If they're not, they're not going to tell us that. You know that colleague, they're not going to tell us that. How do we know that we've done it a collective bid because it could work in the other way too? They could come back and say we're going to sue you because you didn't put us in the bid. You didn't send us all the information we asked you for. Now you're in a rock and a hard place one year later, is there a remedy Mr. Attorney?

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: For relatively small amounts like this we're not required to advertise and put it out to the entire world. For a big project yes, we always do that. On these relatively small amounts, we are permitted to solicit bids by picking some people that we feel are qualified and inviting them to submit qualifying bids to us. It is a less rigorous process than doing an RFP or an RFQ for professional services or something like that.

In a lot of cities, the manager's authority is \$20,000, \$25,000 something like that and these wouldn't even necessarily come before the council. We're a small town so our numbers are lower and we're more sensitive to price. We invite somebody to solicit the information if they're qualified. For instance, if they have a license and they don't send us the license information, they can't really turn around and come after us and say, "Oh, you didn't ask us for our license," because if you're in that business, you need to know you need the license, you need to send it to us.

I understand that this recommendation was not for the lowest number, but to depart from the lowest number, there needs to be a reason. When a reason is given by the recommender, by the reviewer for the village and they state the reason, it's as much art as science. I think if I remember from my reading of it the difference was like \$2,000. If we were dealing with a large item and it was \$200,000, that would be very, very important, but we have to take into account the scale here.

I think one was like 8,000 and one was 10,000. If the reviewer recommends that we prefer to see us go with the 10,000 because they're more reliable or more professional I think the comment was because I read these things. The website looked much better and gave much more information for \$2,000, it doesn't mean we have to do it, but it's enough to bring a recommendation to you, so you can have the discussion you're having now.

No, I don't think they can turn around and sue us when we invited them if they didn't provide information that they should know that we're going to want to see. When

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you're putting your proposal in, you put your best foot forward and if you do not, that's your bad and then you fail to persuade us. Hope that answers your question.

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

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

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: As we look at these proposals, Mohan, so FTA Construction, and FCL, they're the two proposals. Just quickly I am not a commercial painter although I did work for one for several years and prepping-- paint serves a function. There's a very exact reason you put paint on things and it's to protect it. It's the only function of paint. Then because you have to look at it all the time, let's make it look nice. Paint is a tool and so for paint to work as a tool, the entire paint job of painting is prepping everything.

The way that these two companies describe prepping are the only two companies out of the four. The other two are woefully inadequate in terms of describing what they're going to do to prep the services. Between FTA and the company FCL, those are the only two who they are the most expensive but they're the only two who listed adequately that they understand that prep is the whole job and that paint is the last thing you do and great, but prepping is the job. Between those two companies, what stood out to you for FCL versus FTA Construction if you would even--

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: I'm going to stick my nose in the head of Mr. Thampi. I also think there was a discussion in there about replacing some rotted soffit. The recommended company specifically said that was included. I believe the number two excluded the soffit. When you start talking about woodwork, that could be pretty expensive.

My understanding from reading through because anytime there's a recommendation that's not the low bid, you need to see why. The explanation from the gentleman who was the reviewer focused on that and that could easily be more than the \$2,000 difference when you start getting into woodwork because it's not just buying the wood, it's making sure it's properly done and properly installed. He highlighted that as a reason to go with the slightly higher bid because that is a potentially expensive item that was included there and excluded in the number two.

Mohan Thampi: It's shown in the table. He mentions it in line 10. Mid soffit damage, rotten soffit was not included by the \$8,900 proposal.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Also, it goes- is more specific and saying about, you said preppiness is the key to a good job. They also go by saying that they will repair any stock or any holes that needed to be patched where the other one says small patches and stuff like that. Also window framings, the other ones don't include window framings.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Which is where your leaks are happening.

Councilman Luis Pirela: It is, yes. Actually painting, I don't know if you guys know, but now part of the rectification.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes, absolutely.

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Councilman Luis Pirela: Painting is absolutely one of the requirements now. It's very important.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I think it is everything, yes. Absolutely.

Councilperson Darian Martin: I just have one final comment because I feel like I'm the one who opened this can of worms. [laughs] I'm really not talking about, soffits or windows or, or anything like that. That's not my issue. Like if they have insurance, kudos, that's better. They can do some soffits and some window work and all that other good stuff, and I'm sure we all know about painting. That's great.

My issues with the lack of options. If there is a company that can do all of those things and all those things we need, I'm imagining that there must be another company that also does all of those things that we need. It would be good to compare the pricing of those two. It's just the lack of options and also it's the frequency within which this happened that gives me pause because I don't know. I can just envision or imagine a world where someone just solicits bids from this same person all the time.

In my opinion, I don't think that's very fair and it doesn't provide a real access point for new companies and new businesses to do business with the city and grow their profile. \$10,000 is a small amount when we think about this budget for the city. I think a large amount for a small business. If you can save \$2,000 here or there, I think it's a good thing to do. I don't think that they're not qualified. My position is not that we shouldn't go with them, and my position is not that we should put out an RFP, I'd incur those additional expenses.

My position is that we should streamline and make sure that we have real access points for small businesses to do business with the Village of EL Portal, and be able to grow, it is the American dream. Number two, I want to make sure that we aren't just going back to the same exact well all the time, and we are definitely bargaining for the amount that we're spending because it's not our money. That's my point, but we can call for a vote [laughs] any time you guys want to.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Are there any other questions or comments from the council? Hearing none. Any questions or comments from the audience? Come on up. Name and address for the record.

Tom Pulliam: Tom Pulliam, 205 Northeast 86th Street. Two questions about the procurement process. The first one being, is it standard to get references and actually talk to past customers is the one being suggested highly referred? My follow-up question is when we are in situations where there's one recommended and it's over the price, where do we negotiate?

Are we looking at the median price or other prices for the exact same job and offering it to that company if they can match? How are we actually leveraging all the information that we're gathering and all the time and energy and resources that's put into that including the salaries for the folks who are generating those quotes for us? Thank you.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Mr. Pulliam. I don't know if Madam Manager or Mohan.

Mohan Thampi: Yes, I think he answered your first question. The fact is when we get a quote, a description of the work is given to them and it is not like a regular RFP, and then they submit the quotes, and then we look at the prices. Unless everyone missed everything out and it's something is so glaring, we may ask someone why is their price of this amount or why did they miss it out? That does take place. When it comes to be--

Tom Pulliam: I'm sorry, I was asking about references or **[unintelligible 01:46:23]**

Mohan Thampi: We do, yes, we do check. Actually, according to Carlos, all of them have been doing painting and he has seen their work and the factor is why FCL had the highest quote was because they included materials which others left out or their price, and then they didn't provide the license when they were asked to, and the insurance.

Tom Pulliam: Okay. References were checked. Great. Then is there a negotiation process or you just go with what they did?

Mohan Thampi: Yes and there'd only be a negotiation if there's a reason to do it. If something was left out, and we think that-- but in--

Tom Pulliam: Not to get the best price for the taxpayers.

Mohan Thampi: Then we are not-- when you get quotes, you are getting from qualified people where if you start haggling and we are not going to get anything done. [chuckles] Because oh, let's negotiate. If you negotiate, why did you negotiate with one person? I could keep negotiating.

Tom Pulliam: It's never attempted? I'm just trying to get information.

Mohan Thampi: We do. If everybody missed out something or we will ask them, or if there's something which missed out or we think we left out, we say, "Okay, what if we add this and what are your prices?" Everyone will be given the same shot. Here they were given a proposal and yes, a description of the work and they gave us a price and after they gave us the price we asked for the licenses. We asked for the insurance and then we looked at it and, and made a recommendation. Carlos looked at it and then made a table and had me look at it and then, of course, we also had our legal also look at it.

Tom Pulliam: Yes, I'm just asking about the business process. Is that like a council person thing, you guys would recommend if you wanted to negotiate the price or do we just always run with the top price?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: There's just never really a negotiation process in government contracts. Whatever the entity is putting out, it doesn't have to be officially termed in RFP, but they're putting out a request. Scope of work is there and then the companies just as the attorney said, put their best foot forward. The company takes the scope of work, establishes what their cost is for them to do that,

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establishes what their business model says their profit should be on top of that and now you got a quote. They put it against the other, that's the way every--
[crosstalk]

Tom Pulliam: All I'm asking is do we as a village ever try to negotiate the prices, get better deals?

Village Manager Alou: Yes.

Tom Pulliam: Play them off of each other?

Village Manager Alou: The answer is yes. We do that all the time.

Tom Pulliam: In this specific case, that's not the recommendation because it's different.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: To Councilperson Martin's point, the best way to accomplish that is to get a wider range of options. This is her point exactly. Is how to accomplish where your question is how do we negotiate better in this format? The way to negotiate better is exactly as she's saying, we need more options.

Tom Pulliam: Weren't there four or five options provided?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: What he's saying is, if you want to negotiate with the one person you've chosen, why are you not negotiating with all four? Now you start negotiating with all four and it's--

Tom Pulliam: You don't need to negotiate with all four

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Until the other three sue you for negotiating with one and not the others, and then you do need to negotiate with all four. In terms of that reality of fair play. Again to Councilperson Martin's point--

Tom Pulliam: I'm just trying to offer some solutions because I'm hearing that the procurement process, really is not going satisfactory for anybody and there's a lot of time and energy going into it. I'm just trying to understand what is the process, what is the steps that our elected representatives and staff take in order to best utilize the tax funds.

Mohan Thampi: The biggest cities--[crosstalk]

Tom Pulliam: What I'm taking away is that negotiations can and sometimes do happen when there's multiple bids received when they have all the licenses and everything together. That's what I'm taking away.

Mohan Thampi: You're talking about setting up a purchasing department, which the bigger cities and all because of the quantity of work they do. Remember, El Portal is basically the smallest city.

Tom Pulliam: So we have less negotiating power, is what I understand.

Mohan Thampi: Right now I can tell you a lot of cities are having problems getting quotes for work. It's not just El Portal.

Tom Pulliam: I'm not asking about quotes, I'm just asking about the process of actually distributing the funds for that. The tax funds and budget allocated and all of that.

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Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Okay. Let me put us back down on Earth for a second. Just in the past month, my wife and I have repainted a single-family home in the Midwest for about \$4,000. There is still just for a little pieces of wood rot around like eight spots. There's still \$3,000 to \$4,000 worth of woodwork that needs to be done and then touch up on the paint come in and after that. That's on a single-family residence in the Midwest. I just want to establish firstly that between these four quotes, none of them are looking like highway robbery. I'll just-- I want to establish that as--

Tom Pulliam: I think that's been established.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Okay. All right. Now that we're not dealing with highway robbery, what we're simply looking to do is find the most bank value for the cost. I hope that the best-looking candidate is somewhere in the middle. That's my always my hope. Oh, God, I hope the best candidate is somewhere in the middle. That will happen with enough options is what's saying. In terms of the procurement process, first of all, in the largest cities is where you have a purchasing department. That's where almost all of your corruption is taking place. That's where all your envelopes full of money go. Is in those procurement departments. Really our challenge is that we're small. Our challenge is just trying to get enough people interested to do the bids. I keep going back to Councilpersons Martin's point. If we are able to focus on that aspect of it, how do we get more bids? How do we get the word out more efficiently? How do we-- information sheet on what they might need to provide could help those pieces.

That sounds the overwhelming consensus, as Councilperson Martin outlined, is to find a way to have more options. As far as just straight up negotiating with somebody that we see on a bid, that's just-- Is just not how-- it's possible-- That is off the table except for extreme circumstances or where the bid has to be redone, is what he's saying. Outside of that, we simply need more options. Councilperson Martin certainly let us know very clearly that is the case tonight. It sounds through your question, that's why we've arrived at as well.

Village Manager Alou: May I just add to. Yes. We do negotiate quite often. We are actually in the process. In fact, one of the items was pulled from tonight's agenda because we're still in the process of negotiating it. It does happen. As stated earlier, we're small so we don't get the responses that we want. We are at an issue, at a standpoint where we've gotten one proposal for a very important project. That's what holds up a lot of things. We do negotiate when possible and where possible, and we're also looking for best prices, but we don't get the responses as we should. That's why it's taken a year for us to get to just this.

Tom Pulliam: Understood and I appreciate hearing that negotiation does take place and that's possible, and we use that as a tool to be responsible with our funding here. Thank you for the information.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Any other questions or comments from the audience residents? You guys good? Back to the council, any questions or comments from the council before I ask for a motion? All right. Hearing none. Do I have a motion to approve Resolution H5 building exterior painting?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Move for approval.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Move approval from Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward. Do I have a second?

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: I'll second.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second from Councilperson Urbom. Madam Clerk for resolution. H five building exterior painting. May I please have a roll call? [silence]

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Martin.

Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

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

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela.

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes. Five to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Next is Resolution H6.

Councilman Luis Pirela: H6 on the Tot Lot Park restroom. Resolution to the Village Council of the Village El Portal of Miami-Dade County, Florida, providing for an ADA-compliant restroom for the tot lot Park of the village of El Portal of Miami-Dade County providing for incorporation of recitals, providing for an effective date.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. This was moved from last month's meeting with some of the same questions that existed from the last item. Madam Manager, if you want to jump in?

Village Manager Alou: Yes. Thank you. I do recall Councilperson Martin and the Vice Mayor had a couple of questions. We addressed those offline with them and the Public Works director. If anyone else has any further questions or if you would like to talk about those responses we can certainly do that now.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Do I have any questions or comments from the council? Hearing none. Do I have questions or comments from the audience, residents, visitors? Hearing none. Do I have a motion to approve resolution H6?

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

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

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Second.

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Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Second by Councilperson Urbom. Madam Clerk, now please have a roll call for H6, tot lot restroom.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Roll call. Councilperson Darian Martin?

Councilperson Darian Martin: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Lightfoot-Ward.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: [unintelligible 01:57:30]

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Councilperson Urbom.

Vice Mayor Anders Urbom: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Vice Mayor Pirela?

Councilman Luis Pirela: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Mayor Nickerson?

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Yes.

Village Clerk Yenise Jacobi: Motion passes. Five to none.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much. Madam Manager of your report. You're up.

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: Mr. Mayor, did we do Seven?

Village Manager Alou: We moved seven. Thank you. No. Okay. Thank you. Mayor and village council. Have we-- Are we ready now for the-- Okay. I'm going to keep my manager's report short. It is a nine-pager, it's actually short considering other months that have passed. We have good news all the way around, I'm happy to report. Mayor Nickerson and I met with our legislative team and members of the appropriations administrative staff to discuss village hall renovations project. That is the one project that has lasted through our legislative session, and that was the good news that we're excited about, that we're still in the game to get the funding necessary to expand the village hall so that we can do some renovations, much-needed renovations. Police Chief Mendez wrote a supporting letter to Governor Ron DeSantis explaining the need to separate the police department from the administrative staff. Because public safety and police work really is sensitive that it has been trying and troubling for everyone involved to work in the same spaces. We are awaiting response now and fingers are crossed. Our legislative team will be requesting to meet with you in our upcoming council meeting to just give you some information on the funding opportunities that happen this or not funding opportunity-- That funding opportunity, but also just what happened in the legislator session and what came out of short-term vacation rental, and a lot of the hot topics that were considered this season. I know that our own village attorney was very much aware of all of these things as well. We'll be hearing about that and preparing for fall session very soon. I will tell you that we are still on par, or I shouldn't say still on par. We're back in the game for getting our reimbursement, our appeal from FEMA and FDM and we are talking every, no, no, no. Not too sure. Not too sure, [laughs], just listen, we are in the appeal process still, but at least we've got names from FDM, people we can speak with.

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There's been so much turnover that we haven't been able to get any traction for several months, almost a year now, and so we're back in, we're getting phone calls back and requests for more information. We've gotten through federal level now we're going through the state and I hope to have the information-- The mayor and I have been in these meetings talking beg and pleading getting things accomplished to get funding back. We were actually informed today that there's some money, a little bit about a hundred thousand coming on the next day or so. That's a great start, and we're expecting more money coming in the next couple of weeks.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We're keeping everything.

Village Manager Alou: Yes, we're just going to keep it on the down.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: We got some great news, but we, for right now, we just keeping it chill.

Village Manager Alou: Yes. We are just going to keep it chill for now. Thank you, Mayor. [laughs] Let's see. I'm going to go on to, the village now has a new landscaping and tree services contractor. It's called Green Dreams Paradise Company. I mean, that's a mouthful, [laughs] but they seem to be really good and responsive and energized, and they're a small business as well that are really happy to have our business.

We will be sending Orchid Man on to greener pastures for them. They will conclude their work with us on June 30th, but in the meantime, Green Dreams Paradise Company will be doing our tree trimming for hurricane safety as we do annually. They're conducting the trimming June 12th, 13th and 14th, and they'll be mulching as they go, so we won't even have to worry about bulk pickup. That is a boon for us. The sanctuary property is now Village Plaza, that's the name of the project. The project is ongoing with permits and plans having been submitted this month to planning, zoning, and the building department so soon I'm hopeful that we'll be seeing something go public with this project. As we've expressed before, they're expecting to run a private **[unintelligible 02:02:31]** plant sewer conversion at that property. They will be tying into Miami Shore's Northeast 96th Street Pump Station, so that will bring a lot of energy and business to Northeast Second Avenue.

That's exciting. We did hear tonight about our road diet and mobility study, as well as the lowering of the speed limit. I can't believe it we made it because this has been about four years that we've been begging the county. I think that mobility study that you all approved, or not mobility, I'm sorry, the traffic study that you all approved for the vendor of David A Plummer & Associates to conduct that made the difference. We went about it through the county. We dotted I's crossed T's, but it really took us to get our own traffic study commissioned to get us where we want to be.

I'm hopeful that our residents will see the change very quickly and we're going to conduct an education campaign to announce the whole 25-mile-an-hour speed limit, and our police will be conducting their educational campaign as well. The owners of the Kavista Project Development are planning a second development along the

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canal, it's called The Launch. They too have submitted some plans that are being reviewed in planning and zoning as well, but soon that will be coming our way. That's an excitement that will bring more energy to our annexed area and we're happy to continue to work with Skateboard Miami. As a result of several months of complaints of noise, Mr. Strauss met with me and the code enforcement officer Simmons, and he's also met several times with Mayor Nickerson. We requested he do a sound mitigation plan to address his issues with the sound and his venue. He's been compliant, he wants to work with us.

He will be submitting something very soon, but he has explained it will be some kind of sound curtain that is retractable. I think that will be a great remedy to help out Mr. Scott and other people over there, but no, we have been listening, it's just also understanding this is Z4 or Z5. We have to allow that business, but our code doesn't address that level of a business at this point, so we'll address your issues, we will. Mayor Nickerson, Chief Mendez, Major Harrison and I met today to review the hurricane and emergency preparedness plans for the villages.

We do it annually. We're the emergency management team, and we do a review of plans and vendors, and opportunities just before the season. Then I conduct a training for staff on what to do and who goes where and who should we call. As stated, we will be ordering sandbags and ordering more sand to fill for our residents, and just keeping the information waves open for our residents so that they are aware as in real-time or as close to real-time as possible as we are, and that we're able to share information.

The Village of El Portal Police Department will receive three new exterior impact doors, three impact windows, a generator, and a new air conditioning unit from the HUD critical facilities grant that we received, that's \$50,000. We're looking forward to those improvements, but that will at least fortify the police department and that was a painstaking grant that we had to prepare for but we're now awaiting the notice to proceed, and we will do an RFP to get the contractors that are needed to do that work.

You will see a little bit of change in terms of the doors and the windows soon in the police department. Also just speaking of police, the department completed three-day certification training and active shooter. They actually had exercises of active shooter, training was a fantastic thing. The witness, believe me. Multi-agency active shooter drills were conducted at FIU North Campus along with Miami-Dade priority response team.

Officers Canella and Officer Padron completed a 40-hour certification training in tactical medical response with the City of Miami and Miami-Dade Police. We are awaiting the arrival of Baby Harrison for Police Major Thomas Harrison's baby is due tomorrow at 7:30 in the morning. We'll have a new little face to welcome to El Portal this time tomorrow.

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We are onboarding our new zoning contractor that's The Corradino Group, and you met them last month and things are moving quickly. They were very good, we're just continuing with some onboarding and getting building department aligned with them presently. You'll see more of them, especially at our upcoming planning and zoning meeting. Let's see. I think that is probably about enough. [laughs] I will leave the rest for you to review on the Village website, but I thank you for your time and thank you for the opportunity to continue to work for you.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All right, the Mayor's report, you guys see it on your agenda. Everybody gets that, everybody has my phone number. You guys have gotten my cards numerous times. Does anybody have any questions about the mayor's report? You guys can contact me. All right, moving on to the attorney report.

Village Attorney Joseph Geller: Very briefly. We continue to negotiate with the FOP on a possible contract. We have a meeting scheduled with them tomorrow where they're going to present us their latest proposal, which we'll then analyze and respond to. The other item to comment on is the short-term rental. The house passed the bill during the past session.

The Senate passed the bill during the past session. They were very similar, but they weren't identical, and somehow they did not manage to resolve their differences although it looked like they would literally up until the last minute, but they didn't so there's no new bill. I've been in touch with attorney Keith Brady, who we've been talking about and reported on that, and in consultation with the committee Chair Councilperson, Martin, we have what we think is a workable strategy. We're reviewing some materials I received as recently as Sunday. There are, by the way, as the old Chinese proverb goes, "There are many paths to reach one's destination," and we are looking at some paths that can provide us with some alternatives which I think would meet some of the comments that were made tonight by various people and that's consistent.

We're going to be moving forward both with some revisions to our existing SDR ordinance and probably with some revisions to other ordinances as well and I'll continue to work on that with the committee chair. Once we have something we'll then begin to consult individually with other members of council with an I towards hopefully having this on the agenda for the next council meeting and that concludes my report.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: Thank you very much, Attorney Geller. Before I go to good and welfare, any questions or comments from the council about anything? You guys good? Any questions or comments from the audience, residents about anything? You guys good? Good and welfare anybody can come up and talk for three minutes say your name address for the record. You can talk about anything at all, it doesn't have to be only on the agenda, anything at all it's on your mind.

Hearing seeing none. Moving on to adjournment. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Councilwoman Dr. Anna E. Lightfoot-Ward: [unintelligible 02:11:06]

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

Councilperson Darian Martin: Second.

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

Councilmembers: Aye.

Mayor Omarr C. Nickerson: All opposed say nay. Hearing none. The council meeting for Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023 is adjourned at 9:30 PM. Thank you very much. Great job, guys.

[02:11:34] [END OF AUDIO]

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