

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

DATE: September 11, 2024

TITLE: DISCUSS STREAMLINING CITY COMMISSION AGENDA PROCEDURES.

RECOMMENDATION

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

ANALYSIS

At our first meeting with the new City Commission on December 13th, we had a very productive meeting with robust discussion on a number of important issues facing our city. As I mentioned in my December newsletter, out of 123 agenda items – many of which the prior Commission had carried over for up to one year – only 16 agenda items were not reached.

In addition, at that meeting, the City Commission unanimously approved Commissioner Fernandez's ordinance to provide that agenda items not reached at a Commission meeting would take priority over new items at the next regular meeting.

That is all movement in the right direction, but we mustn't stop there.

As my colleagues share the goal of conducting more efficient meetings, I propose that we discuss further updating our agenda procedures to enhance our effectiveness and better serve our residents.

The initial changes I am proposing below for the Commission's consideration are intended merely serve as a springboard for discussion about how to implement procedures that better reflect how this Commission wants to govern itself. The intent is to remove routine housekeeping matters from our limited Commission meeting time in order to be able to focus more fully on bigger issues which matter to our residents. I welcome input and additional proposals. Based on our discussion, I would ask the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance reflecting those changes that appear to achieve consensus.

The potential changes to our agenda procedures could include the following:

1. C2 - Competitive Bid Items: Consider delegating the issuance of routine (office services, minor procurement, etc.) competitive solicitations to the Administration (with the exception of long-term leases or public-private projects, which should be initially approved by the Commission). Similarly, consider delegating to the City Manager the award of routine procurements up to a certain dollar threshold. All competitive solicitations issued or awarded would be included in a monthly information report, to keep the City Commission apprised of the progress of all matters.

2. C4 - Referrals: Consider allowing members of the City Commission, with the consent of a Committee Chair, to place referrals directly to the following month's committee agendas, except for referrals to Land Use Boards (in order to ensure that the City Commission initiates any legislative item that could create zoning in progress). Referrals to Committee must be germane to the Committee's scope. All items referred would be included on a commission agenda as part of an information report, so that all members of the Commission and residents could be timely apprised of all items referred to Committee.
3. Consent Items: Consider delegating to the Administration the authority to apply for and accept grants, or to enter into routine Interlocal Agreements or grant easements to other governmental entities such as FDOT or Miami-Dade County. All items would be included on a commission agenda as part of an information report, so that elected and residents could be up to date on these matters.
4. Earlier Print Date for the Monthly Regular City Commission Meeting: Currently, the agenda for a regular City Commission meeting prints 7 days prior to the meeting. Consider adjusting the agenda publication date so that the City Commission agenda is printed twelve days prior to the meeting. For the regular City Commission meetings which occur on a Wednesday each month, this would mean that the agenda prints on a Friday, which would allow elected and the public one additional weekend to review agenda items and prepare for the monthly meeting.
5. Strictly Limit Addendum and Supplemental Items. Item No. 4 above would only be meaningful if the City Commission strictly limited the ability to add late items. We need a better procedure to change our habits. While change is hard, this may be well worth it. Consider eliminating the ability to add addendum items on a 5/7ths vote. If an item does not print by the due date, it should simply roll over to the next regular meeting, unless it is an emergency or time-sensitive item (i.e. defined as one where the item would be rendered moot if not acted upon by a date certain).
6. Limits on Commission Sponsored Agenda Items. Currently, we allow unlimited referrals, 12 new resolutions and discussion items (combined), and 4 ordinances, per each member of the City Commission. We also allow for a 5/7th waiver of the limit, effectively allowing each member to place an unlimited number of items on each agenda. I propose we continue the unlimited referrals and consider setting a limit on the number of new items each member may sponsor to a total of 10 new items (excluding items that have moved out of Committees back to the Commission).
7. Adherence to LDR Cycle. Now that the City Commission has approved a quarterly cycle for Land Development Regulations, we should consider strictly adhering to the approved cycle and perhaps calling a quarterly Special Meeting solely dedicated to Land Development Regulations (LDRs). This would free the City Commission up to consider other matters during regular Commission meetings; we should be focusing on far more than just acting like a glorified zoning board.
8. Public Hearing on First Reading for Ordinances. Florida law only requires a public hearing for second readings of most ordinances. We should consider allowing for an additional public hearing on first reading of ordinances, if requested by the sponsor of the ordinance, in order to promote transparency and public engagement. In addition, if the ordinance is vetted at Committee, the additional public hearing, if requested by the sponsor, could take place at Committee, with the Committee Chair's consent.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate?
(FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on . See BIE at:
<https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notices/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CONCLUSION

Applicable Area

Citywide

**Is this a “Residents Right to Know” item,
pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?**

No

**Is this item related to a G.O. Bond
Project?**

No

**Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481,
includes a principal engaged in lobbying?** No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

Department

Office of Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

Co-sponsor(s)

Commissioner Joseph Magazine