

“Corrupt Carlos” Giménez approved a 67 percent pay raise for himself and increased his own pension. He makes \$250,000 a year, more than almost every big-city Mayor in the country. He also kept his taxpayer-funded Mercedes-Benz after slashing \$400 million in government jobs and spending.

2018: Giménez Arranged For His Pay To Increase Roughly 67% To \$250,000 And Agreed To Take The Full \$250,000 Salary. “Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Gimenez arranged for a pay increase that took effect Monday, with his longtime salary of \$150,000 set to increase about 67 percent to \$250,000. County commissioners authorized the new \$250,000 salary when they approved the mayor’s proposed budget last month. Gimenez’s budget chief, Jennifer Moon, told commissioners before the Sept. 20 vote that ‘the mayor may opt to receive a salary up to that amount.’ On Monday night, Gimenez issued a statement saying he would take the full \$250,000.” [Miami Herald, [10/2/18](#)]

- **HEADLINE: “Miami-Dade’s Mayor Secures A Pay Boost As The County’s New Budget Takes Effect”** [Miami Herald, [10/2/18](#)]
- **Gimenez In 2018: “I Will Be Earning A Salary Of \$250,000 A Year.”** ““After taking a \$150,000 cut in compensation since 2011, and saving Miami-Dade County over \$1 million in salary alone, I will be earning a salary of \$250,000 a year starting Oct. 1,’ Gimenez said. ‘I made a decision to reduce my salary and benefits by half when I was first elected mayor in 2011 during a tough economic time in which all employees had to face salary reductions. Today, after forgoing my full salary for seven years, our county’s economy is strong, and our efforts to tighten the belt have paid off.’” [Miami Herald, [10/2/18](#)]
- **2017: Giménez Pushed To Increase His Mayoral Salary To \$324,000 A Year.** “The mayor of New York, America’s largest and most expensive city to run, earns about \$225,000 a year to serve as the municipal government’s top administrative officer. A proposal to give Miami-Dade’s mayor a raise would have Carlos Gimenez earning up to \$324,000 a year, nearly 50 percent more than Bill de Blasio makes running NYC. In fact, a proposal narrowly approved by a county committee this week and endorsed through a spokesman for Gimenez could make Miami-Dade’s chief executive one of the highest paid big-city mayors in the country. Research by Gimenez’s office and a 2017 survey by the American City Business Journals found that San Francisco’s mayor, the late Edwin Lee, earned the most of the nation’s large-city mayors. The Miami-Dade survey said Lee earned \$365,200 in salary and fringe benefits.” [Miami Herald, [12/13/17](#)]
- **HEADLINE: “How The Mayor Of Miami-Dade Might End Up Earning More Than The Mayor Of New York”** [Miami Herald, [12/13/17](#)]

September 20, 2018: The Miami-Dade Board Of County Commissioners Adopted The Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget. On September 20, 2018 the Miami Dade County Board of Commissioners Adopted “ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE COUNTYWIDE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2018 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2019;” [Ordinance 18-97, File Number 182452, adopted [9/20/18](#)]

- **The Miami-Dade Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget Gave The Mayor A Salary Of \$250,000.** “Ms. Moon noted that the Mayor’s salary included in the fiscal year 2018-19 budget is \$250,000 with approval of this budget the Mayor my [sic] opt to receive a salary up to this amount and the pay plan will be amended accordingly.” [Miami-Dade County Board of Commissioners, Minutes, [9/20/18](#)]

2019: Gimenez Was Paid A Gross Salary Of \$251,129.84 For His Work As Mayor. According to Miami-Dade County records, Gimenez was paid a gross salary of \$251,129.84 in 2019 for his work as “Mayor Miami-Dade County.” [Miami-Dade County, [2019](#)]

2019 - MAYOR'S OFFICE					
NAME	TITLE	GROSS PAY LAST PAYCHECK	ADJ GROSS LAST PAYCHECK - (HLTH & FRS)	YTD GROSS	ADJ YTD GROSS - (HLTH & FRS)
GIMENEZ, CARLOS A	MAYOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY	\$9,658.84	\$9,370.38	\$251,129.84	\$243,629.88

- **2020: Gimenez Earned The Same Gross Paycheck As He Had In 2019 -- \$9,658.84 – Which Totaled To \$251,118.40 Over 26 Pay Checks.** In 2020, Gimenez’s gross paycheck was \$9,658.84. Over 26 paychecks, this totaled to \$251,118.40. Gimenez’s gross paycheck in 2019 was also \$9,658.84. [Miami-Dade County, [2020](#); [Miami-Dade County, [2019](#)]

2020 - MAYOR'S OFFICE					
NAME	TITLE	GROSS PAY LAST PAYCHECK	ADJ GROSS LAST PAYCHECK - (HLTH & FRS)	YTD GROSS	ADJ YTD GROSS - (HLTH & FRS)
GIMENEZ, CARLOS A	MAYOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY	\$9,658.84	\$9,370.38	\$144,882.60	\$140,555.70

2018: The Third-Highest-Paid Big City Mayor In The United States Made \$248,141. “San Francisco Mayor London Breed’s \$301,000 base salary is the highest in the nation among mayors. It’s also \$119,000 more than what Columbus, Ohio, Mayor Andrew Ginther earns each year, even though San Francisco has just 5,000 more residents than its Midwestern peer. The Business Journals looked at the salaries of 57 mayors, 15 of them women. Joining Breed among the top 10 highest-paid are Libby Schaff of Oakland, Calif., who makes \$212,000, and Muriel Bowser of Washington, D.C., who makes \$200,000 a year. See all the mayors and their salaries in the attached gallery. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio is the second-highest paid mayor in the country. Rounding out the top five are: Eric Garcetti of Los Angeles, who makes \$248,141; Sylvester Turner of Houston, who makes \$236,189, and Jim Kelly of Philadelphia, who makes \$218,474.” [Business Journals, [10/9/18](#)]

2009: Giménez Received \$27,839 In Taxpayer Funding For His Lease On A 2009 Mercedes Benz ML350W4 While The County Commission Cut More Than \$400 Million In Jobs And Spending. “When County Hall’s budget ax fell last year, the mayor and commissioners slashed more than \$400 million in jobs and spending. Yet one perk was preserved: Their taxpayer-subsidized luxury cars. The public picks up most of the tab for Commissioner Joe Martinez’s 2010 Lexus GX460, Audrey Edmonson’s 2010 Cadillac SRX and Carlos Gimenez’s 2009 Mercedes Benz ML 350. [...] In November 2008, the county paid \$27,839 for Gimenez’s three-year lease on a 2009 Mercedes Benz ML350W4.” [Miami Herald, [5/23/10](#)]

- **PolitiFact Found That, As A County Commissioner, Gimenez Drove A Mercedes-Benz Funded By A County Car Allowance.** “Car allowances -- or the use of city-owned cars -- is one piece of an official’s compensation package that may include salary, expenses, health insurance and pensions. We are not providing a full comparison here of every part of the officials’ compensation -- but we think its worth looking at the benefit of the car allowance within the context of their salaries and expense accounts. [...] Gimenez was a county commissioner between 2004 and 2011 when he stepped down to run for mayor. In his final year he was earning an annual salary of \$6,000 plus about \$55,000 in benefits, including the car allowance. J.C. Planas, an attorney for the Gimenez campaign and a former state legislator, told us in an e-mail that Gimenez was entitled to the same car allowances as all the commissioners. For the last year and a half, Gimenez drove a Mercedes-Benz ML and prior to that a Mercedes-Benz E320. Gimenez said in a June 16 interview that his most recent car, the Mercedes-Benz ML, was silver, and he thought it was a 2009 car. He said it was \$2.44 above the \$800 monthly car allowance and that he paid for that out of his own pocket. [...] Gimenez doesn’t dispute that he had a car allowance -- but he said that Alvarez had access to more cars and drivers.” [PolitiFact, [6/20/11](#)]

2009: Giménez Voted For The Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Miami-Dade County Budget. Giménez voted for, “ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE COUNTYWIDE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2009 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2010” The ordinance was adopted 13-0. [Ordinance 09-83, [9/17/09](#)]

- **The Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Miami-Dade County Budget Laid Off 945 County Workers.** “It was billed as a public hearing to reconcile a \$444 million budget deficit, but none of the negotiations took place before the packed audience at Miami-Dade County Hall Thursday night and early Friday. Instead, the budget was crafted in a series of private meetings between County Manager George Burgess and individual commissioners in a nearby conference room outside the commission chamber. At 5:01 a.m., exactly 12 hours after the meeting began Thursday evening, county commissioners approved a \$7.4 billion budget. [...] The losers: county employees who stood to lose \$106 million in salary cuts under the mayor’s original budget and now stand to sacrifice another \$68 million in assorted benefits. But the number of proposed layoffs has been reduced from 1,700 to 945.” [Miami Herald, 9/18/09]

- **2009: Giménez Supported The \$106 Million In Miami-Dade County Employee Salary Cuts In The Fiscal Year 2009-2010 County Budget.** “Money that allowed county administrators to stave off deeper cuts came from a few different sources: savings from delaying capital improvement projects, cutting employee expenses such as travel and putting a hold on merit raises. County employees also will have to absorb \$106 million in salary cuts. Commissioners may end up basing that on a sliding scale, with the biggest earners taking the biggest cuts. Commissioner Carlos Gimenez said he supports the tiered salary cuts, and said Burgess has suggested having a range of cuts from 4 percent to 7.5 percent.” [South Florida Business Journal, 9/18/09]

Miami-Dade Commission OK's \$7.4 billion budget amid cuts, layoffs

The Miami Herald

September 18, 2009 Friday

Byline: MATTHEW HAGGMAN AND JACK DOLAN, mhaggman@MiamiHerald.com

It was billed as a public hearing to reconcile a \$44 million budget deficit, but none of the negotiations took place before the packed audience at Miami-Dade County Hall Thursday night and early Friday.

Instead, the budget was crafted in a series of private meetings between County Manager George Burgess and individual commissioners in a nearby conference room outside the commission chamber.

At 5:01 a.m., exactly 12 hours after the meeting began Thursday evening, county commissioners approved a \$7.4 billion budget.

The winners: elderly residents who get county subsidized meals and community-based service organizations paid for through the commissioners' discretionary funds. Both saw most of their county funding restored.

The losers: county employees who stood to lose \$106 million in salary cuts under the mayor's original budget and now stand to sacrifice another \$68 million in assorted benefits.

But the number of proposed layoffs has been reduced from 1,700 to 945.

Many of the jobs and social programs were restored by savings found elsewhere in the budget, including \$24 million from the county's health insurance reserve fund and \$9 million saved by delaying capital projects, such as maintenance at county jails and renovations at Miami-Dade's police training center.

But, even with an approved budget, there is still work to be done. The pay cuts must be negotiated with the unions in meetings scheduled for the coming weeks. It's also yet to be determined which 945 employees will be laid off.

While community based organizations saw 70 percent of funding from a year ago restored, it remains to be seen how that money will be distributed among the groups.

The mayor's office budget was cut by 10 percent, as were the county attorney and County Commission offices.

"We're going to really look at our budget and the way we do business," County Mayor Carlos Alvarez said early Friday following the vote. "I don't see next year being any better."

The vote was taken after 7 ½ hours of public comment, in which more than 200 residents representing county-funded social programs and employee unions pleaded to keep their budgets intact. Some who questioned big-ticket county raises were cut off from speaking.

"I beg you, please don't take our funding," Dorothy Quintana, a 101-year-old from De Hostos Center in Wynwood, told commissioners from a wheelchair.

"Think of the all the seniors. If you take this away from us, what are we going to do, lay on the floor and die?"

More than a dozen blue-shirted children from the Boys & Girls Club marched into the County Commission chambers seeking financial assistance. Domestic violence victims from MUJER, a Homestead-based organization that supports battered women, pleaded for funding.

Two groups -- the Roxy Theatre Group and Greater Miami Youth Symphony -- broke into song in a bid for funding. With two violinists and a cellist, the group sang The Prayer, made famous by Celine Dion and Andrea Bocelli.

"We will have to turn away more than half of our children if we don't get funding," said Susanne Pinedo of Roxy Theatre Group, which has some 550 arts students.

Zaymar Vargas, who works for the suicide prevention hot line Switchboard Miami, told commissioners she receives roughly 80 phone calls per day.

"With every call, you can feel the desperation, anguish and pain," of residents struggling through the hardships of the recession. Calling her service the last chance many despondent residents get to "connect with someone who can help them," Vargas begged commissioners not to cut off funding.

But with dwindling property values and a vote two weeks ago to keep the tax rate flat, the county had less revenue than last year. So something had to go.

Chairman Dennis Moss opened the hearing with an admonition for speakers to refrain from mentioning politicians by name when complaining about high salaries and other issues recently in the news.

It didn't take long for the topic to come up -- especially in light of Miami Herald reports of double-digit raises handed out this year by Mayor Alvarez and Chairman Moss. Both have defended the raises, but many taxpayers have expressed outrage that they came at a time of economic despair.

"Those that have salaries way beyond their needs should be making the sacrifices to share the pain with those who cannot help themselves," said Clyde House of Pinecrest.

But when he changed tack, and called the board's recent decision to commit county funds to the Florida Marlins' new Little Havana stadium "the most unjust decision in the history of government," Moss cut him off, saying: "Wrap it up now. You're starting to veer."

Rodrigo Lozano, representing the National Association of Social Workers, stayed until nearly midnight to speak his mind, but his two minutes ended prematurely -- the podium microphone was cut off when Lozano turned to Alvarez and mentioned the recent pay raises.

"I was trying to say that the mayor's current actions make a mockery of our representative democracy," Lozano said after walking back to his seat with a stunned expression on his face.

"Increasing the salaries of the well paid while doing away with the social infrastructure is a disgrace."

Later, Moss wasted little time to shut down Richard Ashenoff, a 27-year-old Kendall resident, who criticized commissioners for gross mismanagement of taxpayer funds.

"That's enough," Moss said, turning off the microphone at the podium at which Ashenoff was standing.

"I've been here since 5 p.m.," a furious Ashenoff said outside the chambers. "It was rude, not democratic, unacceptable. I came here to voice my opinion -- it was a violation of free speech."

Immediately after the last speaker finished at 12:30 a.m., Moss recessed the meeting. As a crowd of hundreds sat in the gallery and watched, individual commissioners disappeared one-by-one into a back office to negotiate with County Manager Burgess.

They faced a steep budget challenge.

While Mayor Alvarez has been warning of a brutal budget season since February, he released the first hard numbers in July -- a \$427 million shortfall he proposed closing with a small property tax increase, eliminating 1,700 county jobs and a 5 percent pay cut for all county employees.

Several commissioners had proposed a sliding scale, cutting more from higher earners in county government and sparing the lowest paid. Under that system, nobody would suffer more financially than executives and well-paid members of powerful unions -- which would be a marked change from recent history.

The mayor's proposal also called for cuts to a wide array of social programs, including county parks, grants for small businesses and meals for needy seniors. On Thursday afternoon, however, Alvarez promised there would be no cuts to the senior meals program.

But with fallen property values, commissioners' move to keep the tax flat means an even bigger budget gap of \$444 million.

For the last two weeks, the mayor and commissioners have been meeting to try to reach accord on how to craft a budget, with little visible success.

Illustrating the challenge, in recent meetings called to find ways to cut the budget, commissioners desperate to preserve favored programs added \$100 million.

Yet the blueprint finally came together in another marathon meeting in a commission chamber known for it.

Miami-Dade County Commission approves \$7.4B budget

South Florida Business Journal

September 18, 2009 Friday

Byline: Oscar Pedro Musibay

After hours of public pleas to avoid cuts in social services, Miami-Dade commissioners restored funding to key programs such as meals for senior citizens, shrank executive salaries by 10 percent and spared jobs as part of next year's \$7.4 billion budget.

County Manager George Burgess emphasized after the meeting, which ended in the early hours of Friday morning, that maintaining vital services was a priority, despite the \$444 million budget deficit. However, the budget also resulted in 1,000 job cuts.

"You are not going to see law enforcement officers, firefighters losing their jobs," Burgess said. "We are keeping those vital services intact. We kept elderly services together. There may be some reductions in our parks, but significantly less than there otherwise would have been."

Commissioners voted to approve Burgess' amended budget, which incorporated commission priorities set during prior meetings and which jibed with many of Mayor Carlos Alvarez's priorities.

Despite proposed cuts, programs for the elderly, veterans and the disabled were fully funded. Head Start slots were reinstated and a plan to close libraries one day a week was ditched, as was the plan to do away with the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, whose possible shuttering triggered protest from police and the public.

Other programs run by community-based organizations, whose clients and employees packed County Hall, and the county's parks and recreation department, got much of their funding.

As he did two weeks ago, Aldolfo Henriques, chairman of the Miami-Dade Cultural Affairs Council, implored commissioners to fully fund the arts.

"This is a huge economic engine for this community," he told the Business Journal. "The reality is that, in my mind, if we lose one dollar, we are jeopardizing the arts, and we cannot afford to do that."

In the end, the veteran banker got much of what he wanted.

The cultural arts, which faced \$11 million in cuts, had the majority of its money by early morning. To allow for Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Miami Art Museum, Miami Museum of Science and Planetarium, Vizcaya Museum and Gardens, and the Zoological Society of Florida to get the same funding as last year, the county is shifting convention development taxes meant for the South Dade Performing Arts Center operating budget to those facilities.

Money that allowed county administrators to stave off deeper cuts came from a few different sources: savings from delaying capital improvement projects, cutting employee expenses such as travel and putting a hold on merit raises. County employees also will have to absorb \$106 million in salary cuts. Commissioners may end up basing that on a sliding scale, with the biggest earners taking the biggest cuts.

Commissioner Carlos Gimenez said he supports the tiered salary cuts, and said Burgess has suggested having a range of cuts from 4 percent to 7.5 percent.

Gimenez proposed his own range. Those making \$100,000 to \$150,000 would get a 7.5 percent cut, those making \$150,000 to \$250,000 would get a 10 percent cut and those making \$250,000 or more would see a 15 percent cut. Anyone making less than \$100,000 would see a 5 percent reduction in pay.

Gimenez presented the idea at a hearing Wednesday, but the motion failed. He said even if it passed, commissioners would have to have to make more cuts next year.

"Next year, we are going to have to do the same thing," he said. "The universe of people above \$100,000 is much smaller than the universe of people below \$100,000. Those over \$100,000 are going to generate about \$6 million. And we are going to have to generate a hell of a lot more than \$6 million in revenue next year."

Keeping some programs fully or mostly funded meant others were sacrificed. The approved budget allocated no money for the citizens Independent Review Panel, which was started nearly 30 years ago as a check on government authority. Commissioner Barbara Jordan said she was disappointed with the panel's demise and proposed that the administration seek new revenue next year to fund it.

The end result could have been much worse, a reality reinforced by a long line of senior citizens, who gave testimonials that their lives hung by a thin thread whose strength depended on county funding.

Although Alvarez proposed a small tax increase, he affirmed the budget had a \$427 million hole in it that would need to be filled with a combination of layoffs, an across-the-board salary cut and smaller contributions to social services.

Then, commissioners made their budget approval process even harder.

Spurred by strong sentiment from the public that raising taxes would make suffering from the down economy worse, commissioners voted Sept. 4 to cap property taxes at the same rate as last year. But, because property values are down, some property owners would have to pay more to generate the same revenue. So, instead of a \$427 million gap, commissioners had to approve a budget that would take up an additional \$17 million shortage.

More than 240 people spoke during the public hearing, which began at about 5 p.m. Many wore colorful T-shirts came in groups to make their case. Children from the Boys & Girls Clubs wore blue T-shirts. Dozens of members of AFSCME Local 199, the union that represents a diverse group including nurses, corrections officers, child care providers and sanitation workers, wore green. A Homestead-based organization that provides social services to victims of domestic violence, wore white T-shirts with the slogan "violence affects everyone."

Martine Theordore spoke for Haitian Women of Miami, which offers a wide range of services from legal to mental health counseling, to more than 1,800 families a year. The program receives \$350,000 annually from the county, and may see as much as half of that cut as a consequence of the commission's vote.

Theordore worried many Haitians would lose even more ground as South Florida's economy continues to sputter.

"A lot of Haitians have lost their jobs, and a lot of parents rely on us for the services we provide," she said.

Community-based organizations will receive 70 percent of their funding. Commissioners will decide in October how the money will be distributed.

Some speakers keyed in on a series of revelations The Miami Herald reported that Alvarez approved raises for influential political groups including his executive staff and police as he warned the county was heading into a tough budget year. The Herald also wrote about Commission Chairman Dennis Moss, who gave substantial raises to some staffers.

Jack Russell and a handful of others used the funding of the \$640 million ballpark for the Florida Marlins as a touchstone for their anger. The county took on the bulk of the funding for the project.

"I guess baseball is more important than our public safety," Russell said. "Shame on you for giving these humongous raises and wasting our tax dollars."

Moss cut off most speakers who criticized the raises.

Alvarez had defended the raises early Thursday afternoon, saying police and executives got no preferential treatment.

"Up until Sept. 30, every county employee that was due a raise got one," he said, looking ahead to the end of the 2008-09 budget year.

The mayor also justified the salary increases by citing \$1.7 million that he said was cut from executive office-related costs in the last five years.

He said: "I think that's what's important to taxpayers, whether government is growing or government is shrinking."

After the meeting, Alvarez said he was glad commissioners accepted his recommendation for a 10 percent cut to salaries in the offices of the mayor, the manager and the county attorney. He also warned that the county needed to be careful moving forward because property values could continue to decline well into next year.

Overall, Alvarez was satisfied with the outcome. He said it was a "good day for social services."

"Every budget that I have been involved with, it's going to be changed. This is no different, and that's fine. This is the hardest," he said. "We listened to what the commission had to say, their recommendations. We went back and spent hours looking at them, and we were able to find some monies."

Alvarez encouraged administrators to be careful.

"We have to be careful because some of those areas are areas that may be good for one time, but not necessarily for recurring," he warned. "So we are able to come up with some money and restore social services, which makes me happy, especially in the area of elderly services."

Burgess warned that more work is ahead, as negotiations with unions continue to address salaries and other issues tied to employee benefits. More layoffs might be on the horizon if the unions don't make concessions.

"In the event those labor agreement concessions don't happen, then there will be further position reductions that would be necessary," the manager said. "Obviously, the decision tonight reflects a desire to avoid that."