

SPECIAL COMMISSION WORKSHOP
October 29, 2002
9:30 p.m.

Commissioner Lavino was absent from this meeting.

The City Manager noted that the meeting would not be broadcast live due to equipment failure. The Technology Coordinator video taped the meeting by camcorder to broadcast later.

I. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Deputy City Clerk's Job Description and Hiring Criteria –

The Deputy City Clerk's letter noting her intent to retire December 31 was noted. The Deputy Clerk indicated she has enjoyed her 35 years of employment with the City.

The City Manager indicated that the Deputy Clerk would continue under contract to complete the update of the City's history and would assist with the 2003 General Municipal Election.

The Commission concurred with the City Manager's memo regarding qualities and hiring process.

The Mayor indicated he felt the new person should be willing to attend computer classes as needed.

The requirements to obtain certified municipal clerk status were noted and discussed.

The Commission discussed farewell celebration suggestions.

2. Fireworks Enforcement –

State and local laws pertaining to fireworks were noted and discussed.

The Police Chief and Fire Chief discussed the grave concerns they have with the City Manager's enforcement proposal and problems that would occur with full enforcement of the regulations.

The City Manager suggested that if the City's situation with fireworks has become untenable, perhaps the City shouldn't provide a fireworks extravaganza because that invites the public to come to the beach and bring fireworks.

The Mayor indicated that is an option that could become realistic if the City couldn't get a handle on the problem.

The Mayor voiced agreement with the City Manager's suggestions with the exception of item 1 on page 1 of his October 17th memo. He indicated he feels that if the City gets the message out that the fireworks display would be lost if the public doesn't cooperate would be a good start to getting the problem under control.

Commissioner Blush suggested the BIG-C should join in the effort to control illegal fireworks in all of the beach communities.

The Mayor agreed with Commissioner Blush's comments and indicated he would discuss it at the BIG-C meeting on Wednesday morning.

Commissioner Maloof indicated she didn't believe the hotel/motel industry would favor discontinuing the fireworks display. She suggested the City should begin educating its own residents that the fireworks display might be discontinued without cooperation from the private citizens.

Commissioner Ellsworth indicated it is his opinion the advertising campaign should begin with New Years Eve and the state and local laws should be enforced to the best of our ability.

Commissioner Ellsworth indicated it is his opinion that the problem should be taken to the state level to close the loophole in the statute.

It was agreed that the publicity campaign would begin for the July 4th beach events.

3. Downtown Traffic Calming –

The Public Works Director and City Planner presented a memo dated October 26, 2002 from Mr. Jerry Debkowski, Traffic Specialist with Orth Rodgers Associates, Inc. regarding the traffic concerns in the central business district on 104th Avenue to 108th Avenue.

The City Manager discussed the traffic problems in the area and noted Mr. Debkowski's suggestions.

The City Manager requested permission to ask Mr. Debkowski to prepare a proposal to expand the downtown master plan by addressing the area from 104th Avenue through 108th Avenue in terms of traffic efficiency and pedestrian routes. The Commission concurred.

Mr. Debkowski will offer a presentation at the November 19 Workshop.

In a related discussion, causeway construction and pedestrian ways were discussed. The Public Works Director suggested purchasing 100-foot long permanent walkways that could be salvaged and used over Gulf Boulevard at the conclusion of the causeway construction project. He suggested that the walkways would provide safe pedestrian access across Gulf Boulevard. He indicated permission from the Florida Department of Transportation would be required.

The City Manager indicated if the Commission feels the idea is worth pursuing, staff would continue looking into it. He indicated the key would be designing them in a way they would be an integral part of the business area.

The consensus of the Commission was that staff should continue its exploration into the matter.

4. Public Information Meeting –

Commissioner Maloof discussed her memo to the City Commission regarding the confusion that exists in the community regarding the referendum question and asked whether there is a time when the City could hold a question and answer program to try to clear some of the confusion.

The Mayor indicated he felt it should wait until after the court hearing on Thursday.

Commissioner Maloof indicated she feels that the staff could answer the questions for those who could attend.

After ensuing discussion, the City Manager indicated he was not certain that it would be appropriate for staff to answer the questions and indicated some questions could be answered while others couldn't.

It was agreed that there would be no meeting.

B. ADJOURNMENT: