

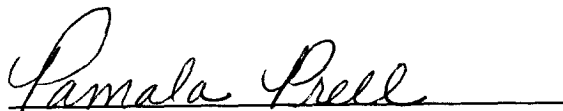
NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING
ST. PETE BEACH CITY COMMISSION

Thursday, February 10, 2011
3:00 p.m.

The St. Pete Beach City Commission will hold a Workshop Meeting on Thursday, February 10, 2011 at 3:00 p.m., at City Hall, 155 Corey Avenue, St. Pete Beach, Florida, in the Commission Chambers.

1. **Discussion of West Corey Avenue - Neighborhood Issues**
2. **Adjournment**

The public is invited to attend.


Pamala Prell, Acting City Clerk

If a person decides to appeal any decision made at this hearing, they will need a record of the proceeding and, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (F.S. 286.0105). The City does not furnish verbatim transcripts; interested parties should make the necessary arrangements for verbatim transcripts.

Agenda Material is available for review at City Hall on Friday, preceding the meeting. In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and F.S. 286.26, persons with disabilities needing special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the City at 727-363-9243 no later than four (4) days prior to the proceeding for assistance.

Posted: January 14, 2011



COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH

155 Corey Avenue

Thursday, February 10, 2011

3:00 PM

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call

1. Items for Discussion

- a. Overview of historical data on criminal activity in west Corey Avenue area - Chief Dave Romine & Captain Dean Horianopoulos.**
- b. Overview of Nuisance Abatement Board provisions in State Statute and potential use in St. Pete Beach - Captain Dean Horianopoulos**
- c. Overview of use of surveillance cameras in Florida and opportunities in St. Pete Beach - Chief Dave Romine**
- d. City Commission Questions & Answers with Chief Dave Romine & Captain Dean Horianopoulos.**

2. Audience Comments

3. City Commission Comments

4. Adjournment

APPEALS

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CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP

February 10, 2011

3:00 pm

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Commissioner Al Halpern

Vice Mayor Jim Parent

Commissioner Marvin Shavlan

Mayor Mike Finnerty

NOT PRESENT

Commissioner Beverly Garnett

ALSO PRESENT

City Manager Mike Bonfield

Acting City Clerk Pamala Prell

Police Chief David Romine

Captain Dean Horianopoulos

Mayor Finnerty called upon Mike Bonfield to give a brief run down on the historical data on Corey Avenue.

Mr. Bonfield reported that they are focusing on the area of West Corey Avenue as to actual data relating to criminal activity, police calls and police time spent. Also issues concerning the Nuisance Abatement Board; there has been some conversation about the possibility of adopting an ordinance to follow the state statute for Nuisance Abatement Boards. Captain Horianopoulos is very familiar with them and he can explain how they work and how they may be used in St. Pete Beach. Most recently the issue of surveillance cameras has come up and they also want to spend some time talking about them.

Mayor Finnerty remarked that there was quite a large number of people attending this workshop and asked if they could keep their comments limited to three

minutes when addressing the Commission; he also asked if they could end this Workshop at 5:00 or 5:30 pm. He then called on Chief Romine and Captain Horianopoulos to come forward and proceed with their presentation.

Chief Romine explained that he was at this Meeting specifically to address some ongoing concerns about activities at the West end of Corey Avenue. There seemed to be a focus of specific response locations that were driving those concerns. He presented some statistics that were put together for those locations which were displayed for review.

The addresses on these statistics are 550 Corey, 600 Corey Avenue, 601 Corey, 625 Corey Avenue, but that address may have been rolled into 635 Corey. The statistical review presented is for the years of 2007, 2008, 2009 & 2010.

In order to qualify for a Nuisance Abatement Board they must have 3 calls within a six-month period for a specific location for a specific crime. There are four types of arrests that qualify under that statute; prostitution, drugs, gang related activities and/or dealing in stolen property.

Mayor Finnerty remarked that it was good that the crime rate has gone down in that area but, judging by the number of people at this workshop, people are concerned about their safety and they are reaching out to the City to communicate with them.

Captain Horianopoulos explained that this department has "read offs" every single day; every shift has a "read off". That crime analysis gets disseminated to the troops so they know where the issues are and what the crimes are. If they are having issues in any specific place in the City, then they are going to direct their resources towards that area.

Captain Horianopoulos has been on this force for 19 years; in those 19 years, the worst he has seen on Corey Avenue was actually the year 2006.

Moving on to the issue of Nuisance Abatement, the Police Department first looked at it in 2007 and the laws from 2007 have not changed. The Captain proceeded to read some of the elements from Florida Statute 93 and give a brief overview of the Nuisance Abatement Board from St. Petersburg; how they go about it and what they do and briefly explained how it could relate to St. Pete Beach.

Last year, St. Petersburg had 10 cases go before the Board; they had given out 85 warning letters where the property owner is required to take some sort of action. In 2009, St. Petersburg had 4 cases before the Board.

Mayor Finnerty stated that it seems like a lot of responsibility for volunteers; are they sworn in, do they have to pass any sort of examination. Captain Horianopoulos wasn't sure about their background check or what their criteria

was to be a Board member. They meet monthly when they have active cases and they serve for three year terms.

Chief Romine then proceeded to explain surveillance cameras. There are two types that a government can install for surveillance type issues. One is a fixed camera with hard wiring for electricity and the other is a remote camera that's powered by either battery or by solar and usually operates off a projected image. What has to be considered when looking at these two types of cameras is what is their intent, what are they trying to accomplish. The cameras they have looked at and gotten prices on go anywhere from \$10,000 to \$30,000.

Mayor Finnerty then opened the Workshop to audience comments.

Marion Krauthammer, 500 50th Avenue, thanked the Police Department for doing a fabulous job. She too has the perception that things are worse than they really are.

Mr. Marino, owns a business on the Beach and hears about the good job the Police Department is doing, he hears about cameras and Nuisance Abatement but he doesn't hear the most important part – a lot of arrests and convictions.

Sandra Samusenko, 7100 Sunset Way, thinks the City is getting a very bad rap and she believes the City deserves it. She thinks the Commission should go look at the properties themselves particularly the code violations.

Bob Brown, 7100 Sunset Way, had a guest who went for a walk and he said he walked two blocks and felt like he was in a slum area. He wants to know from the Commission what can be done to improve the neighborhood. Code violations might be one step.

Chris Martin, 7338 Coquina Way, a winter visitor from Chicago where he is a member of a Neighborhood Watch Group suggested that the residents of this City do the same.

Debbie Lovett, 7101 Boca Ciega, asked if the Fire Inspector had looked at the property at the end of Corey Avenue and what about code violations.

Paul Pfister, 8090 Gulf Boulevard, had a meeting with Mayor Finnerty and Karl Holley about a property on 78th with a lot of homeless men. With the help of Code

Enforcement, they came up with 22 violations for these people. There were 6 people but now there are about 2 or 3. They moved from there and went to the Park. A couple of weeks later he contacted Commissioner Halpern and he called the police. He feels the best thing to do is call Code Enforcement.

George Moore, 406 41st Avenue, asked why is it the perception that this area is the worst. He referred to the chart that Chief Romine provided.

Debra Schechner, 710 Boca Ciega Isle Drive, thanked the Commission for holding the Workshop and also thanked the Police Department for their hard work. She thinks the City should consider the Nuisance Abatement Board.

Tom DeYampert, 78th Avenue, thinks the City should establish a rental registration program similar to the one in St. Petersburg where you register your rental properties; the properties are inspected and he believes Code Enforcement is a huge key to the remedy. The City needs to deal with the cause, not the symptom. The Police Department is doing a great job.

Will Jacoby, 8100 Gulf Boulevard, suggested a way to change the business profile of the properties in question.

Harry Metz, 504 Pass-a-Grille Way, stated that the Code Enforcement people work hard but there are still buildings on Corey Avenue that have windows boarded up with plywood that people live in. This has been going on for nine years or more; people complain about those buildings, about other buildings on Corey, and nothing is really accomplished. Why can't the City do some enforcement on those buildings instead of just letting them deteriorate and the property values go down in that area. The Police do a fantastic job. Police presence is vital to the area.

Florence McNally, has property at 7100 Sunset Way, asked what can they do about the problems on Corey.

Mayor Finnerty asked for further audience comments; hearing none, he called on Mr. Bonfield for remarks who in turn stated that Karl Holley was present and could address code enforcement which is an ongoing process.

Karl Holley understands that the City's citizens are concerned and he understands that their concerns are legitimate. He is willing to provide to the Commission and the citizens the records of code enforcement history on the properties they are concerned about.

The property at 635 Corey Avenue continues to be a problem. Mayor Finnerty asked why doesn't the City buy it and put a park in there. Mr. Bonfield and Mr. Holley explained the laws and procedures for taking property under the eminent domain laws and the costs involved.

Commissioner Halpern thinks it's a good idea and worth pursuing but asked where they are going to get the money.

Vice Mayor Parent stated that there are steps to be taken and the first preliminary steps should be relatively inexpensive.

Mr. Bonfield suggested that an appraisal on those properties would cost between \$20,000 to \$25,000. The first thing you need to do is get some idea what they're talking about; are they talking about \$100,000 or \$10 million.

Vice Mayor Parent asked Mr. Holley if he could provide types of public facilities that would justify condemning the properties.

Vice Mayor Parent asked Mrs. McNally if a Citizen Crime Watch group had been formed and if they are active.

Mrs. McNally responded that the Crime Watch group has been formed and they are quite active. She has some pictures that are being developed and will give them to the Commission.

Mr. Bonfield brought up the pay phone; if the City is paying for it they will take it out. If the property owner is paying for it, he will see what can be done to limit it to only outgoing calls.

Vice Mayor Parent brought up the property with the boarded up window; is it a violation or not. Bruce Cooper advised the Commission that they have been written up for many violations and he will personally walk around all these properties to determine if there are further violations that they can go ahead and cite them for and do it all at one time. He hopes the new lessee at 665 Corey Avenue will perform as they have indicated and if so, he hopes that brings some stability and maintenance to that property.

Mayor Finnerty again opened the Workshop to audience comments.

Irene Depinto, 530 73rd Avenue, suggested that after a certain number of calls, that the property owner be charged. Mr. Bonfield is not aware of such a practice and is only aware of excessive false alarms from the alarm companies and they can charge for those. He doesn't think this is feasible.

Will Jacoby, 8100 Gulf Boulevard, has been involved with a group of investors and looking at those properties. If the City purchased that property, they could turn one side of it into what Gulfport Boulevard has which is an artist's colony and the other side with a 50's retro motel which was originally there.

Paul Pfister, stated that inside the Civic Association they have a "neglected property" committee and they will work with Karl Holley and the Commissioners down there and get that group going. If you buy that property they are just going to move somewhere else.

Debra Schechner, 710 Boca Ciega Isle Drive, advised the Commission that there have been reports from the neighbors that there is more prostitution going on than just \$13 prostitutes. This problem has been solved in the past and now something has to be done. As far as an artist's colony, a city in the north did just that and it was very successful.

Leslie Jeffrey, 73rd Avenue, suggested a commercial overlay along that strip and the City wouldn't have to buy the property.

Mr. Bonfield asked if there is interest in pursuing a Nuisance Abatement Board. If they are interested in putting one in place, he can get the legislation together but he doesn't want anyone to think that will be an immediate solution because the City has not had the history that qualifies under the State Statute.

Mayor Finnerty feels that the Neighborhood Watch is working now and he doesn't want to endanger anyone going out there to take a picture of someone and then have them take some sort of action against the person that is going to report them.

Mr. Bonfield advised that if they work with the Police Department, they will educate them on how to conduct a Community Watch and not put themselves in danger.

Vice Mayor Parent asked why the Nuisance Abatement Board couldn't be the responsibility of the Special Magistrate. Why can't they have those powers under the Special Magistrate just like code enforcement, that way they wouldn't have to start up a new board. Mr. Bonfield agreed to research it.

Commissioner Halpern asked about the zoning where the Blake Inn is located. Mr. Bonfield responded that it's all commercial. Everything that's there that is not strictly commercial use is non-conforming. She is grandfathered a non-conforming use. The City has no way of knowing if it's an apartment or a motel.

Vice Mayor Parent asked if it is viable to go undercover and rent an apartment short term. Captain Horianopoulos stated that they will work with any City department or any other agency and they are willing to use their equipment and their personnel and loan it to whomever to assist any way they can.

Mayor Finnerty asked again if they could look into buying her out. Mr. Bonfield will lay out for the Commission what is involved in buying out the property and then the Commission can make the decision. He will also check into the Nuisance Abatement Board using the Special Magistrate under that statute should one of those situations arise. He will also check out surveillance cameras.

Vice Mayor Parent is interested in financing the red light cameras. Mayor Finnerty suggested calling their Lobbyists in Washington and see what they can do as far as a grant goes as they are still under the City's employ.

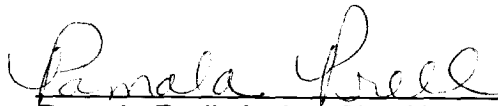
Commissioner Shavlan would like to look into "dummy" cameras.

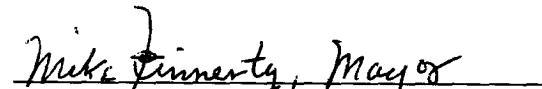
Mr. Bonfield said he would also look into the rental registration. He said he will put something together and get back to the Commission.

Commissioner Shavlan asked if Mr. Holley had any ideas about legislation to address severe problems of this nature. Anything Mr. Holley brings to the Commission he will pass through the City Attorney first.

Commissioner Halpern asked if they could follow up on the monetary issues; is she paying the proper taxes and declaring the money. Mr. Bonfield said that's between her and the IRS and the Department of Revenue. He also asked how they could go about finding out if the property is in foreclosure.

The Workshop was concluded at 5:25 pm.


Pamala Prell, Acting City Clerk


Mike Finnerty, Mayor

Minutes approved on: 3-22-11