

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS
ADVISORY BOARD
JULY 24, 2001**

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. Present were Vice-Chair Wayne Arnold, Norman Blanco, Jason Curtis, Richelle Gilhauley, Brian Hierholzer, Katherine Montgomery (arrived at 6:22 p.m.), and Denis Shaw. Chair Clark, Lynette Brown, Kitty Preziosi and Zel Veesser were absent. Also in attendance were Assistant Town Clerk Barbara McDaniel and Clerk Nina Valdez recording the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 27, 2001

Mr. Curtis stated that Chief George's name was not listed as being in attendance. Assistant town Clerk McDaniel advised that staff was not normally listed unless they were the liaison to the Board.

Mr. Blanco made a motion seconded by Mr. Shaw, to accept the minutes. In a voice vote, with Chair Clark, Ms. Brown, Ms. Preziosi and ~~Mr.~~ Ms. Veesser being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 7-0)

Mr. Curtis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shaw, to excuse Chair Clark from the meeting. In a voice vote, with Chair Clark, Ms. Brown, Ms. Preziosi and ~~Mr.~~ Ms. Veesser being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 7-0)

3. OLD BUSINESS

3.1 Processing Complaints

Mr. Shaw asked if the proposed complaint form for the Board had been added to the Town's website. Vice-Chair Arnold referred to a letter from Town Clerk Russell Muniz, stating that a telephone line, (954) 797-1668, had been installed and it would be beneficial to the Board if the telephone number was placed on the Town's website and printed in the next issue of the Davie Update. Vice-Chair Arnold added that, as per Town Administrator Tom Willi's direction, the Board was to create a voice-mail message and a member was to be assigned to check and create a log of messages. Mr. Shaw asked how the machine worked and where it was located. Special Projects Director Bonnie Stafiej explained the process, stating that someone had to set up the line and follow the directions, which included choosing a password and creating a message.

Mr. Blanco nominated Mr. Curtis to set up the voice-mail and create the message. Mr. Hierholzer seconded the nomination. In a voice vote, with Chair Clark, Ms. Brown, Ms. Preziosi and ~~Mr.~~ Ms. Veesser being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 7-0)

Mr. Hierholzer volunteered to be the alternate to retrieve messages and create a log. In a voice vote, with Chair Clark, Ms. Brown, Ms. Preziosi and ~~Mr.~~ Ms. Veesser being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 7-0)

Mr. Curtis stated that the message should be short and to the point so sufficient time was left for the caller to leave a detailed message. He suggested that the voice-mail be checked every two to three days, but callers should also be encouraged to call Councilmembers if they do not receive a timely response.

Mr. Hierholzer asked how the phone number would be advertised. Ms. Stafiej stated that this was to be decided upon at this meeting and gave some suggestions. Vice-Chair Arnold suggested using the word "concern" rather than "complaint" because the goal was

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not to receive general complaints from the community, but to receive concerns regarding community relations. Mr. Curtis stated that he would work on the message and present at the next meeting.

Ms. Gilhauley asked about guidelines for returning calls and how calls would be addressed. She mentioned various options including inviting callers to present to the Board, having callers put their concerns in writing, or having the receiver note the problem and share it with the Board. Mr. Curtis felt that concerns should be directed to the administrators of the appropriate departments.

Police Chief John George stated the Board should be cautious of operational complaints and these types of complaints should be directed to appropriate supervisors. He also stated that certain complaints needed to be addressed immediately and callers should be directed to call the appropriate departments.

Ms. Stafiej recommended designing a response form and suggested that call receivers call complainants to acknowledge receipt of the call. She also recommended inviting complainants to address the Board with Mr. Blanco suggesting that a representative of the "offending" department be invited to attend as well. Ms. Stafiej stated that the form would allow for documentation. Ms. Gilhauley felt it was important that the appropriate departments address personnel issues before these issues came before the Board. Mr. Blanco suggested that the Board do a follow-up to insure that issues were addressed.

Chief George stated that it was important to differentiate between conceptual human issues and operational issues. He stated that human issues should be dealt with without delay. Ms. Gilhauley added that calls should be routed to the appropriate department and addressed expeditiously.

Mr. Blanco asked if there was a department that could screen the calls, especially for issues not related to this Board, such as excessive rodeo noise. The consensus of the Board was that it preferred having a Boardmember route calls rather than staff.

Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel clarified the procedures, stating that Mr. Curtis would log and take the messages, complete the forms, and then fax them to her attention so that she could then deliver them to the appropriate departments. She added that the forms would be included in the monthly meeting packages for the Board to monitor and address if necessary.

Discussion followed regarding the format of the form. Vice-Chair Arnold recommended using a form similar to what the Council used.

Mr. Blanco asked if there was an issue with confidentiality. Chief George stated that there could be, explaining that if there was a complaint against an officer, that officer was entitled to due process which included confidentiality. He also stated that child abuse complaints would require confidentiality. Chief George reiterated that the concept of the Board was to act as an advisory forum, adding that issues needed to be routed to the appropriate personnel. He stated that callers should be advised to call specific departments. Vice-Chair Arnold agreed with Chief George, adding that it was important not to create problems where issues could be otherwise satisfactorily resolved.

Ms. Gilhauley was concerned with how issues would be dealt with when complainants attended meetings. She mentioned various issues including the presence of media, and time frame for responses. Ms. Gilhauley questioned how the Board would immediately respond to issues personally brought before them. Chief George

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recommended finding out how other Boards took action. Mr. Shaw was reluctant to create definite guidelines as most issues would be unique and had to be addressed individually. He recommended delaying action on this until the Board was further trained by the Broward County Community Relations Board.

Vice-Chair Arnold moved item 4.5 ahead so that the guest speaker could make his presentation

4.5 Mr. Mosley spoke of his background with various boards and committees dedicated to improving community relations. He recommended that the Board have participation from legal counsel to address issues that might be legally vulnerable.

Mr. Mosley explained how Study Circles would allow for discussion and resolution of issues and distributed information which would be discussed at future meetings. He stated that Study Circles were usually comprised of 8 to 12 individuals participating in dialog sessions in an informal setting. Mr. Mosley added that the president of the organization was scheduled to come to Broward County and work with identified groups including the Town. He stated that facilitators would be trained and that the facilitator was not to share his/her own opinions, but to help create a balanced, honest, productive discussion. He continued explaining Study Circles and stated that the objective was to stimulate the democratic thought process, which encouraged further discussion towards resolution. Each session lasted no more than two hours and meeting times were flexible.

Mr. Mosley stated that training was specific to particular organizations and advised that a Police Community Relations Study Circle was under consideration, which would include representatives from the Police Department and the community. This is under consideration because of the recent controversial issues, which had been in the media. Mr. Mosley stated that the Town was leading the way in making an effort to improve community relations.

Mr. Mosley stated that Study Circles would also be effective with other departments including Code Enforcement and Parks and Recreation, where conflicts with the community might arise. Ultimately the goal of Study Circles was to allow for constructive dialog and resolution of conflicts for any group.

Mr. Mosley felt that it would be best if members of the Board and the Town Council participated in the initial training. He stated that this effort would send a strong message that the leaders of the community were concerned with improving community relations. Mr. Mosley explained that participation in Study Circles was a big commitment, but it would be beneficial to the whole community.

Mr. Shaw asked if Mr. Mosley could make arrangements for the Board to be trained. Mr. Mosley described his personal involvement with Study Circles and clarified that study circles could address issues such as diversity, police/community relations, youth issues, bond issues, and expansion issues. He stated that Study Circles could be designed and developed around any topic that was of interest to the community. Mr. Mosley stated that he would be assisting, along with other outside organizations, in the training for the Town. Additionally, the National Resource Center would participate and Mr. Mosley encouraged the identification of potential facilitators from the Town. Mr. Mosley requested that individuals be identified to work on a planning committee and cautioned that diverse

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members of the community be involved so that the group was not perceived as an "exclusive club." Mr. Mosley stated that he understood Mr. Willi was going to take a key role in this program, and he asked for additional recommendations.

Mr. Mosley stated that identifying participants for the planning committee was the first step, adding that his agency would contribute the basic layout. He reiterated that members of the community needed to be identified so that they could give insight to the key issues that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Mosley again encouraged legal representation for this Board, so that legal concerns were appropriately addressed. He also recommended that the Town's legal department set parameters for how the Board would operate. Vice-Chair Arnold explained that the Board was established by Council and asked if Council had to approve funding for legal representation. Mr. Mosley explained that Broward County's board utilized the services of staff legal counsel and their participation with the Boards was an extension of the duties. Mr. Curtis agreed the issue of legal counsel needed to be addressed with Council and Vice-Chair Arnold recommended having Chair Clark pursue this effort.

Mr. Shaw stated that he wanted the opportunity to peruse the materials that Mr. Mosley had distributed and suggested further discussion at the next meeting. Mr. Mosley reviewed the information he needed and the projected course of events for establishment of the Study Circles program. He clarified that issues of concern needed to be gathered and explained that oftentimes issues did not surface until the Study Circle was actually established. Mr. Mosley stated that this program was "budget friendly" explaining that once a location was established, there might be minimal costs for refreshments. He stated that a guest speaker was usually invited to the first meeting of the Study Circle and the speaker usually addressed issues that the community-at-large was interested in. Vice-Chair Arnold requested that Mr. Mosley submit a fee schedule prior to the Board's next meeting so that members could consider this along with the other materials.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Future Meeting Schedule

Vice-Chair Arnold asked if the fourth Tuesday of the month was acceptable for the next meeting. Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel stated that the Police Department was the only facility available on August 28th. She advised that the facility could not be guaranteed as if an emergency should occur and the room was needed, the meeting would have to be canceled.

Ms. Montgomery asked if the Eastside Community Hall was available with Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel responding that it was available on Monday and Wednesday. Ms. Montgomery recommended the Police Athletic League building with Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel responding that she would check into its availability.

Vice-Chair Arnold stated that the meeting would be tentatively held at the Police Department on August 28th. Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel stated that she would tentatively schedule the September 25th meeting at the Police Athletic League building and she would bring further information to the August meeting. It was agreed that the meetings would begin at 6:30 p.m.

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4.2 Policy for Setting Emergency Meetings

Mr. Blanco stated that the Chair or Vice-Chair should be able to call emergency meetings, which the Board agreed with. Vice-Chair Arnold stated that if a member of the Board had an issue that needed immediate attention, they should report to Mr. Willi or Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel, who would then contact the Chair or Vice-Chair. Mr. Curtis clarified that Mr. Willi stated that an emergency meeting could be called within 24 hours.

4.3 Discussion of Cultural Affairs

Ms. Stafiej presented the list of current special events and the projected special events list for 2001-2002. She stated that she had spoken with Chair Clark regarding multicultural events and advised that a Martin Luther King celebration was held at Potter Park. Ms. Stafiej suggested expanding that event and calling it "Diversity Day - A Community Celebration."

Mr. Hierholzer stated that he thought it would be a good idea to celebrate the diversity of the community during a different time of the year, rather than combining it with the already successful Dr. Martin Luther King celebration. He felt that it was not enough to celebrate cultural diversity one day a year and it was important to the community to recognize cultural diversity throughout the year. Mr. Shaw agreed, stating that the Board could look at ways to enhance the Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration and also have a multicultural day on a different date. Mr. Curtis referred to the Broward Community College's annual cultural celebration and suggested participating in that event. He also agreed that a multicultural celebration should be scheduled for another time so as to not take away from the importance of Martin Luther King's contribution to African Americans and to the American people in general. He felt that multicultural events should address all ethnic groups. Ms. Stafiej agreed, stating that it would not be a problem to create another event to celebrate multiculturalism.

Vice-Chair Arnold stated that this item would be added to the next agenda. Mr. Hierholzer suggested contacting Broward Community College regarding its event and perhaps expanding it to a community-wide event. Ms. Stafiej stated that she would bring more information to the next meeting and that she would contact Broward Community College regarding its event. She encouraged the Board to offer suggestions for enhancing the Dr. Martin Luther King Day celebration.

4.4 Davie Agricultural Advisory Board Issues

Mr. Curtis spoke of the history of the Davie Agricultural Advisory Board and its initiation. He explained that the Board was an appropriate forum for discussion of farmers' issues in the Town because the farmers in this community and the surrounding communities were representative of very diverse backgrounds. Mr. Curtis referred to the Greenbelt Law, which was established in the 1950's, and was to prevent farmers from "being taxed out of existence." Mr. Curtis also referred to the Florida's Right to Farm Act. Mr. Curtis felt that the Broward County Property Appraiser had treated farmers unfairly and added that agricultural use did not include development, which was according to the State of Florida, the Broward County Comprehensive Plan, and the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Curtis stated that the aforementioned issue "agricultural use did not include

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development” was something that Town's staff did not like or explicitly ignores. Mr. Curtis referred to Julie Aitken, who in 1991 sued the Broward County Property Appraiser's Office for her entitlement to the Greenbelt Law. He also described an ordinance amendment Ms. Aitken presented to the Town regarding the Right to Farm Act and the farmer's exemption from having to have permits to construct farm buildings for agricultural use. Mr. Curtis spoke of incidents where Code Compliance officers were sent to “red tag” such buildings and reiterated that these buildings were exempt according to Florida Law. He clarified that if there were no complaints about a barn for one year, the farm was protected by the Right to Farm Act.

Mr. Curtis stated that each year farmers must “fight with the Property Appraiser's Office on their tax levels. He added that because of the efforts of the ~~Davie Agricultural Advisory Board~~ Agrarian Committee, farmers in the County had the support of the Broward County Commission and the County's Value Adjustment Board. Mr. Curtis further described the Town's lack of compliance with State law, in regards to land development regulations. Mr. Curtis stated that staff continued to respond to complaints from neighbors of farms in a “more or less harassing manner.” Mr. Curtis cited various instances where farmers, acting within their rights, were given incorrect information by staff and who incurred unnecessary legal and construction fees.

Mr. Curtis explained that the Davie Agricultural Advisory Board's contention was not that staff should not investigate complaints. However, he stated that in many cases the “farmer was legally entitled to do what they were doing.” Mr. Curtis stated that the Davie Agricultural Advisory Board felt this Board, acting as a mediator, could solve many of the problems for staff, farmers and neighbors of horse farms. He added that Ms. Aitken was meeting with Mr. Willi and Development Services Director Kutney to address the issues with staff.

Mr. Shaw stated that it seemed the problem at hand was specifically with the Code Compliance Division and that it might be a larger issue, not only affecting farmers, but others as well. He added that this was an issue this Board might consider looking into.

Ms. Gilhauley expressed concern for these issues, but felt that she was not knowledgeable enough to address them. She asked if mediation had occurred and agreed with Mr. Shaw that the issue might be larger than it appeared. She felt that blaming one group or the other was not the purpose of the Board and was not sure if the Board could assist in this complicated conflict as the ~~Davie Agricultural Advisory Board~~ Agrarian Committee had already done tremendous research and impacted the situation, as it were.

Vice-Chair Arnold recommended inviting Mr. Kutney or Code Compliance Daniel Stallone to address the Board at the next meeting regarding these issues.

4.5 Study Circle - Sherman Mosley

This issue was discussed earlier in the meeting.

4.6 Diversity in Hiring

Mr. Curtis stated that seven new police officers were hired and one was a black male. He added it was a small step, but still a step in the right direction and suggested coming up with more ideas on how to solicit female applicants, clarifying that this was Mr. Willi and the Town's responsibility, not that of this Board. Mr. Shaw referred to issues on the Council

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agenda regarding rules of hiring and promotions, and asked if those issues were addressed by Council. Chief George stated that there had been discussion and clarified that the hiring and promotion process for the Police Department was regulated by the Town's Code. He stated that modifications for these processes were in progress, but were not ready to be given to Council.

Chief George explained the process of hiring and promotions, stating that there was a scoring system based on various criteria and only the top five scores could be considered. Human Resources Director Mark Alan explained that there were other areas being improved upon, including recruitment and selection and explained that selection criteria followed Federal, State, County and Town law. He stated that it was important to be careful when using the selection method and the Town must be sure it was using job-related selection criteria. Mr. Alan explained that the Town was focusing on recruitment and looking for innovative recruitment methods so that a more diversified pool was available for selection. He gave examples of various innovative recruitment techniques that were being employed.

Vice-Chair Arnold questioned what could be done to facilitate the hiring of additional minorities. Mr. Alan gave examples such as utilizing and expanding upon methods in place, using innovative recruitment methods, and reaching out to the community, employees, and professional organizations. Vice-Chair Arnold suggested targeting specific communities, adding that recruiting from employees might exclude minorities for obvious reasons. Chief George stated that the new recruitment techniques had shown more qualified applicants and increased applications by minorities. Mr. Alan explained that they had also presented different opportunities and roles in law enforcement and this had drawn interest from potential applicants who heretofore had not considered this line of work.

Mr. Blanco was concerned that there were few females in managerial positions even though there were those that were qualified and the perception was of a "good old boy network" which could deter potential applicants. He stated that he did not blame anyone in particular for this, adding that he wanted the Board to be aware of this.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Arnold welcomed Councilmember Truex.

Richard Rivera flew in from New Jersey specifically for this meeting. He commended the Board for working closely with the community and addressing areas of concern. Mr. Rivera, is an expert at racial profiling, stated that for the past 12 years, he has been in law enforcement and gave details regarding his involvement. He felt that the Town was being progressive "communitywise and policewise," adding that the board has the support of the Police Complaint Center.

6. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel introduced Nina Valdez as the Board's new recording secretary.

Chief George stated that he fully supported this effort, adding that in the future he

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would only attend when invited, and to feel free to contact him anytime. Vice-Chair Arnold asked if there would be someone from the Police Department at these meetings with Chief George responding that he would monitor the agendas and if the items were police related, a representative could attend.

Mr. Curtis asked if anyone had attended the July 24th NAACP meeting where the Town was on the agenda. Mr. Arnold stated that Chair Clark had attended. Chief George had also attended and stated that racial profiling was one of the main issues. He explained that racial profiling also addressed the care and treatment of people in custody.

Assistant Town Clerk McDaniel clarified that items for the next agenda included the concerns of the Davie Agricultural Advisory Board, discussion of cultural cultural affairs, and Study Circles.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Approved: _____

Chair/Board Member