

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS  
ADVISORY BOARD  
APRIL 23, 2002**

**1. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. Present were Chair Geri Clark, Vice-Chair Wayne Arnold, Norman Blanco, Jason Curtis, Katherine Montgomery, and Kitty Preziosi (arrived at 6:38 p.m.). Also in attendance was Clerk Nina Valdez recording the meeting. Richelle Gilhauley, John Pisula, Denis Shaw, and Zel Veesser were absent.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 26, 2002**

Vice-Chair Arnold made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanco, to accept the minutes of March 26, 2002. In a voice vote, with Ms. Gilhauley, Mr. Pisula, Mr. Shaw, and Mr. Veesser being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 6-0)

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**3.1 Palma Nova**

Chair Clark stated that the reason that Palma Nova and the Hope Outreach Center had been invited to attend the Board's meeting was to discuss the condition of Palma Nova, any future plans it may have for improvements, and to provide community outreach that may be needed from the Town.

In addition to the Boardmembers, the following guests were in attendance: Austin Foreman, managing partner of Palma Nova; Jim Kane; Heidi Davis, James Pembleton, and Clay Cameron of the Palma Nova Property Management; Carida Rodriguez, of the Palma Nova Tenant's Association; Helen Shinnars, and Sister Germana Sala of the Hope Outreach Center; and Freddi Zyre, resident of Palma Nova.

Ms. Davis opened the discussion by stating that she felt that Palma Nova needed to be patrolled by the Police Department at night and that the response time to calls took too long.

Mr. Foreman stated that there was a clause in the annexation agreement that declared Palma Nova a Zone 14 making, it a 24 hours-a-day patrolled area, unless there was a Town emergency. Chair Clark responded that she would contact Police Chief John George regarding this issue.

Ms. Davis spoke about the lighting installation of light poles that was ongoing with the Florida Power and Light Company (FP&L).

Mr. Foreman stated that Palm Nova was on the right course in order to make the park a better and safer community by the addition of a 24 hour front gate security guard, the lighting project, and the clean up of the park. He stated that there were provisions in the annexation agreement for the Town to provide street lighting in certain areas. Mr. Foreman requested that once FP&L had installed the new poles, that the Town pay for lighting and estimated the cost at \$20 per pole, per month. Mr. Curtis inquired how many poles FP&L would be installed, but Mr. Foreman was uncertain of the amount and estimated 300.

Ms. Davis stated that with the help of the Officer Richards, they had organized a Crime Watch team.

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Mr. Cameron stated that the Fire Department had access to Palma Nova in the event of an emergency and felt that their response time was great.

Chair Clark responded to Mr. Foreman's inquiry regarding the Town paving the streets of Palma Nova and that since it was privately owned, the responsibility would belong to Palma Nova. She would check with the Public Works/Capital Projects Director Bruce Bernard on the paving issue. Vice-Chair Arnold explained that the roads would have to be dedicated to the Town in order to be paved by the Town. Mr. Foreman stated that he was informed by previous Council that the streets needed to meet the Town's Code before they could be dedicated, which would be a large expensive project.

Mr. Blanco provided a report on his opportunity to ride with Officer Graziadei from the Police Department, which was mostly spent in Palma Nova. He also distributed documentation that he obtained from the Police Department that referred to Palma Nova as Zone 14, along with a printout of police reports for a period of one year that documented over 1,400 arrests, 75% of those calls were made at night.

Mr. Blanco stated that Officer Graziadei had reported that the Police Department had previously replaced light bulbs in the street lanterns throughout the park; however, the next day the light bulbs would be removed or broken. Ms. Rodriguez believed that the reason the bulbs would be turned off or removed, was because the tenants did not want to pay for the light bills.

Ms. Montgomery inquired about Palma Nova's ability to evict people who were not following the rules. Ms. Rodriguez explained that the Tenant's Association was working together with the property management to start eviction procedures on those residents who did not comply with Palma Nova's By Laws. Mr. Foreman added that he was in agreement and committed to evicting those persons who may have been cited by the law enforcement agencies. He added that some drug dealers had already been evicted.

Ms. Preziosi inquired about the criteria in order to evict someone from Palma Nova. Mr. Cameron explained that the By Laws stated that any three violations against federal, State or local government rules, regulations, or ordinances were grounds for eviction. Vice-Chair Arnold added that a person's civil liberties had to be properly addressed before an eviction took place. He stated that an arrest would not necessarily indicate that the person was guilty, but once a conviction was made, that person should be evicted.

Mr. Blanco reported on his contact with Code Compliance Supervisor Daniel Stallone to obtain a list of problems that existed in Nova Palma, and was informed of the following:

- Derelict vehicles. Mr. Cameron stated that the owners of the vehicles were properly notified and if they did not respond, a 24 hour notice was placed on the car before it was towed.
- Exteriors needed to be cleaned and painted due to mold, along with skirting repairs, broken windows, and a potential fire hazard with Christmas lights. There was illegal building construction, such as carports, fences, decks, and extensions. Chair Clark inquired whose

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responsibility the painting of the homes were. Mr. Cameron responded that they had programs in place to help the homeowners with costs of labor if the homeowner provided the material.

- Excessive trash and debris.
- Park boundary fence in disrepair near the dry canal on the south side.

Mr. Blanco and Mr. Foreman discussed the annexation agreement clause where items were grandfathered in. Mr. Foreman stated that any problems that were of concern to the Code Compliance Inspectors in the common areas would be addressed and repaired

Ms. Shinnors explained that the Hope Outreach Center's involvement with Palma Nova began in 1995 with an after-school care enrichment program for the children. She further explained that the Center had brought in other agencies to bring cultural arts, sports, and field trips to the children. Ms. Shinnors commented that she had seen a great improvement with her working relationship with Palma Nova and that the facilities had been nicely renovated. Mr. Foreman added that they were working on creating a separate facility for the Center's program, and commended the program for doing a wonderful job. Ms. Rodriguez added that the Center helped tremendously year round and commended them for helping families become adopted during holidays.

Chair Clark inquired about the necessity of having a bilingual officer assigned to Palma Nova. Ms. Davis responded that there was a need.

Chair Clark spoke about the possibility of having an officer live on the property and that it had worked well in other cities in preventing crime. Mr. Foreman responded with an offer to provide a mobile home for an officer to live in or for the purpose of an office.

Mr. Blanco spoke about the back gate and how Officer Graziadei had said there was a problem at night because the gate would open and let people in. He questioned whether that gate could be shut down and only opened in an emergency. Mr. Cameron stated that this was an issue that was currently being discussed.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that in order to resolve problem areas, the Tenant's Association and Crime Watch Committee would like case numbers from arrests.

Mr. Foreman stated that the management had diligently worked to help the Tenant's Association with their ideas.

Vice-Chair Arnold gave commendations to all who attended and participated. He stated that this was a giant step that was made and he could see the dedication from all parties to make Palma Nova a better place.

#### **4. TELEPHONE ACTION REQUESTS**

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1. Norm Blanco – Mr. Blanco stated that this issue went before the Special Master on April 2, 2002, and the dog owned by Christine Bowen was declared a “vicious dog” and a public nuisance. The finding required that the dog be kept in an enclosure or house, and when taken outside, it should be leashed and muzzled. Mr. Blanco further stated that the Bowens were notified by phone, in person by a Code Compliance Officer, and by certified mail.
2. Kevin and Kathy Somers – This incident was related to Christine Bowen’s dog, which was resolved by the Special Master on April 2, 2002.

Mr. Curtis inquired about a link on the Town’s Web page for the Board and suggested that signs could be placed at the reception areas in the various departments in order to advertise the Board, in addition he stressed that the public needed to be informed that they could make a complaint anonymously. Chair Clark responded that the brochure the Board would be compiling, in addition to the magnets would be the Board’s advertisement. Ms. Preziosi commented that at the next Board meeting everyone’s ideas would be discussed for the brochure’s rough draft.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments.

**6. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS**

There were no comments and/or suggestions.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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Chair/Board Member