

**MINUTES
JOINT COMMISSION WORKSHOP WITH THE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
CITY OF HOLLY HILL, FLORIDA**

APRIL 10, 2007

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Roland D. Via called the workshop to order in the conference room at City Hall, 1065 Ridgewood Avenue at approximately 6:00 p.m. Attending with Mayor Via were Commissioners John Penny, Gilles Blais, Mark Reed, and Traci A. Anderson. Also attending were the following staff members: City Manager Joe Forte, Community Development Director/City Planner Doug Gutierrez, Community Redevelopment Coordinator Marsha Radulovich, Finance Director Kurt Swartzlander, and City Clerk Valerie Manning.

Historic Preservation Board members present: Dean Wiggins, Ron Edwards, Alice Masterson, and Lou Schmitt.

2. JOINT WORKSHOP WITH CITY COMMISSION & HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

Dean Wiggins, Chairman of the Historic Preservation Board, spoke briefly. The reason this meeting was requested was mainly about budget. They have a not-for-profit Historic Society that they would like to get started on and ask the Commission if they wouldn't mind if they switched from being a City Board to a Historic Society. Right now, they don't have members for that Society but they do have the Board members. Mr. Wiggins wasn't sure if the Commission wanted to maintain it as a Historic Board and give them a budget or as Mr. Forte has suggested give the Historic Society a budget. Do they want to continue with the Board or support the Society?

Mayor Via mentioned that originally the City was trying to get the Historic Board up and running for it to *become* a Historic Society and then have the Board actually dissolve itself because the Historic Society would be more advantageous to getting the grants and taking over things.

Mr. Forte asked if the Historic Society is a non-profit.

Mr. Wiggins stated, yes.

Lou Schmitt, Historic Board member, asked when the Board applied for the 501(c)3, what officers did Mr. Wiggins put down.

Mr. Wiggins stated at the time it was the ones that were involved with the Historic Board.

Mr. Schmitt asked how long ago did Mr. Wiggins apply for this?

Mr. Wiggins stated it's been a year.

Mr. Schmitt stated he wasn't sure if they were aware of this or not, you cannot have a Board in a 501(c)3 because they are separate.

Mr. Wiggins stated they can be separate, they just can't have the same members.

Mr. Schmitt stated, right.

Mr. Wiggins stated if they wanted, they can have a separate Board and a separate Society and each of them can apply for grants; he doesn't know.

Commissioner Penny asked what are the chances of filling all of those seats when they have trouble filling those seats now on the Board?

Mr. Wiggins informed the Commission that they have lots of people interested but they have yet to show up and sign up. With the Board, there are certain things they have to follow like the attendance policy. Whereas, being a Society they won't have to follow those regulations as much.

Mayor Via asked what does the Board prefer to be?

Mr. Forte stated the Code Book says that, *"the Board would be the governing body for establishing and for conducting the business of the Holly Hill Historic Preservation Society. When the Society has established itself as a non-profit organization, the Board shall be the conduit for communications between the City Commission and the staff of the City."* So, should the Historic Preservation Board disband and then they become a Society?

Mr. Schmitt stated, yes because they can't have both under the 501(c)3.

Mr. Forte stated and as any other non-profit, the Society would come to the Commission at budget time and say, "We would like an "x" amount of dollars..."

Mr. Schmitt stated, exactly.

Mr. Forte stated and then the Commission would say, "You're here and we're here". Is that what Mr. Schmitt is talking about?

Mr. Schmitt stated, yes.

Mayor Via stated originally, when they wrote that in the Code Book, they had no prospect of a Historic Society until they had to establish the Board with the hope that they would do the Society and the Board is doing exactly what it's doing now, kind of reporting until they get enough members going. Personally, he doesn't think they need both; a Historic Board and a Historic Society unless the Board needs both.

Commissioner Penny stated he thinks it's much easier for them to function as a Society than as a Board because they have lost several of their valuable members due to attendance requirements that the Commission puts on the boards and it would give them much more flexibility to conduct their business as a Society and get the same work done.

Mr. Forte asked if the Society has By-laws.

Mr. Wiggins stated, yes.

Mr. Forte asked if their attendance is contained in their By-laws and all that kind of stuff.

Mr. Wiggins stated, yes.

Commissioner Blais asked if the Board is ready to become a Society.

Mr. Schmitt stated any organization can become a 501(c)3; all they have to do is apply for it.

Commissioner Reed asked funding wise, how much does the Society think they will need to help them out?

Mr. Wiggins stated Mr. Forte threw out a good figure; and Mr. Wiggins thinks it's a good one, \$5,000.

Mayor Via stated for the City to give money to the Society, just a blanket amount of money, he would really like to have a budget or a plan of what's going to happen with the Society.

Commissioner Reed stated right, what is that amount of money going to accomplish for the citizens? What is that \$5,000 going to do for the citizens?

Mr. Forte stated he thinks what they should do is what the State says, is if the City is going to give money to a non-profit like that, they should do it in exchange for something.

Mr. Schmitt stated the State of Florida has control over 501(c)3, non-profits. The Society cannot spend money on just anything.

Commissioner Reed stated he is not suggesting that the Society would squander the money, he is saying when a citizen asks him, what is that Society getting for the \$5,000 – that their tax dollars is giving them, he would like to have an answer for them. What is the City getting? What are the citizens receiving from that Society?

Mr. Wiggins stated this June will be their 6th year and the only money that has been spent now, he guesses, is the fixing up of the Public Defenders Law Office where they now hold their monthly Board meetings. They have spent the money they have on maintenance for that building and the historic survey that they recently had done. Everything else that has been given to the Board by the City is the desk, some filing cabinets and supplies. They don't have a copy machine, fax machine, no phone, no computer and no bathroom there. Mr. Wiggins mentioned that they would spend the money on the basic needs first and certainly, if anybody donates all that stuff, they won't spend it at all.

Commissioner Penny asked what is the status of the survey.

Mr. Wiggins stated the survey was just done but he doesn't have a filing cabinet to put the files in. They gave them three big boxes with all the files in them.

Commissioner Penny asked has all the data been analyzed at all? Do they now have 450 significant historic sites?

Mr. Wiggins stated the man went through and did them all but not necessarily...he may have missed a few that are not in the listings. But the man set up a system where the Society can add them, themselves. Then the Society would go through them and determine which ones are really historic even though its 80 years old; it's been changed and they need to delete that. Mr. Wiggins mentioned he thinks they can delete half of those that are in there; that are no longer historic, in his opinion. But that takes a lot of time to go through them. He believes there are approximately 500 files to go through.

Commissioner Reed asked if the City has any surplus equipment they can donate to the Society.

Mr. Forte stated the City gives them what little surplus they have to give them; the desk, the file cabinets, the tables.

Commissioner Reed asked would the City continue to give them the things they need if they become a Society.

Mr. Forte stated he doesn't think so. That should come out of their budget. That would be the point of giving them a budget so that they can budget themselves for a computer or for office supplies or for a telephone line and then they can use it for seed money for fundraising activities or grant writing.

Commissioner Reed asked is it going to be more or less expensive for the City to have a Society as opposed to a Board. Which one cost the City more money?

Commissioner Blais stated well, a Society is supposed to be self-supporting.

Mr. Forte stated, right.

Mr. Schmitt stated, *eventually*.

Mr. Wiggins stated the City can either give \$5,000 to the Board or \$5,000 to the Society. Right now, they have gotten nothing.

Mr. Forte stated he thinks their basic needs are going to be their basic needs no matter what they are but once they become a Society...he always envisioned this would become an independent organization separate from the City with its own revenue source. That was always the goal when it was first established. He thinks the seed money is always going to be the same no matter which direction it goes but as a Society, they will increase membership on their own.

Commissioner Reed asked what if the Society runs across a future Commission that really doesn't want to help them anymore?

Mr. Schmitt stated well, hopefully by that time the Society will have received grant money.

Commissioner Penny stated whatever the City sponsors, the Board or the Society, that the Commission puts some attainable goals for the Society. The Board has been around for several years and the Board has done a lot of hard work and they have made some great progress but he keeps hearing people say, "Well, when we get around to writing that grant, there's grant money for this and that..." If somebody doesn't start doing some of these things, they are never going to get the grant done and it's going to be too late because these buildings are going to be gone. He doesn't know what's realistic as a goal. They should put some goals, so whether it's this Commission or a future Commission, they can see that the Society is actually doing something. Commissioner Penny mentioned that he would like to see some tangible goals being met even if it's a tiny goal, just so they can see the Society is making some progress.

Mr. Wiggins agreed.

Mr. Schmitt stated he would be the grant writer and get with the appropriate people; other Societies to see how to go about it. In order for this to work there has to be a relationship between the City and the Society.

Mayor Via stated the City is six months into their budget year, what did they budget for the Historic Board for this year?

Mr. Forte stated he doesn't think they have budgeted anything. With the few items that the Board had, came from the City Manager's budget. Mr. Wiggins asked for reimbursement for some administrative expenses for some computer software.

Mr. Wiggins stated they don't really like doing that. The Board would like to have it come from their own budget. The Board is keeping track of what they are spending now.

Commissioner Reed asked how many years does the Society predict that they would need the City's assistance before the Society can become self-sufficient?

Mr. Schmitt stated, two years.

Mr. Wiggins stated he thinks five years. They have approximately 20 Historic Society members right now.

Commissioner Reed stated he doesn't think that's shabby at all.

Mr. Wiggins stated the last two meetings they have been setting goals for this year. Each one of the members is going to concentrate on a grant or a certain project rather than all of them doing the same thing.

Mayor Via asked when would they be needing to start that budget of \$5,000? Do they need the money to get started now because the City is already in a budget year. Do they only need \$2,500 because they only have 6 months left of this year? Mayor Via agreed that the City should make at least a two-year commitment to the Society. They need to visually think that long and at the end of the year they need to have a report for that next set of money coming up. That's the same thing they currently do with the Chamber. They are trying to help them become self-sustained.

Mr. Wiggins stated they like being a Board but the restrictions kind of hinder them but if they go to a Society they still want to know that they are going to be able to get the support of the City.

Commissioner Reed and Mayor Via mentioned they support what the Society wants to do. Commissioner Reed stated this is the Society's task that they have been charged with as Board members and they want to make it a Society and if they think that's going to help them, he is in favor of that.

Mayor Via agreed.

There was some discussion about the current conditions at the Public Defenders Law Office.

Mayor Via asked would they give \$5,000 now, which is for the six months and then in FY 2008, they would do it again for \$5,000 which is really only a year in a half; that's \$10,000 every year in a half. Can they do that?

Commissioner Penny stated they don't have \$5,000 in the budget. Probably, \$2,500 is the most they can do.

Mr. Forte stated he has to look and see where they would pull the money from. Mr. Forte stated if he is understanding everybody, they would like for him to create an ordinance eliminating the Historic Preservation Board which is on the books, which then sets them free to operate as a Society, as a 501(c)3, and then the Commission will come and prepare a budget that shows some attainable goals and then when the Society brings that forward the Commission will consider funding some kind of money for the Society. Mr. Forte stated he doesn't think they want to do anything as far as contacting the County to sell the Public Defenders Law Office back to the City; he is not going to do anything with that; on the building itself and its concerns, the City does a limited amount of maintenance on the building – if there is anything major, it goes through the County because it's their building; and he will look to see if there is any CRA funds available, which he doubts, but he will check into it.

Ron Edwards, Historic Board member, wanted to invite the Commission to come out on Saturday morning, the Daytona Beach Historic Society on Beach Street will be putting on a program on the Real McCoy situation and his life and what he did and so forth. Mr. Edwards stated he is a part of the program; he has been furnishing their Society with information that he has had and they are going to be putting on a real nice program starting at 10:30 a.m.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The workshop officially adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

Attest:

City of Holly Hill, Florida

Valerie Manning
City Clerk

Roland D. Via
Mayor