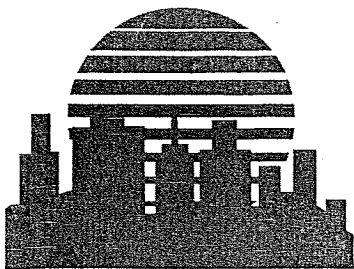


TAB 8



RECEIVED

OCT 24 2008

FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES, INC.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Key Officials

FROM: Rebecca O'Hara, Legislative Director

SUBJECT: Public Participation Policies

DATE: October 22, 2008

During the 2008 Legislative Session Representative Dorothy Hukill filed HB 991, better known as Vox Populi – the “Voice of the People Act”. The bill would have established uniform requirements for citizen participation at local government meetings and workshops. HB 991 was amended to allow local governments to adopt their own written policy on public participation. If the policies were not adopted by October 1, 2008, the local government would have been mandated to follow the uniform participation requirements in the bill. HB 991 died in Senate messages and its companion SB 2276 was never heard.

We expect this bill to be filed again in 2009. If you have not already done so, please help us demonstrate that Florida cities do not need further state intrusion in local affairs by adopting a written policy for public participation at your public meetings and workshops.

Enclosed for your consideration are sample policies for public participation. We encourage all cities to take this opportunity to adopt a new policy or revisit an existing policy to determine whether your procedures for public input continue to meet the unique needs of your community. If you have a policy you would like to share with us, or if you have any questions please contact Rikkia Rellford at (850) 701-3653 or rrellford@flcities.com.

CITY COMMISSION POLICY #09-02

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR AGENDA AND PUBLIC APPEARANCES BEFORE CITY COMMISSION

PLEASE PLACE CELL PHONES ON SILENT MODE

DATE AND TIME FOR COMMISSION MEETINGS: With the exception of holidays and pre-approved meeting schedule changes, the Commission meets every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month in the Commission Chambers located at City Hall. A Commission workshop meeting begins at 4:00 p.m. and concludes at 6:00 p.m. The regular Commission meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and last until 10:00 p.m. unless extended by motion of the Commission.

PRIOR TO COMMISSION MEETING: Agenda will be prepared and available to the public by 5:00 pm of the Friday preceding the Commission meeting. Anyone wishing to be placed on the agenda must contact James Freeman, CMC City Clerk at City Hall by phone 941-723-4570, email: jfreeman@palmettofl.org or fax 941-723-4576, giving their name, business name (if applicable), whether they are resident taxpayers of the City and must state their business. Appearances before Commission will be scheduled per the Mayor. Be advised that, in accordance with the American With Disabilities Act, persons needing a reasonable accommodation to participate in this proceeding should the City Clerk at PO Box 1209, Palmetto, FL 34220, telephone 941-723-4570, not later than seven (7) days prior to the proceeding.

PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 286.0105: If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, council, agency, or commission at this meeting, such person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

WORKSHOP MEETING: Commission workshop meetings are held to allow Commission to review and formulate items that will be placed on a future 7:00 meeting agenda. Commission takes no action at a workshop meeting. The meetings are open to the public, but generally public comment is not presented unless approved by the Commission or Mayor.

REGULAR MEETING: Commission regular meetings allow the legislative body of the City to adopt Ordinance and Resolutions to establish laws and policies to protect the health, safety and welfare of Palmetto residents, as well as providing public services and facilities. The Commission holds public hearings on issues that are of special importance to residents.

WHO MAY SPEAK: Meetings of the City Commission are open to the public. They are not, however, public forums. Any resident who wishes to address the Commission, on any subject within the scope of the Commission's authority, may do so, providing it is accomplished in an orderly manner and in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

SPEAKING ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA: Citizens wishing to speak to an agenda item must complete a Speakers Form and submit it to the Deputy Clerk-Administration, prior to the start of the meeting.

- **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS.** There are items, which the Commission does not need to discuss individually, and which are voted on as a group. Any commissioner, who wishes to discuss any individual item on the consent agenda, may request the Mayor to pull such item from the consent agenda. Those items pulled will be discussed and voted upon individually.

- **REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS.** These are items which the Commission will discuss individually in the order listed on the agenda. The chair, at its discretion, may permit any person to be heard on an item at a non-public hearing.
- **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS.** This portion of the agenda is to obtain input from the public. The chair will permit any person to be heard on the item during formal public hearings.

SPEAKING ON SUBJECTS NOT ON THE AGENDA: Citizens wishing to speak on a subject not on the agenda must complete a Speakers Form and submit it to the Deputy Clerk-Administration, prior to the start of the meeting. Any citizen may address the Commission on any item pertaining to City business during the Public Comment period at the beginning of the 7:00 meeting.

ADDRESSING THE COMMISSION, MANNER, TIME: Citizens shall state their name and address. The length of time each individual may speak will be limited to two (2) minutes in the interest of order and conduct of the business at hand, unless time is extended by action of the Commission. All comments or questions of the public are to be directed to the Mayor as presiding officer. There shall be no cross conversation or questions of any other persons.

PLEDGE OF PUBLIC CONDUCT: We, the Mayor, City Commission and Employees of the City of Palmetto agree to *Establish a process to promote positive interaction among ourselves and the citizens of Palmetto in a positive and non-threatening environment. Encourage visible, involved and active participate among all. Promote improved communication through active listening, providing feedback and honest expression of ideas. Utilize consensus for decision making. We realize that though we may disagree, we will be respectful of each other. We will direct all comments to the issues and will avoid personal attacks.*

DECORUM: If a member of the audience becomes unruly, the Mayor has the right to require the person to leave the room, and may order this done by the Police Department, if necessary. If a crowd becomes unruly, the Mayor may recess or adjourn the meeting.