

**Minutes  
State of the City Address  
Public Meeting  
July 8, 2010**

Pursuant to Public Notice, Vice-Mayor Jeffrey Fleis convened a public meeting on Thursday, July 8, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., in the David R. Schechter Community Center. Vice-Mayor Fleis introduced Council members Mayor Joseph Ferrante, Councilman Michael Chase, Councilman Higginson and City staff, City Manager Michael P. Crotty, Finance Director Brenda Raver, Fire Chief Don Hughes, Community Development Director Laura Canady, Recreation Director Kerry Stoms, Administrative Assistant Paula Brandt, and Deputy City Clerk Leonor. Also present were Councilwoman Karen Miller from the Town of Hypoluxo and Blue Ribbon Committee members Jerry de la Rosa, John Fergus, and Joseph Hemple, III.

Mayor Joseph Ferrante welcomed those present and thanked them for coming. He emphasized projects and goals that have been achieved over the past year to include:

1. Reopening of Hightower Beach Park.
2. Received \$100,000 in tax income from Pelican Coast.
3. Passed an ordinance to help keep the City drug free.
4. Worked as a collective team to continue to provide the highest level of services desired by the citizens of Satellite Beach.

**EXPLANATION OF HOW SATELLITE BEACH GOVERNMENT IS RUN**

- ***Legislative Branch*** – Consists of elected Council members who represent the City as visionaries for the betterment of future progression and pass laws.
- ***Executive Branch*** – Consists of the City Manager and Department Heads whose jobs are to execute and enforce laws passed by City Council.
- ***Judicial Branch*** – Is the City Attorney James Beadle who has done an excellent job of interpreting the laws.

Mayor Ferrante stated that the City runs well because it is well run.

**T.E.A.M. APPROACH TOWARD ACHIEVING GOALS**

The acronym for T.E.A.M. is: **T**axes, **E**ducation, **A**esthetics, and **M**aintenance. Mayor Ferrante gave an explanation of the process as follows:

- ***Education*** – Mayor Ferrante wrote a letter to the School Board emphasizing the need, benefits, and importance of having schools in our community. The schools within our City are “A” rated; which makes our City a desirable place to live. He was happy to announce that there will be no school closures within the City of Satellite Beach.
- ***Aesthetics*** – After damage created by the 2004 hurricanes, City Council changed to the sign code to make signs safer in high winds and more visually appealing. Facade grants have assisted businesses with approximately \$300,000 in grants for signs. As a result, all but 30 businesses have complied with the sign ordinance.

The Recreation parks are well maintained and add to the outstanding benefits of city services.

- **Maintenance** – The City has worked diligently with the engineer to improve the stormwater drainage. The Beautification Board has assisted city staff to enhance the appearance of the city.
- **Taxes** – Each year the millage rate is established to equal the revenue received from the previous year. The City collects \$7.80 for every \$1,000 assessed on the value of your home based on the millage rate of 7.8193. The Brevard County property appraiser's office has estimated an 8.5% (-\$600,000) decrease in property value for the FY10/11. With this dilemma, City Council established the Blue Ribbon Committee to provide recommendations to Council on taxes, services, and finding alternative revenue sources.

### **VISION FOR THE CITY**

City Council has established quarterly meetings to create a venue to discuss City issues educate the community, answer questions they might have, and receive public input.

Mayor Ferrante stated that communication is the best way for Council to talk with the community. With our new website, it gives us the opportunity to provide up-to-date information, assists in getting Waste Management issues resolved quickly, and gives the City a better avenue to provide better services. Our current and future goals are to bring businesses into the city, sustain a vibrant community with all the amenities, and offer services that citizens desire, making our city a slice of paradise with something for everyone.

Mayor Ferrante asked if there were any public comments; the following individuals spoke:

- Margaret Stroup stated she has read the Blue Ribbon Committee minutes and has found more on millage and service operations than on cost cutting measures to balance the budget.

[City Manager Crotty stated there is a lot of information that the Committee needs to make informed recommendations and invited her to attend the Blue Ribbon Committee meetings.]

[Mayor Ferrante stated, with the City obtaining 40% of oceanfront property to preserve the natural habitat, there should be an out-of-the-box thinking to include the State providing funds to assist with the offset of funds a city would receive when they choose to be proactive with the environmental choices.]

- Don McLendon stated that the new website is thorough and beneficial to the citizens. He further discussed his concern on the following issues:
  - Sign replacements and cost of façade grants funds.
  - Lansing Island tax abatement unfair to surrounding neighbors who have had a 35% increase in taxes.
  - Default on promises at Pelican Coast and associated tax ramifications, including number of police and fire personnel.

- He questioned why the City is trying to invest in a fire ladder truck and employees to man it when there is a deficit. We need to look for ways to cut the budget not spend it.
- Recommended announcing these meeting on the marquees and in the *Beachcaster*.
- He spoke about the market value of the Peg Legs property located at DeSoto Parkway and Highway A1A and asked about debt service.

[The PILOT agreement with Hunt Pinnacle has provided a positive outcome (\$100,000 payment in lieu of taxes) to the Pelican Coast issue. A grant has been submitted for the fire truck. If approved, it can be turned down if there are no funds to support the match.]

[Mayor Ferrante stated he would follow up on the Peg Legs property.]

- Sadie Baker expressed her appreciation for the wonderful community she lives in and recommended City Council writes an article in the *Beachcaster* with suggestions on how the citizens can help with volunteering their services.

Mayor Ferrante explained that in past years the City has tried to make wise decisions on the budget. Whereas our city has an 8.5% decrease in property taxes there are other cities that are in much worse shape (Palm Bay with 16% and Hypoluxo with 14%).

Mayor Ferrante recommended citizens attend the joint meeting of City Council and the Blue Ribbon Financial/Budget Committee on July 20 and the July 21 City Council meeting on millage. He thanked those in attendance and adjourned the public meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Leonor Olexa  
Deputy City Clerk