



City of Naples

City Council Chamber
735 Eighth Street Sout
Naples, Florida 3394

-SUBJECT-	Ord. No.	Res. No.	Pa
<p><u>ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></p> <p>-PRESENTATION BY NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PARENTS FOR DRUG FREE YOUTH IN CONJUNCTION WITH "RED RIBBON WEEK" OCTOBER 23-30.</p> <p>-MAYOR PUTZELL: Read a proclamation supporting the Red Ribbon Campaign in its entirety.</p> <p>-CITY MANAGER JONES: Announced that there would be an executive session of Council immediately following this regular meeting.</p>			
<p><u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES:</u> September 21, 1988, Regular Meeting September 23, 1988, Special Meeting</p>			
<p><u>RESOLUTIONS</u></p> <p>-APPROVE appointment of one member to the Perc Blue Ribbon Panel, General R.B. Anderson. 88-5629</p> <p>-APPROVE amendment to legal description of Resolution No. 88-5591, vacating utility easement, Naples Community Hospital. 88-5630</p> <p>-APPROVE maintenance dredging of boat slip, 1843 Eighth Street, S. 88-5634</p> <p>-APPROVE variance to allow an existing overhang, 723 21st Avenue, S. 88-5635 4</p> <p>-APPROVE temporary use of office trailer, 1700 North Tamiami Trail. 88-5636 5</p> <p>-<u>WITHDRAWN</u> request of Collier County to pass ordinance to withhold license plates or revalidation stickers from persons with five or more parking ticket violations. 88-_____</p> <p>-APPROVE self-insurance program. 88-5637</p> <p>-APPROVE assessment district for Bailey Lane. 88-5638</p> <p>-APPROVE parade for Swamp Buggy Days. 88-5639</p>			
<p><u>ORDINANCES - First Reading</u></p> <p>-APPROVE anti-scavenging provisions to the Code. 88-_____ 6</p> <p>-<u>TABLE</u> amendment to Code to update specifications for mailboxes. 88-_____</p>			
<p><u>PURCHASING</u></p> <p>-BID AWARD for 2517 cubic yards of beach sand, Lowdermilk Park. 88-5631</p> <p>-BID AWARD for annual requirements for sod. 88-5632</p> <p>-APPROVE the disposal of surplus tangible personal property. 88-5633</p>			
<p><u>DISCUSSION/ACTION</u></p> <p>-APPOINT Robert Schroer as the City's Public Relations Consultant. 9</p>			

City Council Chambers
735 Eighth Street South
Naples, Florida 33940



Time 9:00 a.m.

Date 10/05/88

Mayor Putzell called the meeting to order and presided as Chairman:

ROLL CALL: Present: Edwin J. Putzell, Jr., ITEM 2
Mayor

Kim Anderson-McDonald
William E. Barnett
Alden R. Crawford, Jr.
John T. Graver
Paul W. Muenzer
Lyle S. Richardson,
Councilmen

Also Present:

Franklin C. Jones,
City Manager
David W. Rynders,
City Attorney
Mark W. Wiltsie,
Assistant City Manager
Gerald L. Gronvold,
City Engineer
Ann "Missy" McKim
Com. Development Dir.
Jodie M. O'Driscoll,
Deputy Clerk

Chuck Thomas,
Asst. Utilities Dir.
Frank "Bill" Hanley,
Finance Director
Stewart K. Unangst,
Purchasing Agent
Tara A. Norman,
Administrative Asst.
Jon C. Staiger, Ph.D.,
Natural Resources Mgr.
George Henderson,
Sergeant-At-Arms

See Supplemental Attendance List - Attachment #1.

*** *** ***
INVOCATION: Reverend James Hervey ITEM 1
Moorings Presbyterian Church

*** *** ***
ANNOUNCEMENTS: ITEM 3

PRESENTATION BY NATIONAL FEDERATION OF
PARENTS FOR DRUG FREE YOUTH IN CONJUNCTION
WITH "RED RIBBON WEEK" OCTOBER 23-30.

Mrs. Mary Peterson commended the City staff for its help with this campaign. She asked Council to observe "Red Ribbon Week" by displaying red ribbon auspiciously throughout October 23-30. After reading an editorial which appeared in the October 4, 1988, issue of the Naples Daily News (Attachment #2), Mrs. Peterson once again asked for the City's participation.

MAYOR PUTZELL: Read a proclamation supporting the Red Ribbon Campaign in its entirety.

CITY MANAGER JONES: Announced that there would be an executive session of Council immediately following this regular meeting.

*** *** ***
-----CONSENT AGENDA-----

APPROVAL OF MINUTES ITEM 4
September 21, 1988, Regular Meeting
September 23, 1988, Special Meeting

*** *** ***
-1-

COUNCIL MEMBERS	M O T I O N	S E C O N D	VOTE		A B S E N T
			Y E S	N O	
Anderson-McDonald					
Barnett					
Crawford					
Graver					
Muenzer					
Richardson			X		
Putzell (7-0)			X		

CITY OF NAPLES, FLORIDA

City Council Minutes

Date 10/05/88

COUNCIL MEMBERS	MOTION	SECTION	VOTE		ABSENT
			YES	NO	

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5629 ITEM 5

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING ONE MEMBER TO THE PERC BLUE RIBBON PANEL TO FILL THE VACANCY CREATED BY WILLIAM L. MCGRATH; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title not read.

*** *** ***

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5630 ITEM 6

A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE LEGAL DESCRIPTION SET FORTH IN RESOLUTION NO. 88-5591 VACATING AND ABANDONING UTILITY EASEMENTS LOCATED IN THE APPROXIMATE CENTER OF THE NAPLES COMMUNITY HOSPITAL'S SOUTH PARKING LOT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title not read.

*** *** ***

PURCHASING ITEM 7

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5631 Item 7-a

A RESOLUTION AWARDED CITY BID #88-56 FOR PROVIDING AND PROPERLY LEVELING APPROXIMATELY 2517 CUBIC YARDS OF BEACH SAND AT LOWDERMILK PARK; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER THEREFOR; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Sea Con Industries, Inc.
Naples, Florida
\$14,339.68

Title not read.

In response to Councilman Richardson, City Engineer Gronvold explained this renourishment was necessary in order to save several coconut palms which currently are exposed. Previous discussions of renourishment efforts indicated that approximately 10,000 cubic yards of material would be needed; however, since that time the beach has somewhat renourished itself.

Mrs. Anderson-McDonald asked if the Natural Resources Manager had approved the sand source. Dr. Staiger advised that he had. In response to another question posed by Councilman Anderson-McDonald, City Manager Jones noted that this project was funded, in part, from beach parking revenue and fines.

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5632 Item 7-b

A RESOLUTION AWARDED THE BID FOR THE CITY'S ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SOD; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ISSUE PURCHASE ORDERS THEREFOR; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

CITY OF NAPLES, FLORIDA

City Council Minutes

Date 10/05/88

COUNCIL MEMBERS	MOTION	SECTION	VOTE	
			YES	NO

Various Vendors
\$54,110.00 (Est. annual)

Title not read.

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5633

Item 7-c

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY VALUED GREATER THAN \$5,000.00; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title not read.

Mrs. Anderson-McDonald asked where these revenue funds would be placed. City Manager Jones explained that they would be included in the general revenue fund.

MOTION: To APPROVE the Consent Agenda as presented.

-----END CONSENT AGENDA-----

-----ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARINGS-----

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5634

ITEM 8

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MAINTENANCE DREDGING OF AN EXISTING BOAT SLIP, OFF NAPLES BAY LOCATED AT 1843 EIGHTH STREET SOUTH, SUBJECT TO THE STIPULATIONS SET FORTH HEREIN; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

PUBLIC HEARING: Opened: 9:18 a.m.
Closed: 9:20 a.m.

No one present to speak for or against.

Natural Resources Manager Staiger explained City Council approval was necessary because the slip to be dredged opened directly into Naples Bay which is designated as "Class 2" waters by the Department of Environmental Regulation (DER). Staff has recommended approval.

In response to Mayor Putzell, Dr. Staiger advised that the Conservancy has expressed no opposition to the request. The dredging will only be done in the boat slip, he explained in response to Councilman Graver.

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution as presented.

-----END ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARINGS-----

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT/ NAPLES PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD

Anderson-McDonald
Barnett
Crawford
Graver
Muenzer
Richardson
Putzell (7-0)

X
X
X
X
X
X
X

Anderson-McDonald
Barnett
Crawford
Graver
Muenzer
Richardson
Putzell (7-0)

X
X
X
X
X
X
X

CITY OF NAPLES, FLORIDA

City Council Minutes

Date 10/05/88

COUNCIL MEMBERS	MOTION	S E C O N D	VOTE		A B S E N T
			Y E S	N O	
Anderson-McDonald			X	X	
Barnett	X			X	
Crawford					X
Graver					X
Muenzer				X	
Richardson				X	
Putzell				X	
(5-2)					

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5635

ITEM 9

A RESOLUTION GRANTING A VARIANCE FROM SECTION 6.41 OF APPENDIX "A" - ZONING OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NAPLES IN ORDER TO ALLOW AN EXISTING OVERHANG TO REMAIN AT 723 21ST AVENUE SOUTH; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

City Attorney Rynders noted that one of the adjacent property owners had contacted him and advised that he had no objections to the proposed variance.

Community Development Director McKim explained that this item was brought before Council once again because the petitioner believes that a similar request has been approved, therefore, their circumstances have changed.

Referring to previous discussion of this item, Mrs. Anderson-McDonald asked staff to comment about contractors' obvious lack of knowledge of City ordinances. Mrs. McKim advised that Naples has a strict reputation for adhering to building Codes; however, in rare cases, a situation such as this will arise. Mayor Putzell said that he believed the message has been sent to area contractors the last time this was denied, that the City Council will require compliance with its ordinances.

In response to Mr. Graver, City Attorney Rynders pointed out that if Council approved this request, no one would be in error. However, should the Council deny it, the homeowner and contractor would have to work it out and perhaps the contractor's license could then be suspended if it went before the Licensing Board. Mr. Rynders directed Council to follow the guidelines outlined in the ordinance when making its decision. In response to Mayor Putzell, Attorney Varnadoe agreed that Council should follow the directives given in its ordinance and said that in doing so would then, in fact, find that approval should be granted his client.

Attorney George Varnadoe, representing the petitioner, briefly addressed the five criteria which must be met before a variance can be granted. He said he believed his client has met all the criteria and, therefore, his request should be approved. Mr. Varnadoe then cited two cases in which Council granted variances for similar circumstances. However, Mr. Graver pointed out that the lots in those cases were dissimilar to the petitioners. Mr. Varnadoe further advised that the petitioner has tried to rectify this situation by acquiring 18" of land from the adjoining property owner, but to no avail.

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution as presented.

Councilman Crawford said that although he was sympathetic to the petitioner's plight, he could not support this motion because of the possible precedent it might set. Mr. Graver concurred stating that no new evidence had been presented to Council for him to change his original position.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

MOTION	SECTION	VOTE		ABSENT
		YES	NO	

Mr. Muenzer said that he would support the resolution and believed Council should decide each case on an individual basis. Councilman Richardson concurred and said he did not believe this would set a precedent. Mayor Putzell stated that since the motion had carried, his vote was meaningless.

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-----END COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PAB-----

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5636 ITEM 10

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO USE A TEMPORARY OFFICE TRAILER IMMEDIATELY EAST OF THEIR PRESENT LOCATION (1700 NORTH TAMiami TRAIL) FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

Community Development Director McKim advised that staff has recommended denial because of the possible precedent this request might set; however, if the Council should approve the temporary use, it should be with the condition that landscaping be used to screen the structure from view.

Councilman Muenzer moved to deny the request and Mr. Graver seconded the motion for discussion purposes only.

Mr. Ed Oates, Executive Vice-President of the Naples Chamber of Commerce, introduced all the Board members in attendance. He pointed out that the Chamber has been at the same location for the past 27 years and has outgrown its present facility. Staff suggested the location could be moved; however, Mr. Oates disputed that and said it was not practical because the current location is so well known. He then advised the Fleischmann interest would be constructing a retail/office complex sometime in the future; however, a date certain has yet to be set. In support of their request, Mr. Oates distributed a paper outlining the definition of "unique" in which category he said his group's situation fell into. In response to Mr. Graver, Chamber Representative Oates advised they were not in receipt of a written agreement with the Fleischmann interest regarding space in its proposed development.

Councilman Anderson-McDonald asked if the Chamber would be agreeable to approval on a one-year basis and if it could obtain written confirmation from Fleischmann indicating their intention. Mr. Roger Barry, representing Neapolitan Enterprises, advised that his group could supply such a letter. Referring to the one-year approval, Mr. Oates said he believed his group would agree with the understanding that they would probably return for an extension. Mr. Richardson said that he would support approval for two years, but no more. Councilman Barnett concurred.

Referring to the trolley franchise agreements, Mr. Muenzer noted that the Chamber had rented space to

Anderson-McDonald
Barnett
Crawford
Graver
Muenzer
Richardson
Putzell (2-5)
FAILED

X
X
X
X
X
X
X

CITY OF NAPLES, FLORIDA

City Council Minutes

Date 10/05/88

COUNCIL MEMBERS	MOTION	SECOND	VOTE		ABSENT
			YES	NO	
Anderson-McDonald	X		X		
Barnett			X		
Crawford					X
Graver		X	X		
Muenzer					X
Richardson			X		
Putzell			X		
(5-2)					

one of the vendors and asked why if space was so critical. Mr. Dates explained the Board believed it to be a profitable endeavor and that it was only on a part-time basis. The trolley representative shares an office with the executive assistant.

J. Dudley Goodlette, President of the Chamber, apologized for the "open-endedness" of this request. The Board, however, does not have a date certain for the proposed building and, therefore, cannot anticipate how long the trailer will be needed.

Councilman Crawford expressed concern that other businesses in the area might come in and request similar temporary uses to relieve their cramped quarters and Council will then be obliged to approve it.

Mrs. Anderson-McDonald moved to approve the request on a one-year basis, or review, with a maximum length of two years providing the Chamber submit a plan as to its future site and subject to total landscaping. Mr. Graver seconded.

Mayor Putzell asked the Clerk to restate the motion. After a brief discussion, Mrs. Anderson-McDonald restated her motion: To approve the temporary office trailer immediately to the east of the present facility for a period of two years, subject to total landscaping. Mr. Graver seconded the motion.

Mr. Goodlette said that he would keep the City apprised of any plans received by the Fleischmann interest for development of the property. Mr. Dates suggested the resolution be effective from the date a certificate of occupancy is issued.

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution with the following amendment: that the site be subject to total landscaping requirements and effective from the date a certificate of occupancy is issued.

-----FIRST READINGS-----

---ORDINANCE NO. 88-

ITEM 11

AN ORDINANCE ADDING SECTION 10-11 TO CHAPTER 10 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NAPLES RELATING TO ANTI-SCAVENGING; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. PURPOSE: TO PROVIDE ANTI-SCAVENGING PROVISIONS TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES AT THE REQUEST OF THE CITY.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

City Manager Jones explained this resolution was to prevent any problems which the City might encounter in the future with its recycling program.

Mrs. Anderson-McDonald asked if the City would establish public places where recyclable material could be disposed of. Mr. Jones noted that the City

COUNCIL MEMBERS

MOTION SECTION Y N O T VOTE

currently has such places and could publish where they are located.

Referring to the horticultural landfill, Mr. Richardson asked if the City had any plans for closing that facility. The City Manager said not immediately; however, it might have to limit its use to only the City rather than including private individuals.

Mayor Putzell asked why the Code Enforcement Board could not be responsible for enforcing this ordinance. City Attorney Rynders replied that the Board was designed to operate with respect to land matters within the Code and would not be very effective in reporting these isolated cases. If a party were fined by the Code Enforcement Board, it would be difficult to enforce the violation if he/she did not reside within the City limits. The Board was established to give individual property owners a chance to rectify any problems prior to levying fines. This particular situation does not lend itself to that procedure.

MOTION: To APPROVE the ordinance as presented at first reading.

---ORDINANCE NO. 88- ITEM 12

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 19-16, 19-17, 19-18 AND 19-19 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF NAPLES RELATING TO MAIL AND PAPER BOXES; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. PURPOSE: TO UPDATE THE LOCATION REQUIREMENTS AND TO PROVIDE SPECIFICATIONS FOR SUPPORTS OF MAILBOXES.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

The City Attorney advised that this was an excellent example of Code violation on real property which the Code Enforcement Board would have ample opportunity to enforce.

City Engineer Gronvold advised that the Code governing installation of mailboxes was obsolete and needed to be updated. This ordinance will bring 95% of the mailboxes in the City into compliance.

Regarding this proposed ordinance, Mrs. Anderson-McDonald said she has received several complaints and if this was approved, many of the existing, decorative mailboxes would not be in compliance. Mr. Gronvold advised of the standards for the proposed ordinance which would limit poles to 4" x 4".

Council expressed concern that this limitation would not be sufficient to discourage teenage vandals. Mr. Jones advised that he had a similar problem and since installing the 4" x 4" post there has been no reoccurrence.

MOTION: To TABLE this ordinance at first reading until the next workshop meeting, October 12, 1988.

Anderson-McDonald
Barnett
Crawford
Graver
Muenzer
Richardson
Putzell
(7-0)

X
X
X
X
X
X
X

Anderson-McDonald
Barnett
Crawford
Graver
Muenzer
Richardson
Putzell

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COUNCIL MEMBERS

M O T I O N	S E C O N D	Y E S	N O	VOTE	
				18	5
				A	B
				S	E
				N	T

Citizen Gilbert Weil spoke in opposition to this ordinance and suggested the City meet with postal officials to determine why there was no home delivery in the City instead of the current rural route practice of using boxes along street rights-of-way. Councilman Muenzer noted that central Naples included house delivery.

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-----END FIRST READINGS-----

---RESOLUTION NO. 88- ITEM 13

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING COLLIER COUNTY TO PASS AN ORDINANCE ALLOWING THE CLERK OF THE COURT OR THE TAX COLLECTOR TO WITHHOLD THE LICENSE PLATE OR REVALIDATION STICKER OF PERSONS WITH FIVE (5) OR MORE PARKING TICKET VIOLATIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution as presented.

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---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5637 ITEM 14

A RESOLUTION RENEWING THE CITY'S SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM PROVIDING FOR PREMIUMS AND THE LOSS FUND; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ISSUE PURCHASE ORDERS THEREFOR; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

Finance Director Hanley explained that this was a renewal of the City's self-insurance program. It has been recommended that the City switch to an occurrence basis for claims made which holds a certain carrier liable regardless of when a claim is reported. Staff has also recommended that the loss fund be increased from \$350,000 to \$460,000, thereby resulting in annual savings of approximately \$20,000 in premium expense. Another change recommended includes increasing the threshold on property from \$75,000 to \$150,000; the City has yet to reach the \$75,000 threshold in any one year.

In response to Mrs. Anderson-McDonald, Mr. Joe Williams, representing Arthur J. Gallagher & Company, advised that the London package refers to Lloyd's of London. Insurance for public officials is handled by the International Surplus Lines Insurance; boiler and machinery by the Chubb Group; property and liability by Illinois Union; and crime handled by Fidelity and Deposit Company.

Anderson-McDonald	X	X
Barnett		X
Crawford		X
Graver		X
Muenzer		X
Richardson	X	X
Putzell		X
(7-0)		

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution as presented.

*** **

COUNCIL MEMBERS	MOTION	SECTION	VOTE		ABSENT
			YES	NO	
Anderson-McDonald			X		
Barnett			X		
Crawford			X		
Graver		X	X		
Muenzer			X		
Richardson	X		X		
Putzell			X		
(7-0)					
Anderson-McDonald			X		
Barnett			X		
Crawford			X		
Graver			X		
Muenzer	X		X		
Richardson		X	X		
Putzell			X		
(7-0)					
Anderson-McDonald		X	X		
Barnett			X		
Crawford			X		
Graver			X		X
Muenzer			X		X
Richardson	X		X		
Putzell			X		
(5-2)					

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5638

ITEM 15

A RESOLUTION ORDERING A LOCAL IMPROVEMENT, TO WIT: CONSTRUCTION OF A SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM AND EXTENSION OF THE CITY WASTEWATER SYSTEM TO PROVIDE SEWER SERVICE ON BAILEY LANE, HEREIN DESIGNATED AS "BAILEY LANE ASSESSMENT DISTRICT"; DESCRIBING THE BOUNDARIES THEREOF; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

City Manager Jones advised this resolution was necessary to begin the public hearing process.

Mr. Richardson asked how many property owners would be affected by this district. Assistant Utilities Director Thomas advised there would be approximately 15 and at this time that represents 100% ownership of the lots.

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution as presented.

---RESOLUTION NO. 88-5639

ITEM 16

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SWAMP BUGGY DAYS, INC. TO HOLD ITS ANNUAL PARADE IN THE CITY ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1988; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Title read by City Attorney Rynders.

The City Manager explained that because this item involves a state road, U.S. 41, special permitting requirements must be followed which include Council approval of the request.

Mayor Putzell asked who would be responsible for costs associated with use of police staff. Mr. Jones advised that the Swamp Buggy organizers will be responsible for such costs. In response to Mr. Richardson, staff advised that the July 4 parade was denied because organizers wanted the City to pay for costs associated with police service, barricades, etc.

MOTION: To APPROVE the resolution as presented.

ITEM 17

APPOINTMENT OF A PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANT.

MOTION: To APPOINT Robert Schroer as the City's Public Relations Consultant.

Mr. Graver said he did not support the use of any public relations person.

CITY OF NAPLES, FLORIDA

City Council Minutes

Date 10/05/88

COUNCIL MEMBERS

M O T I O N	S E C O N D	VOTE		A B S E N T
		Y E S	N O	
		1	0	

Mayor Putzell commended all those who made presentations to the Council for a job well done and urged them to apply again in the future.

ADJOURN: 11:01 a.m.



EDWIN J. PUTZELL JR., Mayor



JANET CASON
CITY CLERK



JODIE M. O'DRISCOLL
DEPUTY CLERK

These minutes of the Naples City Council were approved on OCTOBER 19, 1988.

SUPPLEMENTAL ATTENDANCE LIST

George Varnadoe
W. W. Haardt
Mary Peterson
Roger Barry
Sarah Sauer

George Batchelder
Herb Anderson
M/M Paul Toppino
Lee Layne
J. Dudley Goodlette

Charles Andrews
Jack Sturgis
Rev. Jim Hervey
Dave Fuller
Gilbert Weil

Other interested citizens and visitors.

NEWS MEDIA

Lori Darvas, Naples Daily News
Stephen DiPietro, TV-10
Don Germaise, WEVU-TV

Naples' scourge is spreading

The final segment of a series regarding the problems plaguing Naples' mostly black River Park community appears today in the Naples Daily News.

Assistant City Editor Marty Bonvechio spent several months interviewing residents and assessing conditions in an embattled part of Naples never featured on a postcard, River Park.

The area is beset by open drug trafficking, poverty and despair. Most residents see no way to save themselves or their children from a vicious cycle of poverty, drugs and teen pregnancy. They lack the resources — physical, psychological, educational and financial — to escape from the dilapidated, rundown, neglected neighborhood.

Bonvechio made it very obvious in the series that there are few opportunities to escape from despair for residents who can barely read or write and who have little concept of the value of education. Most do what they can to survive. Some sell dope.

In the meantime, the scourge is spreading, infecting the entire community. Earlier last week, headlines focused on massive drug arrests in another section of the county.

Theft to buy drugs is proliferating. Burglary rates in affluent neighborhoods are increasing. Youngsters in expensive sports cars from the better areas of town are cruising through River Park to experiment with highly addictive crack cocaine and they come back for more.

It's a cycle that is corrupting the entire community.

Community leaders have a variety of strategies for combating the problem, including education — teaching youngsters to avoid drugs and providing a basic education to underprivileged children so they can compete in today's job market.

Naples can't dismiss the tragedy of River Park. The entire community must assume some of the blame for children who drop out of school without the basic rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic.

As long as a segment of our community is denied a legitimate chance to succeed, it will find other, illegal, destructive ways to survive.

And, so long as affluent citizens patronize drug dealers, dealers will continue to thrive. Users ought to be arrested by the busload, if necessary, and sentenced to treatment and counseling. On second offenses, they ought to be sentenced to jail, period.

The most important step this community can take is to realize that drugs are not someone else's problem. Every pastor, every parent, every counselor, every teacher, every employer, every friend must become a drug counselor and teacher. And, if that fails, all of us must tip off police about users and dealers.

If all of us care and act, we can make a big difference.

Blank sheet
Janice Cason