



City Council Chamber  
735 Eighth Street South  
Naples, Florida 34102

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**City Council Workshop Meeting – October 13, 1997 – 8:30 a.m.**

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Mayor Barnett called the meeting to order at 10:23 a.m. and presided.

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**ROLL CALL .....ITEM 1**

**Present:** Bill Barnett, Mayor  
Marjorie Prolman, Vice Mayor

Council Members:  
Bonnie R. MacKenzie  
John R. Nocera  
Fred Tarrant  
Peter H. Van Arsdale

**Absent:** Fred L. Sullivan

**Also Present:**

Dr. Richard Woodruff, City Manager  
Kenneth Cuyler, City Attorney  
William Harrison, Assistant City Manager  
Missy McKim, Planning Director  
Jon Staiger, Natural Resources Manager  
Ron Lee, Planner  
Susan Golden, Planner  
Molly Reed, Recording Specialist

Charles Mohlke  
Virginia Corkran  
James P. Lennane  
James DeWitt  
Peter Gerbosi  
Other interested citizens and visitors

**Media:**

Frank Kinsman, WNOG  
Marc Caputo, Naples Daily News  
Fox News

.....ITEM 4  
**DISCUSSION REGARDING A CITY-WIDE SURVEY ON MAJOR ISSUES. (10:24 a.m.)**

Mayor Barnett introduced Charles Mohlke, a public survey expert, to discuss survey techniques and interpretations. Mr. Mohlke began by saying that because locating willing respondents for a survey required special techniques, several methods for obtaining reliable information are used, noting that conducting several surveys over time could eliminate the effect of prevailing influences. Although there are a number of techniques available, Mr. Mohlke said he would concentrate his presentation on telephone and mail surveys.

Mr. Mohlke related the methodology of the telephone survey conducted for Collier County by League of Women Voters volunteers wherein respondents were randomly selected from registered voters who had voted in the most recent election or had registered since the last election. The interviews average nine to thirteen minutes in length, and the survey includes 250 to 300 respondents. Regarding the mail interview, he said a response as high as 20% is considered rare. In other words, he said, a mailing to every registered voter in the City resulting in 3500 responses would be considered very successful. He emphasized that with either type of survey, however, the accuracy of the information gathered is more reliable when garnered over time since responses are often event-driven.

Council Member Van Arsdale asked whether results would be skewed by so many part-time residents who are not registered to vote. Mr. Mohlke responded that many part-time residents eventually become domiciled here and when the results are measured over time and by zip code, there is little variation on responses to key questions.

Regarding a survey as an alternative to Council Member Nocera's proposed ballot questions on the airport, Mr. Mohlke said the main difficulty would be effectively interpreting the outcome. Further, he observed, some voters also neglect to turn the ballot page causing the number of responses to drop. Additional difficulties with ballot questions include their order of placement on the ballot as well as the total number of questions on the ballot thereby driving an indifferent voter to take a position. Vice Mayor Prolman expressed skepticism on the validity of non-binding straw votes. Mr. Mohlke confirmed that, unlike surveys, straw votes are difficult to assess and tend to be of little value for determining future action. Council Member Van Arsdale observed that it was always a dilemma when straw vote results were counter to what elected officials believed to be in the best interests of the City. Mr. Mohlke agreed, noting that elected officials rarely make decisions based on survey results.

Council Member MacKenzie recalled, however, that Mr. Mohlke had said that proactive citizens can skew both ballot responses and survey results and that a 20% response rate was considered very successful. Naples had experienced a 48% response rate on a ballot question, she said, which would therefore indicate that a higher response rate is probably less skewed. Mr. Mohlke explained that the 20% rate applied to a mail-in survey while a telephone survey using follow-up calls offered a more exacting, thorough response analysis. Mrs. MacKenzie remarked that a telephone survey depended on sufficient numbers of volunteers and was more expensive and time-consuming than a ballot question. Mr. Mohlke agreed, suggesting that telephone survey professionals be used to arrive at the most reliable results and said a City-wide interview of 150 people would, in his opinion, offer a fair representation of public opinion. He then pointed out that if the goal were to obtain neighborhood analyses, a rigorous technique would be required in order to reach working citizens in certain precincts. Mrs. MacKenzie said that a straw vote

enabled the public participation in the decision-making process; and although Mr. Mohlke agreed, he noted that if the voting results were close, no conclusions could be drawn.

Council Member MacKenzie pointed out that Council had discussed whether or not to present her proposed question regarding a second Gordon River bridge on the February 1998 ballot and requested a decision on the following phraseology, noting that it had been reviewed by City Attorney Kenneth Cuyler:

**“Are you in favor of the proposal to build a new road and a second east-west Gordon River crossing to be located generally along a route which would extend Central Avenue eastward from Goodlette-Frank Road, cross the Gordon River and connect to a relocated North Road terminating at Airport-Pulling Road?”**

Council Member Tarrant said he felt the question should reference funding since the voters needed to know how a second bridge would be paid for in order to make an informed decision. He expressed concern that omitting the funding issue source would produce neither accurate nor fair responses; Mrs. MacKenzie, however, took the position that it would be misleading to present the question with the implication that the project could be done without a tax increase. She also noted that it had been the consensus of Council to eliminate a ballot question with respect to funding and predicted that public debate would deal with that issue. Vice Mayor Prolman reiterated her mistrust of straw ballots remarking that people will respond favorably to anything so long as they are not expected to pay for it.

***It was the consensus of Council to review Council Member MacKenzie’s straw vote ballot question at the 10/15/97 Regular Meeting/4-2 (Tarrant and Prolman dissenting).***

City Attorney Cuyler explained that, following formal approval of the question, the City Clerk would then prepare a resolution to that effect for the ballot. Vice Mayor Prolman asked for clarification of the words, “to be located generally along a route,” and Council Member MacKenzie agreed to eliminate the phrase. Therefore, the final question read:

**“Are you in favor of the proposal to build a new road and a second east-west Gordon River crossing which would extend Central Avenue eastward from Goodlette-Frank Road, cross the Gordon River and connect to a relocated North Road terminating at Airport-Pulling Road?”**

In response to Council Member Tarrant, City Attorney Cuyler indicated that a question without reference to funding would be legal and could be placed on the ballot. He observed, however, that Mr. Mohlke had pointed out the dilemma of evaluating the information garnered from such a vote.

Council Member Van Arsdale questioned whether Council would also conduct a survey regarding questions pertaining to the airport; Mr. Tarrant pointed out that the Airport Master Plan had not yet been presented. Mr. Nocera expressed an interest in pursuing a survey on the airport issue, adding that he felt it would provide worthwhile input from the public. However, Council Member Tarrant recollected City Manager Woodruff’s reluctance to spend funds for an outside survey. Dr. Woodruff acknowledged that he did not support conducting an outside survey, but added that this would be a Council decision, as well as determining the topics to be

surveyed. Mayor Barnett said Council should await the Airport Master Plan before taking any action on a survey.

.....**ITEM 5**  
**HOUSING ELEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT**  
**OF COMMUNITY AFFAIR RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS.** (11:14 a.m.)

Planner Susan Golden reviewed changes to the Housing Element in the Comprehensive Plan as proposed by the Department of Community Affairs. ( A copy of this document is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk's office.) She reported that the County Commissioners would hold the second reading of the joint housing element on October 28<sup>th</sup> and, therefore, any adjustments made by Council should be done prior to that meeting.

Council Member MacKenzie referred to Objection 8 regarding the definition of mega house, which, she said, required clarification even though not part of the City/County Housing Element. She suggested the definition include, "...a home that is out of size and scale with its own lot size, with adjacent residences, and inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood." City Manager Richard Woodruff pointed out, however, that several homeowner associations did not feel mega houses were a problem in their neighborhoods. It was determined that, inasmuch as the community consensus was not yet clear, Objection 8 would be altered to read: "By 1998 the City will study and make recommendations regarding amending the Code of Ordinances to limit mega houses within the City."

Council Member Tarrant inquired whether City development hinged on build-out and, if so, were there accurate build-out figures as well as data regarding the effect of land use on the available water supply. City Manager Woodruff responded that water demand, including build-out figures projected through 2015 revealed that the water treatment plant, aquifers, and well-fields could handle the demand.

Referring to Objective 5 regarding conservation of historical structures, Planning Director Missy McKim reported on regular review of building permits to identify historical homes that are demolished. Vice Mayor Prolman proposed that the response to Objective 5.1 include a reference to support documents used to determine historic preservation policies and procedures. Further, she requested that the intent to explore an incentive program to preserve historic structures be included in the response; Planning Director McKim agreed to reference this suggestion. Regarding Objection 2 on affordable housing, Vice Mayor Prolman requested inclusion of income levels for each listed category. Planner Golden said she recalled that for two-person households the income levels were approximately \$17,000 for "very low income, " \$21,000 for "low income," and \$32,000 for "moderate income." She said she would supply Ms. Prolman with a copy of the chart showing these figures.

**Public Input:** 11:31 a.m.

It is noted for the record that **James DeWitt** was not present when called. **Peter Gerbosi, 1708 Gulf Shore Boulevard**, stated that, in general, he objected to surveys because they are predicated on too many variables and, therefore, a public referendum is more reliable. Council Member Van Arsdale asked Mr. Gerbosi for his thoughts on the proposed question regarding a second Gordon River bridge, and he responded that a majority of "yes" responses would have to be closely analyzed whereas a "no" response would be very clear. **James P. Lennane, 4228 Gordon Drive**, submitted a proposed ordinance for Council's consideration which would require a public referendum to plan or locate a bridge over the Gordon River. (A copy of the proposed

ordinance is contained in the file for this meeting in the City Clerk's office.) In addition, he pointed out that Council always has the option to overturn referendum results, noting that the value of referenda is to direct elected officials toward the wishes of the public. Postcard referendums are legal in Florida, he said, and he encouraged Council to adopt this procedure. Council Member Van Arsdale asked Mr. Lennane's opinion of the proposed ballot question, and he replied that he approved of it even though he felt that the question concealed Council's intent.

.....**ITEM 3**  
**REVIEW OF ITEMS ON THE 10/15/97 REGULAR MEETING AGENDA. (11:42 a.m.)**

**Item 7 (Consider authorizing Police Confiscation Funds to purchase a computer dispatch and records management software system for use by Police & Emergency Services)** Vice Mayor Prolman questioned why Progressive was not considered as a vendor.

**Item 8 (Consider amendments to contracts with Hole, Montes & Associates, Inc.)** Vice Mayor Prolman asked when the results would be known, and whether or not Council could determine action for the three projects on Attachment A.

**Item 11 Consider authorizing a bond issue to enable the Naples Players, Inc., to finance a community theater)** Vice Mayor Prolman requested a statement of financial status regarding the Naples Players.

**Item 17 (Appointing a selection committee for the Police and Emergency Services Building)** City Manager Woodruff added this item to the agenda

**Item 18 (Consider a resolution regarding the ballot question presented by Council Member MacKenzie regarding a second Gordon River bridge)** City Manager Woodruff added this item to the agenda.

City Manager Richard Woodruff requested direction from Council in order to begin the process for resolving zoning issues raised by Attorney John Passidomo regarding the previous illegal sub-division of various property which is scheduled to appear on the November 5<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting agenda.

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**It is noted for the record that Vice Mayor Prolman left the meeting at 11:52 a.m.**

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*It was the consensus of Council to proceed with the proposed amendment process on the above issue/3-2 (MacKenzie and Tarrant dissenting, Prolman absent)*

Council Member MacKenzie, however, stated that she could not support taking action on the subdivision issue at this time since there had not been sufficient time to study the staff memorandum prior to directing staff to propose new zoning laws. The situation, she noted, had existed for years and should not be resolved in haste.

**ADJOURN** .....  
11:52 a.m.

At the conclusion of this meeting the City Council went into Executive Session with reference to labor negotiations.

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Bill Barnett, Mayor

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Tara A. Norman, City Clerk

Prepared by:

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Molly Reed, Recording Specialist

Minutes Approved: 11/19/97