

CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

City Commission Meeting
Fair Housing Workshop
September 4, 2008

The City Commission met in a formal session Monday, September 4, 2008 at 7:10 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Boles, and the following were present:

Roll Call:

Joe Boles, Mayor/City Commissioner (Excused)
Donald A. Crichlow, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner
George Gardner, City Commissioner
Errol D. Jones, City Commissioner

Absent: Susan Burk, City Commissioner (Excused)

William B. Harriss, City Manager
Ron Brown, City Attorney
Karen Rogers, City Clerk
Timothy A. Burchfield, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark Knight, Director, Planning and Building
Mark Litzinger, City Comptroller
Jim Piggott, General Services Director
Tim Fleming, Deputy Director, General Services/Purchasing Manager
Dr. William Adams, Director, Heritage Tourism
Martha Campbell, Director, Public Works
Paul K. Williamson, Director, Public Affairs
Loran Lueders, Police Chief
Mike Arnold, Fire Chief
Susan Goins, Recording Secretary

2. Presentation by Fred Fox Enterprises, Inc. regarding the Fair Housing Ordinance.

Tim Fleming, Deputy Director, General Services/Purchasing Manager, explained that the city had considered applying for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for approximately \$750,000. He stated that the category of activities included housing, neighborhood revitalization, commercial revitalization and economic development. He said a condition of applying for the grant was the Fair Housing workshop. He pointed out that the meeting was to explain the Fair Housing

Ordinance to the Commission; it was not a public hearing.

Melissa Fox, Fred Fox Enterprises, 26 Spanish Street, presented a sign in sheet for attendance, and she referred to the city's Fair Housing Ordinance as follows:¹

- City passed Ordinance 95-13 on March 13, 1995 to add the category family status to existing classes of persons
- Code and Ordinance stated the city's policy to eliminate housing discrimination based on race, color,

¹ Attached to original minutes

religion, sex, age, family status, handicap or national origin

- Ordinance included provisions for citizen complaints
- Ordinance stated that if an individual felt discriminated against they could file a written complaint with the city within 45 days of the incident and the city would investigate the matter
- Upon receipt of a complaint the Commission or appointed board would serve the individual charged with the violation in a written resume setting forth the rights of both parties
- Commission or appointed board would investigate the complaint
- Within 60 days from the date of the receipt of the complaint the Commission or appointed board should establish a written report with findings of fact
- If the city deemed the complaint was justified the city could ask the State Attorney to look into prosecuting the person or persons the complaint had been made against
- If necessary the city would evaluate all local ordinances and the practice of local lending institutions, realtors and apartment complexes to ensure that all were compliant with state and federal housing laws

Ms. Fox added that she had included information concerning ways to recognize housing discrimination and contacts if someone felt that they had been discriminated against.

Mayor Boles questioned how the city would investigate a charge of discrimination.

Mr. Brown replied that the CDBG requirements were that the investigation be conducted at the staff level. He said the complaints procedure had established a hierarchy structure in 1994 with the Program Director as the first point of contact. He said if the decision was appealed it would go to the City Manager or his designee, then the Mayor and Commission.

Commissioner Gardner stated that the ordinance had been created many years ago and questioned whether it should be amended, and the response was negative.

A resident made a comment from the audience and Mayor Boles invited him to the microphone.

Dwight Hines referred to the following:

- Complaints in administrative court had specified environmental justice which meant housing

Mr. Brown replied that the aforementioned comment was not correct.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 P.M.²

MAYOR

CITY CLERK, CMC

² Transcribed by Susan Goins