

## CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

First America: 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Workshop  
May 25, 2010

The City Commission met in a formal session Monday, May 25, 2010 at 5:00 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Joe Boles, and the following were present:

### **1. Roll Call:**

Joe Boles, Mayor/City Commissioner  
Errol Jones, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner  
Donald Crichlow, City Commissioner  
Leanna S. A. Freeman, City Commissioner  
Nancy Sikes-Kline, City Commissioner

### **Staff:**

John Regan, Chief Operations Officer  
Ron Brown, City Attorney  
Karen Rogers, City Clerk, Recording  
Mark Knight, Director, Planning and Building  
Jim Piggott, General Services Director  
Mark Litzinger, Comptroller  
Paul K. Williamson, Director, Public Affairs  
Dana Ste. Claire, Executive Director of the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration/Director, Heritage Tourism  
Jamie Alvarez, Program Coordinator, 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration  
Laura Cryan, Intern, 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration  
Victoria Hines, Intern, City Attorney  
Steven Fricke, Commander, SAPD  
Martha Graham, Director, Public Works

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### **2. Discussion regarding planning and information relevant to the First America – 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration.**

Mayor Boles explained that the workshop was to provide information related to the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration to as many members of the community as possible.

Dana Ste. Claire, Executive Director of the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration, & Director, Heritage Tourism, announced that the Secretary of Interior, Ken Salazar, had not appointed the Federal Commission, because of the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. He explained that once the Federal Commission was appointed, the

Steering Committee would meet to discuss the event structure, ratify the strategic plan and enact the organizational chart. He stated that many projects had begun, and he provided examples as follows:

- Maritime Heritage Foundation – construction of a 16<sup>th</sup> century replica Spanish ship
- Romanza – Arts festival planning
- City working towards an agreement to manage historical state owned properties
- Website nearing completion

John Regan, Chief Operations Officer, requested that the Commission create a unified vision statement regarding the 450<sup>th</sup>

Commemoration Celebration. He stated that a specific vision statement would benefit the development of infrastructure planning.

Commissioner Crichlow felt that the scope of the event was similar to a convention or conference offering many choices of events. He stated that his vision was to provide a variety of events that would appeal to people with different interests.

Mr. Ste. Claire agreed that the signature events, programs and venues were being developed for cultural diversity and to enhance the visitor experience. He gave examples of signature themes as follows:

- Maritime History
- Civil Rights and African American History
- First American / Age of Exploration
- Spanish Colonial period
- British Colonial period
- Flagler Era
- Seminole Indian War

Commissioner Sikes-Kline suggested improving the communication between volunteers and committees by developing group lists to facilitate easier contact through e-mail. She stated that her main concern for the City during the events was carrying capacity, infrastructure, parking and traffic flow.

Mr. Ste. Claire agreed that the issues were critical, because if the Commemoration event was successful the City would become a more popular destination and annual visitors would increase.

Mayor Boles suggested creating signature theme workshops, which could encourage community participation.

Mr. Ste. Claire felt that the public had made their interest clear judging by the participation during the *First America* series, in which over 6,000 people had attended. He noted that educational displays had been provided during each

event. He advised that Jamie Alvarez, Program Coordinator, had begun e-mail correspondence with volunteers, and the website would provide a valuable communication tool.

Mr. Ste. Claire stated that the organizational chart consisted of 47 committees, and he suggested creating separate committees for the Signature Themes. He explained that because of St. Augustine's cultural diversity, it would be beneficial for the individual Signature Theme committees to focus on a specific period.

Commissioner Freeman stated that her vision for the workshops was to have roundtable discussions between the Commissioners. She advised that she had received inquiries from the public regarding the scale of proposed events and the necessary infrastructure to manage large crowds. She expressed concern regarding information not being readily available on the internet. She suggested creating a City newsletter that included a calendar with a dedicated section to the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration.

Commissioner Jones stated that while it was important to allow public input, he felt that the workshops should provide updates for the Commission, as well as the opportunity for discussion. He added that it could provide reassurance that the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration would be successful. He stated that a clear process should be established prior to discussing infrastructure. He felt that the website was critical for providing information to the public and accessibility for private and corporate sponsorship; therefore, it should be launched immediately.

Commissioner Freeman suggested identifying specific agenda topics for each workshop to provide focused discussions. She stated that a designated public hearing workshop could be established. She added that the committees could

provide progress updates to the Commission.

Commissioner Jones stated that the City should pressure Washington to appoint the Federal Commission.

Mayor Boles stated that the 14 member Federal Commission had been signed into law by President Obama, which consisted of two Republican Congressmen and one Democratic Congressman. He explained that the Secretary of Interior had to approve and appoint the Commission; however, he had changed political parties, and the Federal Commission appointment was caught in a lag. He pointed out that the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration was not a high priority for anyone other than the City. He reported that Congressman John Mica had notified him that two of his Federal Commission choices had been finalized; however, it was unclear if those choices had accepted. He stated that the quality of the individuals appointed to the Federal Commission could provide St. Augustine with world wide recognition. He added that once the Federal Commission was appointed, an Executive Director, with experience in planning celebrations similar to the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration could be hired. He stated that the City Commission should approve or modify the timeline of events established by Mr. Ste. Claire, which could provide a better process and encourage public input.

Commissioner Jones announced that John Lewis would be speaking to the 40<sup>th</sup> ACCORD on July 2, and he suggested that every opportunity should be utilized to promote the City.

After a brief discussion, it was determined that Paul Williams, Director, Public Affairs, would schedule and coordinate private tours and receptions for influential visitors that could have an impact on the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration.

Mr. Regan felt that the purpose of the Commemoration was to tell the story of

how St. Augustine helped shape and influence the culture of America. He stated that a successful Commemoration could create a long term sustainable environment, which would be beneficial to the community. He pointed out that the Commission's vision and goals for the Commemoration would provide the basis for staff to prepare a schedule of programming and infrastructure discussions. He added that currently the City did not have a mechanism available to accept funding from private or public donations.

Mayor Boles felt that the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration would provide the opportunity to focus the attention and resources of the community. He pointed out that the 400<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration provided the Mission cross, amphitheater, Cross & Sword and the stepping stone for the Spanish Quarter renovation and restoration.

Mr. Regan suggested a vision statement as follows:

- A locally driven initiative to tell the story of the City of St. Augustine's impact on American culture, leaving lasting impressions for the residents and community alike

Mayor Boles pointed out that the Jamestown 400<sup>th</sup> Commemoration provided Williamsburg multiple lasting benefits such as infrastructure improvements, way-finding signage and interactive exhibits. He felt that the success of the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration could provide the opportunity to continue to expand the visitor experience, and a venue for future events.

Mayor Boles announced that the Commission had been invited to attend a reception aboard the Spanish Navy ship, *the Elcano*, in Mayport on June 7.

Commissioner Jones pointed out that the Haitian Historical Society had expressed

interest for involvement in the Commemoration.

Mayor Boles suggested appointing an International Commission, and questioned whether they would be subject to Sunshine Laws.

Ron Brown, City Attorney, explained that the Florida Supreme Court evaluated groups or organizations following criteria called "*the multitude of factors test*". He noted the factors as follows:

- Organizing entity
- Funding and level of funding
- City officials or administrative members serving
- Would it serve a traditional public function
- Location of offices

Mr. Brown stated that a group could fall under just a single criterion and not be subjected to Sunshine Laws; however, if a combination of factors were applicable, it would require public hearing and recording.

Commissioner Freeman questioned the tasks that an International Committee would be assigned.

Mayor Boles replied that the Consulate General of Spain and the Seminole Indians has expressed interest in co-financing an exhibition hall; therefore, an International Committee could provide input and resources.

Commissioner Sikes-Kline pointed out that St. Augustine was not a suburb of a large region, and had traditionally been independent and unique. She felt that the City could host a successful 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Celebration without relying heavily on outside factors. She stated that her vision was to promote the City's history, educate the public and create a better community for the future.

Mayor Boles stated that while he agreed, St. Augustine was the Nations Oldest City,

and that fact should be made known to the world. He added that resources and funding were dwindling, and the City had a responsibility to provide for the future. He stated that Federal, National and International partnerships could provide recognition, resources and funding.<sup>1</sup>

Commissioner Freeman stated that residents had expressed concern regarding increased noise, traffic issues and the disruption of everyday life over a three year period. She felt that the public should be made aware of the type and scale of planned events.<sup>2</sup>

Commissioner Jones clarified that the 450<sup>th</sup> Commemoration was not a party, but a celebration of the history of St. Augustine. He stated that it was unrealistic to limit the number of visitors during the events. He felt that the success of the Commemoration could be measured by the number of visitors willing to attend. He added that the issues that the City and residents would have to endure during the Celebration would be worth it in the end.

Mr. Regan stated that when designing the infrastructure systems, consideration would be given to minimizing the disruption of daily life.

Commissioner Jones pointed out that corporate sponsors would not be willing to provide financial support if the Commemoration was kept to a small scale with minimum attendance.<sup>3</sup> He expressed concern regarding workshops being scheduled during times when the Commission could not dedicate the time necessary to complete the discussions.

Commissioner Sikes-Kline expressed appreciation for those that were in attendance.

### 3. Adjournment

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<sup>1</sup> Mayor Boles left at 6:15 P.M.

<sup>2</sup> Commissioner Crichlow left at 6:16 P.M.

<sup>3</sup> Commissioner Freeman left at 6:24 P.M.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:27 P.M.<sup>4</sup>

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MAYOR

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CITY CLERK, CMC

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<sup>4</sup> Transcribed by Darlene Kirkland