



**ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS
VILLAGE COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

**Founders Park Community Center
87000 Overseas Hwy
Islamorada, FL 33036**

**June 5, 2014
at 5:30 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER\ROLL CALL

Mayor Ted Blackburn called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The following Council members were present: Mayor Ted Blackburn, Vice Mayor Deb Gillis, Councilman Mike Forster, Councilman Ken Philipson, and Councilman Dave Purdo. Also in attendance were Village Manager Maria Aguilar, Village Attorney Roget Bryan, Village Clerk Kelly Toth, Director of Planning Cheryl Cioffari, Monroe County Sheriff's Office Captain Corey Bryan and other appropriate personnel.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Joe Roth.

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Discussion Regarding the Sign Ordinance and Chamber of Commerce Recommendations

A-frame signs:

Councilman Ken Philipson spoke in support of the recommendations except the permit fee. Councilman Philipson supports a sign permit fee for \$25 a year instead of \$50.

Councilman Mike Forster requested that businesses be allowed to clean up the signs before implementing enforcement. He requested consideration be given to the possibility that in the future DOT would be widening the roads resulting in some businesses no longer being able to display A-frame signs. Councilman Forster supports uniformity of the signs.

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis spoke in support of the recommendations. Vice Mayor Gillis deferred to staff to advise on the cost recovery associated with this ordinance so as to determine if the fee was appropriate.

Councilman Dave Purdo stated he would like the permit fee reduced to \$25. Councilman Purdo spoke against the limit of three signs on a multi business property.

Mayor Ted Blackburn stated the code is restrictive but agrees with the restrictions; and addressed the enforcement component of the ordinance. Mayor Blackburn suggested the signs be standardized by having local artists design borders for them.

Councilman Mike Forster spoke in support of the \$50 permit fee and agreed with Councilman Purdo regarding waiving the fee for licensed non-profits.

Councilman Mike Forster expressed concern over too many signs being displayed and suggested a rotating schedule or the number of signs be limited to the amount of available highway square footage.

Mayor Ted Blackburn stated Council was in agreement with the A-frame signs being an important advertising mechanism for local businesses.

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis supports legislating borders, but spoke against directing businesses to purchase the borders from specific entities.

Mayor Ted Blackburn opened public comment.

Dr. Sally Bauer spoke about the recommendations and restrictions being for safety reasons. Dr. Bauer stated signs should come in each day when businesses close.

Ms. Debbie Prybil suggested alternatives to A-frame signs and spoke in support of limitations being placed on the number of A-frame signs displayed. Ms. Prybil expressed concern over too many A-frame signs.

Mr. Joe Roth, President of the Islamorada Chamber of Commerce, pointed out the recommendation pertaining to increasing permanent stationary sign allotment by 30% when a business owner opts out of displaying an A-frame sign.

Councilman Mike Forster supports a percentage increase, but not 30%.

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis expressed concern over the applicability of opting out and the 30% increase to signage when businesses change owners.

Councilman Ken Philipson spoke against allowing a percentage increase to signs when a business owner opts out of displaying an A-frame sign.

Planning Director Chery Cioffari clarified that the additional square footage pertains to ground mounted multi business center signs.

Councilman Ken Philipson spoke on the penalty aspect and requested discussion.

Village Attorney Roget Bryan suggested an educational period, notification period and warning period and spoke about the penalties that existed within the current code.

Discussion ensued regarding progressive penalties.

Village Attorney Roget Bryan spoke on notices of violation and citations being current enforcement methodologies within the Village code and about the success Code Enforcement Officers have had educating the public.

Flutter signs/attention getting devices:

Planning Director Cheryl Cioffari provided examples of “attention getting devices” that are currently prohibited.

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis, Councilman Mike Forster and Mayor Ted Blackburn support prohibiting flutter type signs.

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis suggested that staff modify the definition of attention getting device.

Mayor Blackburn requested public comment.

Ms. Aliana O’Connell, owner of Mystical Mermaid, spoke in support of flutter signs as some business owners do not have other alternatives. Ms. O’Connell requested Council provide alternatives in these situations.

Public comment was closed.

Human signs:

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis, Councilman Mike Forster and Councilman Ken Philipson spoke in support of prohibiting human signs.

Mayor Blackburn opened public comment. There was none. Public comment was closed.

Outdoor display of merchandise:

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis spoke in support of redefining the definition of outdoor merchandising and suggested setting limitations.

Councilman Mike Forster supports setting limitations regarding the amount of merchandise displayed outdoors.

Councilman Ken Philipson requested input from Planning Director Cheryl Cioffari regarding where and how much to display.

Councilman Dave Purdo emphasized the Village is a tourist based industry and spoke against being too restrictive.

Mayor Ted Blackburn provided direction to staff to translate the recommendations into the Village code.

Mayor Blackburn opened public comment.

Dr. Sally Bauer stated the recommendations were made to provide for flexibility in the code as it pertains to the display of merchandise.

Councilman Ken Philipson requested clarification of merchandise displayed by "open air" businesses vs. businesses displaying merchandise outside of the building.

Village Attorney Roget Bryan clarified outdoor merchandise vs. outdoor storage; and suggested the enforcement aspect of delineated display space would be difficult.

Director of Planning, Cheryl Cioffari spoke in support of specific delineation for the display of merchandise and provided clarification on the existing provisions for outdoor storage displays.

Flags:

Councilman Mike Forster suggested allowing international flags.

Dr. Sally Bauer, representing the History of Diving Museum, commented on nationality flags and how tourists appreciate seeing them when they visit.


Councilman Dave Purdo suggested restricting the number of flags that can be displayed.

Councilman Ken Philipson suggested permits for allowable flags in order to restrict them.

Vice Mayor Deb Gillis suggested the number of flags be based on the highway frontage of the property and suggested updating portions of the ordinance that no longer apply.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Dave Purdo made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Ken Philipson seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.


Kelly Toth
Village Clerk

Approved by the Village Council this 26th day of June, 2014.