



Mayor Flagg said the larger the festival, the more manpower required to service its needs. He asked representatives to state the size and length of their festivals. Mrs. Troiano said if they limit themselves to one weekend for festivals, they may be 'cutting off their nose to spite their face' by limiting the potential. Mayor Flagg said as far as the City is concerned, they are limited by what costs they can afford to absorb. A policy needs to be set up determining how to recoup some of those costs by applying a formula determined by the anticipated attendance, the number of days, the requirements, etc. Some of the festivals can be more efficient by utilizing a smaller space, but then the merchants further down St. Johns Avenue are left out. They should consider the economic impact for Downtown Palatka as well. When people plug into electricity and water, someone is paying for that, and many times it's the City. Mr. Jones said he has donated over \$25,000 worth of electrical equipment and power distribution services to the downtown area over the past nine years. This does not include his or anyone else's donated time. Mayor Flagg said everyone makes unseen donations to the festivals, and one of the purposes of this workshop is to bring it all into the open. Many enjoy the benefits of the fruits of other's labors. There are astronomical expenses with putting on a festival. Commissioner Norwood said there are new applications coming in for new festivals all the time, and the City is constantly incurring more costs. They need to be consistent with all festivals, and they need to know what everyone's costs are. He asked for feedback on the recommendations on the table. Alicia Bush said it may take several workshops to tweak the recommendations. Mr. Bush said this is just a starting point and everything is open for negotiations. Mrs. Sacareccia said some of the payments should be in-kind. Ms. Arrington said the Chamber estimates the Blue Crab Festival has a \$4.3 million economic impact on Putnam County as a whole. Mayor Flagg said they can all appreciate those numbers, and this should be brought to Putnam County's attention so that the County may feel compelled to participate more. Mr. Fulgham said Blue Crab Festival has enough of an impact on downtown businesses to enable the merchants to pay their yearly taxes. Mr. Bush said no one wants to pull the plug on festivals, but they need to talk about ways to even out the costs. After they look at costs vs. benefits, they can come up with a plan that everyone can live with. Mayor Flagg said when you say \$4.3 million comes back to the County, the City is only 10,000 of that 75,000 population, and the majority of the City's residents don't pay any taxes. Commissioner Brown said many new businesses have come into town that are farther down St. Johns Avenue, and asked if they had considered extending the festival a few blocks. Mr. Fulgham said he has suggested the same thing, but was told they don't want to get so big they spread themselves too thin. If you get too many vendors, no one makes any money and they all stop coming. The present vendors are very happy with the size and attendance. Mrs. Jones said they are looking for quality, not quantity. Commissioner Brown said they need to do some long-range planning and try to take care of more downtown businesses. Mayor Flagg said they can facilitate growth by creating a good partnership.

Mr. Crabtree said one objective should be to control the number of festivals. When you get too many, you stretch your sponsors too thin. It's much better to have two or three great festivals than a lot of mediocre ones. Mr. Jones said it would benefit everyone who uses the riverfront to put up a big tent over the amphitheater for an extended period of time, and use it every weekend for activities. Mr. Bush said there are other types of activities held on the riverfront, like Wolfson's Bass Tournament and the Rowing Regatta, that do not generate the same size or type of crowds. Mayor Flagg said those specialized events have a positive impact on the area, and are not a big expense to the City. They are fairly self-contained. They are looking to control the number of festivals held in the City, and ideally by January of each year the City should know the festival schedule for the entire year. Commissioner Azula agreed that they are watering down the festivals. The Azalea Festival is not what it used to be. He believes the name was copyrighted by the Palatka Jaycees, who have now ceased to exist. He has a problem with the same promoters using the City two or three times a year to promote other festivals. That opportunity should be given to other services organizations. A promoter who comes in and uses City waterfront land and services and only gives out two \$500 scholarships per year is not in the same position as people who work in and have a stake in the Community. The Jaycees disbanded in 1994. Anyone can create a non-profit organization. This promoter is not a civic group, and is using the name Azalea Festival to promote themselves. Priority should be given to an established civic organization. He does not see how you can do three festivals in one year when it takes a whole lot of

people working all year to put on a quality festival. He does not want Palatka associated with the mediocre festivals as opposed to the great ones. The important thing is accountability. The Community and civic organizations should be the ones benefiting from the waterfront, and not a promoter. Mr. Bush said recently more small groups have come in wanting to run carnivals on the riverfront, and that issue needs to be addressed.

Mayor Flagg addressed each recommended objective standard referred to in the suggestions. It was agreed to add “or civic organization” to number one. Per discussion, the Board of Directors are listed on the 501-C list. Suggestion #2 establishes a pattern of accountability and should show where the profits are going and that the agency or organization is audited. Per the question, Mrs. Arrington said they turn in a profit/loss accounting to the State each year, and have an accountant. She has thinks that there should be a form created for vendors to sign showing they have been paid for what they have supplied. That way there is a way to prove that festivals don’t owe money all over for previous festivals. She knows of other festivals that don’t pay their bills, and everyone looks bad because of it. If a festival does not make money, that is what festival insurance is all about. There should be something in place to ensure that even if all the bills from one year aren’t paid, the money from the next year will first go to the old bills. Mrs. Jones said they have encountered many instances of initial prejudice from vendors who think she is with the festival with all the unpaid bills. Mr. Bush said festivals should have to disclose their vendors prior to the festivals, and after its conclusion show proof that the vendors had all been paid. Mrs. Arrington said she has a whole system of checks and balances in her accounting system, and she can even provide a printout of deposits as well as checks written on funds at any time, as well as an accounting of how much was spent on each item. She agreed to help come up with a form for that purpose. Mayor Flagg asked her to provide Ms. Driggers with a copy of the end-of-festival report as well as a proposed form for use at the next workshop.

Locally based theme – Mayor Flagg said this will also address the frequency of festivals. Any community needs time to ‘bounce back’ from a major festival. Less is more in terms of festivals. Right now there is Azalea in March, Catfish in April, Cabbage & Potato in April, Blue Crab in May, Blueberry in June, Independence Day in July, Hot Southern Nights in September. Mayor Flagg said they do not want to compete with other festivals around the County. New festivals need to prove that they have the resources and manpower to put on a quality festival. Ms. Driggers said the reason the City is trying to come up with a list of objective standards is because the City Attorney has advised they cannot turn down any application for festivals without one. It leaves the field wide open. Mr. Bush said in the past an objective was that the festival had to have its own unique, recurring theme, list their assets and board members, and show that it could be a legitimate festival. That is not an easy sell. They have to convince the Commission that they have staying power and their festival will not compete with other established festivals. Per the question, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is not an organized event. Interlachen has a celebration but it has gone downhill for the last few years. They have asked for help. Mrs. Banks said Palatka has entertainment prior to the city-sponsored fireworks. Commissioner Azula said the Jaycees used to take care of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. They would organize events beginning at noon and lasting until the fireworks. Per the question, Jaycees are not affiliated with the current Azalea Festival; its Charter was disbanded.

Letter of Support – Mayor Flagg said this is in partnership with the downtown merchants. Mrs. Banks said the downtown merchants have requested that they be notified of anything that happens downtown in advance. Ms. Driggers provides her with a copy of the permit application, which she takes to the meetings for their information. There is no formal sign-off, but also no formal letter of support. Most people who do something at the riverfront already pitch it to the downtown merchants. Anyone who wants to hold a festival or event running longer than one day should be required to appear at a Downtown Palatka meeting. Mr. Bush said this just means that when anyone wants to appear before the Commission to make a pitch for creating a new festival, they should be prepared to show support from the Downtown Merchants. You can’t deny it based on whether or not the merchants support it if you don’t have the criteria in place. Mrs. Sacareccia said the main concerns of Downtown are the parking and business impact. Commissioner Norwood said they get complaints on many levels from people who live in that area, but it affects Downtown the most. Mayor Flagg said there is a difference between events and

festivals. Downtown merchants need to be aware of all events. Festivals should not catch anyone by surprise. Ms. Driggers said there is already a procedure in place that keeps Downtown notified of events at the riverfront. This was suggested merely as a partnership effort, and they may even want to include something from the Chamber of Commerce. Mayor Flagg said they may have the right to require input from Downtown, but not the Chamber, although they can strongly recommend it. A letter of support is very generic. Downtown Palatka needs to establish its own criteria. Reputation is very important.

Commissioner Brown said some events are not centered around the Riverfront, but are located in the parks, and asked if these criteria will also apply to those events. Mayor Flagg said if the event is limited to that park, then the protocol for that park will apply. Festivals have a direct impact on other business other than city park areas. If residential areas around parks are affected by why goes on at the park, then they need to come up with a citywide policy. Mr. Fulgham said they need to come up with a definition of a festival. He asked why the \$500/day fee will not apply to any event held in the City, no matter what park its located in. Mayor Flagg said some people call themselves a festival, but really aren't. The City has to establish criteria to decide if they are an event or festival, and he will look to staff to do that. Mr. Fulgham said they cannot allow something like the biker festival to fall under the 'event' title. They should look at factors such as economic impact, amount of city services required, duration, and anticipated attendance. Mr. Fulgham said every event affects the City no matter how large or small, even football games. Mayor Flagg said the School Board leases that facility and should take those factors into consideration. Mr. Fulgham asked if there is a way to limit the pay to police officers for off-duty work, and if it would help if Blue Crab hired the officers themselves instead of them working on the City's payroll. He can hire four off-duty officers to work the festival in lieu of the City staffing the festival officers. Officer Fells said the Festival security is probably understaffed now. With crowds that size, especially on Saturday night, you need more officers should anything happen. If there is an incident that leaves anyone open to liability, the first question is going to be was there adequate security staffing. The county only supplies one or two auxiliary officers at any time. They have not done a survey as to how many officers would be required per thousand people, but if a major melee goes down, especially in the beer tent, you will have a real problem on your hands. Alicia Bush said the mobile command center they brought in from Ocala makes a big impression. Also, most of the people who come to the festival are family oriented. They like to sit and drink beer and eat crab. They bring their kids. Officer Fells said it would be less expensive for them to hire the officers at a set price, as the City has some senior officers working the festival who are making \$35/hour. The county and school board reimburse the City for half of the expense of providing officers for their events. Commissioner Azula said the City is only proposing to recoup 1/3 of the actual costs. Mr. Fulgham said that is fine, but it needs to apply to everyone. Mayor Flagg said events and festivals do not have the same impact. Most events do not require off-duty officers and hourly sanitation runs. Mr. Bush said people already pay a deposit and charge for LT Park, and there is a charge on the riverfront for utilities. Mayor Flagg said the City is merely trying to create the criteria and set the rules so that they can bring those people into compliance that are not already there. Mr. Fulgham asked if being a member of Downtown Palatka is going to hurt them and give people the idea that they are being favored. Mayor Flagg said it makes no difference. Commissioner Brown said some of the events and festivals that are coming in don't need to be here. Mayor Flagg said the City likes the standards the Blue Crab Festival has set, and they are not saying it is a perfect festival, but he would like for them to put their standards and methods to paper for use as a city-wide standard for like events. The end result meets the Commission's approval on most levels. Alicia Bush said they critique themselves at the end of each festival, and will provide a copy of that. Commissioner Brown said the only thing she does not like is the alcohol sales, but understands why they have to do it. Mr. Jones said the alcohol sales pays for the entertainment. They don't charge a single person for any entertainment during the entire festival. They supply over \$50,000 worth of free entertainment. Mrs. Sacareccia said anyone who wants to put on a legitimate festival would have no problem with 'jumping through these hoops' and appearing before Downtown Palatka to learn what needs to be done. They need the expertise of people who have been doing this for a long time. If there is no accountability and you don't have to show anything, chances are it won't be a quality festival. Mayor

Flagg said if someone comes in and says they want to hold a festival or event, the City should be able to put the criteria in their hands. Downtown needs to be able to do the same thing. Then politics won't enter into it. They are all just looking to bring in quality oriented functions. It promotes a win-win situation. People need to know they will be scrutinized. Ms. Arrington said they don't want to overprice some of the special events because they will shoot themselves in the foot. If a church or other organization wants to come do some little something, they should not be overwhelmed with requirements. Mr. Bush said there will be a sliding scale. They have already established fees for leasing other places, like Lefty Turner Park, Bronson House, and Price Martin. The last thing they want to do is run off a worthwhile cause.

Mrs. Arrington said she would like for the Blue Crab committee to get together and work on these issues prior to the next workshop. They will come back with their recommendations after the festival is over and they have had time to process everything.

Item 5 – Sales of Alcohol – Mr. Fulgham said two years ago the Committee opted to hire Oasis to manage the alcohol sales. The first year went extremely well. Last year it did not. They were not happy with the way the whole concession worked last year, so they decided to bring it back in-house. It will remain under the tent. They were not selling on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, but the backpacks gave the impression they were. The Committee knew there was a problem and took care of it. They had already nixed it long before the Commission let them know they didn't like it. Mayor Flagg said the Committee should provide the Commission with their 'post-festival critique and report' so everyone will know where they stand on the issues. Commissioner Brown said she tries to be broad-minded about the alcohol sales, but she gets calls from citizens on alcohol issues, and citizens is what they are all about. The last thing she wants to get when she's at home late at night are calls complaining about what they are letting people do. Mayor Flagg said a schematic of the entire riverfront and downtown area showing the festival arrangements and location of tents should be a part of the application. The City's ordinances are the basis for what they do. The City has an open container law, and when people walk around with open containers during festivals, it sends the wrong message. No one should be walking around City property with open containers. It should be contained within a designated area. It also makes it easier for the PD to do their job. Per the question, Mr. Jones said every other pole in the beer tent will have a sign saying "no beer beyond this point". Commissioner Azula said their security people are very conscious about not letting people walk around with beers. Per the question, Mr. Jones said not being able to leave the tent with beer will cut down on their sales by 20 – 30%. Mrs. Jones said people like to walk around the festival with a beer. Mayor Flagg said this is a non-negotiable point. They are to designate a location and keep everyone inside that location. Mr. Jones said one year they had 'satellite tents' located around the festival. Mayor Flagg said the application needs to be specific about the hours of alcohol sales, and they should be sensitive to the churches in the area for hours of Sunday sales. There is an ordinance that deals with the proximity of alcohol sales to churches. Mrs. Jones said every year they draft a letter to the Presbyterian Church asking for their feedback. Commissioner Brown said they should include a notation of church hours on the application.

Commissioner Brown said they have had complaints about the constant noise. They need to be considerate of the people who live in the area. One year someone even had a boom-box contest. Mayor Smith said they simply want voluntary compliance on this measure so they won't have to have the PD out there monitoring with decibel meters. The PD is busy enough, and they want to have officer-friendly community service. They should let their people know that the levels need to be acceptable.

Mr. Fulgham said one area of concern for them is the pending sale of the 100 block. If it is sold, that puts the cap on the festivals. The only place to move would be to the open field across the street from the Church. They may need to move the entire festival to another location altogether, but it won't work as well as on the riverfront.

Mrs. Clem Sacareccia asked about the City's supplementing the Azalea Festival's scholarships. Mr. Bush said that goes back to when the Jaycees sponsored the Festival in conjunction with the City of Palatka. The recommendation is that the City ceases to supplement it. Mr. Fulgham said they never realized the City was underwriting Azalea

Festival's scholarships. Blue Crab Festival is giving out \$2,500 worth of scholarships per year themselves, with no help from the City.

Mayor Flagg said the City would like the festival representatives to come up with a recommendation on what constitutes a reasonable time after the festival closes to expect a wrap-up report. Mr. Fulgham said Blue Crab has never had a problem with opening their books to the City. They do not have them printed in the PDN because some may take issue with some of the entities they choose to contribute to or do business with. They can't make everyone happy. An example is they have been snubbed by some insurance businesspeople who have taken issue with the fact that they do business with a certain agency. Mayor Flagg said they don't need the information spelled out line for line, but need an idea of where the money is going and for what. They only have to say how much they spent on each category. The City doesn't need to know whom they paid it to unless it is a vendor. All festivals should not bear the black eyes for bills that another festival is not paying.

Mayor Flagg said in order to expedite this process, he would like the festival committees to look at the rest of the recommendations and come back to the next work shop with feedback. They would like this feed back in advance of the meeting.

Mayor Flagg asked for final comments. Mrs. Jones thanked the City for being a part of what they are trying to do. Officer Fells agreed to provide Mrs. Sacareccia with a breakdown on overtime costs for officers from last year's festivals. Mr. Fulgham also thanked the City for their participation, and said the best example is that one person can't do it all. He does not intend to bash other festivals, but it takes a committee to run a festival, and one person can't control it. It takes teamwork. They do not even have one chairperson – there are three. Mrs. Sacareccia said police officers should volunteer their time. Ms. Kitchens said it was either the Azalea or Biker festival that put the street barricades up before 5:00 on Friday, and the people who work downtown had a terrible time getting out of their parking spaces to get home because of all the set up and street closings going on. Also, she has no problem with Blue Crab's noise, but during Azalea Festival her windows were rattling, and she lives a mile away. Chief Schauland, who lives in East Palatka way down E. River Road, said he could hear it clearly. It was way too loud. Commissioner Azula thanked the people who volunteer their time to make Blue Crab a success. It has brought a lot of positive publicity to Palatka. These festivals are not created overnight. Commissioner Brown thanked everyone for his or her input. If they have brochures, she will be happy to take them on her trips and hand them out. Commissioner Norwood said he hopes they can continue this process to make things better in the community. He hopes they will continue to advertise these meetings to let everyone know they are invited to participate. Mr. Bush asked everyone to take a look at the dollar figures and come back to the next workshop with some suggestions. Mayor Flagg said together they can get some checks and balances in place so all festivals will run smoother. Per the question, he was advised that Hot Southern Nights is the next festival coming up on Labor Day weekend. Mayor Flagg said some of the things they are discussing will affect that festival, so the City needs the feedback as quickly as possible. They will probably have to use existing fee structures for that festival, but they want to get some checks and balances in place prior to that festival. The City will schedule another workshop prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Mrs. Banks will be the person to finalize the date. Mrs. Jones said their wrap-up meeting will be June 6. Mr. Jones said over the last few years the Mayor of Palatka has been one of the "jell-o-jump" judges, and they hope Mayor Flagg will agree to carry on that tradition. Mayor Flagg said he would.

There being no further business to discuss, the workshop was adjourned.

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR