

**CITY OF ANNA MARIA  
CITY COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING  
MEETING HELD AT ANNA MARIA COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
10005 GULF DRIVE – ANNA MARIA, FL  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2010  
6:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Quam called the Special Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Fran Barford, Commissioner Jo Ann Mattick, Commissioner Dale Woodland, Chair John Quam, Commissioner Chuck Webb, and Commissioner Harry Stoltzfus.

**Staff Present:** City Clerk Alice Baird, Building Official Bob Welch, and Minutes Clerk Stacey Johnston.

**Press:** Sun and Islander.

**Pledge of Conduct:** Read by Chair Quam

**Special Meeting to discuss Permit Fees**

**1. Introduction**

*Commissioner Woodland* explained that he had requested the special meeting as a result of the strong comments he had received during his election campaign and from persons involved in the construction business. He suggested the Commission review the current fees and determine if any changes should be made. He pointed out that the fee schedule was changed approximately 1 1/2 years ago.

*Mayor Barford* informed that when the current fees were adopted, it was agreed that the fees would be reviewed again every six months. As a result, some of the fees had been adjusted.

**2. Background**

*Building Official Welch* explained that the semi-annual review had evolved into an annual review due to the time it takes to input changes into the computer system.

Building Official Welch said his proposal includes looking at the cost for a permit and simplifying it. He noted that three of the Island cities have permit fee schedules very similar to Anna Maria's as far as how they are broken out. However, it is very difficult for a contractor to figure out the fee and therefore it needs to be simplified. Building Official Welch proposed the following changes:

- Lower the fee for a simple miscellaneous building permit with a cost under \$1,000 to a flat fee of \$50. This would bring Anna Maria in line with the surrounding cities for a permit of that type.
- Remove most of the flat fees for permits in favor of a value fee system as the City has for all other permits. The one exception would be the stand alone subcontractor permits. Those fees would start at a base fee of \$50 instead of the \$75 charged for combination permits.
- All planning and administrative fees would still be charged as necessary, depending on the need for those services.
- The current rate for fences is \$1.00 per linear foot. Suggested a rate change be made – either based on evaluation or by linear foot.
- Removing flat rate fees for any items that a report is not ran on – examples include: carport/canopy, carport w/utility room or shed, screen enclosure, glass room, pool enclosure, utility room, sheds (non-exempt) site built and DCA approved, vinyl/acrylic windows in screen enclosures, and aluminum “roof over’s”. Those items would be combined into miscellaneous residential permits.

Building Official Welch informed that the building department budget was currently above 50% in revenues and approximately 50% in expenditures. Therefore, the current fees seem to be working.

### 3. **Commission Discussion**

*Chair Quam* informed that a fence permit in Bradenton Beach was a flat fee of \$96.

In response, *Building Official Welch* said for the last three years, Bradenton Beach's expenditures have exceeded their budget. Revenues brought in did not cover the expenses. As a result, they are currently looking at raising their fees in order to be self-sufficient.

He informed that at the height of construction, Longboat Key had lowered their fees. Their building permit fees are now currently going under study by a private firm to establish fees that will make their department self-sufficient.

Building Official Welch said he hoped to get input from the Commission to allow him to bring back a proposal for their review at a future Worksession. A Resolution would then be adopted at a following regular meeting.

In answer to *Commissioner Mattick*, Building Official Welch informed that he had calculated his time and had concluded that flat rate fees were high and that an evaluation system would be best, based on the number of inspections and time it takes to input the inspections. A base rate, or application fee, would be charged based on the size of the project - and then \$20 for every \$1,000 in value.

Discussion followed relating to fences and the results of placing a fence on a neighboring property.

*Chair Quam* said he recently installed a screen and was charged the \$75 application fee, plus the \$175 flat rate valuation fee. He felt that amount was very high.

*Building Official Welch* stated that the existing fees were implemented by the former Building Official. The former Building Official had felt that the flat rate fees covered both the planning side and the building side, along with the overhead.

Discussion followed relating to new structure values. Building Official Welch informed he had requested building permit fee information based on a specific scenario from Holmes Beach, Bradenton Beach, and Longboat Key. Explanation of the results followed.

*Commissioner Woodland* noted that the building permit fees were to be based on the costs to cover the operation of the Building Department. He noted that Building Official Welch had mentioned before that he was the only person in the department able to figure the ending building permit fee for a contractor. Commissioner Woodland hoped that the changes made to the fees would allow any person in the department to make those determinations.

*Building Official Welch* explained that valuations were set by the contract prices. Explanation followed. He estimated the cost of building at \$200 to \$250 per sq. ft. – and some as high as \$1,000 per sq. ft.

*Commissioner Webb* asked that the fees for Planning/Zoning Appeals be reviewed - feeling it was currently set too high. He informed that the City's fees were three times higher than the court filing fee. He was concerned that the City's cost would prevent someone from even filing an appeal – which could cause a due process violation.

*Building Official Welch* informed that the current \$1,000 fee was based on the administrative time for the letters, etc. He suggested that some of the Appeal categories could be combined into an Appeals Process and charged similar to the Appeal of staff decision to P&Z or Commission – at \$750. He pointed out that in most jurisdictions those fees are higher due to the time involvement for the City Attorney, staff, and consultants. However, he agreed to discuss the issue with City Attorney Dye.

**4. Public Input**

**Sandy Mattick**, 305 Pine Ave. said she was glad to see no Business Tax fees were included in the schedule.

Ms. Mattick referred to the fees for Miscellaneous – Special Events (with alcohol) and commented that it was her understanding that at the Commission’s discretion that it could be reduced.

Ms. Mattick said her main concern was the cost to the City about having some current Commissioner that is currently violating the laws to vote on anything here or anything forward – instead of resigning.

*Commissioner Webb* said he would prefer the City require a nominal fee, plus a bond - rather than a \$500 fee charge for the Special Events with alcohol. Any cleanup expenses, etc. to the City would be collected through the bond.

Ms. Mattick further felt that the \$150 fee for picking up signs was too high since there was no expense to the City.

*Mayor Barford* explained that a specific employee was assigned for processing the Special Events Permits. The permits are then forwarded to the Police Department, Public Works Director, and Fire Department for their approval.

*Chair Quam* noted that the Commission had recently increased the Special Events (with alcohol) fee to the \$500 amount. He asked that the details causing the increase be reviewed.

**Press Comment on Agenda Items – None.**

**Adjournment**

**On motion made by Chair Quam and seconded by Commissioner Woodland, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Alice Baird, CMC, City Clerk**

**MINUTES APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_