

MEMORANDUM

March 19, 2014

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Commission

VIA: Kenneth Fields, City Manager

FROM: Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk

RE: Resolution 2014-07, Amendment to the Citizens and Police Community Relations Committee Resolution

SYNOPSIS: The adoption of Resolution 2014-07 amends the requirement of when the Citizens and Police Community Relations Committee shall hold its meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is for the City Commission to adopt Resolution 2014-07, which amends Resolution 2012-03 to allow the Citizens and Police Community Relations Committee to meet quarterly or as needed instead of monthly.

BACKGROUND

The Citizens and Police Community Relations Committee provides a monthly forum as required by current Resolution 2012-03 for citizens to express opinions about the police department, receive informal information about police procedures; and discuss concerns openly. Although, the forums are effective in providing a dialogue between citizens and the police department, citizen attendance is very low. A lot of time and effort by staff is committed to each forum.

The City Commission, following an annual presentation by the Committee, directed the City Clerk to prepare a resolution for it to amend the monthly meeting requirement of the Committee to allow meetings to be held quarterly or as needed instead of monthly because of the time and effort committed by police department staff. Resolution 2014-07 is prepared for that purpose.

OPTIONS

If the City Commission does not adopt Resolution 2014-07, the Citizens and Police Community Relations Committee would continue monthly forums with citizens or the City Commission could choose to dismantle the Committee by resolution.

FISCAL IMPACT

The adoption of Resolution 2014-07 will limit the amount of time committed by the police department for holding citizen forums.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution 2014-07.

RESOLUTION 2014-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA, REVISING RESOLUTION 2012-03, TO CHANGE THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENT FOR WHEN THE CITIZENS AND POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL MEET; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Lake Wales Police Department provides a valuable public safety service; and,

WHEREAS, the Citizens of Lake Wales play an integral role in the preservation of the peace, deterrence of crime, and prosecution of crimes; and,

WHEREAS, the Lake Wales Police Department values community relationships and input and seeks to gain a greater understanding and awareness of citizen concerns regarding police actions; and,

WHEREAS, the Citizens of Lake Wales seek the opportunity to express concerns, discuss issues, and gain a greater understanding of police actions ; and,

WHEREAS, the City Commission continues to strive for a greater partnership and working relationship between all members of the community and the Lake Wales Police Department and recognizes the need for greater education on the part of citizens and police with respect to one another; and,

WHEREAS, the City Commission and the Lake Wales Police Department seek to provide a forum for citizens and police to respectfully discuss issues and concerns in a public format before an incident rises to the level of a formal complaint; and,

WHEREAS, the City Commission and the Lake Wales Police Department seek to provide a mechanism for informal discussion of law enforcement policies and procedures because there is a belief that direct communications between citizens and police will bring about positive community relations; and,

WHEREAS, there is great optimism that, by positively addressing the need for greater citizen and police education with respect to one another, the City will lay a foundation of trust upon which a stronger and more open relationship between these groups may develop and flourish over time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA:

1. The Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee is hereby established for the purpose of:

- A. Providing a forum for citizens to express their opinions about police procedures and to receive informal information from the police department regarding police procedures.
 - B. Providing a forum for citizens and the police department to openly and respectfully discuss issues of concern with the hope that concerns can be positively resolved.
 - C. Providing a forum for citizens and the police department to engage in a dialogue that will be positive and productive and that will continue to foster a climate of trust and mutual respect.
2. The Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee shall be informally referred to as the “Community Relations Committee.”
3. The following rules shall apply to committee membership:
 - A. The committee shall consist of three members each of whom will serve a two-year term. A quorum shall require the presence of two members.
 - B. Two members of the committee shall be citizens of Lake Wales and shall be appointed by the mayor with approval of the city commission. One member shall be an active police officer serving in the Lake Wales Police Department and shall be appointed by the chief of police. Citizen members shall serve no more than two consecutive terms.
 - C. With the exception of the initial appointments, terms shall begin on July 1 and expire two years later on June 30. So that term expiration dates may be staggered, the initial term of one citizen member shall expire on June 30, 2012 and the initial term of one citizen member shall expire on June 30, 2013. Initial terms of all members shall begin on May 4, 2011.
 - D. Committee members shall be subject to the Sunshine Law and other applicable state laws and city ordinances.
4. Regular meetings of the committee shall be held ~~monthly~~ quarterly or as needed in the Municipal Administration Building or other locations as deemed appropriate by the committee. Notice of a regular meeting shall be posted on the notice board in the Municipal Administration Building and at the location where the meeting will be held if not held in the Municipal Administration Building no later than forty-eight hours prior to the meeting. A special meeting may be called at any time by any member of the committee as deemed necessary. Notice of a special meeting shall be posted no later than twelve hours prior to the meeting.
5. The committee shall select a chairperson at its first meeting and shall develop procedures for bringing matters before the committee. Procedures developed by the

committee shall require the unanimous approval of the committee members.

6. The committee shall have no power to hear or discuss complaints regarding officer misconduct. No provision of this resolution shall be construed to circumvent the requirements of the Police Officers Bill of Rights or the requirements of any State or Federal law to the contrary.
7. The following guidelines shall be observed in conducting committee meetings:
 - A. The committee should provide a forum in which the citizens and the police department come together for the purpose of developing positive relationships.
 - B. The committee should provide a forum in which citizens can express opinions or concerns.
 - C. The committee should provide a forum in which citizens can receive basic information regarding law enforcement policies and procedures.
 - D. The committee can be a place for citizens to commend officers who have gone above and beyond the citizens' expectations.
 - E. The committee should not be used to circumvent the formal complaint process, as described by the Police Officers Bills of Rights. The committee should refer any citizen with a formal complaint to the proper complaint process.
 - F. The committee should not provide a forum for discussion or involvement in any form of officer discipline.
 - G. The committee should serve as the forum for positive and productive discussion that will lead to a greater partnership and stronger working relationship between all community members and the police department.

THIS RESOLUTION INTRODUCED AND PASSED by the City Commission of the City of Lake Wales, Polk County, Florida at its regular meeting on April 1, 2014. All provisions are immediately effective.

Eugene Fultz, Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk