

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Armando G. Martinez

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Resume

135 Ridgemont Circle, SE
Palm Bay, FL 32909

(386) 569-8880 Cell
elcapi@aol.com

Armando G. Martinez

Qualifications

Currently, City Manager and Chief Executive Officer for the City of Bunnell, with comprehensive financial responsibility of the City's Budget and all city Departments, such as: Utilities (Water and Sewer), Public Works, Finance, Administration, Human Resources, the City Clerk's Office, Community Development, Engineering, Solid Waste, Police, and Fire.

Over thirty years of Public Service with extensive Senior Executive Management, Leadership, Law Enforcement and Public Administration experience with the City of Bunnell and City of Miami. Highly experienced in managing all municipal City functions, along with criminal investigative and uniformed police patrol functions. Comprehensive responsibility for all aspects of budgetary and financial performance.

Creative self-starter with extensive public management, training, teambuilding, and problem solving experience in revising, developing, and implementing training and organizational standard operating manuals for the day to day operation of, sections, departments, districts, and divisions of an organization. My people oriented and analytical management style played a significant role in the implementation of changes in all my professional endeavors. This resulted in getting the employees to buy into the changes, while increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the elements under my responsibility. Extensive experience in inter and intra-organizational net working.

Experience

2008-Present **City Manager and Director of Public Safety** City of Bunnell, Florida.

- Chief Executive Officer responsible for the management of all Departments within the City of Bunnell, such as: Public Works Department, Utilities (Water and Sewer) Department, Finance Department, Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Police Department, Fire Department, The City Clerk's Office, and The Community Development Department.
- Recruited and hired an experienced and professional management team, who were people oriented, to replace Department Directors that were unqualified and not willing to move the City in a new direction "just because that's the way has always been done attitude," and had an autocratic leadership style that was hurting morale and efficiency.
- Updated and established new written directives for the City of Bunnell,

to include a General Rules of Conduct, Disaster Mobilization Plan, and a Safety Plan for employees.

- Created a new user friendly Website to enhance the City's ability to attract new development, along with enhancing our level of service with future on-line billing availability at no cost to the City.
- During my first year as City Manager in Bunnell, I realigned and streamlined expenditures, which procured the revenues to create the following positions: City Planner, Grant Writer, Assistant Finance Director, Police Captain, along with providing employees with a 3% COLA increase denied by the prior administration for lack of funding. Also procured required funding to facilitate the data and analysis needed to complete our Comprehensive Plan rewrite. The new Grant Writer position was successful in procuring just under four million dollars in additional revenues the first year.
- Created Budget Sheets outlining expenditures leading to line item on budgets, and justification for each individual department budgets.
- Consistently established business practices to reduce taxes from roll back to Milage Rate: *FY 2009- 9.5872%, FY2010-22.802%, FY 2011- 1.418% and FY 2012-9.22%*. A total average of 10.7568% reduction for the four years, while enhancing the City's level of service, efficiency, and professionalism.
- For Fiscal Year 12-13, produced a budget providing for a 5% COLA increase for employees, a pay plan adding an additional 2% increase based on merit to establish a means for salaries to grow on merit not just tenure and a tax cut to our citizens with a 9% budget decrease. This was accomplished by enhancing efficiency in our workforce not sacrificing services.
- Enhanced the Community Development Department from a one person operation, to a cohesive team ready to promote development in our city and rewrite our comprehensive plan.
- Represented the City of Bunnell with the State of Florida Department of Community Affairs concerning changes to our comprehensive plan and land use amendments as a result of the largest land annexation in the State of Florida 87,000 acres.
- Coordinated and facilitated the adaptation of the City's new Comprehensive Plan with the State of Florida's Department of Community Affairs. Currently working on the Land Development Codes.
- Established the City's first computer network and negotiated computers, laptop computers, and Information Technology Support for the City from the Flagler County Sheriff's office at no extra cost.
- Created structure and a fair progressive discipline and training policy to enhance personnel development and guidance.
- Hired new Water and Sewer Director and consulted with an engineering firm to develop a five year capital improvement plan for water and sewer to facilitate future city needs and growth.
- Created the City's first Engineering and Solid Waste departments to generate savings and produce revenues, and enhance services.
- Represented the city in several mediation hearings concerning lawsuits inherited by the prior administration.
- Coordinated the City's five year Capital Improvement Plan in anticipation for the Capital Improvements Element required by the

Comprehensive Plan process as one of its elements.

- Reviewed and facilitated the submission of the City's Water Supply Plan to the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

- Coordinated a Utility Rate Study at no cost to the City of Bunnell. Note: The Utilities Department (Water and Sewer Plant) had no Capital Reserves because they were depleted by a **-\$300,000.00** a year operating expenditure shortfall. Therefore, the following fiscal year there would not be enough revenues to cover the expenditures required to run the Utilities.

2007-2008 **Chief of Police** Bunnell Police Department, Bunnell, Florida.

- Chief of Police responsible for the management of the City of Bunnell Police Department.
- Established written directives for the Police Department.
- Established community policing and investigative initiatives which resulted in a -59.6 reduction of crime (FDLE UCR crime index Jan-June 2007) and -26% for the year (FDLE UCR crime index Jan-December 2007) and a -34% for the first six months of 2008.
- Established the Chief of Police Crime Watch advisory board, which meets monthly to address citizen complaints and crime concerns.
- Established Community Policing Initiatives, such as: *Park and walk, Watch Over Bunnell, Business Check cards, Alliance of Involved Ministers (AIM), Student Report Card Program, and Trespass After Warning Citizen Program.*
- Established minimum standards for the hiring and training of all department members.
- Establish internal procedures for the logging and investigation of Internal Affairs Complaints in compliance with state law.
- Restructured property and evidence procedures for the department to maintain efficiency and a higher level of accountability.
- Procured funding and commission approval for five new police vehicles and equipment.
- Procured funding for Computer Aided Dispatch and related laptop software and hardware for 15 police vehicles.
- Comprehensive responsibility for all aspects of budgetary and financial performance administered a \$1,138,708.00 budget.
- Developed and implemented a Policies and Procedures Manual to enhance high liability areas, such as: *Training, Less Lethal Force, Deadly Force, In-custody Deaths, Criminal Investigations, Active Shooter, Internal Affairs, Vehicular Pursuits, etc.*

1998–2007 **Captain of Police/Commander:** Criminal Investigations Division, Internal Affairs Division, Administration Division, and Field Operations Division

- Criminal Investigations Section's Deputy Commander responsible for the management of over 175 Detectives and Civilian Staff.
- Commanded and managed all investigations involving: *Kidnappings,*

Extortion, Robberies including Armed Robberies, Juvenile Gangs, Missing Persons, Sexual Battery, Auto Theft, Domestic Violence, and Homicides (made several appearances in "The First 48" series shown in the A&E channel).

- Established minimum standards for investigators and related training required to achieve this goal.
- Assisted in the Professionalizing the Economic Crimes Unit through the Certified Fraud Examiner certification.
- Implemented new measures that dramatically increased clearance rates in compliance with current Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniformed Crime Reporting System.
- Assisted in the development of a temporal based violent crimes mapping tool currently used to assist NET Commanders and Investigation Lieutenants in their on going operational planning.
- Deputy Commander of the Special Investigations Section responsible for working with federal, state, and local agencies in investigations/details concerning: narcotics trafficking, terrorism, homeland security, and dignitary protection.
- Coordinated dignitary details and escorts for many high profile dignitaries including: the president of Peru, the President of Ecuador, the president, of Costa Rica, the president of Haiti.
- Deputy Commander of the Internal Affairs Division and managed all investigations concerning police misconduct and corruption.
- Deputy Commander of the Administration Division and have accumulated experience in special projects, budget preparation, and capital improvement projects. Served as part of the management team that administered the department's 135 million dollar budget and capital projects.
- Deputy Commander of the Central District of the City of Miami for all uniformed patrol functions and calls for service responses. Responsible for the implementation of community policing concept and measures in that district. Commanded and managed over **360 officers and civilian staff**, in this assignment.
- Commanded and responsible for all access pass clearance checks, access point entry, and inner perimeter security including the command of several field forces during the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) convention hosted in Miami in 2003.
- Commanded and spearheaded a team selected by the Chief of Police, through the United States State Department, to travel internationally and provide training. Trained the Honduran National Police, and the Dominican Republic National Police in: *Survival Tactics, Criminal Investigations, Bicycle Patrol Techniques, Community Policing, and the Internal Affairs function.*
- Effectively commanded and managed the Police Emergency Operations Center, as the EOC Deputy Commander for during departmental emergency mobilizations and major incidents.

1995–1998 **Lieutenant of Police/Commander:** Criminal Investigations Division, and the Field Operations Division

- Commanded Juvenile Investigations Unit and implemented innovative ideas to combat juvenile gangs and delinquency. Also procured and managed over \$850,000.00 in federal and state grants.

- Commanded and managed over seventy sworn and civilian personnel.
- As the Juvenile Unit Commander training courses were implemented for new recruits and officers concerning gang awareness, juvenile delinquency, and missing children.
- Created proactive initiatives targeted towards at-risk youths in danger of joining violent street gangs.
- Responsible for the first major case against violent street gangs in the City of Miami, using Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations (R.I.C.O.) statutes. Over 70 violent gang members were arrested and indicted, subsequently eradicating the violent street gang.
- Commanded and initiated the first Tactical and Investigations Unit for the Miami Police Department. This included the creation and implementation of written Standard Operating Procedures for this function.
- Commanded numerous major scenes involving critical incidents such as: *homicides, hostage situations, bomb scenes, civil disturbances, and grid searches for missing children.*
- Commanded field forces during civil disturbances and/or civil demonstrations.

1991–1994 **Sergeant of Police/Supervisor:** Field Operations Division, Criminal Investigations Division, and the Internal Affairs Division

- Field supervisor (Sergeant) responsible for two patrol squads which provided calls for service responses to citizen requests for police.
- Acted as first responder to major scenes and critical incidents.
- Assigned to the Special Investigations Section and supervised the Miami-Vice Detail, and the Interceptor Detail which dealt with prostitution and upper level narcotics trafficking related crimes.
- While assigned to the Internal Affairs Section, was responsible for the supervision of over three hundred investigations concerning allegations of misconduct and corruption lodged against police officers.
- Supervised the expenditure of \$70,000.00 worth of federal and state grants targeted at combating street prostitution and citizen nuisance abatement complaints.

1981–1991 **Police Officer/Detective** Field Operations Division Criminal Investigations Division and the Internal Affairs Division

- Uniformed Police Officer responding to calls for service to many different culturally diverse neighborhoods within the City of Miami.
- Community Relations Officer responding to numerous community meetings and concerns. Also conducted many radio and television programs to provide community service and improve police/community relations.
- Training Instructor to academy recruits, and coordinated the civilian crisis response team training for the Miami Police Department.
- Crime Prevention Specialist provided many lectures, security surveys, and programs to the community on many topics targeted on increasing community awareness and reducing the crime rate through the

reduction of crimes of opportunity.

- Internal Affairs Investigator and investigated over a 150 investigations concerning police misconduct and/or corruption.

Education

2006 Barry University, Miami, Florida

- **Bachelors of Public Administration**
- Graduated *summa cum laude*, with a 3.75 GPA

1982 Miami-Dade College, Miami, Florida

- **Associates Degree, General Studies**

Professional Licenses

2006

Florida International University

- Certified Business Executive Manager

State of Florida Department of Law Enforcement

- Law Enforcement Officer Certification
- Certified Law Enforcement Instructor

Training

I have received over 1700 hours of training throughout my 30 year career. A full listing and documentation is available upon request.

Federal Emergency Management Agency

- National Response Plan
- National Incident Management System

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

- Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Terrorism Incident Defense Operations

Florida International University

- Leadership for Decision Makers Course

Miami Police Department

- Cultural Diversity Training

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

- Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs School

Miami Police Department

- Major Case Management

University of Louisville

- Crime Prevention Specialist Course

Professional Organizations

2008-Present	International Association of City Managers
2006-Present	Florida County/City Managers Association
2006-2010	Florida Police Chief's Association
2006-2010	Volusia County Chiefs Association
1982-Present	Fraternal Order of Police
1982-Present	Police Benevolent Association

Awards

Miami Police Department

- Administrative Excellence Award
- Silver Lifesaving Medal (2 awards)
- Gold Lifesaving Medal
- Unit Citation (4 awards)
- Over 77 Commendations and Letters of Commendation

Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez

- Certificate of Appreciation Commendation

City of Bunnell

- Certificate of Appreciation Commendation for Leadership and Executive Management

(Over 70 commendations and letters of commendation received)

On January 2007, I retired from the Miami Police Department, and was hired as Chief of Police for the City of Bunnell, Florida and subsequently was promoted to City Manager and Director of Public Safety. In all my professional endeavors, I utilized my experience to fix and restructure departments within all the organizations I have had the privilege to serve. Initiatives were implemented that made an impact on the levels of professionalism and efficiency. The scope of my responsibility expanded to entire Departments with City Government, which were comprised of many different elements. While under my leadership these elements were nominated and won many meritorious service awards. They have not been listed for the purpose of this resume. However, the management decisions I made that facilitated those awards and impacted on service enhancement within those elements, are explained in a Comprehensive Professional Experience Portfolio. The portfolio is available upon request.

Candidate Introduction

Armando G. Martinez

EDUCATION

Bachelors of Public Administration, Barry University, Miami Florida
 Miami Dade College, Associate in Arts Degree, Miami, Florida
 Certified Business Executive Manager, Florida International University, Miami, Florida
 State of Florida Law Enforcement Certification-Current

EXPERIENCE

City Manager and Director of Public Safety Bunnell, Florida	2008 – Present
Chief of Police	2007 – 2008
Miami Police Department	1981 – 2007
Rose from the rank of police officer to captain	

BACKGROUND

The City of Bunnell is the County Seat of Flagler County, and considered the crossroads of the county. The City is bordered by I95 and US1, and is located in the center of the County next to the Flagler County Airport. In 2010, the City was involved in the largest annexation in the State of Florida, when it added over 87,000 acres (approximately 136 square miles) making it the second largest city geographically in the State. With only a population of 2,685 people, the City is strategically located in one of the fastest growing counties in the State of Florida.

Although the level of service has dramatically increased in the City, both the operating General Fund Budget of \$4,002,173.00 and total City Budget of \$13,386,711.00, (excluding Capital Projects) have been gradually reduced and taxes not increased. While most cities have elected to raise the millage rates to keep pace with the depreciation of property values and resulting taxes, Bunnell has increased efficiency and services. For example, in 2011, the City created a Solid Waste Department which is now generating an additional \$125,000.00 annually in revenues, while also creating needed jobs. A grant writer (\$48,000 in salary) has generated over \$13 million dollars for the City.

The three most significant issues facing Bunnell were:

- **Poor Infrastructure:** In order to grow, and be ready for the economic recovery and development that will come with it, the City needed to enhance its utility system. The lack of planned, regular and gradual utility rate increases had left it with a deficit of (\$300,000) and no reserves. Further, nothing had been set aside for renewal and replacement or capital improvements. To overcome that situation a rate study was immediately conducted through Florida Rural (at no cost to the City) and presented to the community through educational workshops. The idea was to obtain their “buy in.” In

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addition, \$5.5 million dollars in grants and low interest loans were obtained. The result secured the Utility's and, indeed, the City's future.

- **Reduction of Revenues:** Bunnell has experienced the same issues other municipalities have with the current economic crisis. In order to survive and prosper, we started to “think outside the box.” The City has improved its competitive bidding to get maximum services without sacrificing quality. The City is also run more like a business. We watch the bottom-line on spending while finding ways to increase revenues by creating positions that generate revenue. In addition to that, by investing in its employees through training and accountability, this year we were able to give a 5% raise for our employees, establish a 2% merit increase for good performance and not raise taxes. This result was not accomplished by any one factor alone, but rather with teamwork and creativity.
- **Economic Development:** In order to be competitive, the City needed to create a foundation that would encourage economic development. After successfully accomplishing the aforementioned annexation, the City needed a complete re-write of its Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code to make it more developer friendly. Instead of spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on a consultant, the Community Development Department was staffed with competent and talented persons and the Plan was rewritten in-house. This not only created jobs, but it also saved the City money which it frankly did not have. The Plan was approved by the Department of Community Affairs in 2011.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

Bunnell is a great City that has afforded me the type of hands on experience, very few get to benefit from. As the City Manager, and with the cooperation and trust of our City Commission, I was able to overhaul this nearly bankrupt City. I started as an ambassador for change in a broken Police Department and then, as City Manager. I was entrusted to create a management team that would assist me in accomplishing many goals that led to the City's economic recovery in just five years. Our reserves have tripled, our utilities are self-sufficient and financially sound, and our level of service is better than ever.

I have a participative people oriented, lead by example, and “can do” management style. I refuse to accept the status quo or the “that's the way it has always been done attitude.” I analyze the areas under my responsibility and look for ways to enhance morale, efficiency, professionalism, and the level of service provided to the citizenry. It is important in today's economy to come up with “outside the box” alternatives to reduce expenditure and increase revenues. However, I do not believe time and effort should be wasted on the elements identified as not broken and running efficiently within an organization.

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I believe in clear transparency with the City's elected officials, the citizenry, and employees. You are better off admitting to a mistake than to cover it up or attempt to justify it. I believe in being clearly visible and available to all. I enjoy mentoring and recruiting talented individuals to be the future leaders of the organization. To be a true leader is to gain respect not by the authority granted through a position, but through the trust and respect of those employees under you. I believe in leading by example, treating others with the respect and courtesy one desire for themselves, and creating a positive work environment wherein every member of the organization plays an important role.

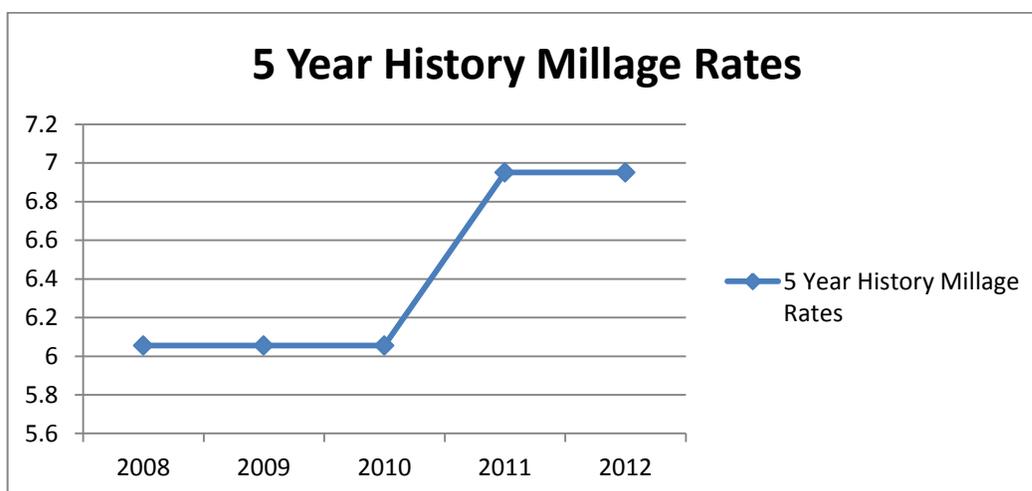
The elected officials for whom I have worked would be my best references, and can corroborate that I am the person with the qualities described above. I would add that I have over thirty three years in public service, twenty seven of which I served a community in the City of Miami with a population of over 400,000. I believe that my comprehensive public safety experience gives me an added advantage only gained by experience and that cannot be learned in books.

My accomplishments in Bunnell include:

- Recruited and hired an experienced and professional management team, who were people oriented, to replace Department Directors that were unqualified and not willing to move the city in a new direction. They also had an autocratic leadership style that was hurting morale and efficiency.
- Updated and established new written directives for the City of Bunnell, to include a General Rules of Conduct, Disaster Mobilization Plan, and a Safety Plan for employees.
- Created a new user friendly website to enhance the City's ability to attract new development, along with enhancing our level of service at no cost to the City.
- Realigned and streamlined expenditures, which permitted us to create the following positions: City Planner, Grant Writer, Assistant Finance Director, and Police Captain. We were also able to provide employees with a 3% COLA – an increase denied by the prior administration for lack of funding.
- Created Budget Sheets outlining expenditures leading to line item on budgets, and justification for each individual department budgets.
- Enhanced the Community Development Department from a one person operation, to a cohesive team ready to promote development in our city and rewrite our Comprehensive Plan.
- Represented the City of Bunnell with the State of Florida Department of Community Affairs concerning changes to our comprehensive plan and land use amendments as a result of the largest land annexation in the State of Florida 87,000 acres.
- Coordinated and facilitated the adaptation of the City's new Comprehensive Plan with the State of Florida's Department of Community Affairs. Currently working on the Land Development Codes.
- Established the City's first computer network and negotiated computers, laptop computers, and Information Technology Support for the City from the Flagler County Sheriff's office at no extra cost.

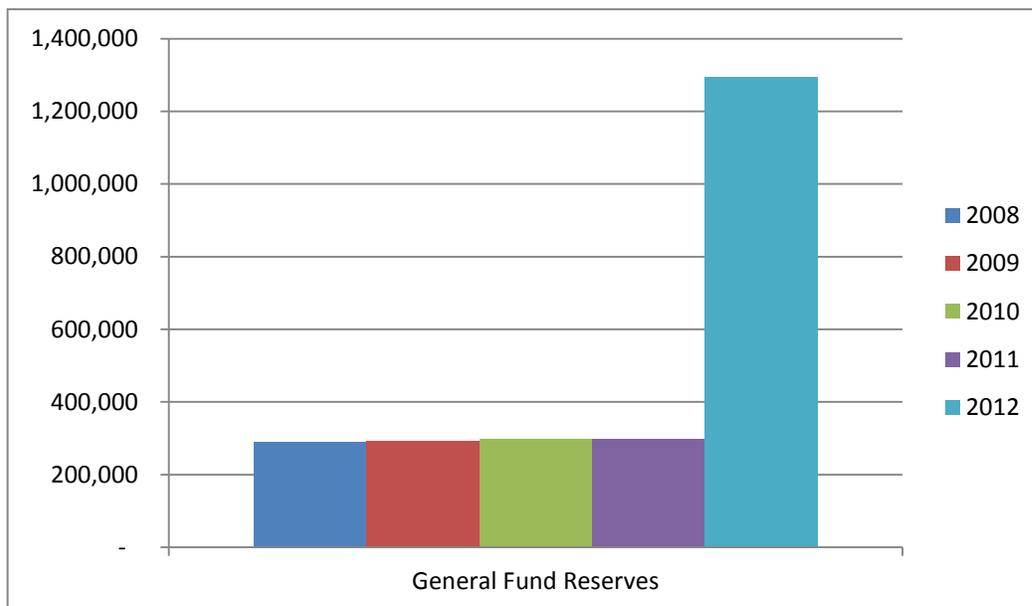
Armando G. Martinez

- Created structure and a fair progressive discipline and training policy to enhance personnel development and guidance.
- Hired new Water and Sewer Director and consulted with an engineering firm to develop a five year capital improvement plan for water and sewer to facilitate future city needs and growth.
- Consistently established business practices to reduce millage rate: **FY 2009- 9.6%, FY2010-22.8%, FY 2011- 1.4% and FY 2012- 9.2%**. A total average of 10.8% reduction for the four years, while enhancing the City’s level of service, efficiency, and professionalism.
-



With property values steadily dropping, the City of Bunnell successfully maintained their millage rate at 6.05440 for 3 consecutive fiscal years. In 2011 the City adopted a millage (once again below the roll back rate) of 6.9506 and successfully maintained the millage for a second consecutive year for 2012 while property values reduced an additional 7.65%.

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- General Fund Reserves remained relatively flat since 2008; however, in 2012 the City’s General Fund Reserve increased from \$300,212 to \$1,294,486 of which \$1,040,415 is unrestricted.
- Created the City’s first Engineering and Solid Waste departments to generate savings and produce revenues, and enhance services.
- Represented the City in several mediation hearings concerning lawsuits inherited by the prior administration.
- Coordinated the City’s five year Capital Improvement Plan in anticipation for the Capital Improvements Element required by the Comprehensive Plan process as one of its elements.
- Reviewed and facilitated the submission of the City’s Water Supply Plan to the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

If selected as the City Manager of Satellite Beach, my first six months will involve:

- Familiarize myself with City codes and Policies before the start date.
- Conduct a financial audit.
- Meet with city leaders individually to obtain their vision and goals for the City.
- Meet with staff and employees to obtain feedback and their assessment on:
 1. Morale,
 2. Efficiency,
 3. Needs, and
 4. Ideas to enhance service and increase savings.
- Assess staff and begin to build a relationship based on trust and mutual respect.
- Have community workshops to hear citizen concerns and establish accessibility to me.
- Assess staff and employee performance.
- Assess each department’s productivity and level of service to the community.

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- Develop a plan to:
- Improve efficiency where needed, departments and employees,
- Establish training where required to enhance performance and efficiency,
- Create policies and procedures where needed,
- Get employee “buy in” and cooperation,
- Reduce expenditures and increase revenues, and
- Create accessibility and transparency with the elected officials and the citizens.
- Brief elected officials on the plan – obtain needed input and implement.
- Create a positive relationship with the media as a means of providing public service information to the community.
- Create follow up measures to monitor the plan.
- Reevaluate and make necessary changes to the plan if required.
- Continuously evaluate the plan and brief the elected officials and the community.

I believe my staff would also corroborate the fact that I include them in the problem solving process and listen to their input. Then I can make a decision based on thought and reason. I pride myself on having a lot of common sense, and using that as a foundation to all my decisions.

I have established a great reputation and cannot think of anyone who would attempt to discredit me. In my leisure time I am a family man and grandfather and enjoy spending time with my family.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES I WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE MYSELF:

- Leader,
- Transparent,
- Highly Competent,
- Highly Ethical/Honest,
- Team Builder, and
- Great Personality – very friendly, very fair.

REASON FOR DEPARTING CURRENT POSITION

When I retired from my job in Miami, I moved to Palm Bay in Brevard County and chose it as my final destination to live and work. However, the opportunity presented itself in Flagler County where I have worked for the past six and a half years. The result is that although, I have a great job, bosses, and employees, I have to commute for an hour and a half to and from work each day.

Armando G. Martinez

My children and grandchildren settled in Palm Bay Brevard County, and I wish to find a job I can settle into for a long tenure nearer to my family. I will miss all the good people of Flagler County, but I feel a need to be closer to my family. I look at the City Manager's position at Satellite Beach as a place I can work and dedicate my talent for a very long time. Satellite Beach is a beautiful place to live – a place where I would love to live and call my permanent home.

CURRENT/MOST RECENT SALARY

My total compensation at Bunnell is \$120,000.00 including benefits and a take home vehicle.

CB&A Background Checks

Background Check Summary for ARMANDO G. MARTINEZ

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search No Records Found

County

Brevard County, FL No Records Found
Flagler County, FL No Records Found
Miami-Dade County, FL No Records Found

State

Florida No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County

Brevard County, FL December 2008 – Civil Action Law Suit
filed by Mr. Martinez
Disposition = Open, Litigating
See next page for candidate explanation
for record found
Flagler County, FL [Results Pending](#)
Miami-Dade County, FL No Records Found

Federal

Florida No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Florida No Records Found

Credit

Good

Bankruptcy

[Results Pending](#)

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed

*See page 2 for candidate explanation for record found

**Background Check Summary for
ARMANDO G. MARTINEZ
Explanation for Record Fond**

From: Armando Martinez]

To: Kathryn Knutson

Kathryn,

I am the person listed and identified in your search. Unfortunately, I as many other Americans in our country who invested in the real estate market, am suffering from the current economic situation our country is facing. I have purchased and sold many properties throughout the years and have always paid my creditors.

However, there are some unique circumstances surrounding these issues for which I had to contract an attorney to defend my interests. Early on I contacted my mortgage company and attempted to refinance some of the properties I invested in. This has seemed impossible since the property is appraised significantly lower than the purchase price. The two specific properties listed are currently being worked through the legal system and resulted in the civil action I initiated.

My attempt all along is to refinance at a lower interest rate to secure these properties until the market returns. However, I am also currently considering placing the homes as short sales and am willing to take a substantial loss to settle my debt with my creditors.

Thank you, I appreciate your time.

-Armando Martinez

Background Check Summary for ARMANDO G. MARTINEZ Personal Disclosure

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: Armando G. Martinez

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you even been involved in a domestic abuse incident that resulted in you being arrested or that was covered by the media?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been convicted of driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Do you have a personal My Space, Face Book or other type of Web Page?
Yes No
9. Do you have a personal Twitter Account?
Yes No
10. Is there anything else in your background that might cause a reasonable person concern if he/she became aware of it through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No

Attested to:


Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via WORD or PDF DOCUMENT to kknutson@cb-asso.com or via fax to (888) 539-6531 **no later than 3:00 PM CST 03/04/2013.**

(Note: Please be sure to sign the form with your actual signature if you are sending Fax or PDF Document)

CB&A Reference Notes

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

Catherine Robinson – Mayor, Bunnell, FL 386-503-8837

Mayor Robinson has known Mr. Martinez since 2006. He was the Police Chief and she moved him into the City Manager's position in 2008.

Mayor Robinson has been on the commission for 17 years and Mr. Martinez is by far the best manager she has ever had. The Bunnell Police Department was in terrible shape when he was hired. He did an excellent job bringing in professionalism and ridding the department of useless employees. He is a quick thinker and does an outstanding job of public relations. He adheres to human resources policies and procedures and has made her job as Mayor a delight.

When Mr. Martinez first came to work in Bunnell he would stay the bulk of the week and make the two hour drive home on the weekends. He is Cuban American and has extremely strong family ties. When he moved into the City Manager's position he gave up his house in Bunnell and started to drive home every evening to be with his family. He is adored by the community and it will be a tremendous loss if he chooses to leave. However taking a job without such a terrible commute will be a significant gain for his family.

Mr. Martinez is transparent and open. He has a great deal of integrity. He and the former city manager did not see eye to eye so he resigned as Police Chief rather than drag the city through a controversy. 200 people showed up to a public meeting to beg him to stay. Mayor Robinson decided to let the City Manager go and asked Mr. Martinez to step into that role.

Mr. Martinez is not corrupted by politics. He has instinctive people skills and works well with everyone. When he was promoted to city manager, his only area of weakness seemed to be economic development - he was, after all, trained to be a Police Officer not a City Manager. He immersed himself in anything that would give him more knowledge of the subject and soon learned everything he needed to know.

Mr. Martinez is not afraid to move someone out of a position if they are a detriment to the city. He is fair and committed to his team of employees. He is a leader and maintains the organization at a high performance level. He hires quality personnel then allows them to lead their departments. He initiated a pay plan based on merit for the employees, which was initially controversial. By doing so the staff has additional incentive to work hard.

The City did not have a solid waste department until Mr. Martinez put one together. The newly formed department has increased customer service and brought in additional revenue. With some of the revenue he was able to give the employees a raise for the first time in five years.

Mayor Robinson cannot imagine life in Bunnell without Mr. Martinez. He is simply irreplaceable. She and the entire community will be devastated if he leaves but she will be happy for him and his family if he accepts a position closer to his home.

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Energetic,
- Positive,
- Bubbly personality,
- Go getter,
- Charismatic,
- Loves people, and
- His family is extended to the people of Bunnell.

Strengths: Public relations, people skills and integrity.

Weaknesses: At one time, Economic Development. He has, however, educated himself and it is no longer a weakness.

Richard Diamond – Former City Manager, Bunnell, FL 863-496-1910

Mr. Diamond was the City Manager in Bunnell and hired Mr. Martinez as Police Chief in 2006. They worked together until 2008. He has excellent interpersonal skills and worked well with everyone.

The Police Chief prior to Mr. Martinez did not do a very good job. He did not like the Sheriff so they never spoke. The City had extensive drug problems and the officers were afraid to go into certain neighborhoods. The department had a high turnover rate and when Mr. Martinez was hired he had to reach out to the Sheriff's Department for help. He set up an advisory committee and with the help of the Sheriff's Department, improved training substantially. He recruited quality police officers and turned the community around. Some activists said it was the first time in 50 years that they had seen cooperation between the City and Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Martinez's greatest strengths are his experience and people skills. Coming from Miami, he had to get acclimated to a smaller community (Bunnell's population is a little over 3,000) but showed no weaknesses. He held monthly meetings in an older neighborhood that had one of the highest crime rates in the City and stood side by side with Mr. Diamond to take criticism and answer hard questions.

Mr. Martinez was timely with his budget preparation and always accomplished tasks quickly. He was not involved in anything controversial in Bunnell. Something did turn up in his background check when he was hired. Mr. Diamond does not remember the details but it had something do to with falsifying overtime in South Florida. He was exonerated from any wrong doing in the end.

Mr. Martinez is a leader. He learned how to be a leader through his paramilitary training. He could also be described as a great manager, but he first leads then manages.

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

Although Mr. Diamond did not work with Ms. Martinez in his current position as City Manager he has heard great things about what he has been able to accomplish. He highly recommends Mr. Martinez for the City Manager position.

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Energetic,
- Enthusiastic,
- Loves police work,
- Builds strong working relationships,
- People person, and
- Experienced.

Strengths: People skills and experience.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Arthur Jones – Police Chief, Bunnell, FL 954-391-0885

Chief Jones has known Mr. Martinez since 2004 and indirectly before that. Mr. Martinez was with the Miami Police Department at the time that Chief Jones was working homicide in Fort Lauderdale. They met again in Bunnell when Mr. Martinez was Police Chief and Chief Jones was one of his detectives. Chief Jones has been in law enforcement for 30 years and considers Mr. Martinez one of the best he has ever worked with. Although Chief Jones retired in April 2012 they have continued to maintain the same amount of contact.

Mr. Martinez is a leader in every sense of the word. He participates in mentoring programs throughout the City. Anyone can go to him and he will have the solution to your problem. He is extremely versatile and knows the ins and outs of running a city

When Mr. Martinez was the Chief of Police he changed the Bunnell Police Department by sheer will and the desire to make a positive difference. He is a Christian man and earned Chief Jones' respect right away. The Police Department was small and needed to be restructured. Mr. Martinez laid the groundwork with new policies and established relationships with other agencies. His personality and interactions with others is refreshing. He gives all of himself to better the environment. He is uniquely unselfish. He will never put a limitation on what needs to be done. He overdoes it sometimes but seems to go home and rejuvenate with his family.

In 2006 when Mr. Martinez came to Bunnell some of the officers were not performing up to expectations. He redefined the positions clearly and ensured only qualified employees could fill them. As City Manager he has done the same with other departments. Some of those people are now gone and the rest at least meet expectations.

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

The public is the reason Mr. Martinez does his job. He gives the people what they ask for. He consoles citizens and makes them feel important. When someone needs something, it should be strongly considered because the people matter. He stands for process and every goal is set with the community in mind.

At one point, a resident of Bunnell was complaining about a stop sign that made vehicles stop too close to his bedroom window. Chief Jones looked into it and determined the sign was legally placed. Hence, nothing could be done about it. Mr. Martinez went a step further and spoke to the school under construction in the area. He worked with the FDOT and restructured the area to a three way stop so the sign in question could be moved. That is only one example of how he goes above and beyond on a daily basis.

Since becoming the City Manager Mr. Martinez has brought the professionalism and dedication to the entire City that he brought to the Police Department. He put in a new operations system that allowed each department to communicate with each other that was more conducive to change. The first thing he did was pull his team of directors together and clearly state what his mission was and gain their support. He explained that while some of the people were not necessarily qualified for their positions he let them know that he was going to give them the opportunity to receive training and become qualified. He made the directors live up to their title.

Mr. Martinez also made changes to the budget. Many times directors get accustomed to a certain amount of money for their budget and feel that they have to continue to get that same amount to survive. However, he taught them that they can do more with less. Once they realized he was right they were proud of what they had accomplished and were even more motivated to do better.

Mr. Martinez instated the Clean-Up Bunnell day, which occurred one day every year. He encouraged all of the employees to participate and he was there every year as well. Whatever he attempts to do he puts his whole heart into. The City is cleaner and more efficient than ever with him at the helm.

Mr. Martinez has been under a microscope in such a small town. He taught his employees to avoid controversy by always being on the right side of the law. He encourages them to bring issues to the surface and never try to hide anything.

Chief Jones would definitely hire Mr. Martinez as City Manager. He works towards perfection. The first thing he will do as the City Manager is learn and master the policies. Then he will be able to determine where changes need to be made and perfect those policies to meet the needs of the city.

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Can go to him at any time for support,
- Spiritual brother,
- Awesome guy,

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

- Problem solver,
- Gives good direction, and
- Loved by all.

Strengths: Personality, people skills and drive to make a difference.

Weaknesses: Overworks himself.

Barbara Harkins – Human Resources Administrator, Bunnell, FL 386-313-4079

Ms. Harkins became the Administrative Assistant for Mr. Martinez in 2007, they have worked together ever since. He is forthright and extremely kind not only to her but to all department heads and employees. He will commend you for a job well done but never criticize in public. He makes himself available to anyone who wants some of his time.

Since becoming the City Manager Mr. Martinez has accomplished a great deal. He developed a solid waste and engineering departments, and cleaned up the city. Things are moving forward and not only are the employees happier working for him than ever before, but so are the residents. Currently the City is negotiating the purchase of a private utility that will help them provide better service to some of the citizens. In addition he pushes for modernization. He implemented a new plan to replace a portion of the City's computer equipment every year so they will continue to remain technologically viable.

Mr. Martinez gets people to work toward a common goal. He had built a relationship with every single employee in the City. He will go out and work the equipment with street sweepers to see what they really do and understand what they face every day the work. He is more of a leader than manager because he inspires the staff to do their job so that he does not have to manage very much.

Mr. Martinez is very intuitive. He reads people incredibly well and can pinpoint the meaning in what is being said. He is also compassionate. When she is sick, he will call her at home. When her husband passed away, he was there to offer help. If he hears someone is sick or has lost a loved one, he will ask her to send a card on his behalf.

Before Mr. Martinez was hired, the central theme among the staff was self-preservation. He brought everyone together and taught the departments to rely on each other. He has hired good people who are getting the job done. He will listen even when he does not agree. He will compromise if he feels it will be beneficial to the city. He will stand firm on his decisions and help the people understand the reasons they are made.

Residents and business owners stand behind Mr. Martinez. They all know that he is the one to go to when a problem comes up and that they will be welcomed into his office to speak with him.

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

He keeps a neat schedule and consistently checks in with Ms. Harkins to review his daily calendar.

The Police Department had a number of issues which Mr. Martinez had to investigate and resolve. He always kept the good of the community in mind when working on them. If it was found that an officer had done wrong, he had no problem stepping in and rectifying the situation.

Ms. Harkins highly recommends Mr. Martinez for any City Manager position.

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Pleasant,
- Knowledgeable,
- Always there to help in any situation,
- Forthright,
- Kind, and
- Compassionate.

Strengths: Reads people well, intuitive and strives to do the right thing.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Don Fleming – Former Sherriff, Flagler County, FL 386-931-9703

Sheriff Fleming has known Mr. Martinez since 2008. They worked together until December 2012 when the Sheriff retired. He is doing a wonderful job for the City of Bunnell. He is outgoing and willing to network with other agencies and other cities. If Sheriff Fleming was in a position to do so, he would hire him. Of the four City Managers that the Sheriff worked with, Mr. Martinez has accomplished the most by far.

Mr. Martinez balanced the budget which had not been done in years. He made improvements to City Hall with bonds and so many other things it would be hard to quantify. Although the majority of his career was in law enforcement he has found a new niche in city management.

Mr. Martinez mixes work and people to resolve issues before they become larger problems. He is experienced and transitioned from Police Chief to City Manager effortlessly. He has led the City through some rough times. His only weakness is being a two hour drive away from his family.

Mr. Martinez has done a good job hiring personnel considering the limited money he has to spend. He is a good speaker and presents himself well in public forums. He mingles with the chamber of commerce and has good working relationships with the community.

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

When Mr. Martinez became the Chief of Police in Bunnell, he requested the Sheriff Department's assistance. He asked them to determine the strengths and weaknesses of his department. Sheriff Fleming felt they needed additional training and Mr. Martinez immediately provided it. He also felt the turnover was high and recommended paying officers more. Sheriff Fleming could rely on Mr. Martinez to provide manpower in a timely manner if it was requested.

Mr. Martinez is an outstanding City Manager and will make an excellent addition to any city. He has the knowledge and the skills to make him one of the best.

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Outgoing,
- Well dressed,
- Personable,
- Great verbal communication,
- Experienced, and
- Knowledgeable.

Strengths: Motivated and resolves issues before they get bigger.

Weaknesses: Wants to be closer to his family.

Doug Baxter – President, Flagler County Chamber of Commerce, FL 407-247-5153

Mr. Baxter has known Mr. Martinez since he was hired in 2006 as the Police Chief for the City of Bunnell. He has since taken over as the City Manager and made a tremendous difference from the previous manager. Mr. Baxter is not happy about even considering losing him. They worked together until November 2012 when Mr. Baxter resigned from his position.

The county-wide chamber has three smaller chambers under its umbrella and Bunnell is one of them. They put together the annual Potato Festival and without Mr. Martinez it would have never have happened.

Since taking over as the City Manager, Mr. Martinez has taken the City out of its bubble and brought it up to modern standards. He brought the solid waste collection in house, saving Bunnell money. He has partnered with the county to purchase a water treatment plant from a private company. The county was unable to acquire the bonds on its own so its asked Mr. Martinez and the City of Bunnell to partner with them. The treatment plant will be yet another source of revenue that he has helped bring to the City.

Mr. Martinez is extremely supportive of his chamber and community. He helps everyone he possibly can. He has opened many doors with his positive attitude and charismatic personality. He is an excellent communicator and team builder. He functions well in every area. Dealing

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

with elected officials can be a challenge, especially for someone with a background strictly in law enforcement. Mr. Martinez was challenged to learn politics as the City Manager and he did so while earning the full respect of his elected officials.

Mr. Martinez increased the caliber of his employees to meet the needs of the City. He has done an excellent job with a very limited budget. He is fantastic at getting out into the public and meeting people. He wants the residents to know him. He has an open door policy and is completely transparent. He has brought back trust in the government that was lost with previous managers. He knows the boundaries of the law and follows them.

Mr. Martinez has balanced the budget and made it easier for the elected officials to do their jobs. He has also made Mr. Baxter's job as the Chamber CEO enjoyable and it will be a terrible loss when he moves on.

Mr. Baxter has no doubt that Mr. Martinez is a capable City Manager. He is confident Mr. Martinez will do extremely well anywhere he goes.

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Very big asset to the city,
- Easy to talk to,
- Experienced,
- Knowledgeable,
- Supportive, and
- Respected.

Strengths: Personality, communication and experience.

Weaknesses: Needed to learn politics for his position as City Manager but did that very well.

Raul Martinez – Retired Chief, Miami Police Department, FL 305-975-0939

Raul Martinez worked with Mr. Martinez in Miami and retired in 2003. They have known each other since the 1980's.

Mr. Martinez is very honest, conscientious and outgoing. He did excellent work in community relations and was the Deputy Commander of Internal Affairs. He is ethical and fair. He always gets the job done. He has a knack of speaking with the community in a manner they understand.

Every new position has a learning curve that takes time to master. Mr. Martinez had mastered every position he has taken on. He has never been involved in anything that could be an embarrassment to a future employer.

Armando Martinez Reference Notes

Raul Martinez cannot recall specifics but Mr. Martinez is a problem solver. He recommends him for the City Manager position. He is a balance of a good leader and manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Armando Martinez:

- Straight shooter,
- Gets the job done,
- Committed to his job,
- Honest,
- Good communicator, and
- Conscientious.

Strengths: Works well with the community, ethical and fair.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by: Emilee Anderson and Trissa White
Colin Baenziger & Associates

CB&A Internet Research

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

FLAGLERLIVE

March 3, 2013

Bunnell's City Election Tuesday: From the Revealing to the Embarrassing

Bunnell elections are like the town itself: blink a couple of times and you might miss it. Most Bunnell residents needn't even blink. They either don't know or don't care that a municipal election is taking place Tuesday.

Two city commission seats are up. The city of 3,000 will be lucky if 300 people turn up at the polls—or rather, the poll, at Bunnell's old city hall—although in that regard Bunnell's traditionally dismal turnout is only slightly worse than Palm Coast's or even Flagler Beach's of late.

The difference with those two towns is that in Bunnell no one bothers to host candidate forums. So issues are hardly discussed outside of commission meetings, giving incumbents an automatic advantage since they can simply advertise themselves as sitting commissioners with “experience.” Also, not much is done to signal the coming election and give potential candidates a better chance to enter the race. As a result, few do. Mayor Catherine Robinson was re-elected, without opposition, just as she was three years ago.

Two commission seats are up. Both incumbents (Elbert Tucker and Daisy Henry) are in the running. Only one additional candidate is in the race, Bill Baxley, who fell three votes short of winning a seat two years ago.

That's still better than Flagler Beach's municipal election, which was to be held concurrently with Bunnell's. Two seats were up on the Flagler Beach City Commission, but after one candidate briefly flirted with challenging the two incumbents, he withdrew, resulting in the automatic re-election of Jane Mealy and Steve Settle. That's unusual for Flagler Beach, where elections have been hotly contested in recent years, if with a revolving set of familiar candidates. In Bunnell on Tuesday, the top two vote-getters will be elected. So at least one of the two incumbents will be reelected.

Absent forums and public interest—and better coverage from local media, this news source included—Bunnell's city commissioners are left to their own devices to draw the few dozen votes that assure them victory. That involves the usual campaign signs and knocking on a few doors. But mostly, it involves the equivalent of a mass mailing, or as close to a mass mailing as Bunnell's absence of anything like a critical electoral mass can elicit: Henry, Tucker and Baxley each sent a letter in the form of a personal appeal to registered voters.

The letters are the sharpest self-portraits by candidates that most voters are likely to get.

They are also, in one case, the cause of controversy: Henry's letter to constituents was so poorly written, so incoherent and at times factually wrong that it drew a letter of protest from Hardy

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Underhay, a Bunnell resident, to the mayor and the commission. Underhay's letter might have carried more weight had it not itself had its share of misspellings (it's "grammar," not "grammer"), terrible punctuation, and run-on sentences. But Underhay isn't running for office.

"Receiving a letter like the one mailed to us by Ms. Daisy M. Henry is a poor reflection on all of you, the City of Bunnell and not to mention Ms. Henry herself," Underhay wrote. "What a disgrace to think that this is someone who is supposed to be out there helping to run the City of Bunnell."

Henry, a pastor, wrote lines like this, reproduced here exactly as they appear in the original letter: "As a native of Flagler county, resident, and commissioner of Bunnell. I have serve as your commissioner for fourteen years. I am very proud of the position ,it have been very, very challenging educational, and rewarding."

The lines don't get better.

No one would begrudge a local politician's poor writing skills. Few can write. But most try hard, when they write, either to edit their work, or to get a little help from someone who can, before disseminating it widely. Not doing so can be as offensive to the intended audience as it can, or should, be embarrassing to the author. It also raises questions of competence beyond English, especially when Henry asks residents to "please remember that some commissioners live within the city" (no, all of them do, otherwise they couldn't run for office there), or that "the millage have not increase in a while" (yes it has, though the actual taxes property owners pay may not have increased as much, or in some cases at all, because of falling valuations).

Each letter is revealing in its own way, as are to a lesser extent the candidates' campaign finances. Both are detailed below.

Bill Baxley

Baxley's letter is the briefest, and like Baxley himself, it is to the point and frills-free. It makes no outlandish promises, as candidates often do. Baxley tells constituents of his service in the Marines (10 years) and the Florida Department of Corrections, tells them he's now retired, giving him time to devote himself to city issues, and tells them that he's attended commission meetings and "studied the agendas for the past three years." That's no boast: few local residents attend any of the county's five local governments' meetings as religiously as Baxley attends Bunnell's. He's also been serving on the city's zoning board for the last two years.

Baxley pledges to "lower taxes when possible" and "lower the water and sewer rates," two very difficult promises to keep in an economic climate that keeps pushing tax and water rates the other way. Bunnell's recent acquisition of the Plantation Bay utility will also—its officials' promises notwithstanding—sooner or later likely lead to higher water rates for all residents, because the city (along with the county) took on a clunker. Repair costs will be heavy. The city

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(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

will not be able to isolate them entirely from ratepayers elsewhere in the city. (The closing on the Plantation Bay utility sale is not before May).

Baxley also says he will cast his vote “to cut all excessive spending” (a vague enough pledge that doesn’t necessarily flirt with the impossible) and “to bring more businesses to Bunnell” (an obligatory and costless pledge every candidate in every election makes).

Baxley’s campaign finances are as spare as his letter: through Feb. 28, he raised \$700, including \$500 in a loan to himself, and \$100 each from Charles Chambers of Bunnell, and Vickie Waddell of Bunnell. He spent most of the money on signs and mail.

Elbert Tucker

Elbert Tucker’s letter is the longest of the three, but also the most substantive, and just as revealing for what it says as for what it doesn’t. Until the election of John Rogers two years ago, Tucker was the commission’s lone ranger, voting in dissent more often than any other commissioner. He is also the odd man out when it comes to ideas: he proposes them, sometimes from a limb, even though a majority of commissioners usually rebuff him. It was Tucker’s idea to invite the sheriff to take over policing in Bunnell two years ago, after a State Attorney’s investigation revealed, for the third time in 10 years, that the department was a morass of incompetence and corruption. Consolidation with the sheriff’s office would save the city hundreds of thousands of dollars, Tucker argued. But his colleagues rejected the proposal.

Tucker’s dissents were at times prescient, as with his early opposition to Bunnell’s participation in a consortium, led by Palm Coast, to build a desalination plant. Bunnell’s participation cost it \$40,000, Tucker says, a contribution he opposed early while the rest of the commission approved it—only to realize, as every government that joined Palm Coast’s consortium eventually did, that the desalination plant would instead be a white elephant. The plan died after local and regional governments lost well over \$2 million on it.

Tucker also takes credit—though it was more of a group commission effort—for the city’s resumption of running its own garbage pick-up operations. He also takes credit for ending the city’s illegal scheme, operated in conjunction with its police department, of seizing and towing vehicles, usually on flimsy pretexts. Drivers would get their cars back for \$350 fees the city pocketed. While it’s true that Tucker voted to repeal the ordinance that made the scheme possible, he did not initiate the idea: a State Attorney’s investigation exposed the scheme’s excesses, embarrassed Bunnell, and essentially forced the city to repeal the ordinance, since it was illegal, and make refunds available to drivers affected.

Tucker also takes credit for opposing merit-based raises to city employees (he was in dissent on a vote that a majority of the commission approved). “I recognize the value of our city employees and believe they should be paid a meaningful wage,” he writes in his letter to citizens. “But, in these bad economic times and with many of our own citizens themselves suffering (those on

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(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

fixed incomes, those who have lost their job or have had their pay or work hours cut) I didn't think it right to ask Bunnell taxpayers to fund 'merit' pay increases for city employees. Do you?" Tucker had no such concerns when it came time to give himself and the rest of the commission a 100 percent raise a few years ago. Commissioners and the mayor voted together to double their pay, to nearly \$10,000 a year, and bring it in line with the pay of commissioners in Palm Coast, a city with 25 times the population of Bunnell. Tucker was even defiant about his vote approving his raise: "I'm worth every dime that I get paid for this job," he said at the time. "Here's the final analysis. The people don't like us, they need to vote us out and get the salaries back to \$4,800." Tucker raised a total of \$1,100, all but \$300 from himself. He got a \$250 check from Jay Beggelman of Palm Coast, and a \$50 check from Diane Minotti, who also donated \$50 to Henry. Minotti is married to Perry Mitrano, the city's solid waste director who owes his job, in part, to Tucker's support of Bunnell resuming those services.

Daisy Henry

Henry's Feb. 6 letter notes the creation of the solid waste department and the hiring of City Manager **Armando Martinez**, whom Henry does not name but credits for being a qualified manager. **Martinez** brought on a strong administrative staff and placed the city on a stronger footing after years of instability and poor management. But it's just as true that Henry's long tenure on the commission oversaw Bunnell's more wayward years.

The rest of her letter makes general statements about the city's business friendliness, its ability to get grants and its special events, none of which entailed Henry's direct or, in most cases, indirect involvement. "Even though you don't hear or read anything I say in the media I am silently working in your behalf," she claims. If so, she works in mysterious ways.

Henry can be fierce, passionate and pious, but only concerning matters that concern her directly, if not personally. Her commission colleagues never give her leadership responsibilities, condescending instead to let her pray or speak her mind on occasions, but little more. There is no mystery to her successive reelections: she is black, and as such enjoys the only solid, unwavering constituency in the city with the highest proportion of black residents in the county—and the only city still with a black ghetto. Bunnell's South Side, where Henry lives, is a blight of poverty, crime and political indifference unparalleled anywhere in Flagler. It's also her base. (Palm Coast is relatively well integrated, and Flagler Beach has no ghetto because it banned blacks from living there until recently; few do anyway).

Yet when Carver Gym, the one unquestionably positive icon that stands out as a service to South Side residents, was threatened with closure by the County Commission in 2010, it wasn't Henry who led the battle to save it. She was vocal and organized her own neighborhood's grass roots, but it did not go further than that. Nor did her colleagues entrust her with that battle. After a failed attempt by Bunnell Vice Mayor Jenny Crain-Brady to lead the effort, it was Barbara Revels, the county commissioner (and a long-time Flagler Beach resident) who took up the fight, and won it. It's still Revels more than anyone who's keeping Carver Gym's organizational structure and funding solid.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Henry seldom votes in dissent: she is a quintessential status quo commissioner, who largely goes along with Martinez's administrative initiatives, and provides the surest third vote for Crain-Brady and Robinson. Martinez's future in Bunnell may well depend on her re-election.

Revels is among Henry's campaign contributors: she donated \$100. Other contributors include Crain-Brady (\$50), former Bunnell City Commissioner Jimmy Flynt (\$200), Frank Giddens (\$100), and Bunnell developer Mark Langelo(\$500).

Henry's campaign finance documents are confusing, and in one case clearly wrong: her last report, covering Feb. 9 to Feb. 28, lists just \$100 as "total monetary contributions to date," when it should list *allof* her monetary contributions in the course of the campaign, which appear to top \$1,000. Henry was also fined \$50, in accordance with state law, for turning in a report late.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

February 6, 2013

Plantation Bay utilities purchase approved

Author: *Julie Murphy; STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL — Utilities serving Plantation Bay are beyond old.

In fact, it wouldn't take much of a failure to leave residents unable to flush their toilets or pour themselves a glass of water, according to independent engineers who examined the system on behalf of Flagler County and the city of Bunnell.

"We are going to have a defunct system. I'm not comfortable with this at all," Flagler County Commissioner George Hanns said at Wednesday's workshop on the utility's possible purchase. "And, you are still recommending that we go forward. You are going to need a sledgehammer to convince me."

The utilities system was built 28 years ago, said engineers from Wade Trim. And capital reinvestment to maintain equipment with a 20-year life expectancy hasn't been done.

Armando Martinez, Bunnell city manager, said he and Flagler County Administrator Craig Coffey are now fully aware the system is deficient but are keen on ensuring that residents there have quality drinking water and a working sewage system.

Engineer Clayton McCormick said the Department of Environmental Protection issued a four-year administrative order, that ended in 2010, because there were, and are issues with suspended solids in wastewater, no continuous monitoring as required, and the system is unreliable. That order was extended until 2012, but because the work wasn't done to correct the issues a consent order was issued and fines could be forthcoming.

The big problem is a lack of redundancy, McCormick said.

"There's only one tank," he said, referring to the wastewater side of the utilities. "There's no way to get in and clean it."

County Commissioner Frank Meeker, who works for the St. Johns River Water Management District, asked whether dual redundancy is needed on the water side as well.

"It's not required," McCormick said, "but as a good engineer, I would want to have it."

It would be close to impossible to shut down and repair the facility if it were to fail, Coffey said.

"It wouldn't be pretty," McCormick said.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Getting to the nitty-gritty details, Oscar Duarte, also with Wade Trim, said two of four wells do not pump water that can be adequately treated for use. Wiring for the wells' signaling system, instead of being buried, string through the trees over 137 acres of forest known as the well fields.

"If a tree falls because of a storm, the water signaling system (to pump water from the wells) could go out," he said.

The company determined three levels of projects based on dire need and bringing the system into compliance.

To make the repairs necessary to fulfill the DEP's consent order, projects will cost an estimated \$3.4 million. Capital improvement projects, such as the water supply wells, will cost another \$1.9 million. The third tier of repairs, the lift stations being the largest part of those repairs, will be \$2.3 million.

"It needs substantial improvements," Duarte said. "It has had Band-Aids put on (the problems)."

The total cost of purchasing the utilities and making the aforementioned improvements is \$13.1 million.

"I think we're obligated to provide these services for the residents there," **Martinez** said.

With Hanns and Bunnell City Commissioner John Rogers opposed, officials approved an interlocal agreement to purchase the utility and make the improvements.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

December 23, 2012

Flagler County may give courthouse to Bunnell

Author: *Julie Murphy; STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL — Flagler County and Bunnell officials will meet Thursday to discuss the possible transfer of the Historic Courthouse to the city.

"That building has deep roots in Bunnell," City Manager **Armando Martinez** said by phone Friday. "We think it is very important to the revitalization of the downtown."

Consensus was reached during a July workshop about how to proceed and an interlocal agreement was drawn up by County Attorney Al Hadeed, but with a new request by Bunnell and new commissioners seated on the County Commission the agreement could change, County Administrator Craig Coffey wrote in a memo to the County Commission.

"Following the workshop, through (**Martinez**) it was indicated to county staff that Bunnell commissioners desired a deed for the property under the courthouse," Coffey said.

County Commission Chairman Nate McLaughlin and Commissioner Frank Meeker told staff they wanted "to explore a potential alternative to give Bunnell the entire (Historic) Courthouse and annex property."

"Bunnell needs to plan out its future," McLaughlin said by phone on Sunday. "If they can have access to the whole building and annex and the property there, they will be able to do that. I think it is important for us to try to give them control of it for planning." **Martinez** said the city is "excited" about the prospect of having the entire building to use.

"We want to go into the old courthouse," **Martinez** said. "With the changes to the commission, we want to make sure everybody is on the same page."

County staff will work toward whatever end is decided, Coffey said. While he said he wouldn't speak for sheriff-elect Jim Manfre, Coffey said his understanding is that he is flexible.

"The Sheriff-Elect is flexible on any office project that the board would like to pursue, whether that is the Courthouse Annex or another project," Coffey said. "He is in agreement with the Courthouse Annex project and would not object to the Bunnell Police Department occupying a portion of the space in the Courthouse Annex. If an alternative project is proposed, he does not want it to cost more than the currently proposed project and would even prefer an option that would offer a savings."

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Coffey said he would prefer county staff "no longer be involved" if possession of the buildings and property go to Bunnell, but said "county staff will continue to manage a capital project for the Sheriff's Office space needs."

"Staff is in agreement with providing a deed to the City of Bunnell for the property under the Courthouse. Although it will complicate any agreement slightly, the basic relationship on a day-to-day basis would remain the same," Coffey said. "This is an important point for the City officials and can be worked through, should be County Commission choose this direction."

The meeting will be from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Flagler County Emergency Operations Center, 1769 E. Moody Blvd.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

FLAGLERLIVE
November 9, 2012

Bunnell Manager **Martinez**'s Pay Raise Blocked As a Commissioner Calls Him "Overpaid"

In October 2009, the Bunnell City Commission hired **Armando Martinez** as its city manager for \$90,000. He's now making \$102,400, but says he's never gotten a raise since he became manager. Thursday evening, he was up for a merit pay increase that would have brought his salary to \$104,470, a 16 percent increase from his base pay.

A 2-2 vote of the commission meant that the motion to give him the 2 percent merit increase failed. "I tell him all the time that Mr. **Martinez** is overpaid," Commissioner John Rogers said, siding with Commissioner Elbert Tucker in opposing the merit increase.

Mayor Catherine Robinson and Commissioner Daisy Henry voted for the raise, but it wasn't enough: a tie vote means a failed motion. Vice Mayor Jenny Crain-Brady was absent: had she not been, she likely would have voted to support the raise, as she has been a staunch supporter of **Martinez** in the past. It's quite possible that commissioners favoring the raise will bring up the matter again at a subsequent meeting, when they're assured of a majority.

But the discussion over **Martinez**'s pay—the latest in a series of such discussions in the last few years—again laid bare a fault line on the commission that opposes Tucker and Rogers against the remainder of the commission, and that points to how **Martinez**'s fate hangs in the balance, with elections coming early next year, when three seats are up—Tucker's, Henry's and Robinson's. One of the leading candidates for the election, Bill Baxley, was in the audience Thursday evening, as he has been at most meetings since well before running for a commission seat at the previous election and failing to win a seat by 19 votes. He's not been a fan of **Martinez**'s, and spoke skeptically of the merit raise Thursday evening.

"If my memory serves me correctly, I would almost be positive that I heard Mr. **Martinez** say he'd be willing to recuse himself from it," Baxley said of the merit raise, referring to a previous meeting's discussion.

"Yes," **Martinez** said. "What happens was, when the issue came and was brought up by Mr. Tucker, about my name being on the list, what I said was, if my name being on the list would exclude you from approving the merit list, then go ahead and move it off the list but I think the board chose to pass it as was, with my name still on the list."

The difference between **Martinez**'s base pay, when he was originally hired, and its current status bears explaining.

His original \$90,000 salary was for his duties as city manager. But he was also given the title of public safety director. Before becoming manager, **Martinez** was briefly Bunnell's police chief.

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(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

As a cop, +he was granted hazardous pay, even as manager, since he had the title of public safety director. That gave him an additional \$6,000 a year, raising his pay to \$96,000.

In late 2010, questions were raised about **Martinez**'s right to be a public officer in two different jobs at the same time. The Florida Constitution forbids such a status. To his chagrin, **Martinez** had to drop his cop's title (and his gun-carrying). He no longer merited hazard pay. But the commission decided not to eliminate that hazard pay, and even gave him a minor bump. In effect, he got a \$7,500 raise in January 2011, though **Martinez** and his supporters on the commission do not see that as a raise.

"I've never gotten a raise since I became city manager." **Martinez** said Thursday, "and I wouldn't have accepted one because my staff never got one."

Tucker didn't buy the argument. "The director of public safety position is really what you're doing as a city manager, so you just got a little more money for being the director of public safety," Tucker said.

"I do believe that I contribute to that public safety, and you can ask the fire chief or you can ask the police chief," **Martinez** protested, "that whenever we have anything as the Halloween event or any particular issue or parade or something like that, I'm involved and they run their plans by me and I give my two cents. Sometimes they come up with a better planned idea than I do, but I contribute to that with my years of experience."

Tucker: "You really do the same thing as a city manager as our director of public safety would do had we hired one separately from you."

Martinez: "No, because I don't think that anybody that doesn't have the experience that I have, doesn't have the qualifications to stand at the same level with the chief of police and talk in the same terms that he understands as to when it comes to planning and recruiting and internal cases and police unions and a lot of the issues that come up. I think that I am a sounding board and a support mechanism to him that you couldn't have had here before."

Then came the 5 percent "cost of living" increase all Bunnell employees got this year. It wasn't exclusively a cost of living increase. Three percent of it was to compensate for the 3 percent that employees must now pay into the state's public retirement system, by order of the Legislature (money most employees may get back should a lawsuit disputing that mandate go employees' way). Two percent was a cost of living raise.

That brought **Martinez**'s pay to \$102,438.

He was then evaluated. The evaluations could have been filled out by all commissioners, but only the mayor filled it out. She gave him a glowing review. "I did the legwork to do the evaluation. You all get to make the decision whether or not you want to give the merit increase," Robinson said.

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(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

That 2 percent additional, merit raise was what was under discussion Thursday, and what Tucker and Rogers resisted.

“This is a huge amount of money for an employee,” Tucker said, referring to the 5 percent raise he’d already received. “You’re doing a good job, there’s no doubt about that. A \$5,000 increase in his salary, it actually comes out, with all the benefits, to 10.1 percent increase in his salary, or the money we have to pay out for him just for the \$5,000 increase over the last year’s money.”

The city’s finance director corrected Tucker, in that the calculation Tucker was presenting included the merit amount, not just the cost of living amount. But Tucker’s point was made: a salary increase at the top end of the scale is disproportionately higher than a salary increase for the rank and file.

Two people—Bunnell developer Mark Langello and Perry Mitrano, the city’s solid waste director, in an unusual pitch on behalf of his boss, who’d approve Mitrano’s merit raise—spoke to the commission in support of **Martinez**’s raise.

And **Martinez** made his own pitch. “It’s very important for me to tell you that in the amount of years that I have been here, I’ve never, ever asked for anything without the employees being compensated first,” **Martinez** said, a statement that, given the commission’s \$7,500 gift last year, was only half true. “Whatever I am getting now is no different than whatever the other employees are eligible for. As a matter of fact when this issue came up, I tried to really stay away from it, but my position is that what I am entitled to is for consideration.”

Robinson thought the 2-2 vote meant that **Martinez**’s raise had carried. Sid Nowell, the city attorney, corrected her. **Martinez**’s pay remains, for now, at \$102,438, a 13.8 percent increase over his starting base pay—still well above the sort of increases most workers, if employed, have enjoyed over the past four years.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

October 6, 2012

Bunnell officials to weigh synthetic drug ban

Author: *Aaron London; STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL — Following the lead of Palm Coast, Bunnell city commissioners are set to discuss an ordinance banning the sale, manufacture or display of herbal incense, designer drugs or bath salts.

City Manager **Armando Martinez** said the ordinance, on the agenda for Monday's City Commission meeting, would not make the sale or display of so-called synthetic marijuana, bath salts or incense a criminal act but "more of a code enforcement act."

He said Police Chief Jeff Hoffman recommended consideration of a ban, especially with Palm Coast passing an ordinance banning the sale of such substances last week.

"We're just trying to stay ahead of the curve," **Martinez** said.

As a former law enforcement officer, **Martinez** said he is familiar with the impact such products can have on a community.

"A lot of these designer drugs come out and become something that is abused and illicit and needs to be controlled," he said. "That is why they are called controlled substances. They are being misused and causing harm."

Martinez said the issue is also one of basic safety for city residents and to ensure that Bunnell does not become a haven for purveyors of such products.

"I think part of our job here is to try and create a safe environment for our citizens," he said. "In addition, with surrounding cities and counties already adopting similar ordinances, I want to make sure Bunnell doesn't become the new hub for this because we don't have one. Basically, we don't want to be known for fried chicken and designer drugs."

When the issue comes up for debate Monday, Commissioner Elbert Tucker said he will reluctantly support the ordinance.

"I'm going to go along, but I'm sure going to argue against having it," he said.

Tucker said his concern is that there are already state and federal laws covering such products.

"It's a redundant law and it's another ordinance on the books," he said. "Now we will have to set up another line of rules and ramifications about what we're going to do if somebody violates our code."

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Tucker said the existing state statute "seems to cover anything we could possibly have" and the issue "needs to be a law enforcement matter, not a code enforcement matter."

Tucker is also concerned with jurisdictional issues if violators are cited and said he has not heard that the issue is a big problem in the city.

"They've jumped into something they really don't need to jump into," he said. "They're going to create problems that if you just left it alone and let law enforcement take care of it you wouldn't have."

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

July 28, 2012

Bunnell looks to cut taxes, raise salaries

Author: *AARON LONDON - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - Bunnell residents will get a tax cut while city employees will get raises if a proposed budget is approved by city commissioners.

City Manager **Armando Martinez** and city staff presented a budget proposal during Thursday's workshop that would give city employees a 5 percent cost-of-living raise while keeping the property-tax rate at same levels.

"Our employees deserve a raise. It's because of them we're prospering," **Martinez** said. "The city of Bunnell made it a practice to run the city like a business and a lot of revenue budgeted to be used was not used and carried forward."

Martinez said the city is able to offer employees a pay increase without raising the property tax rate because it has been able to increase its contingency fund from just under \$300,000 to \$1.2 million.

The budget and tax plan recommended by city staff was one of three options presented to city commissioners. The other options included giving employees a 5 percent raise and increasing the property tax rate; or keeping the tax rate at the current level with no raise for city workers.

The current property tax rate in the city is \$6.95 per \$1,000 of taxable property value. The rolled-back rate, which would produce the same revenue as the current rate using new assessments of the same properties, is \$7.59 per \$1,000 of taxable property value. If approved by commissioners, the proposed rate would represent a 9.2 percent decrease in property taxes.

A homeowner with a house valued at \$125,000 with a \$50,000 homestead exemption would pay \$521.25. The city expects to generate \$942,258 of its annual general fund budget of \$4 million from property taxes.

Martinez defended the raises for city workers, saying it has been several years since they have received a pay increase.

"I think it is something that's the right thing to do," he said.

To bolster the point for commissioners, city staff prepared a graph comparing taxable property values and property tax rates for Flagler County, Palm Coast and Flagler Beach with Bunnell.

"All the other entities, with the exception of Palm Coast in 2010, increased their millage every year," said Finance Director Cissy Bertha.

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(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Staff also prepared budget sheets that break down each department's revenue and spending to help commissioners with budget questions.

"It really is pretty cut and dried," said Mayor Catherine Robinson, reviewing the proposed budget. "This used to be a very grueling process. It was hours and days and meetings."

Commissioners reviewed each department in turn, though there were few questions for the department heads.

Community redevelopment agency head Judi Stetson told commissioners she would like to add another \$2,000 to the budget for the city's centennial celebration next year.

"We're trying to be so conservative," Stetson said. "It's going to be expensive."

Vice Mayor Jenny Crain-Brady said she supported giving city workers raises, despite taking a hard line on the issue in past years.

"I'm thrilled we're in the economic position we're in," she said. "I think the city of Bunnell is being run like a business and this is the proof."

Commissioners approved the proposed property tax rate unanimously and will hold the first of two required public hearings on the budget and tax rate at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 10 in the Government Services Building, 1769 E. Moody Blvd. The second meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Sept. 24, also in the Government Services Building.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

April 25, 2012

Bunnell's new top cop ready
Hoffman set to take over on Saturday

Author: *JULIE MURPHY - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - Daytona Beach Police Capt. Jeffrey Hoffman officially becomes the city's new top cop on Saturday.

The City Commission unanimously approved hiring Hoffman on Monday night while commissioners said their good-byes to Chief Arthur Jones.

Jones announced his intention to retire in December and Friday will be his last day on the job.

"We appreciate your long hours, hard work and dedication," Mayor Catherine Robinson said to Jones during Monday's meeting. "We expect you not to be a stranger."

"I'm feeling good about all aspects of the situation," Jones said by phone Tuesday. "I'm pleased that the commission approved him. He'll be able to carry on the work that's been done here in the community."

Jones said he's looking forward to "serving the community in a different capacity" through volunteer work with a group he created - the Alliance of Involved Ministers - starting with the coming session of summer camp.

"I'm really looking forward to this," he said.

Michael Barr, chairman of the Bunnell Chamber of Commerce, called Jones' efforts since November 2008 when he was hired "outstanding."

"Bunnell is a much better place to come to since (Jones) has been here," Barr said.

City Manager **Armando Martinez** said Hoffman was his top pick because he is a local and hardworking law enforcement officer with 21 years of experience under his belt.

The 41-year-old Ormond Beach resident has worked for the Daytona Beach Police Department since 1991, two years after graduating from Oviedo High School. He received an associate's degree from Daytona State College and a bachelor's degree from Warner University in Lake Wales.

"You asked and I think we were able to deliver," **Martinez** said to commissioners regarding the vetting process done with the help of a selection committee that included Rick Look, former chief deputy at the Flagler County Sheriff's Office.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

"He is recognized and known by all law enforcement in the area," **Martinez** said of Hoffman.

Hoffman said it was "the hardest promotional process" he has been through in his 21 years of service and that he started to get cold feet about leaving Daytona Beach, the only place he's worked in law enforcement.

"Chief Mike Chitwood said, 'You're good for this. You need to see this through,' " Hoffman said. "I've always prided myself for integrity and professionalism."

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the new chief with little comment.

Hoffman, who is married with five children, currently earns an annual salary of \$94,500. His pay as Bunnell police chief will be \$50,000.

"He will retire from Daytona Beach so his pay will be on top of whatever his pension is," **Martinez** said during a previous interview. "A lot of cops want to make the career move to top cop because they love it. They love the job."

Commissioner Elbert Tucker specifically asked for **Martinez** to find local candidates when the search for chief began.

"A plus for me is that he has a little country background," Tucker said by phone Tuesday of Hoffman, who originally hails from Seminole County. "Chitwood is tough on criminals. Chitwood, I bet, is a really good teacher about how things should be."

Jones intends to take Hoffman on a driving tour of Bunnell as soon as possible.

"I know he's still finishing up some things in Daytona Beach," Jones said. "He may have time (today).

"This was an adventure and a learning experience. I'm looking forward to providing the community with some of its other needs."

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

December 26, 2011

Bunnell administrator needs more oversight

Bunnell residents probably could use a refund on the thousands of dollars in gas money they paid to their city manager, but at the least, taxpayers deserve a review of city policy.

Many Bunnell residents likely have questions about how their city government handled expenses incurred by City Manager **Armando Martinez**, who commutes from Palm Bay in Brevard County. **Martinez**, who has said that he wants to be closer to family in Brevard County, was turned down recently in a bid for a police chief position in Melbourne. He now says he plans on staying in Bunnell.

Martinez, 52, is a retired Miami police captain and former Bunnell chief of police. Bunnell officials liked his resume when they hired him as city manager in 2008.

But **Martinez** ran up hefty travel expenses. His home in Flagler went into foreclosure in 2008 and until November, **Martinez** was racking up mileage and wearing down city-owned tires when he was commuting to work from Palm Bay in a Chevrolet Impala owned by Bunnell.

According to city records, **Martinez** put 37,000 miles on the Impala between January and September. And he burned through 1,481 gallons of gasoline purchased by the city of Bunnell for \$4,875.80. After hearing from city commissioners, **Martinez** now drives his own car to and from work.

It's a common practice for city and county governments to allow their administrators to drive a government-owned vehicle. But surely most administrators don't put almost 5,000 miles a month on their cars.

City Commissioner Elbert Tucker said he told **Martinez** that he should limit his use of the city's car to conducting city business "in and around Bunnell, a trip to Tallahassee on occasion and four miles down the road to his home in Palm Coast."

That sounds about right. It's unfortunate for the taxpayers that the message didn't get through until **Martinez** had used up almost 1,500 gallons of gasoline.

This raises some questions. Does the city spell out its policy regarding use of city cars and gasoline credit cards? Are travel records regularly reviewed? The taxpayers need these safeguards.

Martinez did not violate his contract, which allows him to take his city car home. In the future, city commissioners should make sure that top officials understand the city's view of appropriate

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

travel. It would be wise to add a line in future contracts that city-owned cars may be driven home only if the employee lives in Flagler County.

Another issue with **Martinez** is his insistence on being certified as a Florida law enforcement officer. **Martinez** was carrying a badge until January, when questions arose about holding two offices. The Florida Constitution forbids that, and **Martinez** no longer is involved in law enforcement.

But **Martinez** still collects \$500 a month in hazard pay, which is in his contract. The extra hazard pay also costs the city \$6,000 in annual worker's compensation costs, officials said. This arrangement is not in the public's interest.

Martinez is a well-paid city administrator. That's his job. He shouldn't be mixing public administration with police work.

City commissioners like the overall job **Martinez** has done. He made budget cuts and kept property taxes at reasonable rates. He has also tried to steer economic development toward Flagler County's smaller cities.

But he should work within the customary boundaries of public administration. It appears that he has enjoyed a little too much latitude in his job, and the City Commission needs to make a resolution to exercise stricter oversight in the coming year.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

August 13, 2011

Rules cut Bunnell manager meeting short

Author: *AARON LONDON - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: **BUNNELL**

BUNNELL- A special meeting of the City Commission on Friday about the future of the city manager was short but not very sweet.

Commissioner John Rogers called for the special meeting after City Manager **Armando Martinez** informed commissioners that he is a candidate for the police chief's job in Melbourne.

Rogers said he was concerned because **Martinez's** contract automatically renews for another year today, and a clause in **Martinez's** contract provides for a severance package that would pay the manager the equivalent of six months' salary and benefits "if Mr. **Martinez** falls out of favor with the board."

Martinez is paid \$102,733.60 as city manager. Rogers said the severance package would cost the city "somewhere around \$51,000" if paid.

When **Martinez** was hired as city manager in 2008 he received a one-year contract which renews automatically for two more years. However, if he is offered the Melbourne job and resigns as city manager he is not due the severance pay.

Rogers said he "felt time was of the essence" in addressing the issue and was motivated to call for the special meeting because "something was churning up inside of me and I couldn't ignore it."

However, his fellow commissioners were not inclined to discuss the contract.

Mayor Catherine Robinson pointedly noted that the commission was there to discuss "only what's on the agenda" and was supported in that by City Attorney Sid Nowell.

The notice for the special meeting listed the agenda as "discussion regarding Mr. **Martinez's** application for the position of Chief of Police with the City of Melbourne, Fl.," and Nowell said that was the only item that could be discussed under the terms of the city charter.

Keeping a tight rein on the discussion, Robinson said **Martinez** had notified commissioners of his job search.

"I think he did that solely and only to inform his bosses," she said. "He has the right to get another job if he chooses."

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Robinson added it was "premature" to discuss the city manager position.

"I see it as a nonissue," she said. "The contract is a nonissue."

In a terse exchange with Rogers, Robinson said it was her understanding that Rogers had some "inside information" regarding **Martinez's** job search and his contract.

"I did not tell you that," Rogers retorted.

After the meeting, Rogers characterized the limitation of discussion to the noticed agenda as "a rookie mistake" and reiterated his concern with any potential severance package that could be paid to **Martinez**.

"The fact of the matter is he's looking for a job," he said. "It wasn't a personal agenda. I was just looking out for the citizens of Bunnell."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

FLAGLER LIVE
JANUARY 25, 2011

Bunnell Manager Armando Martinez Forced To Give Up Cop Shield, But Not Extra \$7,500 Pay

Bunnell City Manager **Armando Martinez** will no longer be a law enforcement officer, as he had been for the last two years as city manager — a contractual arrangement that enabled him to earn an extra \$7,500 on top of his base \$90,000 salary. But **Martinez** is keeping the extra \$7,500 a year.

The Florida Constitution forbids government employees from being public officers in two different jobs at the same time. An article in the News-Journal earlier this month pointed out what appeared to be **Martinez**'s—or the city's—constitutional violation, compelling City Attorney Sid Nowell to explore the issue. **Martinez** argued at the time that he was a police officer but not a public officer.

Skirting the constitutional language, Nowell and **Martinez** insisted that there was no law forbidding the dual positions, but both conceded that they were on legally safer ground if **Martinez** gave up his shield and became a civilian. Nowell said Attorney General's opinions made clear that the two jobs were incompatible within the purview of a single employee. "My bottom line is, if someone challenged and questioned whether or not the city manager position constituted a public officer, more likely than not, that would be the determination," Nowell said. "I spoke to Mr. **Martinez** and I said, I couldn't in good faith advise him that as a city manager he was not a public officer."

On Monday, the Bunnell City Commission accepted **Martinez**'s resignation as a police officer. But the commission increased his base salary by \$7,500, essentially nullifying that saving to the city. (The city will realize an eventual saving of some \$5,000 that it would no longer have to pay in workers' compensation costs attached to **Martinez**'s former law enforcement designation.)

"I don't want the city and I don't want me to be in the gray," **Martinez** said. "I want us and I want me to be in the black and white. So even though it isn't law, and it's not challenged, why stay on the gray?" He said that because of his service to the city, and the work he'd done through the Bunnell Police Department, he asked the city to roll over his \$7,500 pay to his regular salary. Earlier in the meeting, **Martinez** and Police Chief Arthur Jones had choreographed an elaborate award ceremony for several Bunnell police officers for various acts of valor while on duty. The ceremony softened **Martinez**'s request to the commission, even though there never was a doubt that he would not lose the \$7,500. The commission voted 4-1 in favor of the new package, with Commissioner Elbert Tucker in dissent.

One commissioner's biggest concern was that there would be one less armed man in the room. Civilians are not allowed to carry guns in public buildings. Police officers are. **Martinez** carried his. "That's what I have a problem with because I just don't understand why people would

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

pursue this and the end result would be disarming you,” Jenny Crain-Brady told him. “I just flat have a problem with that.”

She then asked: “Does that mean we will always have a law enforcement officer at our meetings, armed?” Crain-Brady asked.

“Yes,” **Martinez** said.

But there had almost always been an armed law enforcement officer at the meetings: the chief of police himself, who makes a point of being at most meetings. Jones is often overshadowed by **Martinez**, who’s commonly believed to call most of the shots in the police department. **Martinez** will preserve his dual title: city manager and director of public safety. He, too, had misgivings about giving up his gun, at least temporarily. (He may seek to be a reserve officer somewhere, to maintain his certification.)

“I’ll just feel naked without my gun for a while,” **Martinez** said, “but I’ll need a permit or something.”

“Not *something*,” Nowell corrected, eliminating still more shades of gray. “You need a permit.”

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

January 8, 2011

Bunnell manager's role may violate law

Author: *JULIE MURPHY - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: BUNNELL

BUNNELL - **Armando Martinez** may be violating the state constitution by working as Bunnell city manager while continuing to serve as a police officer.

Martinez maintains his active Florida Department of Law Enforcement status and collects \$500 per month hazard pay, on top of his \$90,000 annual salary, according to city officials. That hazard pay adds up to an additional \$6,000 a year.

While current Police Chief Arthur Jones said it would be prohibitive to go through the entire 2010 call log, he remembers **Martinez** at "a minimum of five calls" over the course of the past year.

Martinez cited armed robbery and armed burglary calls as two of the "many" calls he went on, noting he monitors the city's police radio though he's not called out through dispatch.

"I back up officers continuously," **Martinez** said. "I just don't write these all down besides everything else I do."

But his continued work as a police officer may violate a section of the Florida Constitution, which states: "No person shall hold at the same time more than one office under the government of the state and the counties and municipalities therein. . . ."

Martinez maintains that since he is no longer police chief, he is not holding two offices.

"I'm still a police officer, but I'm not an 'officer' because I resigned as chief just like Mark Barker did in Holly Hill."

Barker, acting city administrator, had his police credentials temporarily inactivated before taking over the post.

"I will reactivate them when I go back to being chief," he said.

Both of **Martinez's** roles appear to fit definitions of holding an office, according to the Bunnell city charter and Attorney General's Office.

"There shall be a city manager who shall be the chief administrative officer of the city," the charter says.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

The Attorney General's Office defines all law enforcement officers as "officers" in its Dual Office-Holding Pamphlet.

"It is the powers that a law enforcement officer may exercise, particularly the authority to arrest without a warrant and to carry firearms in carrying out his duties, not the salary or certification requirements, that characterize the law enforcement officer as an 'officer,' " the pamphlet reads.

The consequences of dual office-holding, according to Attorney General press secretary Jennifer Krell Davis, is "resignation of the first" office, which was excerpted from the pamphlet in an e-mail from her office.

It is not clear which position "the first" refers to, in this case.

Martinez said his position, city manager/director of public safety, was created specifically for him so he could keep his law enforcement credentials through FDLE.

"I was being considered in several other places," he said. "Most of my career is in law enforcement, so I didn't want to give that up."

City Commissioner Elbert Tucker said in a phone interview Friday that he asked the commission to take away **Martinez's** public safety director designation during the past budget session because it costs the city an extra \$5,000 in workers' compensation, in addition to the \$6,000 hazard pay he receives. He said, "it's aggravating," that the city doles out about \$11,000 a year to have **Martinez** respond to a handful of calls.

Martinez was hired as police chief in January 2007 and accepted the position as administrator in October 2008. **Martinez** set his own salary and extra compensation when he was hired, and City Attorney Sid Nowell told commissioners then that he worked those terms into his contract. Afterward, the contract was unanimously approved.

Nowell did not return phone messages left on his cell phone Friday.

"The hazardous pay is a result of him responding to calls and being involved in crime scenes," according to an e-mail sent by City Clerk Dan Davis in response to reporter questions.

City commissioners Daisy Henry and Jimmy Flynt said they'd rather have **Martinez** carry a gun and assist calls than not, but Henry said if it goes against Florida law, she's prepared to do whatever is necessary.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

November 26, 2010

Sizing up Bunnell

More room in the county seat makes for a good fit

Author: *AARON LONDON - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - Tampa, Miami and Orlando are major cities in Florida and key tourist areas. They also have something else in common: They're all smaller than Bunnell.

After a series of voluntary annexations from 2005 to 2007, Flagler's county seat became the second-largest city in the state in land area, trailing only Jacksonville.

But while Bunnell's 135.9 square miles - compared to around 4 square miles before the annexations - put it near the top of the size list, city leaders are determined to retain the small-town feel for the 2,722 residents.

By comparison, Palm Coast encompasses just under 51 square miles while Daytona Beach comes in at just under 59 square miles in size.

In City Manager **Armando Martinez's** office at the Government Services Building, a large map of Flagler County dominates one wall, with Bunnell's extensive boundaries highlighted. It's something he likes to show to business owners and developers who might be interested in relocating to Flagler County.

"We get a 'Wow!' reaction when people see the map," he said. "That's one of the purposes of the map."

Martinez points out that the annexations have also meant that the city is no longer land-locked, despite being several miles from the Atlantic Ocean.

"We even got some waterfront property on Crescent Lake," he said. "It certainly brightens the future for Bunnell."

That "Wow!" reaction is not exclusive to first-time visitors to Bunnell. Kathy Hull, owner of Guys & Girls Hair Salon in the Bunnell Plaza on U.S. 1, was stunned when told of the city's size.

"Wow, we're big," she said. "If people realized how nice Bunnell is, there'd be a whole lot more people coming through here."

Martinez said despite the city's large size geographically, officials want Bunnell to retain its sense of community.

Community Development Director Mick Cuthbertson said that of the city's total land area of 87,000 acres, 18,000 are permanently undevelopable and 60 percent of the remaining acreage

Internet Research**Armando Martinez**

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

also won't be developed. He said some of the annexed acres include wetlands but most are rural Florida lands.

"We wanted to maintain the agricultural and timberlands character of the land," he said.

A desire to maintain the rural designation for the open land west of the city was a big factor in why landowners sought voluntary annexation into Bunnell.

"The appeal was that we probably were losing political ground to those who didn't know about the west side (of the county)," said Elbert Tucker, a Bunnell city commissioner and a landowner. "The political climate was not warm enough."

Tucker said water issues were a major concern for landowners in the county's agricultural west side - generally the area west of U.S. 1. He said being annexed by Bunnell offered protection from "encroachment" from other municipalities.

"We needed to cut off that westerly expansion of other municipalities," Tucker said.

Flagler County officials say the growth of Bunnell can be a good thing for the city and the county.

"Although the annexation presents some unique challenges, it also creates new opportunities to partner and work closer together on projects," County Administrator Craig Coffey said in an e-mail. "We have already worked with Bunnell on our comprehensive plans and other cooperative efforts."

"As always, we will continue to work with our city government partners to give our residents the best service possible in whatever jurisdiction they choose to be a part of."

The annexations weren't done just to make the city bigger, Cuthbertson said.

"We annexed a significant amount of property along the railroad that will allow us to develop property that will create good-paying jobs."

At the same time, **Martinez** said the city wants to enhance its inner core, and give residents and visitors a strong sense of community.

"We'd like to give our inner core a Norman Rockwell-ish feel," he said.

Officials are not looking to see the city's population swell to fill all that land.

"Bunnell doesn't have any desire to be a large population center," Cuthbertson said. He said he expects the population to grow to about 11,000 in the next 10 years.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

For **Martinez**, the city's status as the state's second-largest is a big bonus when it comes to the future.

"When the economy turns around, we're going to be a front-runner that developers want to come to," he said. "The future's so bright, we're going to have to wear sunglasses."

In the meantime, officials are content to wait for economic conditions to improve and to be ready for growth when it comes.

"We're a small town in a cocoon ready to grow," **Martinez** said.

Big, Bigger, Biggest

It might seem strange to see Bunnell on a list of the largest cities in Florida, but some of the other names are more familiar.

Top 5 largest cities by land area (square miles):

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

July 8, 2009

Fired cop gunning for his old job

Former Bunnell officer says he should have been disciplined, not dismissed

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - A former Bunnell police captain fired in April after an internal investigation says he will continue to fight to get his job back.

Randy Burke also leveled some accusations of his own against his former supervisors, including that they knowingly allowed two employees to violate written department policy without consequences.

"I admit I should have been disciplined, but not fired," Burke said in a recent telephone interview.

Burke was fired after an internal investigation conducted by the Flagler County Sheriff's Office concluded that his subordinates had begun to question his integrity because he neglected to deliver \$100 collected by staff members to a former employee in time for Christmas 2007.

That employee, Ed Culver, was fired from his position as a road patrol officer shortly before the 2007 holidays by officials citing poor job performance.

Police Chief Arthur Jones also found Burke was "less than truthful" during the internal investigation because he told a Sheriff's Office investigator that he thought Culver shouldn't have been fired. Jones wrote in his synopsis of the investigation that a department memo indicates it was Burke who initially recommended firing Culver.

Those findings led Jones and **City Manager Armando Martinez** to fire Burke. But Burke said the city's action was too harsh. He said he thinks his firing might be in retaliation for complaints he made about other employees' violating written department policy in the months preceding the internal investigation.

Burke also claimed his rights were violated during the internal investigation because he didn't receive proper notice of the city's intent to discipline him.

Martinez and Jones said Burke was given adequate notice of their intent to discipline him and denied that his rights were violated.

"I would never want to violate anyone's rights," Jones said in a June interview.

In his defense, Burke said he simply forgot to deliver the cash gift to Culver, who lived next door to him. He said he left the money in a briefcase that wound up stowed in a closet at his home.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

The money, \$20 of which Burke said he donated out of his own pocket, eventually was delivered to Culver after the investigation.

Burke said he was truthful during the internal investigation and that he never felt Culver should have been fired. Instead, he said he felt Culver should have been given additional training through the Sheriff's Office.

"I guess I'm not allowed to have an opinion," Burke said.

As for the memo Jones mentioned in his written synopsis of the internal investigation, Burke said it only indicates that Culver failed the city's training program. Burke said he wrote the memo the way **Martinez** ordered him to do it and that he did not offer an opinion on how the matter should be handled. He said that decision was left to **Martinez**, who was the city's police chief at the time.

Burke also contends not only was his firing over the top for his perceived infraction, he believes it could be in retaliation for complaints he made regarding a personal relationship between two fellow officers.

Burke said he complained to Jones and **Martinez** about police Lt. John Murray's romantic involvement with a subordinate - Cpl. Lisa Poole. Burke and other department employees, who requested their names not be published for fear of reprisal, said Murray supervised Poole directly and indirectly for months and that's against policy.

The employees said they also feel Poole has received preferential job treatment due to her relationship with Murray.

He and Poole were married in early June and both still work with the agency.

A copy of the police department's policy manual, obtained by The News-Tribune, reads that, "in order to promote the efficient operation of the agency and to avoid misunderstandings, complaints of favoritism, other problems of supervision, security, and morale, and possible claims of sexual harassment, supervisors are forbidden to date or pursue romantic or sexual relationships with members who they supervise, directly or indirectly. Members who violate this guideline will be subject to discipline."

In a separate interview, **Martinez** defended the couple's relationship and his decision to keep them both on staff.

"You can't tell people what to do in their personal lives," **Martinez** said.

He called Poole and Murray "good employees" and said in an agency as small as the Bunnell Police Department, officials simply don't have the luxury of letting good employees go over something benign.

Internet Research**Armando Martinez**

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

"There's nothing amiss here," **Martinez** said. "It's not something we're keeping a secret."

He said Poole has received no favoritism and plans are under way to change department policy regarding such relationships.

Jones added that Poole's chain of command has been rerouted to exclude her husband and she now reports directly to the chief.

Meanwhile, Burke's second appeal to get his job back was denied June 19. He can make a final appeal to the city's interim human resources director, who happens to be **Martinez's** administrative assistant.

Burke said he'll file the appeal, but he isn't holding out much hope.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

May 2, 2009

Officials take aim at enhancing Web site

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: BUNNELL

BUNNELL - The city of Bunnell is aiming to look more professional with a new Web site.

"We're trying to put Bunnell in the forefront of business minds to be more competitive for economic development," said **Armando Martinez**, city manager.

The site, www.bunnellcity.us, is more aesthetic and professional, and is also easier for users and prospective businesses to navigate, **Martinez** said.

It's all a part of **Martinez's** quest to put Bunnell on the Florida map as a strongly organized city with great residential and commercial potential. He's been working to give city government and its departments a more professional structure since his first day as chief of police in January 2007.

"We didn't even have computers in the police department when I started," **Martinez** said.

The city government offices had computers, but no network at the time. It's something **Martinez** saw as in need of immediate correction.

So he called on his counterpart in Flagler County, Sheriff Donald Fleming, for help.

"The Sheriff's Office has been instrumental in getting our computer technology upgraded," **Martinez** said.

Shortly after taking the lead of the police department in Bunnell, **Martinez** capitalized on an existing contract with Fleming's office for information technology services related to the countywide dispatch system and crime recording software.

At **Martinez's** request, Fleming sent his crew, which is led by Information Technology Director Bob Urie, to Bunnell to get some new computers up and running at the police department.

Martinez said Fleming was kind enough to expand his aid to the city when **Martinez** took over as city manager last year, **Martinez** said.

"He extended the services to city government to help get Bunnell on its feet," **Martinez** said.

A provision to include city government in Bunnell's contract with the Sheriff's Office on a more permanent basis will be added next year when the current contract expires, **Martinez** said.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Martinez and city commissioners said they're pleased with the new city site.

However, some things are still to be worked out and there's a slight delay in getting meeting documents and such on the Web site where there once wasn't, said City Clerk Ronya Johnson. But officials said those issues will be rectified in the coming weeks and months.

"We're playing catch-up right now," Johnson said.

What's the address?

To access the city of Bunnell's Web site and see the changes, go to www.bunnellcity.us.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

April 28, 2009

Restructuring in Bunnell

Misconduct claims lead to multiple changes in police, city policy

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - On the heels of several recent internal investigations and terminations, the Bunnell Police Department is being restructured and city policies are being refined across the board, said City Manager and Public Safety Director **Armando Martinez**.

Four Bunnell city employees, including one police officer, were fired and another city employee resigned after various allegations of misconduct during the past three months. That put an effort to clarify the city's rules and regulations for employees into high gear, **Martinez** said.

Among the adjustments:

*A policy specifically explaining that employees are responsible for knowing the rules and regulations of the city.

*A new safety manual for city employees.

*Outlining some activities deemed not acceptable, such as reading newspapers or other leisure activities during work hours in public view - even when on break.

"There are private break areas provided for employees to do such things," **Martinez** said. It will prevent the public perception that city employees aren't doing their jobs and will better allow management to know when such a thing is happening, he said.

*A new policy relating to computer usage, which is not fully addressed in the city's current rules and procedures.

Martinez said he'll soon be asking commissioners to approve making city policies clearer and more specific. He said he wants employees to better understand their roles and what's expected of them, both on and off the job.

"City employees are representatives of the city, even when they're not on the clock," **Martinez** said.

And though it was hard to see one of his former police officers terminated and another demoted earlier this month, it did give **Martinez** and police Chief Arthur Jones a chance to change the structure of the department, **Martinez** said. The 16-member department has 13 police officers and a vacant officer position, which will be filled.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Jones and **Martinez** said they don't plan to fill the vacant position opened with the firing of Capt. Randy Burke after an internal investigation this month. Instead, they're eliminating the post and creating a new, lesser-ranked position of lieutenant. Burke was fired after an investigator found he misappropriated \$100 that employees had collected for a former police officer in 2007, according to **Martinez** and a report.

And with the demotion of Cpl. George Hristokopolis to the rank of officer, a corporal position will be dissolved. In its place, a new sergeant post will be added. Hristokopolis was demoted after complaints about a lack of patrol visibility on shifts he supervised, Jones said recently.

The changes do a few things, Jones and **Martinez** said. First and foremost, they put into place more supervision in the agency. They also balance the chain of command from its previously lopsided structure, **Martinez** said.

For the public, the reorganization will mean more uniform patrol visibility on Bunnell's streets all hours of the day, Jones said, with more "knocking on doors and talking to the community."

And it relieves an overburdened sergeant who has been on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until now.

Martinez said the changes won't cost a single cent to taxpayers and it won't change the Police Department's fiscal year 2008-09 budget of \$1,053,601.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

January 12, 2009

Bunnell unable to repay \$529,000

City begs FDOT to forgive loan

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - City officials say they can't afford to repay a half-million dollar loan from the state and now they're hoping for a miracle.

When Bunnell accepted the \$529,000 loan from the Florida Department of Transportation in 2005, "we didn't know that Amendment 1 and an economic downturn was coming," said City Manager **Armando Martinez**. "We didn't know the future would be so gray."

The funds were accepted years before **Martinez** took over as city manager but now he must find a solution to the small city's inability to repay the debt.

The money was used to move utility lines along State Road 100 when state officials decided to widen the road. County Administrator Craig Coffey, who also wasn't around in 2005, said he doesn't know whether city officials had much say in whether they even wanted to move the lines. It was something that had to be done for the state road project, Coffey said.

A spokeswoman at FDOT acknowledged Bunnell officials never signed the loan documents that dictate an obligation to repay. But she said it doesn't matter, state laws obligate the city of a few thousand residents to repay the loan even without a signature on the promissory note.

Martinez has sent a letter to FDOT officials requesting forgiveness of the loan. Flagler County Board Chairwoman Milissa Holland and other Flagler officials also sent letters of support to FDOT.

Holland's letter begs state officials to understand that the tax rate freezes, voter-imposed tax cuts and economic slump that's marked the last few years has affected Bunnell more than most other Florida cities. She said skyrocketing unemployment and a small, rural population has put the city into a bad situation that will likely only "worsen for the foreseeable future."

"Bunnell is definitely less financially stout than other cities," Coffey said. "If there's a criteria for a hardship exemption, I'd think Bunnell would fit."

But there's no program that allows for anything like this, said FDOT spokeswoman Pam Griffis. The only way for Bunnell to get some relief, either through a total forgiveness of the debt or a restructuring of the payment plan, is with an order from state legislators.

And that's happened only twice before, Griffis said.

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

She said the most recent case was in 1999 when Milton- a small city in the Florida panhandle - had a utility loan forgiven through legislation. The other was granted during an economic downturn in the 1980s when Opalocka, a South Florida city, was allowed to delay making payments on a loan until the economy improved, Griffis said.

Martinez and Coffey said they weren't aware it would take legislation to handle the debt. Coffey said he plans to recommend **Martinez** personally address Flagler's legislative delegates when they visit this month.

Griffis said FDOT also plans to send the local officials a letter telling them they'll have to take their request to legislators.

Martinez said if Bunnell is forced to repay the loan under current conditions, it will hurt local residents. The city can't raise taxes to pay the bill, he said, because "the residents are suffering financially, too."

Instead it will mean further cinching of a belt that's already painfully tight, **Martinez** said.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

April 7, 2009

3 Bunnell employees fired after complaints
4th worker resigns amid allegations of misconduct

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - Internal investigations concluded in the last two months have resulted in the firing of three city employees, including the public works director, and the resignation of another.

Eric Crandall, Bunnell's public works director, was fired March 27 after an internal investigation found he yelled, used profanities and created a hostile work environment. One of his employees also was fired that day for lying to investigators, documents show.

Earlier in March, another city employee was fired following an internal investigation into the theft of a car battery.

And in February, an employee resigned amid allegations of misconduct and filing a false police report.

"You don't plan these things, they just happen. Coincidentally there were a few (investigations) back-to-back this time," said City Manager **Armando Martinez**, regarding the quantity of investigations in the past few months.

Martinez said the city's Police Department typically handles internal investigations but he can and will bring in other agencies, if warranted, to ensure a fair and unbiased investigation. Discipline is left up to the city manager after the investigation is completed, **Martinez** said.

The eight-day investigation that led to Crandall's firing began with a March 19 incident witnessed by two information technology employees from the Flagler County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office employees said were working on some nearby computers when they overheard Crandall yelling and swearing at a female employee who started crying.

The woman, Ines Alonso, confirmed the incident, adding that Crandall has yelled at her and others in the past, documents show. Alonso also told investigators that some employees are so afraid of Crandall they installed a mirror in the break room so they could see him coming and escape.

According to the report, an investigator also found a sticker on a bulletin board in Crandall's office that read: "The beatings will continue until morale improves."

Crandall denied the claims against him and one of his employees, Sheila Bevacqua, backed up his account. But the "preponderance of evidence" to the contrary led the investigator to conclude that both Bevacqua and Crandall had lied, documents state.

Internet Research**Armando Martinez**

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Weeks earlier, Ralph Silcox Jr. was fired after he admitted to stealing a car battery from the city maintenance yard. A witness said he saw Silcox unload a vehicle battery from the back of a city truck and put it into his car. Two other staffers corroborated the witness' account, documents said.

Less than a week before that, Alexander Dearriba - a water works supervisor for the city - resigned amid allegations of misconduct and filing a false police report.

According to investigation documents, Dearriba reported a rental car stolen to Flagler Beach Police on Feb. 26, but officers soon learned the rental car hadn't been stolen at all. Police found a man driving the car in Bunnell and stopped him. The man said Dearriba had acted as a middleman in renting the car for him and he showed officers text messages he had exchanged with Dearriba to prove it.

Dearriba later admitted to filing the false report. He said he became nervous and reported the car stolen after the man he'd rented the car for didn't immediately return it at the agreed upon time, the report states.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

December 26, 2008

Flagler County in hunt for company, 470 jobs

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - A deal is in the works that could eventually bring up to 470 new jobs to Flagler County over a period of years starting in January, said Bunnell City Manager **Armando Martinez**.

"All I can say is we are aggressively moving to bring economic development to Bunnell," **Martinez** said.

Martinez, who has dubbed the deal "Project Sprint," said that, of the 470 jobs, 70 would be filled within 90 days of signing a deal and more than 100 would be guaranteed by the end of the first year.

If successful, the deal also could mean new construction work in the city, **Martinez** said, as company officials plan to build a new facility in Bunnell for their operations.

Martinez said negotiations are ongoing so he could not elaborate about the company's name or the types of jobs that might be brought to the city.

"Project Sprint" comes as Flagler County continues to be home to the second highest unemployment rate in the state, despite the recent success of "Project Continental," which retained 1,000 jobs at Palm Coast Data and added 700 new ones.

The deal with Palm Coast and its parent company, New Jersey-based AMREP Corp., means an estimated \$175 million in new economic activity in Flagler, city and county officials have said. But to land it, Palm Coast officials had to hand over their Commerce Boulevard city hall site for the company's new headquarters.

AMREP will pay \$240,000 annually for the site and has the option to buy it for \$3 million within three years.

Doug Baxter, president of the local Chamber of Commerce, said then "the fallout" from the deal was "huge."

"What we have here is a foundation to build on to bring other companies to the area," he said.

That's exactly what **Martinez** is banking on now.

Martinez wouldn't say if the incentives that he and county officials are negotiating with the company they're trying to woo would be similar to those offered to Palm Coast Data earlier this

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

year. Just before the deal closed in October, Palm Coast City Manager Jim Landon called that incentive package "very aggressive."

In addition to the work site, the package gave Palm Coast Data mitigated wetland issues on project properties, expedited permitting and processing, use of city fiber optics and tax abatements valued at more than \$400,000.

Flagler County also forked over \$100,000 to help city officials land the deal.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

October 18, 2008

Bunnell city manager decides own salary
Commissioner questions Martinez's hazard-duty pay
Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - **Armando Martinez** decided his own salary and extra fees for his new post as city manager and public safety director in Bunnell, the city attorney said.

Martinez, the city's former police chief, provided City Attorney Sid Nowell with the compensation details he hoped to get in his new post, Nowell told commissioners in a special meeting this week. Nowell worked those terms into a contract that commissioners accepted unanimously.

Martinez will get a \$90,000 annual salary plus another \$500 per month in hazard-duty pay under the new contract.

Commissioner Elbert Tucker noted at Monday's meeting that the hazard-duty pay amounted to an extra \$6,000 each year for **Martinez**.

"Is the (city) manager's job that hazardous?" Tucker asked.

Martinez, 48, told Tucker his new role still leaves him as a law enforcement officer. And that means if one of the city's police officers is headed into a building where a suspect is armed - and **Martinez** was the available person - he'd be there with a gun as backup.

He's already been a first responder on multiple law-enforcement calls since taking the position as city manager just weeks ago, **Martinez** said. And with a small police force like Bunnell's, it's entirely believable he would continue to be needed in a police capacity, he said.

Tucker said he wasn't sure he liked the idea of the city manager risking his life and risking leaving the city without a manager - yet again.

"I don't know if that's the wisest choice," Tucker said.

Even **Martinez** acknowledged at the meeting that one of the city's biggest problems in recent years has been the repeated turnover of city managers.

Commissioner James Flynt disagreed with Tucker's concerns, calling **Martinez's** new dual role in the city "the best of both worlds."

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Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Though he has never been a city manager before, **Martinez** has more than 25 years of public-safety and law-enforcement experience that includes managing staff and dealing with large budgets.

The new contract allows **Martinez** to keep his new take-home Dodge Charger patrol car. It also entitles him to 27 days of paid time off annually. And it pays **Martinez** the cash value of medical and dental benefits usually offered to employees so he can obtain his own.

The deal works out to be a sweet \$36,000 pay increase for the former police chief. It's also a bit higher than the \$75,000 salary that former City Manager Syd Crosby was making when he left abruptly in August amid conflicts with **Martinez**. But it's right on a par with what former manager Richard Diamond, who hired **Martinez** to be the city's police chief in 2007, was making.

And despite early speculation that hiring **Martinez** could mean a "two-for-one" deal that saves the city a chunk of change, the move will, in the end, mean about the same cost for taxpayers.

This year's city budget set aside approximately \$135,000 to pay for a police chief and a city manager. A new police chief will be promoted or hired at an annual salary of \$50,000. The new chief will report to **Martinez** and work under his direction, commissioners decided at the meeting. A new captain's position will also be opened up as part of the changes happening at the police station.

Vice Mayor Jennifer Crain-Brady said **Martinez's** recommendations for his contract and the future operations at the police department amounted to more than commissioners wanted to spend. But they agreed it was money well-spent.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

October 9, 2008

Chief takes over as Bunnell manager

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - By unanimous vote, Bunnell city commissioners named Police Chief **Armando Martinez** manager of the city.

Martinez accepted the title change graciously late Tuesday night and praised city workers, saying leadership is only as good as the people under it.

And for those concerned how the change might affect operations at the Police Department, **Martinez** said he feels confident an arrangement can be made to find someone to run the day-to-day operations at the police station, under his direction.

The move could save taxpayers some cash, too, he said.

"We might get a two-fer - two for the price of one," Commissioner Elbert Tucker said.

Martinez' salary as city manager - and the future of the leadership structure in the Police Department - will be discussed during a public meeting at 7 p.m. Monday at City Hall.

Martinez, who almost quit his post as police chief in late July, was instead named interim city manager after Syd Crosby resigned abruptly on Aug. 4. As directed by the city's charter, City Clerk Ronya Johnson took over as interim city manager - for the second time this year - after Crosby left. But for medical reasons, Johnson was unable to fulfill those duties so the interim torch was passed to the next person in line: the police chief.

Crosby's resignation came amid public outcry from residents who wanted **Martinez** to stay. **Martinez** said then that he wanted to leave because he and Crosby couldn't resolve differences between them.

It wasn't the first - or even the second - time the city has lost a manager due to conflicts with the police chief, commissioners said. They said the previous conflicts didn't involve **Martinez**, who was hired in January 2007.

But commissioners have been hard-pressed to find a manager who didn't want to meddle too much with Bunnell's biggest expense - the Police Department. And it is one department that local residents are passionate about protecting, because drug-related crime has been a long-standing problem in the city.

Since **Martinez**, 48, was hired by former City Manager Richard Diamond, crime rates have consistently fallen in the small city, Florida Department of Law Enforcement statistics show.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

And now city officials and commissioners say he's proven to be a good city manager, too.

"(Hiring **Martinez**) is the best of both worlds," Commissioner James Flynt said.

Commissioner Daisy Henry once voiced concern in a meeting that having **Martinez** lead both the city and its biggest department could create some kind of unforeseen conflict.

So City Attorney Sid Nowell suggested commissioners research how other Florida cities have handled similar situations.

But Mayor Catherine Robinson quickly shot down Nowell's suggestion, saying she "doesn't care" how other cities handle it.

"We are unique - in our own world," Robinson said. "I'm willing to try something new."

Besides, if it doesn't work out, commissioners can always change the plan later, she said.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

September 2, 2008

Bunnell chief may vie for manager

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - From leaving to leading, a lot can happen in a month.

Just ask Police Chief **Armando Martinez**.

Martinez, who was named temporary city manager of Bunnell last week, said Friday he might consider throwing his hat in the ring to make the title permanent.

This, just a month after he almost walked away from the city for good.

"I will do anything the commissioners think will be best for the city," **Martinez** said. "Being offered a position like (city manager) would be an honor for anyone."

City Commissioner Daisy Henry said Friday commissioners have received a couple of letters of interest for the vacant city manager position. But commissioners won't even consider the applicants until after the budget process is finalized in September.

"We're taking it one day at a time," Henry said.

She said she hadn't really thought about making **Martinez** the permanent replacement for City Manager Syd Crosby, largely because he's found a good niche leading the city's police force and his background is in law enforcement.

Commissioner James Flynt said commissioners are taking things slowly, especially until the budget process has concluded. But he said **Martinez** has had a positive impact on the city in many ways.

"His professionalism and leadership in our Police Department leads me to believe that he would be a good candidate for city manager," Flynt said.

Depending on how the next several weeks progress, there may be a number of possibilities for commissioners to explore to meet the city's management needs, Flynt said.

Martinez announced his plans to resign as police chief on July 29, citing irreparable differences with Crosby. But after an outcry from residents who wanted him to stay - and Crosby's subsequent, and abrupt, resignation on Aug. 4 - **Martinez** rescinded his resignation.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

As directed by the city's charter, City Clerk Ronya Johnson took over as interim city manager - for the second time this year - after Crosby left. But for medical reasons, Johnson was unable to fulfill those duties so the interim torch was passed to the next person in line: the police chief.

Martinez, 48, a former Miami police captain, was hired in January 2007 by then-City Manager Richard Diamond. Since he began leading the city's small police force, crime rates have consistently fallen each year in Bunnell.

Statistics the agency sent to Florida Department of Law Enforcement for its semiannual crime report show that crime in the city again declined more than 34 percent in the first half of 2008.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

July 31, 2008

Bunnell police chief quits

Resignation letter cites conflict with city manager

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - Police Chief **Armando Martinez** has resigned, citing irreconcilable differences with City Manager Syd Crosby.

According to his letter of resignation, submitted Tuesday, **Martinez** will leave at the end of the fiscal year, which is Sept. 30.

"My sixty days' notice will provide ample time for you, as the new city manager, to find a candidate that better serves your new administration's management style and vision for the police department," **Martinez** wrote.

Martinez declined to elaborate on the differences he and Crosby have. "I don't want to try this in the media," he said Wednesday. "I think (leaving) is the best decision for me and the department at this time."

Meanwhile, Crosby said he was "totally caught by surprise" when **Martinez** presented his resignation.

"I hated to receive it," he said. "I asked him to reconsider, asked him to hold it and think about it overnight, asked him if we could talk about it. But his mind was made up."

Crosby said he wasn't aware he and **Martinez** were at odds.

"I thought we were working together very well," he said.

Crosby said his job is to put together a budget for city officials. Then department heads tell commissioners what their needs are and commissioners usually make a decision that's somewhere in the middle. So Crosby said he didn't feel anything out of the ordinary had happened during recent budget wrangling.

"He's done an excellent job in Bunnell," Crosby said of **Martinez**.

Martinez, 48, a former Miami police captain, was hired in January 2007 by then-City Manager Richard Diamond. His resignation comes on the heels of several policy and procedural changes made in his department in June under the direction of Crosby.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Some of the changes included prohibiting officers from taking their patrol cars home at night, halting officer training, and demanding more stationary radar activity and nighttime walking patrols to reduce fuel consumption.

Most recently, during a budget workshop for city commissioners last week, Crosby proposed a reduction of six officers - or nearly half the small police force of 13. But **Martinez** asked commissioners to rethink such a move, saying Bunnell is the "storefront" for drug activity countywide.

Commissioner Daisy Henry said Wednesday she was upset by news of **Martinez**' resignation. She said since he took the reins and the city began more seriously investing in the department, "our streets are safer."

Statistics compiled by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement confirm that crime in Bunnell has dropped each year for the last few years.

Ed Pinto, vice president of the Flagler NAACP and president of the African American Cultural Society, said Wednesday he also was surprised and disappointed by the news.

"It's just sad," Pinto said. "Crime is down, there's better minority representation on the police force, and he's very involved in the community and crime prevention."

Pinto said **Martinez**' leadership would be sorely missed.

Henry said she hopes residents will fill City Hall and speak their minds during the next budget workshop, which is slated to begin at 7 p.m. Monday.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

June 7, 2008

Bunnell pushes to solve rape cases in timely manner
2 arrested in separate cases

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: BUNNELL

BUNNELL - Bunnell police have arrested two people on rape charges, one involving a woman held hostage and another in which a 7-year-old boy was attacked, officials said.

John Robert Stubbs, 38, Bunnell is being held without bail at the Flagler County Inmate Facility on charges of sexual battery and false imprisonment.

And Edward G. Sampson, 14, Bunnell, was taken to the juvenile detention center in Volusia County, also charged with sexual battery, Chief **Armando Martinez** announced this week.

Both were cases that would likely have gone unsolved before **Martinez** was hired just over a year ago, the chief investigator on the cases, Cpl. John Murray, said.

"In the past, these kinds of cases were closed out if they couldn't be solved in eight hours," Murray said.

But it's "cases like these you never stop pursuing," **Martinez** said, and that's been his motto since becoming chief.

One rape investigation was initiated May 15 after a 25-year-old woman reported she'd been held hostage for two days, tied to a bed and raped multiple times by Stubbs, according to police reports.

She said Stubbs grabbed her and pulled her into a home on South Anderson Street in Bunnell as she was walking nearby in search of drugs to support her cocaine habit, according to the report.

On the second day, Stubbs brought in another woman, with whom he had sex. After Stubbs fell asleep and the second woman left, the first woman escaped and called police.

When police arrived, the woman had a black eye, numerous cuts and bruises on her body and many around her throat, according to the incident report. She told police when she tried to fight Stubbs during the rapes, he choked her until she passed out, the report said.

Stubbs told investigators sex with the woman was consensual, but she was only willing when high. He denied holding her against her will or injuring her.

Internet Research**Armando Martinez**

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Another rape investigation began 10 days earlier when a 7-year-old boy told his mother that he'd been raped by another boy, Edward Sampson, according to a police report. The mother approached her son after a friend of hers said she saw the boys on a couch together naked, the report said.

Sampson denied sexual contact with the 7-year-old to police, saying only that he'd spent the night at the boy's home, the report said.

With more resources at his disposal, including the victim's advocates who aided the victims in both of these rape cases, Murray said his job has become easier and more gratifying.

And, now, a second officer will begin working with Murray on the agency's open investigations, **Martinez** said.

Arthur Jones, a retired police officer from South Florida, assisted Murray on the two rape cases.

"We were pulling our hair out to get these cases solved before something else happened," Murray said.

Both investigators said they have children, which made the two rape cases rewarding to solve.

Although rape cases like these aren't frequent in the small Flagler town, "one is too many," in Jones' fatherly opinion, he said. So "it's a pleasure to get that element off the streets."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

March 24, 2008

Top cop takes back the streets

After 1 year, Bunnell chief tames crime, stirs some citizen unease

Author: *HEATHER SCOFIELD - STAFF WRITER*

BUNNELL - A year can make a world of difference.

Since Bunnell police Chief **Armando Martinez** took over early last year, locals say improvements at the agency and in the community are many.

Before city officials hired **Martinez**, criminals and drug dealers were running the streets in south Bunnell. And the poorly trained, underpaid officers in the city's ill-equipped Police Department feared they might never gain the upper hand. The issues kept turnover high and morale low, said Cpl. John Murray, a seven-year employee.

But city officials hoped to fix it and hired the then 47-year-old **Martinez**, who earns \$65,000 annually. They had high hopes the "enthusiastic" Miami man could turn things around in their small city of slightly more than 2,000 residents with rapidly spiking crime.

In just one visit, **Martinez** knew he had his work cut out for him in Bunnell.

"Others would have been discouraged and high-tailed it out at that point," **Martinez** said. "But I wanted a challenge and there was no bigger challenge than this Police Department."

As he and city officials began the task of taking back turf from criminals, big decisions were made. The city implemented an underage curfew and gave 17.2 percent overall raises to police officers. The city and the Sheriff's Office also worked with **Martinez** to ensure his officers had the training, tools and equipment they needed to do their jobs properly, **Martinez** said.

Martinez and his approximately 15 officers would spend hours walking, riding bikes and driving in the community. They'd introduce themselves to residents and watch for anything suspicious. And if people seemed nervous or if they were loitering in high crime areas, they might be arrested.

Some of the arrests didn't stick.

In fact, the State Attorney's Office dropped the charges in several arrests. And some in the community were angry about the wrongful arrests.

Edmund Pinto, vice president of the Flagler chapter of the NAACP, knew of **Martinez'** plans before they were put into action. And he knew he might get calls about it. But the calls never came, he said.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

"**(Martinez)** was received with a little resentment from the criminal element in the community, but the average Joe Q. Citizen objectively took a look at him and his platform" and appreciated the goals he was reaching for, Pinto said.

The initial arrests that caused some minor controversy may not have been completely "necessary," Pinto said. "But it amounted to a lot of good things."

Delories Hall, a resident in the then crime-stricken south side of Bunnell and once a strong critic of the Police Department, said "**(Martinez)** had to come in and let people know there was law here now."

Martinez and Murray, his lead investigator, made "major changes" in the way investigations are handled. Organized files, proper officer training, attention to details, are now the norm, both said.

"Now cases that can be solved are worked until there's no more work that can be done," Murray said, and people are going to jail who wouldn't have under the old policies. In the past, Murray said cases that couldn't be solved in an eight-hour shift were dropped and never touched again, with the exception of homicides, which are investigated by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

But **Martinez** and his officers are putting too much focus on drugs and not enough effort into other crimes, resident Lasongia McKay said.

"Don't get me wrong," McKay said in a telephone interview. "I don't condone drugs, but crime is crime and it all should be dealt with equally."

McKay also said there are times when officers' fight against drugs is inconveniencing good, law-abiding people. She knows of several people who would rather not meet their friends in Bunnell for fear they'll be stopped by police because they are driving in a known drug area, and officers sometimes jump to the initial conclusion that they must be in the area to purchase drugs.

McKay also complains officers are ignoring other crimes in the city such as the loud music that thumps in the wee hours of the mornings and the sale of bootleg products such as CDs and sodas from people's homes. And they're missing the little things like teenagers in the parks fighting and engaging in "gunplay," McKay said.

"I don't feel like my kids are protected," McKay said. For her to feel her children are safe, Bunnell cops need to "kick everything - not just drugs."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Miami Herald, The (FL)

May 23, 2007

ARMANDO MARTINEZ

The way **Armando Martinez** sees it, you can only be in one place at one time. So he can live with the fact that Flagler County has only one Outback Steakhouse.

"In South Florida, there are lines at all of them," says **Martinez**, 47. "Here, there is one, but you walk right in."

Martinez left Miami six months ago, when he retired from a 20-year career with Miami police. He became chief of the Bunnell Police Department and lives in much slower Palm Coast. He had lived in South Florida since age 14.

He first got turned onto Central Florida in the 1980s, when he visited relatives in Brevard County.

"Miami is a beautiful city. I would never say a bad thing about it. It will always have a special place in my heart.

"But it was time for a slower pace," he says. "I don't have to leave an hour early to get to work on time. If I want a faster pace or a fancy dinner, I go to St. Augustine or Orlando. It might seem like a long drive, but going from Kendall to South Beach will take you 25 minutes. And then it takes another 30 minutes to find parking, so it's the same thing really."

In short, he loves the new life.

"I love both Miami and Flagler, really. Like you love your mother and father. You love them both, just different."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

April 11, 2007

Area police struggle with minority hirings

Author: *BARRY FLYNN - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: BUNNELL

BUNNELL - Even before former Miami cop **Armando Martinez** took the job as Bunnell police chief in January, he was convinced the city's all-white department desperately needed some black officers.

In contrast, Chief Roger Free of the nearby Flagler Beach Police Department said recently he was unconcerned about whether his city's white force brought on any blacks.

The striking contrast between the neighboring departments highlights issues that law enforcement officials throughout Volusia and Flagler counties grapple with. Racial and ethnic balance is one matter. Recruiting is another.

Daytona Beach Chief Mike Chitwood said his department has about half the minority officers it needs. He has launched recruitment efforts to change that.

"For a police department to be effective, you have to reflect the community," Chitwood said.

That is a theme law enforcement leaders sounded repeatedly. In Port Orange, for instance, Chief Gerald Monahan said, "You do want your department to mirror the diversity of your community." So far, his department has fallen short, he said.

The police chiefs in Bunnell and Flagler Beach each said his department should reflect its city's demographics. That's the catch: though separated by only about 5 miles at their closest points, in some ways the cities are worlds apart.

The population of Bunnell, an inland, old-Florida city and county seat, is about one-third black, according to the 2000 U.S. Census figures. Residents and civic leaders alike in the city's predominantly black south Bunnell area long complained of getting shorted when it came to police protection.

The department's last black policeman quit five years ago to take a higher-paying job elsewhere, **Martinez** said.

"From Day 1 it dawned on me that the department needed a black officer," **Martinez** said recently. "When I interviewed for the job, I researched the community. Common sense told you, you need black representation. I need black officers."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Martinez, who said he is proud to be the first Hispanic chief of any Flagler County police agency, has met with black community leaders, including members of the NAACP, for help letting black potential applicants know they are welcome in Bunnell.

In contrast, Flagler Beach is almost all-white, and its 16-member police force with no blacks meets the goal of reflecting local demographics, Free said.

"Our community is a predominantly white community," he said. "We have a few Hispanics. And I'm sure we have a few blacks. I feel right at the moment we pretty much mirror our community."

Even so, Free said he would not hesitate to hire a minority officer.

"I would take a black officer in a heartbeat," he said. "Even if I brought two or three, or one black officer on, I'd still be mirroring the community."

Robert E. Williams, president of the NAACP of Flagler County, said Free is not wrong in his perception.

"He's right. If you're going to go according to the population, that would be all right," Williams said.

The 2000 Census put Flagler Beach's black population at just 26 residents, about 0.5 percent of the approximately 5,000 population.

Elsewhere in the area, however, Williams sees a troubling racial imbalance.

"I would like to see an equal amount of minorities as the population," he said. "In that south side (of Bunnell) there would be a majority of blacks" on the police department, he said.

No local governmental agency adequately reflects the racial makeup of the community, nor, for that matter, do many businesses, Williams said.

"So, it's not just the police department; it's every department," he said.

The sheriff's offices in Flagler and Volusia counties are somewhat different from the cities for two reasons. They serve a more rural area than the city forces and in some cases their coverage areas have higher proportions of other ethnic groups.

Flagler County Sheriff Donald Fleming said his department tries to have a racially and ethnically diverse force, including representatives of a growing Portuguese community. The department also serves Palm Coast, a burgeoning city that estimates its population at 73,000 but still has no police department of its own.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Fleming said he is satisfied with the department's ethnic and gender diversity, having recently hired three Portuguese officers and two women.

Competition from bigger departments that often offer higher pay was another problem many law enforcement officials cited as barriers to reaching the levels of minority representation that they wanted.

Chitwood said he has a wide range of recruitment efforts in Daytona Beach, including an internship program for students in the criminal justice major at historically black Bethune-Cookman University.

But his short-term goal, Chitwood said, is simply "to get word out it's a good place to work."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

February 14, 2007

Chief pushing initiatives into action

Author: *DEREK L. KINNER - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: BUNNELL

BUNNELL - The last case **Armando Martinez** worked as a captain with the Miami Police Department resulted in the seizure of 9 tons of cocaine.

Now, as Bunnell's new police chief, **Martinez**, 47, is in a position that will let him see firsthand the other end of the cocaine highway.

He says the cocaine he helped confiscate in Miami one day would have wound up on the streets of small cities and towns like Bunnell, being sold in powder form or as crack.

"I didn't pick Bunnell because of the money," **Martinez** said recently. "I picked Bunnell because it's a small town, and it's where I wanted to be."

Bunnell officials picked **Martinez**, who will make \$60,000 a year, largely because of that enthusiasm, City Manager Richard Diamond said.

"I think that's good," Diamond said. "I think his idea is to get the community policing itself and to get involved with the neighborhoods. He's already made contact with the business owners, and he's already put together an advisory board.

"I think they're all good programs."

City officials say the police department has suffered from a lack of organization and morale for several years. After former Chief Bill Davis resigned, interim Chief Mike Ignasiak was hired to fill the spot temporarily. Ignasiak managed to get better training for officers, upgraded equipment and uniforms, and reached out to the community and other law enforcement agencies for help in fighting crime.

There still is a lot to do, officials said, and **Martinez** says he's up for the task.

"This will not happen overnight," the new chief said. "I do want to praise the City Commission and city manager for giving us full support in what we've got to do."

Martinez, who spent 25 years with the Miami department, rising through the ranks from a police officer to captain, retired this year.

"Usually, after you retire, you decide what else you want to do with your life," he said.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Going into a small community was the answer **Martinez** came up with.

He said it makes police work all the more gratifying when he can see the direct results of his work.

"You see the people it affects - the kids on bicycles, the people at barbecues, the people in the park. You get to interact with them and you get to see the change," **Martinez** said.

He has moved from Miami, a department with about 1,100 officers, to Bunnell, one with 15 employees, including two unfilled positions and the chief.

Martinez plans to make some changes quickly, especially in south Bunnell, where drug dealers and users have openly made transactions on neighborhood streets.

"Custer once said, 'You head to the sound of the cannons.' I'm heading to the sound of the cannons. That's south Bunnell, but I will not ignore the other areas," **Martinez** said.

Martinez said his officers will show zero tolerance for drugs, and will arrest anyone who tries to interfere with the arrests. In the past, officers have complained that when they tried to arrest someone, family and friends came into the street to harass them.

"We're going to hit them hard, and we're going to hit them quick," **Martinez** said. "We will not be intimidated by mob rule. We're going to hold the line. If you come out there, you're going to jail if you obstruct us."

Martinez, who started Jan. 29, already has numerous other plans for community interaction. He wants to form bike patrols, get all of his officers trained as crime prevention specialists, and have officers help people make their homes safer. If the officers see things like open garage doors, bicycles left lying in yards or car windows rolled down, they will leave cards on the residents' doors telling them how they can make their property safer.

Martinez also has formed a Police Chief Citizen Advisory Committee consisting of residents from all parts of town who will meet monthly to discuss the job police are doing and evaluate the effects.

"We need to win the trust of the community that we serve," **Martinez** said. "I think the community had lost their trust in their police department. By holding the line, and being fair, we're going to regain that trust."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

February 11, 2007

New Bunnell police chief ready to hit the streets

Author: *DEREK L. KINNER - STAFF WRITER*

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Internet Research**Armando Martinez**

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

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Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Daytona Beach News-Journal (FL)

January 17, 2007

Chief aware of problems facing city

Author: *DEREK L. KINNER - STAFF WRITER*

Dateline: BUNNELL

BUNNELL - The search for a new police chief is over. City Manager Richard Diamond said Miami Police Capt. **Armando Martinez** has agreed to lead Bunnell's Police Department.

Martinez, 47, has spent more than 25 years with the Miami department, serving as a captain since 1998. He has had more than 1,700 hours of police training.

"I'm very humbled by the assignment," **Martinez**, who will earn \$60,000 annually, said Friday. "I consider it an honor and a privilege to serve the community."

In the letter he sent with his resume, **Martinez** said, "I am a strong proponent of being highly visible, accessible and accountable to the community in order to form a trusting and lasting partnership."

Those are some of the qualities Bunnell residents are looking for after crime exploded in the community of 2,000 in recent years. Residents say things have gotten better since interim Police Chief Mike Ignasiak took over and made sure officers were patrolling high-crime areas. The City Commission also contracted with the Sheriff's Office to provide a deputy 24 hours a day to assist city police.

While city officials made it clear they would have liked Ignasiak, the former chief of Edgewater, to accept the Bunnell position permanently, he declined.

Diamond said **Martinez's** obvious eagerness to work in Bunnell won over members of the panel given the task of finding a chief .

"He ranked pretty high with all of them," Diamond said. "Other candidates had more experience, but they (the panel) seemed to like his enthusiasm, his real eagerness to work for the city, and his background dealing with drug enforcement."

Martinez said he is well aware of the problems that have faced Bunnell .

"I read a couple of articles, met with Chief Ignasiak, read the (Ignasiak) report, met with the city manager," he said. "I think I have a grasp with what the problems are. The first thing I need to do is introduce myself to the community and gain their trust and gain their cooperation. It takes a collaborative effort."

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Martinez began working for the Miami Police Department in 1991 as a police officer, then an internal affairs investigator. He served as a sergeant and lieutenant before being promoted to captain.

Martinez was picked from more than 35 applicants, Diamond said.

Martinez and his wife, Nubia, have two grown children, ages 23 and 25.

Internet Research
Armando Martinez

(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Miami New Times
Sep 25 2003

This Just In ...

We have unconfirmed reports that a major daily newspaper has reinvented journalism

By Tristram Korten

I wasn't going to say anything. Who wants to spoil a birthday party, even if it's the *Herald's* ballyhooed 100th anniversary? No, I was just going to let it slide -- their endlessly self-congratulatory centennial, their costly new redesign, their coy suggestion that perhaps they'd actually reinvented journalism. ("The next generation of news and information!" boasted publisher Alberto Ibarguen, who should have used an exclamation point but didn't.)

And I wasn't planning on saying anything about the *Herald's* new partnership with public radio WLRN-FM, in which *Herald* reporters get to talk about the stories they'd written for that day's paper -- which, for any informed person, is simply redundant. Like many, I've been ambivalent about the partnership. For years WLRN's local news reports have been monotonously delivered rip-and-reads from the paper anyway; now they're just being up-front about it.

Then the anniversary celebration and the news partnership merged in unholy union. Last week I woke up listening to a purported news story on WLRN. The subject? The *Herald's* redesign. So important was this shocking development that it was repeated all morning in different variations. *Riveting*. What's next? Breaking news about weekend classified ad specials? Circulation gains in west Broward?

Later that week Joseph Cooper, the peppy host of the station's midday talk show *Tropical Currents*, laboriously discussed the redesign with *Herald* executive editor Tom Fiedler, who does a drop-dead Mister Rogers impersonation. Fiedler murmured fretfully about the "risk" that the redesign might take "people outside their comfort zones." But he was quick to reassure that when confused readers called the *Herald* in a panic, his staff was ready to talk them through the trauma and "metaphorically reach out and hold their hand, and say, 'It's going to be okay.'"

Puhleeze! They changed some type fonts, stripped in some color, and added a digest page for the attention-deficit-disorder crowd. (*USA Today*, watch your back!) But as far as I can tell, the same people are still doing the same job. New coat of paint, same old jalopy. Even the touted daily tabloid insert, "Tropical Life," is the erstwhile "Living" section by another name printed sideways.

Shameless self-promotion is nothing new to the *Herald*. But when it's tartered up as news and drilled into our heads on the local National Public Radio affiliate, it becomes something else -- a deception. Not unlike the paper's makeover itself, which is a marketer's attempt to cover up with snappy graphics the damage done by years of staff cuts inflicted by Tony Ridder in his relentless drive for ever-higher profit margins. Ibarguen and Fiedler can hype the redesign all they want. The truth still lies in the numbers, and the numbers don't lie. Since 2000 *Herald* total average

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paid circulation has plummeted by more than 20,000. Surprise, surprise -- none of that was mentioned in the WLRN report.

The State Attorney's Office recently closed a case against some high-ranking Miami police officers suspected of stealing money from a federally funded program to supply security at public-housing sites. The SAO declined to prosecute.

I wrote about the case in July. Within the MPD it was viewed as one of the last necessary but painful thresholds the department needed to cross in an effort to reform itself. First was the indictment and trial last spring of eleven officers in the so-called throw-down gun cases. Then came the resignation of old-school Chief Raul Martinez and the selection of his replacement, outsider John Timoney.

Rank and file viewed this latest case as an important investigation because two of the suspect cops were prominent -- Maj. Mario Garcia, in charge of the South District substation; and Capt. **Armando Martinez**, second in command of the department's internal-affairs bureau. Miami cops are accustomed to seeing powerful officers skate, so they were watching carefully. Many will be disappointed with this outcome. But it's not for lack of effort. In a year-long probe, a task force of the FBI, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Miami police investigated whether the officers submitted invoices for overtime pay without showing up for the security jobs.

Task force members reviewed hundreds of pages of worksheets for each officer and compared them with duty rosters and payroll records spanning four years. They found five discrepancies in **Martinez's** records, involving less than \$700. They found four discrepancies in Garcia's paperwork, also involving less than \$700. And only one discrepancy involving a third officer, Lt. Alejandro Oliva, for \$108. (I had previously identified another officer, Lt. Ramon Fernandez, as a suspect. While he participated in the security program and his records were reviewed by investigators, he was not a criminal suspect.)

Given the small dollar amount and the difficulty proving this wasn't just sloppy paperwork, both federal and state prosecutors took a pass. In an August 22 memorandum, assistant State Attorney Howard Rosen wrote, "One would expect that if there were any criminal intent, the amounts involved would be much larger, and that the alleged 'double dipping' would have occurred much more frequently."

Those following the case can take heart in the fact that it's not over. Chief Timoney says the matter is now up for internal administrative review. Meanwhile **Martinez** was transferred from internal affairs to the criminal investigations unit and Garcia has been demoted from major to lieutenant.

Speaking of Timoney, two weeks ago he tried to stay one step ahead of the untold number of protesters who vow to descend on Miami and disrupt the Free Trade Area of the

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Americas summit in November. Timoney asked the city commission to outlaw golf balls during the protests. Not just golf balls but also "ball bearings, marbles, paint balls or other solid shapes made of rubber, plastic, metal, wood, or any other similar hard substance." By which the chief means anything in the known universe that could possibly be launched as a projectile.

With all due respect to our new chief, throwing something at a cop is already unlawful, so why the need to criminalize golf balls? I know the motive is to protect police and civilians, but at this rate we'll be requiring the protesters to march naked with their slogans painted on their chests. Local ACLU president Lida Rodriguez-Taseff sums it up tartly: "You don't outlaw the object, you outlaw the behavior." If the ordinance passes, she said her organization may sue.

For his part, Timoney isn't worried. He reports the proposed law is virtually a word-for-word copy of one enacted in Los Angeles, which survived legal challenges. "It just gives us greater discretion," he says soothingly. "We're not going to lock up people for having golf balls. If you've got golf balls, you're going to be told you can't go into the protest area."

When it comes to cops and crowds of rowdy protesters, the word "discretion" sounds like an invitation to detain just about anyone. ("Hey, kid, that belt of yours has a metal buckle. Come with me.")

Other items he wants to prohibit at the expected protests (in addition to water balloons!) are gas masks. The reason? When he was police commissioner of Philadelphia during the 2000 Republican National Convention, protesters used tear gas on police, not the other way around. "I've never used gas on a crowd in 35 years," Timoney boasts. "And I have no intention of using gas now. Doesn't mean I won't, but I don't intend to."

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Miami Herald, The (FL)

May 7, 2000

MIAMI POLICE HONORED FOR EFFORTS DURING CRISIS ON MDCC CAMPUS

Author: *Herald staff*

During a recent Miami-Dade Community College District Board of Trustees meeting, College President Dr. Eduardo J. Padron and Medical Center Campus President Dr. Kathie Sigler acknowledged the outstanding efforts of the Miami Police Department during an incident at the Medical Center Campus.

Miami Police responded to an alert involving a criminal suspect fleeing an alleged drug bust and hiding on the campus grounds. During this tense situation, the police conducted a well-organized, coordinated and thorough search of the campus, while being sensitive to the safety of students and staff.

Those honored were District Cmdr. Maj. John Buhrmaster and Deputy District Cmdr. Capt. **Armando Martinez**, along with Lt. Armando Guzman from the SWAT Team.

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Miami Herald, The (FL)

June 25, 1997

POLICE GANG UP ON STREET `THUGS' AMONG CHARGES: MURDER, DRUGS

Author: *JOHN LANTIGUA Herald Staff Writer*

One of the biggest street gangs in Miami is no more, police say.

Investigators said Tuesday they had broken up the 10th Street Thugs, a Little Havana gang they say is responsible for at least two murders, attempted murders, kidnapping, armed robberies and drug dealing. The arrest of 23 gang members on the street and in residences began June 6 and followed a one-year investigation, said Lt. **Armando Martinez**, who headed the sweep. Those arrested range in age from 14 to 26, but no names were revealed. **Martinez** said laws that apply to organized crime -- called RICO statutes for Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations -- will be used to prosecute at least the adults in the case. ``They're looking at time in both the state and federal systems," **Martinez** said. ``Heavy time."

Martinez said that in April 1996, investigators noticed for the first time the 10th Street Thugs' ``tag" spray-painted on local buildings -- a Roman numeral ``X," which stands for 10. By June, the investigation was under way, including the use of undercover police.

The gang was based a block from 10th Street in a grimy, beige stucco duplex at 1775 SW Ninth St. The gate was padlocked Tuesday, the house empty. On its second floor, boards could be seen behind the windows, apparently to protect against drive-by shootings. Neighbors said gunfire from rival gangs was frequent in the past two years.

``Cars coming by and strafing the house -- that was a common thing," said Maria Sanchez, 23, who lives with relatives, including her daughter Aimee, 1, next door. She pointed at a rusted bullet hole in the left front fender of her blue Buick. That happened, she said, during one of those strafings.

``They always came at night, sometimes a few times a month," she said. ``The people in that house never did anything to us, but it has been very scary to live here, especially with a baby."

Esperanza Ballester, 40, who lives in the same unit as Sanchez, said windows in the family car were shot out twice. She pointed to a bullet hole in a palm tree on the property.

``We used to sit inside at the top of the stairs, where we figured it was safest," she said. ``These weren't just a couple of shots. They were a lot. I ended up spending almost all my time inside, because I was afraid for me and my children.

``A policeman said to me a year ago that we should move, because what was going on next door wasn't good," she said. ``But we couldn't afford it."

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Police say at least one person was killed outside the house, although they didn't identify the victim.

The house was rented, neighbors said, by a Nicaraguan-born man whose first name was Misael. Police said many of the gang members were Nicaraguan and Honduran.

The gang was making thousands of dollars in narcotics sales every week, much of it in crack cocaine, **Martinez** said. He said gang members operated all over the city, although they were based on Ninth Street.

Martinez said the street gang's operation was the largest ever broken up in Dade County.

``In 1991, there were 32 active street gangs in Miami, and now there are 13," he started to say. ``Scratch that. Make it 12, now that the Thugs are gone."

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(Note: Articles Appear in Reverse Chronological Order)

Miami Herald, The (FL)

February 2, 1996

POLICE BAG THREE SUSPECTS IN 20 HOLDUPS

Author: *ARNOLD MARKOWITZ Herald Staff Writer*

To keep up with the Burger King Gang, specialists in fast holdups of fast-food restaurants, it was necessary to get up early and stay up late. To catch them, it took a gang three or four times the size of theirs.

Miami police said they did that and declared the triumph worth the trouble Thursday, when they showed off the handcuffed suspects:

- * Dwight Harris Jr., 22, of South Miami Heights.
- * Clifton Mann, 20, of South Miami Heights.
- * Cory Mills, 20, of Leisure City.

The three robbed 20 Burger King and McDonald's outlets starting Oct. 19 and ending on Monday, said Lt. **Armando Martinez**, who headed the investigation by the robbery squad's crime-suppression team.

All the suspects have arrest records. Harris has convictions for auto theft, Mills for drug possession and burglary, and Mann for burglary, grand theft, criminal mischief, kidnapping and armed robbery.

The hamburger holdups were so much alike that police figured the same crooks must have done them.

There was a standard operating procedure: Smash the glass in the locked door, stick up the staff, take off. The robbers took turns driving and robbing. On average, they got away with \$2,000 to \$3,000 each time.

Sometimes they pushed victims around, but did not injure anyone. At first, they wore masks. Later they didn't bother.

"We started a coordinated surveillance of potential targets," **Martinez** said.

"These were stores that we thought were the most prominent ones because of location, the amount of times they'd been robbed and so on. As these robberies went on and on, we started seeing a sequence, a pattern."

The beef called for a stakeout. Miami got the help of Metro and Florida state agents who have a task force for that sort of thing.

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The officers spent a week watching Burger Kings and McDonald's before opening time and after closing, because those were the periods when the gang struck. The last two robberies were committed early Monday, at Burger Kings in Miami and Coral Gables.

Once the robbers held up a Burger King 10 minutes before a policeman arrived on his off-duty security job. Everything about the robberies indicated that the robbers planned well, probably casing each place carefully.

That is what appeared to be happening a little after midnight Monday, in a gasoline station at the corner of Le Jeune Road and Southwest Eighth Street. Robbery detectives Placido Diaz and Boris Mantecon, the lead investigators, were touring restaurants not under steady watch when they drove by a McDonald's next to the station.

They observed three guys who were observing the McDonald's, Diaz said.

"One was on the passenger side of their vehicle. One was standing by the gas station window. One was standing by the pay phone, but he wasn't using the phone. Then for some reason they left."

Diaz said the three drove to a Red Road intersection where there is a McDonald's and a Burger King, and turned onto a side street. The officers followed, but it was a dead end. The other car turned around and was nose to nose with the unmarked police car. Politely, the police moved aside, let it pass and resumed following.

A little while later, the officers pulled the car over and arrested the people inside -- Harris, Mills and Mann, they said -- on charges of loitering and prowling. They could not throw the key away for that, but before the suspects were released, the police got their pictures and fingerprints.

On Wednesday, detectives showed photo lineups to Burger King and McDonald's employees who had been robbed. Then they obtained arrest warrants on armed robbery charges, and early Thursday went after the suspects.

Martinez was with a squad that followed Mills and Mann to the Goulds area of South Dade before seizing them. "When they got far enough from home, we arrested them like a thief in the night," he said.

Diaz and Mantecon went after Harris. They found him at his girlfriend's place, just waking up, when they burst into the bedroom. Diaz said Harris looked surprised to see him and Mantecon, the same ones who had stopped him on the street two days before.

"I know you," he said.