

Report and Recommendations of the
City of Flagler Beach
Ad-Hoc Fourth of July Findings Committee

Committee Members

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Ex-Officio Members

Mayor Suzie Johnston
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January 10, 2022

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Introduction

This *Report and Recommendations of the City of Flagler Beach Ad-Hoc Fourth of July Findings Committee* is the work product resulting from the regularly scheduled meetings of the Committee. The Committee Mission Statement follows, as does a breakdown of the topics discussed, the research undertaken and the recommendations made, by the Committee.

In making its findings and recommendations, the Committee recognizes the historical significance and the joy that the 4th of July Celebration has brought to the residents of Flagler Beach, to residents of the County, and to visitors from all parts.

The focus on the Committee has been to provide studied suggestions to the City Commission, with input from all Flagler Beach residents who choose to participate, resulting in a variety of considerations and recommendations to improve and make safer, the City of Flagler Beach 4th of July Celebration.

Committee Mission Statement

On August 19, 2021, the Ad-Hoc Fourth of July Findings Committee (“the Committee”) was formed by the Flagler Beach City Commission under the authority of City of Flagler Beach Resolution 2021-21 (“the Resolution”). The purpose of the Committee is to discuss, investigate and plan, with City Resident input, recommendations for the City of Flagler Beach’s going forward staging of celebratory events on Independence Day. Specifically, the Resolution provides as follows:

The mission of the committee will be to investigate all aspects of the event including: safety, costs associated, demand on staff, management of the influx of people, resources required, and other associated impacts as a result of the event ad then compile the findings for presentation to the City Commission. (City of Flagler Beach Resolution 2021-21). Exhibit “A.”

Accordingly, the Committee has conducted bi-weekly meetings since its formation with the goal being to discuss the historical significance of the event, and to identify and offer solutions to the challenges that have evolved with the growth of this annual event. This Report represents the issues discussed and the findings and recommendations offered by the Committee.

Committee Meetings and Public Participation

As of the date of this Report, the Committee conducted 9 regularly scheduled meetings, each of which occurred at City Hall. All meetings were properly noticed and were public in nature. Public participation was generally light, despite efforts by the Commission and the Committee members to encourage public participation.

Attendance at the meetings by Committee members was good, and meeting discussions were thoughtful and enthusiastic. This Report represents an accurate accounting of the opinions expressed by the Committee members and by those members of the public who did participate in Committee meetings, or who otherwise expressed their views and opinions on 4th of July issues to individual Committee members.

Identification of Problem Issues

From the outset of the initial meeting of the Committee on September 14, 2021, the members unanimously concluded that identifying the primary historical challenges associated with the Flagler Beach 4th of July Celebration, and crafting possible solutions for those challenges to be presented to the Commission, was the best path to success. After a wide-ranging discussion during the first Committee meeting, the members agreed that the primary challenges to a successful 4th of July Celebration are: (i) Traffic Congestion; (ii) Parking Shortage; and (iii) Public Safety as result of (i) and (ii) and issues and concerns related to significant underage alcohol consumption.

Having identified the primary challenges, the Committee began deliberations on the best means to address these challenges in order to bring about a safe and logistically sound basis for future 4th of July Celebrations. This Report contains the suggested solutions that the Committee urges the Commission to consider.

Finally, the Committee recognizes that the reconstruction of the Flagler Beach Pier, scheduled to begin the first quarter of 2023, will alter certain aspects of the 4th of July Celebration for that year and the following 2 or more years. Consequently, the suggestions made in this Report, while intended to be considered on a going forward basis, will require another look after 2022 to accommodate the logistics created by the Pier reconstruction.

Traffic Congestion and Solutions

Over time, the congestion created by the significant increase in the number of vehicles coming to Flagler Beach for the 4th of July Celebration, has presented mounting challenges to traffic flow logistics, leading up to the Pandemic, during which no formal celebrations occurred. These challenges are intensified by the shrinking number of parking spaces, brought about for a variety of reasons, and heightened parking demand due to the sustained population increase in the City and the County over the past decade.

In its study, the Committee considered a variety of possible solutions to the issue of traffic congestion. After much deliberation, the Committee has concluded that traffic congestion will be eased and improved through the following suggested measures: (i) Implement and advertise use of a shuttle system for entry onto and exit from the island, with fare to be paid by passengers; (ii) Continued use of the North to North and South to South ingress and egress traffic flow patterns developed by Chief Doughney; (iii) Continued use and reliance on volunteer support through the Flagler County Assist program; (iv) Endorsement of visitor use of Lyft, Uber and other commercial pick up services, using the shuttle system's drop off and pick up points.

The Committee also suggests the continued use of helicopter traffic control; maximum usage of electronic signage and use of available law enforcement resources from neighboring forces to be coordinated by Chief Doughney.

Parking Limitations & Options

With a population of approximately 5200, Flagler Beach long ago ran out of adequate daytime parking for the number of visitors who attend the annual 4th of July celebration. Recent studies by the Florida Department of Transportation (“DOT”) have concluded that during peak periods, 20,000 cars per day pass through Flagler Beach. Using that figure for 4th of July and estimating 2.5 passengers per car, we can reasonably compute an average of 50,000 visitors to the City for July 4th activities. All downtown parking spaces, including those adjacent to the Boardwalk, are usually taken by 7 a.m. on July 4th. Moreover, the number of parking spaces has decreased for various reasons. Consequently, increased demand and fewer parking spaces accounts for the current parking issues.

The Committee considered a wide range of options to the July 4th parking shortage and is able to suggest a number of improvements and additions to the parking space issue. The Committee’s recommendations center on locating additional parking inventory to supplement historical parking availability, which, for various reasons, has actually lessened from years past.

Specifically, the losses to the available parking inventory include the reduction in parking spaces on South A1A mentioned above totaling 85 spaces, following road reconstruction. The parking space reduction caused by the expected loss of use of the Forehand property immediately West of Veteran’s Park due to construction expected to begin in the Spring or Summer of 2022, which accounted for approximately 35 parking spaces. Together, this results in a combined loss of approximately 120 parking spaces to the 4th of July parking inventory.

On the other hand, the Committee is optimistic about the availability of significant additional parking areas from commercial properties West of the bridge, following outreach made by the City Manager and members of the Committee.

Specifically, if successful, negotiations with the following entities will result in the addition of as many as 730 to the City’s July 4th parking inventory:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Spaces</i>
Babcock Home Furniture & More lot	S.R. 100	260
First Baptist Church lot	Roberts Road	220
Boston Whaler lot	Sea Ray Drive	250
TOTAL Potential Added Spaces		730

The Committee urges the Commission to continue its efforts to negotiate the use of these properties for July 4th parking. But even if those efforts are completely

successful, it is the belief of the Committee that there is current and future need to increase the July 4th parking inventory East of the bridge, to the extent any additional spaces can be located or can be made available. *Exhibits “D” “E” & “F.”*

Downtown Beach Issues

The Beach between North 10th Street and South 10th Street is generally packed with celebrants by 7 a.m. on July 4th. While visitors are welcome and are a large part of the 4th of July celebration, the challenges associated with increased crowd congestion generally, and underage alcohol consumption specifically, are considerable.

After examining these challenges, the Committee recommends a concerted effort by the Commission to curtail underage alcohol consumption in the downtown celebration area. The Mayor has specifically volunteered to lead an Underage Drinking Awareness Campaign, in tandem with being active in her role as Mayor in publicly supporting Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Additionally, Chief Doughney has made several recommendations concerning law enforcement presence in the area. Specifically, the Chief will continue the use of ATV patrols during the day on the beach in the downtown area and will consider adding additional ATV patrols, if they are available. Moreover,

the Chief will call on state law enforcement agencies with whom he has associations for their support on the underage drinking issue.

Furthermore, the Committee recommends the use of COP personnel (Citizen Observer Patrol) on the downtown beach walkovers during the day and continuing through the evening. In addition to the use of COP personnel, Chief Doughney will continue to patrol the downtown area at a maximum staffing level with support from neighboring law enforcement agencies, through the relationships he has fostered over the years. *Exhibit "C."*

Moreover, the presence of the Flagler Beach Police Command Center at the corner of A1A and South 5th Street is expected to have practical impact and serve as a deterrent in the downtown area.

Because of an incident requiring law enforcement activity in 2019 in downtown Flagler Beach, the Committee urges the Commission to ensure that local law enforcement 4th of July staffing increases appropriately to match the participant growth expected as our population continues to rise.

Fourth of July Parade

The Flagler Beach 4th of July Parade has been a tradition for generations. While the Committee wholeheartedly supports continuation of the Parade, there are recommended changes intended to improve the experience to the public and to participants.

While the Parade is currently under the control and supervision of the Rotary Club of Flagler Beach, the Committee recommends that the Commission establish certain guidelines concerning the parade and that these guidelines be implemented after discussion with the Rotary Club.

After deliberation and with input from residents on the topic, the Committee believes the parade is simply too long given the typical July temperatures. A shorter parade, therefore, may serve to improve the experience for the viewing public and for entrants. Shortening the parade means some combination of limiting the number of entrants or limiting the space taken by entrants. It is the understanding of the Committee that the Rotary Club is open to and in fact supports placing some equitable limitations on the number of entrants in the parade.

Moreover, the Committee recommends that the Commission and the Rotary Club explore limiting the number of vehicles, per entrant, by setting, for example, a reasonable maximum number of vehicles each entrant may utilize.

Additionally, the Committee recommends that electronic signage be used in the days leading to the July 4th parade, so that residents are aware of potential local congestion and temporary detours associated with parade staging.

Another suggestion considered by the Committee is the extended use of interlocking bicycle fencing to enhance spectator safety and is an option that should be explored. A similar option is the use of water fillable Jersey barriers, for the same reasons. These are both considerations that the Committee urges the Counsel to consider.

Finally, the Committee discussed possible options for changing the start time of the 4th of July parade—historically, 10:00 a.m.—given heat of day considerations. After deliberation and input from those familiar with the amount of time necessary for staging of the parade, the Committee has concluded that the start time cannot reasonably be expected to begin before its current start time of 10:30. Moreover, starting the parade at any time later in the day will worsen the heat effect on the viewing public and on entrants. Consequently, the Committee advocates keeping the start time of the 4th of July at 10:00 a.m.

Daytime Event Management

4th of July Events staged at Veteran's Park and the Downtown area have been a hallmark during the celebration for many years. Pageants, games and music, as well as a variety of vendors, have been a part of Flagler Beach's July 4th celebration in many different formats over the years. It is the collective belief of the Committee that bringing an organized schedule of events in the area of Veteran's Park will attract those residents and visitors who wish to be festive but seek an alternative to the packed beach areas.

This Report will be supplemented with a proposed list of events and start times, which the Committee would recommend that the Commission approve. The events have all passed the test of time in Flagler Beach and have been enjoyed by residents for decades at one time or another. *Exhibit "E."*

Additionally, Vern Shank has committed to offer his services to oversee these 4th of July events for the City. Vern's current involvement in renewed First Friday celebrations is a natural platform for his role in organizing and staffing the events that the Committee recommends.

Finally, it is the view of the Committee that the use of Veterans Park and the downtown area for these events is an important alternative for families and individuals who seek 4th of July entertainment but are unwilling or unable to visit the beach on what is historically the busiest beach day of the year.

Fireworks Display

From the outset of and even before the Committee's formation, the subject of the 4th of July Fireworks Display has been studied and discussed. There are strong opinions for continuing with the Fireworks Display. There are also many residents who are indifferent, primarily because of the logistical issues associated with the 4th of July, which are all exacerbated by the high-volume crowds coming for the evening Fireworks Display. Not to be forgotten are those who are not in favor of fireworks at all, with this group consisting primarily of pet owners and others concerned with problems associated with the noise and the high-volume traffic of 4th of July evening. All of these points of view have been considered by the Committee in making its recommendations.

The Committee first considered the possibility of sharing this event with the City of Palm Coast, in order to ease traffic and crowd congestion while maintaining the quality of the event. That option was generally deemed not workable due to the demands it would place on law enforcement and on parking and traffic logistics. Moreover, the City of Palm Coast is currently undertaking efforts to keep its July 5th fireworks display on July 3rd, and moving it to the Airport grounds. Accordingly, the conversation of the Committee has turned to conduct of the July 4th event by Flagler Beach, only.

In our review of the multifaceted challenges surrounding the conduct of the 4th of July Fireworks Display, the Committee is keenly aware that dispensing with that event would significantly reduce the other challenges discussed in this report, namely traffic congestion, parking issues and related safety issues. On the other hand, with the Fireworks Celebration being the centerpiece of the day's events and given its general popularity with our residents and our guests, the Committee feels strongly that our recommendations concerning traffic, parking and safety must be implemented to some degree for the Fireworks Celebration to be conducted safely and successfully.

It is the desire and hope of the Committee that our recommendations concerning traffic, parking and safety will be implemented by the Commission, which we believe will make the Fireworks Display more appealing and a safer and more enjoyable experience to those who have concerns about those challenges.

Costs to the City of Flagler Beach

From the outset of our meetings, the Committee examined the costs to the City--and thus to the residents of Flagler Beach--of the various activities which collectively compose the 4th of July Celebration. Some of the costs are defrayed by in kind contributions of one sort or other by, for example, local law enforcement contributing their time to the City in exchange for the City's support to other local jurisdictions when called upon.

In gaging the actual costs to the City of 4th of July activities, the City Manager and the Police Chief prepared and circulated financial report that the Committee reviewed, questioned, commented on and made suggestions about. The financial reports from the City Manager and from the Police Chief are attached.

In summary, the Committee is satisfied that the costs to the City for conducting 4th of July activities are transparent, are readily identifiable, and appear to us to be reasonable and necessary in order for these events to be conducted safely and successfully. *Exhibits "B" & "G."*

2023 and Beyond

Pier reconstruction is currently scheduled to begin in January 2023, with target completion being late 2025 or early 2026. Accordingly, the shape of Downtown Flagler Beach will change in many respects. From the standpoint of the 4th of July, the platform for the Fireworks Display will not be available.

But this does not necessarily mean the end of Fireworks. Rather, the Committee discussed possible options for the evening of July 4th events during Pier reconstruction. While these options will need to be examined in detail after successful staging of the 2022 4th of July Celebration, the Committee notes the following options for the evening event, during the period of time the Pier is unavailable:

- I. Use of an offshore barge for fireworks in the area of the Pier;
- II. Use of a barge for fireworks in the Intracoastal Waterway in the proximity to the Flagler Beach Bridge;
- III. Light show and/or presentation by Drone technology.

The Committee recommends that the Committee give consideration to these alternatives to evening 4th of July entertainment during the years the Pier is under construction.

Summary

Through our regularly scheduled meetings and discussions conducted between August 2021 and January 2022; through review and analysis of a variety of reports presented to the Committee concerning parking; law enforcement activities; and historical costs to the City; and through consideration of all public comment provided to the Committee, we are satisfied that we have taken a thorough look at the issues and concerns that must be resolved, corrected or improved in order for the Flagler Beach 4th of July Celebration to be conducted safely, successfully and within certain financial parameters, as we understand them to be.

Of highest concern is a comprehensive and sustained plan by the City Commission to ensure the safety of all who participate in the 4th of July Celebration, from spectators and participants to those persons involved in conducting the events, which includes law enforcement and volunteers. Paramount to ensuring safety is a plan that provides for adequate parking; for organized ingress and egress to and from the event; and for appropriate staffing by law enforcement throughout the day, with emphasis on detecting and curtailing underage drinking in high volume public areas.

We believe through our study and consideration, that we have identified measures the City Commission should consider and adopt in the areas of

supplemental and replacement parking; the use of shuttles to and from beachside areas; and an adequate level of law enforcement presence in strategic areas throughout the day.

We believe that the suggestions and recommendations comprising this Report, when properly and fully considered by the City Commission, will be the platform upon which the Commission improves and maintains the traditional 4th of July Celebration. In doing so, with emphasis on safety, traffic and parking, we anticipate that the 4th of July Celebration will continue its historical status as a centerpiece of all family events conducted in Flagler Beach.

Appendix

Resolution 2021-21 Creating Ad-Hoc Committee.....A

September 29, 2021 City of Flagler Beach Report 4th of July Historical Financials.....B

October 10, 2021 Email report from Bob Pickering re: Event history.....C

October 11, 2021 Memorandum from William R. Whitson re: Parking logistics.....D

October 26, 2021 Memorandum from William R. Whitson re: Parking Spaces.....E

November 9, 2021 Memorandum from William R. Whitson re: Parking and Events.....F

Financial Report from Chief Doughney.....G

Exhibit “A”

RESOLUTION 2021-21

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH, FOR THE CREATION OF AN AD-HOC COMMITTEE "FOURTH OF JULY FINDINGS COMMITTEE" TO ADVISE THE CITY COMMISSION REGARDING MEANS BY WHICH TO ADDRESS ALL ASPECTS OF THE EVENT; MAKING FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT, PURPOSE, AND SAID DUTIES OF SAID AD-HOC COMMITTEE; PROVIDING FOR APPOINTED MEMBERS AND TERMS; SETTING FORTH OFFICERS, RULES, AND PROCEDURES; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Whereas, the City Commission of the City of Flagler Beach has determined the need exists to research all aspects of the event; and

Whereas, The City Commission has selected five (5) residents to serve on the Ad-Hoc Committee and directed the Mayor, City Manager and Police Chief to serve as Ex-Officio Members to form the Committee. Additionally, the City Commission has requested the Flagler County Tourism Director serve as an Ex-Officio Member; and

Whereas, Chapter II, Article IV, Section 2-61 through 2-69 of the Flagler Beach Code of Ordinance, regulates the establishment of Boards and Committees.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Creation

1. There is hereby created a committee in the City to be known as the Ad-Hoc Fourth of July Findings Committee.
2. The mission of the committee will be to investigate all aspects of the event including; safety, costs associated, demand on staff, management of the influx of people, resources required, and other associated impacts as a result of the event and then compile the findings for presentation to the City Commission.

SECTION 2. Membership

1. The Committee shall consist of five (5) voting members who are residents of the City. The Mayor, City Manager and the Police Chief shall serve as Ex-Officio Members to provide administrative support and direction to members in relation to administrative rules, conforming to the Code of Ordinance and the Florida Statutes. Additionally, the City Commission has requested the Flagler County Tourism Director serve as an Ex-Officio Member.

SECTION 3. Eligibility

Eligibility requirements are defined in Section 2-63 of the Code of Ordinance.

SECTION 4. Term of Appointments

The City Commission shall appoint the members of the Committee for terms of up to one (1) year. A list of current members will be written in the minutes, listing those present and absent.

SECTION 5. Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filed in accordance with Section 2-65 of the Code of Ordinance.

SECTION 6. Sunset Provision

The Committee will sunset six (6) months from the effective date of this resolution or upon the acceptance of the findings presented to the City Commission whichever occurs earlier unless otherwise extended by the City Commission.

SECTION 7. Officers

The duties of the officers shall be in accordance with Section 2-67 of the Code of Ordinance. With regard to the Secretary, the City Commission directs the City Manager to provide staff support for this committee. Contact with staff shall be limited to items of committee consensus and shall be forwarded from the chair.

SECTION 8. Chair Duties

The duties of the Chair shall be in accordance with Section 2-68 of the Code of Ordinance.

SECTION 9. Committee Operations

1. The Committee shall meet a minimum of once per month, the day and time to be decided by the membership.
2. The presence of three (3) committee members shall constitute a quorum.
3. The rules of operation shall be in accordance with Section 2-69 of the Code of Ordinance.
4. Either the Committee or the City Commission may call for joint meetings or workshops as determined necessary or desirable.
5. The City Manager will report the Committee's progress at the regularly scheduled City Commission Meetings.

SECTION 10. All resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith be and the same are hereby repealed.

SECTION 11. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon passage as provided by law.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 19 TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2021.

ATTEST:


Penny Overstreet, City Clerk

CITY OF FLAGLER BEACH, FLORIDA
CITY COMMISSION

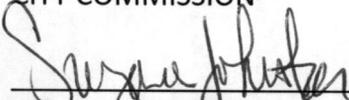

Suzie Johnston, Mayor

Exhibit “B”

City of Flagler Beach

4th of July Event Cost by Year

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
City Labor	\$9,464.85	\$8,885.85	\$9,676.81	\$3,967.38	\$3,204.40
Outside Labor	\$1,796.26	\$1,102.08	\$1,212.64	\$1,000.50	\$2,282.04
Other Costs	\$39,201.25	\$30,928.50	\$34,979.70	\$4,456.00	\$480.00
Sanitation Costs	\$2,350.54	\$2,033.04	\$1,888.76	\$754.17	\$965.70
Total	\$52,812.90	\$42,949.47	\$47,757.91	\$10,178.05	\$6,932.14

City labor cost includes OT for Police, Fire and Refuse for July 3rd thru the 6th.

Outside labor includes costs for the County Sheriff Deputies and garbage slingers.

Other costs include the cost for the fireworks, shuttle services and port a potties and other smaller expenses.

Sanitation cost include solid waste.

Exhibit “C”

From: Flagler County Assisst <flaglercountyassist@gmail.com>
Subject: 4th of July Observations
Date: October 10, 2021 at 7:34:22 PM EDT
To: <Sjohnston@cityofflaglerbeach.com>

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you some of the observations we have made over the years assisting with the Fabulous 4th of July event in Flagler Beach.

Some background on our organization;

Flagler County Assist was founded in 195 mostly by high school students who wanted to lend a hand using their CB radios. Over the years it has evolved into a professional volunteer service organization which have provided volunteers to numerous public service and emergency events in Flagler County. Among those events has been the Fabulous 4th of July in Flagler Beach. This event has been worked by our volunteers in varying roles since 1986. Our first involvement was assisting with the line up of the parade. Over the years as the event grew we were tasked with traffic control assistance during the parade through the 1980's and into the 1990's.

When the late 1990's rolled around Flagler Beach PD began to request our assistance for traffic control after the conclusion of the event (fireworks) as the crowd steadily increased.

This event is a favorite of mine and of many FCA volunteers. However especially in the last 10 years of so some of our long time volunteers have expressed concerns over their personal safety. Some "near miss" incidents have occurred (see below).

It should be noted that FCA operates with it's own communications system so when a message needs to get relayed to FDBP it must go to the FCA controller and then they relay to our liaison so when someone needs help fast there is an extra step in making it happen.

The following are key observations noted by myself and volunteers as far as Flagler County Assist Operations are concerned.

1. The first "crushing" event was in 1999. The previous 4th of July was canceled due to the 1998 Wildfires when the 1999 event came along attendance seemed much higher than before. FCA members were put into traffic control earlier (6 pm) due to the traffic getting gridlocked.
2. Fourth of July I THINK 2007 but could have been 2005 2006 or so, a firework exploded on the beach at South 3rd street. An Ambulance was summoned and we literally had to force traffic onto the shoulders of the road to get them through. Further the incident put us in the intersection alone briefly. There were multiple injuries but nothing serious however the resulting traffic chaos that incident brought with it caused all sorts of issues well into the night.
3. During the 4th of July in 2008 we got another crush of people where we had to activate volunteers early again, Traffic control was needed at 7 pm. During this event multiple fights broke out which used up all law enforcement resources. FCA was tasked directly

by FBPD to respond and handle a report of a missing juvenile. Fortunately our volunteers were able to locate the missing child and get them back to their mother. Shortly after FCA was requested again by FBPD to assist with an elderly woman who spoke Russian who lost her Husband. A member was tasked to assist. We requested law enforcement assistance multiple times but none were available due to the multiple fight calls ongoing. The woman we were trying to assist then had a medical emergency in which Flagler EMS (As it was known then) responded and transported to hospital. No law enforcement ever responded to the incident. Traffic congestion was extreme and we did not clear until 0100hrs. This clearing time became the norm from here on out, with the exception of 2010. (see below)

4. In 2011 one of our volunteers was aggressively threatened by a motorist. FBPD had no resources to assist we had to send two of our own volunteers to resolve the situation. This was the start of when we started to encounter road rage where motorists stuck in traffic would get out of vehicles and get in the face of our volunteers. These incidents could continue into the years ahead. During this event one of the officers at the SR 100 and A1A intersection got into a physical altercation with a jaywalker. The resulting disturbance left the intersection with NO traffic control officers. FCA members took on the responsibility alone which went against FCA policy (we do not do traffic on state roads without some official presence from Law Enforcement.
5. Fourth of July 2013 one of our volunteers working SR 100 and A1A was clipped by a passing car and knocked on the ground. Fortunately no injuries, It was also during that event where we had a number of our volunteers verbally threatened where they felt for their safety and even had incidents where people attempted to "take over" traffic control posts assigned by FBPD. This event was so bad that FCA considered no longer supporting it due to the fact many had thought it had become too dangerous to work. I was working S5th and Daytona and an impatient driver of a large pickup truck drove down the sidewalk yelling "F you! as he drove by at a high rate of speed. The concern was if anyone had been walking they could have been hit.
6. After the above incidents, FCA requested during the Fireworks detail that their members be co located at law enforcement posts. For the most part this works but the law enforcement units cannot always stay as they get calls etc.
7. **BIG CHANGES** In 2014 through the efforts of EM Director Kevin Guthrie and newly hired Police Captain Matt Doughney the very first comprehensive planning for the 4th of July was put into force. Planning meetings started months in advance. FBPD said no leave would be allowed during the 4th as it was the largest event in Flagler Beach. The result was one of the best run 4th of July events in years. The vision was to close parts of A1A for pedestrians only as well as one way SR 100. But DOT from what I understand would not allow it. We still had problems but many long time FCA members stated that not only was it much better than 2013 but it was the best one ever worked. We actually cleared near 2330 hrs which was much better than the 0100 hrs timing it once had.
8. 2016,- 2018 the organization of the event got better and more fine tuned. However based on observations the crowds continue to increase. During the parade we had an incident where a person threatened one of our FCA members. FPBD responded quickly and decisively. However it should be noted that improvement of these events required a lot of resources from outside agencies. This in my opinion helped keep the lid on things and if not for the outside support would have been a different outcome. However other

problems continued, such as citizens moving protective barricades which in turn allowed for traffic to flow into areas that were pedestrian only. We would have to send our volunteers sometimes to set these barricades correctly only to be confronted by others attempting to drive through.

9. 2016 2019 Even with the outside help and the volunteers just being one or two people short still would cause issues. On the 4th one person could not make it due to an unforeseen injury which would leave a post open, things like that.
10. 2019 shuttle bus parking ran out due to overcrowding. This caused some issues and confusion and contributed to some of the traffic issues. Our volunteers helping with the parade line up ran into problems with parade participants overheating / dehydrating from the heat.
11. 2020 2021 FCA members provided hydration support however were canceled in 2021 due to weather. In the support role of hydration FCA members can utilize their communications and equipment working a much safer role that does not put them into potential confrontation situations

A few key observations

1. This event from the 1980's has gone from a few hundred people along A1A to 10's of thousands especially for the fireworks. In the 1980's a handful of officers at SR 100 and A1A was all that was needed to direct traffic out.
2. There is a clear escalation of things over the past 35 or so years I have been involved in this event. Even though we have much better organization these past few years I think that was a stopgap as the crowds continue to grow each year and with that growth the risks of further incidents.
3. Even though none of our members were involved in any physical altercations, thankfully I am always worried about the "first time" someone gets hit or worse.
4. We love the idea of the event, but in my personal opinion I do not want to see one of our FCA people get hurt just so a bunch of people can drink beer and watch fireworks especially in today's climate.

Fireworks not on the 4th - FCA has provided traffic support for fireworks during the off 4th of July events

1996-1997 Fireworks were shot off for the Columbus Day event. Traffic was easily managed and no serious incidents occurred

1998 Fireworks went off on Labor Day Weekend (delayed due to 98 fires) it was quite busy but nothing like the 4th

2000 - Fireworks went off at Midnight. 3 FCA volunteers was all that was required to assist with traffic and were able to clear in 20 minutes. There was a fair amount of traffic but nothing to the scale their typically is during the 4th of July

2010 - Fireworks were delayed to Labor Day again busy but we were able to wrap up 2200hrs or so.

In closing FCA will continue to support this and other requests from the City of Flagler Beach as long as the volunteers feel safe to do so and roles that are safe for them to support. The 4th of

July is one of the favorite events of the organization, however members have expressed concerns with their own safety due to a few actions from drivers being impatient and aggressive.

I hope this offers some insight on the event over the years and how it has changed and the trend of how things are going. If you have any specific questions please reach out.

Respectfully

Bob Pickering
President
Flagler County Assist Inc.

Exhibit “D”



City of Flagler Beach

P.O. Box 70 • 105 South 2nd Street
Flagler Beach, Florida 32126

Phone (386) 517-2000 • Fax (386) 517-2008

MEMORANDUM

From: William R. Whitson, City
Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William R. Whitson".

To: Fourth of July Findings Committee

Subject: Follow-up Assignment

Date: October 11, 2021

As requested at your last meeting, City staff has gone back and evaluated the issue of how we can put on the 4th of July Fireworks celebration in a safe and cost effective manner. As you know, the City staff has been leading and coordinating the 4th of July Holiday operations for years and has built up an extensive experience base and knowledge of this complex event. All in all, the operations over the years have been pretty successful.

The team discussed two (2) main issues that we believe would help significantly improve the safety and cost effectiveness of the Fourth of July operations. Those were:

- 1) Parking & Shuttle operations
- 2) Event Scheduling for that day

Parking & Shuttle:

A parking inventory will be taken and a detailed shuttle bus plan with a map will be developed. Outlined below is an estimated inventory for two (2) new parking lots that may be added to the existing parking inventory. We estimate that up to 470 spaces could be added to our existing spot at Babcock's Furniture lot (260) spaces. If we could obtain permission to use the lots listed, we would advertise an off-site parking and shuttle system by a RED, WHITE & BLUE Parking lot scheme:

- A) First Baptist lot behind Publix- Asking for permission (220 spaces)
- B) Boston Whaler Lot- Asking for permission (250 spaces)

The buses ordered at the last 4th of July event cost \$7,625.00. Those busses were offered free and were paid for by the City. Our new plan is for patrons using the busses to pay the cost for this service.

Proposed fees would be \$5.00 per person for a round trip ticket on and off the island. For \$15.00 per person; bus transportation back and forth multiple times would be available. We would distinguish the two (2) levels of fees with different colored wrist bands. If fee collections are not adequate to cover the cost of the bus service, the City would propose that we split the remaining balance with the Business Community and the City. Thus, if the cost was say \$8,000 and we collect \$4,000 in fees the balance would be paid by the business community or split 50/50 with the City and the business community. Another option would be for Flagler Strong to support some of the costs as well.

Event Scheduling

Upon detailed examination of the schedule for the day; we would like to make some recommendations for the committee to review and consider that we believe would help make the day run more smoothly and effectively. The primary focus of this recommendation is to ease traffic congestion. Please review the proposed schedule as a general “strawman” to organize our discussion. The main suggestion is to “trade” the 4th of July Parade for “old fashioned” family friendly activities in Veterans Park:

Proposed Schedule of Events

- 5K Freedom Run under the Bridge @6:00am
- Set-up & Activate “Cool Zones” @11:00am and Event Information Center
- Old Fashion Family Fun at Veterans Park (Led by Vern S.)- 1:00pm – 4:00pm
- Trash Bag Handout at the Beach 4-6:00pm
- Fireworks @ 9:00pm

NOTE: “Cool Zones” (Tented Areas- with Fans/Misters) would be set up and sponsored by various local businesses. Cool Zones would be set up at Veterans Park, the A-Frame and both ends of the City Boardwalk.

In addition, a comprehensive Press Release with a map and information related to what is happening, where to go (Traffic/Parking), what are the costs and information center location.

In closing, I am hopeful this background memo will be helpful to our discussions and serve as a useful tool to develop a final plan/recommendation. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Copy: Mayor & Commission
City Clerk

Exhibit “E”



City of Flagler Beach

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MEMORANDUM

From: William R. Whitson, City Manager
To: Fourth of July Findings Committee
Subject: Follow-up Assignment
Date: October 26, 2021

As requested at your last meeting, City staff has gone back and evaluated the number of parking spaces available in the city.

Parking:

Flagler Beach Study Area Parking Inventory from 2019 Parking Study:

North of Highway 100			South of Highway 100		
On-Street	229	26%	On-Street	426	43%
Off-Street Public	48	6%	Off-Street Public	67	7%
Off-Street Private	585	68%	Off-Street Private	495	50%
Total	862	100%	Total	988	100%

Shuttle System:

Outlined below is an estimated inventory for two (2) new parking lots that may be added to the existing parking inventory. We estimate that up to 470 spaces could be added to our existing spot at Babcock's Furniture lot (260) spaces. This would be an estimated total of up to 730 spaces. If we could obtain permission to use the lots listed, we would advertise an off-site parking and shuttle system by a RED, WHITE & BLUE Parking lot scheme:

- A) First Baptist lot behind Publix- Asking for permission (220 spaces)
- B) Boston Whaler Lot- Permission granted- working on legal/liability (250 spaces)

Event Scheduling:

Proposed Schedule of Events

- 5K Freedom Run under the Bridge @6:00am
- Parade at 10:00 a.m. (capped at 60 participants)
- Set-up & Activate "Cool Zones" @11:00am and Event Information Center
- Old Fashion Family Fun at Veterans Park (Led by Vern S.)- 1:00pm – 4:00pm
- Trash Bag Handout at the Beach 4-6:00pm
- Fireworks @ 9:00pm

Exhibit “F”



City of Flagler Beach

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MEMORANDUM

From: William R. Whitson, City Manager
To: Fourth of July Findings Committee
Subject: Updated Information for Fourth of July and Proposed Schedule
Date: November 9, 2021

Family Friendly Zones on the Promenade:

After deliberating with the Police Chief, we are suggesting that the city focus on working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to aid in the enforcement of underage drinking that has become prevalent in the city during the Fourth of July celebration. In the past, the service provided by this state agency has made significant differences in the day's events and staff feels as if this is the most effective way to address this issue, and monitor underage drinking during the holiday.

Parking:

Flagler Beach Study Area Parking Inventory from 2019 Parking Study:

North of Highway 100			South of Highway 100		
On-Street	229	26%	On-Street	426	43%
Off-Street Public	48	6%	Off-Street Public	67	7%
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Event Scheduling:

Proposed Schedule of Events

- 5K Freedom Run under the Bridge @6:00 a.m.
- Parade at 10:00 a.m. (capped at 60 participants)
- Set-up & Activate "Cool Zones" @11:00am and Event Information Center
- Old Fashion Family Fun at Veterans Park (Led by Vern S.)- 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Trash Bag Handout at the Beach 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- Fireworks @ 9:00 p.m.

Exhibit “G”

4th of July Costs Per Year

Draft

	2017	2018	2019	2021
Police				
Police Overtime	\$8,154.85	\$7,905.59	\$8,427.90	\$7,057.21
Police Salary Chief	\$588.24	\$600.02	\$647.46	\$376.48
Police Salary Lieutenant/Captain	\$475.92	\$506.16	\$520.02	\$295.20
Police Reserve	\$345.66	\$381.45	\$381.45	\$228.32
Bunnell	\$288	\$252	\$252	0
FCSO Deputies Motors	\$3,360	\$2,800	\$2,240	\$600
FCSO Deputies Bicycle	\$1,440	\$1,440	\$1,440	\$1,200
FCSO Deputy Transport Wagon	\$440	\$480	\$480	\$320
FCSO COP Volunteers	\$888.84	\$915.48	\$839.18	\$0.00
R.E.A.C.T. Volunteers	\$5,184.90	\$3,916.22	\$6,052.34	\$0.00
Daytona Police	\$640	\$1,760	\$2,080	\$0.00
State ABT	0	0	\$1,280	\$0.00
Department of Juvenile Justice	\$240	\$300	\$150	\$0.00
Gasoline (Gallons)	\$427.85	\$165.55	\$289.19	\$533.79
Water/Gatorade & Food	\$909.80	\$810	\$998	\$707.43
Miscellaneous	\$3,321.54	0	\$89.70	\$89.75
Park & Ride Buses	\$5,900	\$7,625	\$7,625	\$0
Stanchions & Cones/EOC	\$480	\$480	\$480	\$480
Message Boards EOC/Palm Coast (5)	\$1,450	\$1,450	\$1,450	\$0.00
Light Banks (5)	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$0.00
Fire Flight Helicopter/ Traffic Op's	\$1,360	\$1,760	\$1,440	0
Police Totals	\$36,645.60	\$34,297.47	\$37,912.24	\$11,888.18
Fire				
Staff	\$3,010.00	\$3,010.00	\$3,010.00	
Overtime	\$5,068.00	\$5,068.00	\$5,068.00	\$1,200.00
Flex Time (16 hrs)				
Volunteers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Flagler County Fire	\$960.00	\$960.00	\$960.00	\$960.00
Palm Coast	\$1,080.00	\$1,080.00	\$1,080.00	\$1,080.00

Flagler County Emergency Management	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
React Team Volunteers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Lifeguards				
Staff	\$3,872.00	\$3,200.00	\$3,200.00	\$2,048.00
Overtime	\$1,936.00	\$1,600.00	\$1,600.00	\$1,024.00
Sanitation	\$4,400.00	\$4,500.00	\$4,200.00	\$3,800.00
Traffic Control				
Barricades	\$640.00			
Maintenance				
Staff/Overtime				
Janitorial		\$200.00	\$325.00	\$150.00
Fishing Pier	Lost \$2000.00	Lost \$2000.00	Lost \$2000.00	
Fireworks (cost over TDC contribution)	\$1000.00	\$1000.00	\$0.00	
Port-O-Lets	\$3,089.80	\$1,380.00	\$1,150.00	\$480.00
Advertising	\$860.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Decorations (Banners)	\$8,400.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Weather	Fair	Fair	Fair	Raining
Total Cost	\$72,961.40	\$58,295.47	\$60,505.24	\$22,630.18

Weather was not a factor in 2017, 2018 or 2019.

Rain was a major factor + no parade and no fireworks in 2021

Volunteer hourly rates of pay courtesy of www.IndependentSector.org

Equipment cost for rentals of message boards, stanchions and light banks; www.sunbeltrentals.com