

FGCAC  
Meeting Tuesday, August 4, 2008

**AMENDED August 17, 2009**

ATTENDANCE:	REPRESENTING
Major Greg Elder	Superintendent Warren Riley
Carlyn Goodwin	Mayor Nagin's Office
Linda Landesberg	Councilmember Carter
Eric Holstrom	Fair Grounds Race Track
Tommy Lewis	Councilmember Midura
Austin Miller	Fair Grounds Race Track
Sandra Salmen	Fair Grounds Race Course
Chief Jimmy Scott	NOPD/Fair Grounds Race Course
Rocky Seydel	Councilmember Midura
Enrico Sterling	Councilmember Midura
Bishop Ryan Warner	Councilmember Fielkow
Sherry Watters	Councilmember Midura

Meeting called to order 4:06pm by Bishop Warner

Introductions of new members: Rocky Seydel was introduced to the board as an appointment of Councilmember Midura

Old Business:

Sandra Salmen read from the minutes from the meeting on May 12th, which addressed the dates for the Quarter Horse Race Meet and the Thoroughbred Race Meet.

Linda Landesberg asked for the dates again. Also, the size of the crowds for the Quarter Horse meet and would the need for the Mystery Street gate to be opened?

Sandra Salmen answered: For the Quarter Horse Meet it will be September 8<sup>th</sup> through September 19<sup>th</sup> with a 12:30 post time and no racing on Sunday

or Monday. Thoroughbred Race Meet November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009 through March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

Sandra Salmen said the gates will need to be opened on race days but not for training hours for the Quarter Horse Meet.

New Business:

Chief Scott gave a detailed presentation with excellent hand outs about the crime statistics with in the ½ mile radius of the Fair Grounds which is in the Fair Grounds patrol area. The statistics dealt with robbery, burglary, auto theft and murder. The information provided also brought in the statistics of the areas up to a two mile radius of the Fair Grounds. Because of the Fair Grounds patrols the ½ mile radius the crimes were significantly lower than in some of our surrounding communities/citywide.

Mayor Elder wanted to inform the committee on July 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 am the third district was notified of shots being fired on Trafalger. There were over 26 rounds fired, a house and a car on Castiglione Street were hit. They do not believe the house or the car were the target of the shooting. The patrols in this area have been stepped up.

Austin Miller asked for input from the Committee and brought up the idea of a Fourth of July Family celebration with fire works to take at Fair Grounds. Conceptually the event would feature food, beverage, rides, activities, arts & crafts, and Fireworks.

Carlyn Goodwin reminded the group because this is the same time as the Essence Festival all police are active with that festival.

Chief Scott responded and said yes police are required to work over time because of the Essence.

Carlyn Goodwin provided the name of the pyro tech company that the city uses, Rocky Bitale at 985-893-8800.

Austin Miller pointed out that the cost of fireworks is about \$1,200 per minute.

Rocky Seydel asked about how many people would attend such an event?

Austin Miller, we are just in the early stages of seeing if the neighborhoods would like to embrace this concept of a fun filled family event and a way in which to raise funds for their projects but it would have the potential to attract a crowd of several thousand.

Sandra Salmen brought up the Covington 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration which takes place in Tchfuncte Park . They always hold it the Sunday before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and it is an old time 4<sup>th</sup> celebration. This way it does not compete with other Fourth of July events.

Austin Miller discussed a desire to adjust the hours of operation for the slot facility. The facility currently closes at midnight which causes an average of 165 to 200 customers per night (5,000 to 6,000 per month) to stop their entertainment and leave the facility. The midnight closing is the number one complaint from customers.

Tommy Lewis asked what the extended hours of operation would be and Austin responded that while a 24 hour operation would put us on a level playing field with other gaming operations, our needs and the wants of our customers would likely be met with a 3am or 4am closing.

Linda Landesberg asked if the adjusted hours would apply to just the slots facility or did it include horse racing. Austin Miller answered that it would be intended for the slot facility.

Austin Miller talked about how the few additional hours may also put Fair Grounds in a position to be able to fund several projects that would be beneficial to the local community including:

1. A more frequent replacement of the patrol cars which are not projected to survive a four year replacement cycle.
2. A CAC fund that could be used for special neighborhood projects at the discretion of the CAC.

Bishop Warner commented that this would create more jobs and produce more revenue for the city.

Rocky Seydel asked what type of revenue would be brought in by extending the hours. Austin Miller responded that it would really depend on what the hours were, it may generate as much as an additional 10% of gross gaming

revenue by allowing current customers to extend their stay rather than being asked to leave at midnight.

Caryln Goodwin and Enrico Sterling noted that it may be worth considering a test period.

Linda Landesberg suggested that it may be a good idea for Fair Grounds to make a good will gesture of replacing one of the patrol cars prior to a formal approval of the request to adjust hours.

Rocky Seydel asked if Chief Scott could pull the crime statistics prior to the operation of the Fair Grounds patrol.

Austin Miller asked each member to go back to their neighborhood groups and solicit their feedback on the issues. He also asked that we meet again in three to four weeks to continue discussion and provide more input.

Major Elder asked Bishop Warner if he could be excused because of the commitment to Night Out Against Crime.

Bishop Warner asked a polling be done to accomplish the date for a meeting in September.

Bishop Warner informed everyone our next regular scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, November 10th at 4:00 pm.

Motion to adjourn was presented by Sherry Watters and seconded by Rocky Seydel.

Meeting adjourned 5:28 pm.

After polling the members a special meeting of the FGCAC will take place on Wednesday, September 16 at 4:00 PM in the conference room of the Fair Grounds.