

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA
CONSIDERATION OF LOBBYIST REGULATION
September 11, 2007

The Board of County Commissioners met for a Workshop on Consideration of Lobbyist Regulation in the County Commission Chambers on Tuesday, September 11, 2007.

Chairman DePuy called the workshop to order at 1:02 p.m. Present were Commissioners Proctor, Rackleff, Desloge, Thaell, Sauls, and Dailey. Also present was County Administrator Parwez Alam; County Attorney Herb Thiele; Assistant County Administrator Alan Rosenzweig; Finance Director David Reid; and Board Secretary Dionte Gavin.

The workshop was conducted to consider proposed amendments to the Lobbyist Regulation. County Attorney Thiele provided background information.

Commissioners engaged in discussion on the proposed ordinance.

Rebecca Sager, 1017 Cherokee Drive, appeared and read a statement prepared by Ben Wilcox, member of Common Cause. She read highlights of the proposal: require lobbyist to update registration when taking on new clients; ban on lobbyist gifts to Commission members and staff; quarterly lobbyist compensation reporting requirement; require a provision on communication, except for written correspondence regarding a request for a contract or competitive bid (known as code of silence).

The Board reference the proposed ordinance in attachment 2, page 1 of 9 in the agenda material regarding a broader definition of lobbyist (Section 2-700). Commissioner Sauls moved and was duly seconded by Commissioner Thaell to approve the proposed language in Section 2-700 (Lobbyist Definition). The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

The Board briefly discussed proposed Section 2-701, Record Keeping Responsibilities.

Commissioner Thaell moved and was duly seconded by Commissioner Desloge motion to delete the proposed language for Section 2-701 (Record Keeping Responsibilities). The motion carried unanimously, 7/0.

Commissioner Thaell moved, seconded by Commissioner Dailey to accept the County's versions of Section 2-702 (annual registration of paid lobbyist) with changes: client must make registration before commencing lobbying; \$25 fee per client; 30 days to withdraw. The motion carried 6-1 (Commissioner Proctor

opposed. County Attorney pointed out that lobbyist registration should be done under oath.

Commissioner Rackleff, seconded by Commissioner Thaeil to accept language in Section 2-703 (articulating Exceptions). The motion carried 6 – 1 (Commissioner Proctor voted in opposition). Commissioner Proctor suggested that the item be continued and looked at further.

Commissioner Desloge and was duly seconded by Commissioner Sauls to approve Section 2-704 (Validity of Action). The motion carried 6-1 (Commissioner Proctor vote in opposition).

The Board then discussed Section 2-705 and 702 (Common Cause) (quarterly paid lobbyist statement). Commissioner Thaeil moved and was duly seconded by Commissioner Rackleff to incorporate the language proposed by Common Cause and League of Women Voters into Section 2-702 (disclosure of lobbyist compensation).

Commissioner Desloge moved a substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Dailey to adopt Section 2-705 (quarterly pay), using Common Cause language 702, and add "Under Oath" which is similar to the State Statute. The motion carried 6 – 1 (Commissioner Proctor voted in opposition).

Commissioner Sauls moved and was duly seconded by Commissioner Desloge to approve Section 2-706 minus the lobbying law. The motion carried 6-1 (Commissioner Proctor opposed).

The Board engaged in discussion of Section 7-707 about not taking anything of value from a lobbyist (bribe) for a vote. County Attorney Thiele clarified that a gift is a different issue and already addressed in Chapter 12.

Commissioner Sauls moved and was duly seconded by Commissioner Desloge to delete Section 2-707 from the ordinance.

Commissioner Dailey moved a substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Thaeil to keep part of the language, starting with line 15, to read: "No county official or employees of Leon County shall solicit or accept as compensation, payment, favor, service, or thing of value from a lobbyist (or principal)."

Commissioner Desloge moved a substitute motion, seconded by Commissioner Sauls to keep the language in Section 2.707 as drafted by the County Attorney. The motion carried 5-2 (Commissioners Dailey and Proctor opposed).

Commissioner Thaele moved and was duly seconded by Commissioner Dailey to accept Section 7-708 (Code of Silence) as recommended in the County's version of the ordinance. The motion carried 6-1 (Commissioner Proctor voted in opposition).

Commissioner Thaele moved, seconded by Commissioner Desloge and carried 6-1 (Commissioner Proctor opposed), to approve Section 7-709 (Penalties), the County's version.

Commissioner Dailey moved, seconded by Commissioner Desloge and carried unanimously, to adjourn the workshop.

The Chairman announced that the Commission would meet downstairs for the Memorial Service of 9-1-1.

Approved: _____
C. E. DePuy, Jr.
Chairman

ATTEST:

Bob Inzer
Clerk of Circuit Court