

100407

**Osborne, Rhonda L.**

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**From:** Blackburn, Russ D.  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 03, 2010 2:29 PM  
**To:** Jones, Tony R.  
**Cc:** Radson, Marion J.  
**Subject:** FW: [Tag] Increase of Maximum Tow Rates  
**Importance:** Low

Chief Jones,

Please prepare a consent item referring the request to the Public Safety Committee.

Russ

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**From:** eliteautognv@aol.com [mailto:eliteautognv@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 30, 2010 8:55 PM  
**To:** citymgr  
**Subject:** [Tag] Increase of Maximum Tow Rates  
**Importance:** Low

City Manager Blackburn,

We write to you in regards to the regulation of private property trespass towing rates, as specified by Section 14.5 of the City of Gainesville Code of Ordinances. It is our belief that the current maximum rates enforced by the City are unreasonably low, and we request that these rates be increased.

The City of Gainesville first began to regulate the maximum rate for a trespass tow in 1993. The Consumer Price Index, the universal standard for gauging inflation in the United States, has increased more than fifty percent from that time, while during the same period the City has increased the price ceiling for a "light duty" tow only eight percent. It is of note that during this time period the price of fuel, one of the primary costs in the towing industry, has increased at an even higher rate. Specifically, the average cost per gallon of regular unleaded gasoline has increased more than one hundred and fifty percent since 1993. In addition to the standard costs related to doing business, the towing industry in Gainesville has been impacted by the imposition of numerous fees and regulations that require additional use of resources, including permit fees for all trucks and employees conducting trespass tows. The decision of the City Commission that credit cards must be accepted as a form of payment for a tow imposed a further burden on the industry, as the issuing company typically collects a significant percentage of the payment made on a card from the business. As well, there has been a significant issue with the owners of towed vehicles paying with a credit card and later fraudulently refuting the charges, leading to further costs for the towing company.

Currently, the maximum rate for a tow in the City is significantly lower than all surrounding metropolitan areas, and is quite possibly the lowest specified rate in the United States. In Tallahassee, the rate is set at \$88 for the first twenty four hours of a light duty impound, while in Jacksonville the rate is \$91.73, plus \$2.62 per mile the vehicle is towed. Our research has thus far found no instances of a municipal authority that currently sets a lower rate for trespass towing than the City of Gainesville.

For these above reasons, we request that the Commission increase the maximum tow rates to a level that brings the city in line with regional as well as inflationary levels. We would suggest an increase of the Class A "light duty" rates from \$76 to \$95, Class B "medium duty" rates from \$133 to \$165, and Class C "heavy duty" rates from \$288 to \$450. These increases would in fact be a lower percentage increase than inflation would indicate, but would still allow local towing companies to continue providing their services to property owners in the City.

While you consider this proposal, please remember that it is often said that no one likes towing

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until someone is parked in your parking place. The towing industry in the City provides much needed relief for home and business owners alike beset by illegally parked vehicles violating their property rights.

Respectfully,

Raymond Fleming,  
General Manager, Ultimate Towing

Stan Forrón II,  
Operations Manager, Ultimate Towing