



Legislation Text

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Prohibiting Smoking in the Downtown "Bo Diddley" Plaza (B)

This item involves an update to the Public Safety Committee regarding a referral from the Gainesville City Commission on July 1, 2010 to consider the matter of prohibiting smoking in the Downtown "Bo Diddley" Plaza.

During their July 1, 2010 meeting, the Gainesville City Commission discussed the topic of prohibiting smoking in the Downtown "Bo Diddley" Plaza, and referred the matter to the Public Safety Committee for further discussion and review. There currently are no restrictions regarding smoking in city parks in the City's ordinances. Staff researched this matter and provided an update the Public Safety Committee on September 27, 2010 to include 1) feedback from peer cities on what they do to address this issue (ban or restriction to specific areas); 2) advisory board feedback on the topic; 3) signage at the Plaza; 4) review of the current City ordinance governing activities allowed/prohibited in City parks and whether to remove the Plaza from the listing identifying it as a City park; 5) consideration of cigarette butts and litter enforcement; and 6) designating specific areas for smoking at the Plaza during events. The Public Safety Committee again discussed this referral at their January 10, 2011 meeting and heard from a representative from the State Health Department regarding the "Communities To Put Prevention To Work Program." The representative provided samples of signage and gave a list of Florida cities that have smoking restriction ordinances.

On February 17, 2011 the Public Safety Committee provided a report to the City Commission. At that time the Commission approved moving forward with voluntary compliance using signage. The Commission also authorized the City Manager to pursue partnerships with the Health Department and "Keep Alachua County Beautiful" for an educational campaign and to have appropriate staff monitor the situation and observe what is taking place in other Florida cities so the issue could be revisited in one year.

At the Committee's March 28, 2012 meeting Dr. Stephen Pokorny, Director of Health Promotion for the Alachua County Health Department, gave a presentation on effects of a voluntary program to designate a few parks, including the downtown plaza as smoke-free zones and consider regulations to legally ban smoking.

There are costs associated with the manufacturing and installation of signs and the related educational campaign. The City will seek to partner with the Health Department and Keep Alachua County Beautiful.

The City Commission 1) hear a presentation from the Alachua County Health Department on the assessment of smoke free signage in Gainesville public parks; 2) consider the option for a smoke free parks ordinance; and 3) remove this item from the Committee's referral list.