

follows: for approval of Resolution 07-R21. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

12. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was nothing scheduled for this item.

13. NEW BUSINESS

a) DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE PLACING OF A NATIVITY SCENE AND A MENORAH ON THE FRONT LAWN OF CITY HALL, REV. A. ALBRIGHT

(Clerk's Note: Rev. Albright read a prepared statement. Please see attached.)

Rev. Albright said, "My request has been given to you in writing. I hope that you will think this through. You are the leaders that were chosen by this City. I pray for you on a daily basis."

Edward Rishko, resident, said, "I am here in support of Rev. Albright. I would like to present a few facts from a different perspective. What is Christmas? Christmas honors the birth of Christ. It is celebrated in remembrance. More than 24,000 copies of the Bible are known to exist; there are only 643 copies of Homer's Iliad. All but a few verses of the Bible can be reconstructed. No part of the Bible has ever been proven wrong. Looking at the United States, more than 85% of United States citizens claim to be Christian. The nativity scene is a symbol of the birth of Jesus. Without Christ, there is no holiday. What a shame to willingly omit the reason for the season. Why does this City lack this Christian symbol? We have toy soldiers, instruments of war, but no Jesus. We have holiday trees, but no angel announcing God with us. How do you think Jesus feels about this? Will you please put Christ back in Christmas? Please allow a nativity scene to be displayed in front of City Hall."

(Clerk's Note: Douglas Buchanan read a prepared statement. Please see attached.)

Mr. Patronie said, "I recently learned of a ruling by the Supreme Court that the menorah had been approved as a secular symbol. That is the essence of the Three-Reindeer ruling. I'm asking you to place the menorah and the Nativity scene on the public square. This is supported by the Supreme Court."

Vice Mayor Kelly said, "We do have decorations at the Community Center. I don't support putting this at City Hall. I would support putting it at the Community Center. The request is for a Nativity scene and a menorah and I have a problem with that. It would have to be for anyone who has a celebration at Christmas time. This is such a touchy situation; you have to be very careful with what you

say." The City Attorney said, "I want to make sure my comments are understood. If you look at the cases they have referred to, those are cases that were brought against governments for having allowed the Nativity scene and the menorah. My advice to the Council is not to pursue allowing these types of decorations on government property. Doing so would invite the challenge of those who are offended by it. I would much rather they be placed on private property. The City will not interfere with that. The best legal position for the City is to be sued by someone who is trying to compel us to allow them on City property, rather than allowing them on City property and someone suing us because they are offended. I don't want the City to be involved in one of those cases where a Federal judge is involving himself in ruling against the City. A good example is when the Alabama Supreme Court had the Ten Commandments in the courthouse building. The Alabama Chief Justice took that case to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled that they couldn't keep it there."

The City Attorney continued, "There are two conflicting Constitutional principles. There is freedom of speech and freedom of religion. Then you have the Constitutional principle of the establishment clause. The United States Supreme Court has failed to provide any government a test resolving the conflict. If someone wants to sue us for not having it, then we would have a court order saying we must do it. I would rather be in that position." Councilman Cooper said, "This is a personal issue. If it's not broken, then don't fix it. I'll defend the Christmas tree. If we had the Ten Commandments hanging in this building, I would defend those. But they aren't here. Just reading the agenda item, there is already a problem with it. It doesn't address all the religious groups. This would create controversy. It's going to tear the community apart. It's going to result in lawsuits. Is that what we want? I heard people say put Christ back in Christmas. I don't think any of us took Him out. The former Mayor loved Christmas, and he was Jewish. I have an idea: every Church should put up a Nativity scene. The more the merrier. I've said this before. What is the fascination with this location? We can do it at every church and at every house. Why are we going push the issue with this one piece of property?"

Mayor Christensen said, "We have a policy in place. Unless we are going to change the policy, we don't have to take action on this item."

b) REQUEST FOR COUNCIL DISCUSSION CONCERNING SPEED LIMIT ON NE SAGAMORE TERRACE, AND TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES BETWEEN AIROSO BOULEVARD AND LAGOON LANE, RICHARD BLOHM

Mr. Blohm said, "I am here tonight to talk about excessive speeding on our neighborhood streets. When my wife and I moved to Port St. Lucie in May 2005, we quickly became aware of the dangerous