

Pinkie Hendley

August 7, 2023

Mr. Nicholas Mimms
Fort Pierce City Manager
100 N. U.S. 1
Fort Pierce, FL 34950

Dear Mr. Mimms:

In reference to your response to my email requesting to be placed on the agenda for August 7, 2023, I am asking you to meet with our "Chat, Chew, and Do" community group on Wednesday, September 6, 2023. We meet at 9:00 a.m. at New Life Christian Fellowship Church, 2308 Avenue D, Fort Pierce, Florida. Also I would like to know where I can go on the City's website for clear procedures to get on the agenda.

At a recent meeting on July 26, 2023, several community members came together to discuss the circumstances around the recent shootings in Fort Pierce, specifically at Avenue D and 25th Street on July 14, 2023. The meeting was called by Dr. Pinkie W. Hendley.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MEETING!

- L. Carl Herold, Director of Law Enforcement, Division of Gaming Enforcement stated, "Operation or possession of slot machines outside of a licensed facility is unlawful in the State of Florida and subject to criminal and administrative penalties." They are only permitted to operate only on tribal property and within the licensed parimutuel facilities.
How many licensed Arcades are in District 1 and how many are in District 2?
Are arcades allowed to have slot machines that receive and or disperse cash?
Was the store at Avenue D and 25th Street where the shooting took place licensed as an Arcade?
Did that license allow slot machines?
Are Arcades registered as "ordinary coin-operated amusement games" in Fort Pierce?
- The City has its ordinances for Arcades.
However is it the Fort Pierce Police Department or the Sheriff's responsibilities to oversee these arcades?
Who monitors the activities at and around the Arcades? Police or Sheriff?
How are these "arcades" able to operate in the Lincoln Park Community and be in compliance with the Fort Pierce city ordinance on arcades?
- According to the current city ordinance, when an amusement arcade or arcade amusement center hires a new employee or changes its ownership composition, the police department shall inspect the new employee's or owner's background to insure they have not been convicted of a crime described in the Florida statutes.
How many background inspections has the Fort Pierce Police Department made in the last two years? District 1 _____ District 2 _____ ?
How many permit denials has the City made in the last two years. District 1 ___ District 2 ___
Who has this information? Police Department or City?
- According to the City's ordinance, all arcades or arcade amusement parks must provide an operating plan with specific information such as interior layouts, location of all machines, devices, equipment identification and access ways.

How often are these arcades checked to see if they are adhering to the operation plan?
Are serial numbers or equivalent identification checked to be sure they are on the permit? If so, how often and by whom?

What role does the planning department play to insure compliance?

Why are there no signs specifying that this premise is an "ARCADE" in District 1?

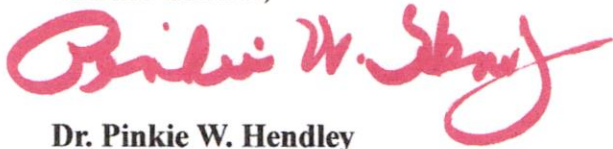
- It appears that most arcades in District 1 are housed and operate in a convenient store setting that may serve food and alcohol or provide catering services on premises.
Are these stores licensed by the department of health, department of business professional regulation, or department of agriculture and consumer services?
Who has the responsibility for inspections and how often?
How many are there in District 1 _____ District 2 _____?
How many maybe operating in other businesses/homes without a license?
- According to the city ordinance, "No amusement arcade or arcade amusement centers shall operate after the hour of 12:00 midnight and before the hour of 8:00 a.m. on weekdays and between 2:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. on weekends."
Who is responsible for enforcing these restrictions?
How is this enforced if food is also being served?
Why are some establishments, especially in the Lincoln Park area, allowed to operate after these hours?
- Alcohol sales and consumption is prohibited at all arcades.
How can this be true when they are operated inside another establishment that does serve alcohol?
Are permits or licenses allowed to waive this requirement?
- It is believed that many arcade could easily net \$20,000 – over \$50,000 a month. They are usually in low income areas and not allowed in downtown districts such as our Downtown Business and Entertainment Overlay District?
Why is there a restriction to the Overlay District?
Is there more or less scrutiny on the arcades in affluent areas than low income areas?
- Is it true that special governmental incentives are given to certain ethnic groups to open certain stores and arcades in predominantly black and brown neighborhoods?
- What can be done for the hanging out in front of stores all day and all night that post "No Loitering"?
- What is it that we want?
 - Regular inspections and proper licensure of approved establishments
 - Crackdown on unlicensed establishments or those out of compliance
 - A clear understanding of the role of the sheriff and our local police department concerning arcades
 - Establishments that have a license to run an arcade clearly display ARCADE signs and ones that tell any patron "NO CASH TO PLAY"
 - Ensure stores and eating establishments are inspected routinely not only by code enforcement but also health department and other licensing agencies.
 - Law enforcement officers to be more visible in and around these establishments to curb prostitution, and food stamp fraud. Perhaps the city can have the a law enforcement partnership with the sheriff to have a business code law enforcement officer whose role is to insure business

owners maintain a bonifide business and not so much to shut them down.
Businesses out of compliance must be shut down. No exceptions.
Better informing of citizens by letter when new businesses and new business
owners are seeking approval to open a business or a new business within a
business. (Smoke houses, vapors, etc.)
Understanding the impact the closing of these illegal arcades/stores will have on the
surrounding residents
Having commitments from business owners to use local residents when ever
possible for jobs,
Determine the extent these businesses give back to the community?
Provide the necessary resources so that the police department can see these
concerns as a priority in our community.
And So much more!!!!

We realize this is a long laundry list of concerns; they are, however, our concerns. We look forward to discussing these concerns and discussing how we can better have a safer community. As you can see the use of the Public Comment Section of the City Commission's agenda would not have allowed us the opportunity to fully discuss this concern. Therefore, I am sending the City Commissioners a copy of these concerns and perhaps as you said, "This may initiate discussion by the Commission to further explore this matter".

I look forward to hearing from you. Please feel free to contact me.

You are blessed,



Dr. Pinkie W. Hendley