

From: [J H](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Edward Lavalley](#); [Kelly Fernandez](#)
Cc: [Jen Ahearn-Koch](#)
Subject: Ordinance 2020-11 included in Agenda 4/14/2020
Date: Monday, April 13, 2020 10:21:13 AM

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

I am writing today in reference to the poor timing of proposed Ordinance 2020-11, Camping and Storage of Personal Property on Public Property. The memorandum associated with this ordinance states:

"In 2017, Sarasota County convened meetings with the staff of each municipality in the County, the Sheriff's Office, State Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, and representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union and Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness to collect input on a draft Quality of Life ordinance. The goal was for each municipality to have uniformity in their ordinances, removing conflicts or gaps, with a County ordinance. The County adopted the final version of the ordinance on November 14, 2017. The attached proposed Ordinance is substantively identical to the County's ordinance. "

The final version of the county ordinance dates back to November 14, 2017; during the ensuing 2 1/2 year period the United States continued on a path of expansion such that unemployment by December 2019 was among the lowest percentage ever recorded. During that time of alleged abundance, the city did not see a necessity to pass an ordinance like 2020-11. Now that we face an unemployment rate that may exceed that of the Great Depression, an ordinance such as this finds its way to the agenda for council consideration.

I think it is a foregone conclusion that the longer COVID-19 plagues our world, the greater the chance of increasing the homeless population, not only in Venice, but country wide. The city should be looking at ways to help the less fortunate, not ways to make life more difficult for them. The timing of this ordinance is reprehensible and I respectfully ask that you preferably vote against its passage or at a minimum postpone action on it until such time as this country returns to a state of normalcy. I would ask that you communicate with the county, City of Sarasota and City of North Port to form a united front to help those in need and not take punitive actions against those who can least afford it.

In addition, I ask that council discuss the possibility of contributing some funds to the United Way of South Sarasota County (UWSSC) per an email to Mayor Feinsod on March 17, 2020 from Barbara Cruz, CEO UWSSC; that email is copied here:

From: Barbara Cruz <Barbara@uwssc.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 9:37:37 AM
To: Ron Feinsod <RFeinsod@Venicegov.com>
Subject: Possibly establishing a United Way South County COVID19 relief fund

Caution: This email originated from an external source. **Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links and Requests for Login Information**

Good morning Mayor Feinsod!

United Way of South Sarasota County is contemplating establishing a COVID19 relief fund for our South County Community so I am reaching out to community leaders like you to see if there would be support for the fund. At this point I recognize that you may not know at this time what if any resources could be committed to the fund but wanted to ask if this is something the City of Venice could get behind in ANY capacity.

I have made similar requests to other community leaders and hope to pull together a conference call within the next few days. As you I'm sure are aware time is of the essence, so if you could let me know your thoughts quickly I would greatly appreciate it.

Warm regards,

Barbara Cruz, President & CEO
United Way South Sarasota County
157 Havana Road, Venice, FL 34292
Office: 941-484-4811, Cell: 941-525-4061
Barbara@uwssc.com
www.uwssc.org

"United Way of South Sarasota County, a community fund for our neighbors in need."

UWSSC did establish a relief fund, but I have not heard any council discussion in regard to anything the city is going to do, nor have I seen anything on the server other than Mayor Feinsod's initial response copied here:

Ron Feinsod <RFeinsod@Venicegov.com>
Tue 3/17/2020 11:34 AM

Barbara Cruz <Barbara@uwssc.com>

Thanks for reaching out to me about this. I would be interested in finding out what possibilities there are for working together to help the people in our communities who are affected by the issues related to Covid19.
Please keep me informed.
Regards
Mayor Ron Feinsod

Perhaps the mayor could comment on the discussion he may have had with Ms. Cruz. The City of Venice has not been a contributor to UWSSC in a meaningful way and this may be a chance to change that. I look forward to listening to your discussions and I am hopeful that you will continue to make wise decisions in regard to the homeless and to those who are in financial distress and may become the next wave of homeless citizens.

Respectfully,

John Holic

Resident, City of Venice