



MEMORANDUM

Date: February 24, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Commissioners

Via: Brian L. Barroso
City Manager

From: Kelli Funkhouser
Special Events Manager

Subject: **{File 25-3396} Recommendation to Approve the “The 43rd Annual Conch Republic Independence Celebration 2025 from April 19, 2025, through April 26, 2025**

Introduction

The City Manager’s Office requests the approval of the Annual “43rd Annual Conch Republic Independence Celebration”, which consists of numerous events during April 19, 2025, through April 26, 2025.

Background

The City Manager’s Office has received an application for the “43rd Annual Conch Republic Independence Celebration” for numerous events and at different locations through town starting on April 19th and ending on April 26th, 2025. This will be their 43rd Annual event and it is benefiting many local nonprofits charities. This event is free to the public. The Conch Republic was born on April 23, 1982, in response to a United States Border Patrol blockade of the Florida Keys. Since the United States insisted on treating the Keys like a foreign country, Mayor Dennis Wardlow seceded from Union. Today we stand proudly as a community of who have “Sovereign State of mind” and as the People who seceded where others have failed.” The seventeen mile traffic jam immediately ensued as the Border Patrol stopped every car leaving or entering the keys, supposedly searching for illegal drugs and aliens who might be hiding under the front seats and trunks and thus the Conch Republic was born.

There are a total of 6 events under the Conch Republic Independence Celebration Resolution:

Conch Republic Drag Races – Saturday, April 19, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the 700 block of Duval Street

Conch Republic Independence Street Fair – Saturday, April 19, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Duval Street between Eaton and Greene Streets

Conch Republic the World’s Looooongest Parade – Thursday, April 24, 2025, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Duval Street South to Greene Street

Conch Republic Military Salute Naval Parade & Sea Battle – Friday, April 25, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the T Pier at Mallory Square

Conch Republic Bed Races – Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Duval Street between Olivia and Southard Street

Conch Republic Brawl on Duval Street, Saturday, April 26, 2025, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on 200 block of Duval Street

Procurement

There will be no additional expenses to the city as all service costs (Police/Fire/Community Services) are covered by the applicant, based on the Special Event Matrix.

Recommendation

The City Manager’s Office recommends the Mayor & City Commission approve the “43rd Annual Conch Republic Independence Celebration” starting on April 19 to April 26, 2025.