

## Memorandum

**To:** JP Murphy  
**From:** Stefan Massol and Micah Badana  
**Date:** 5/12/2017  
**Re:** Sign Ordinances

### Sample Selected

For this study, staff examined the sign ordinances in Belleair against those in the following municipalities: Dunedin, Gulfport, Clearwater, Largo, Belleair Bluffs, Indian Rocks Beach, Belleair Shore, Belleair Beach, and Redington Beach.

### Pertinent Sign Types

Staff confined the study to 1) garage/yard sale signs, 2) political campaign/election signs, 3) real estate signs, and 4) banner signs.

### Parameters Identified

The key parameters staff identified for sign ordinances include 1) permit requirement, 2) number, 3) location on property, 4) maximum sign area, 5) maximum height, 6) illumination restrictions, 7) off-site posting, 8) right-of-way posting, 9) setbacks, 10) duration of display.

### Key Findings

Staff has reviewed the parameters identified in ordinances for the sample of municipalities selected and compared them against the Belleair sign ordinance. Generally, Belleair's current sign ordinance is comparable to those in other nearby municipalities. During this study, staff observed two items as improvements to the current ordinance: 1) include specifying an amount of time prior to an election that signs may be posted and 2) allowing only one sign per candidate or issue. Some municipal ordinances did not address every parameter identified by staff. Below is a summary of findings for each sign type:

#### 1) Garage/Yard Sale Signs:

Permits are neither required for garage sale signs in Belleair, nor in any other municipality studied but Belleair Shore. All municipalities allow only one sign on the parcel of the garage sale, and only Clearwater allows directional signs for this purpose (a maximum of two off-site directional signs that must be located on private property). Maximum sign area in Belleair is six square feet with no individual sign exceeding five square feet and in our local sample ranges between two and six square feet. Maximum height in Belleair for residential signs is four feet, and in our sample ranges from two to six feet. Most municipalities, including Belleair, forbid sign placement in the right-of-way or place more stringent criteria on such signs prior to city approval (i.e. Clearwater requires city manager

approval, and Largo requires a letter of no objection from the electric utility for any sign located within ten feet of rights-of-way or a utility easement). Setback requirements range from five to twenty feet from the road or public right-of-way, and Belleair requires a setback of ten feet. Signs may only be displayed during daylight hours in some municipalities or during hours of operation, however all require that the signs be removed when the yard sale is complete. Belleair does not require that signs be taken down at night, however it is required that they be removed 48 hours after the event to which the sign pertains. While some places allow as many as two days of yard sale per calendar month, others limit frequency to once per six months. Belleair restricts frequency to once per year, which is the most restrictive.

## **2) Political Campaign/Election Signs (Single-Family):**

Belleair does not require permits for these and the same is true for all other municipalities studied. Most municipalities allow only one sign for each candidate or issue located on each parcel, however Belleair does not limit the number of signs per candidate or issue. Maximum sign area in Belleair is six square feet with no single sign exceeding five square feet and in other municipalities ranges between two and 32 square feet in the sample, but most are between four and six square feet in the sample selected. Maximum height in Belleair is four feet and for the other municipalities ranges from twenty inches to eight feet. Illumination is forbidden by some, and only allowed by others, including Belleair, when there is no flashing or color changing and require that shields be installed to minimize the safety impact to drivers. Belleair and many municipalities forbid sign placement in the right-of-way or place more stringent criteria on such signs prior to city approval, and Largo requires a letter of no objection from the electric utility for any sign located within ten feet of rights-of-way or a utility easement. Setback requirements range from five to twenty feet from the road or public right-of-way, and the setbacks in Belleair are ten feet. Starting dates for posting range from 45 to 60 days preceding an election however all require that signs be removed by three to seven days following an election. Belleair does not have restrictions on the time before an election that a political sign may be erected.

## **3) A) Real Estate Signs (Single-Family):**

Permits are not required for these in Belleair or any municipalities studied. All municipalities allow only one sign for each lot, however Belleair allows an additional sign that shall not exceed five square feet in size and four feet in height (and must not be more than three feet apart from any other temporary sign on the property). Maximum sign area ranges between two and six square feet in the sample selected and in Belleair it is four square feet. Maximum height for these range from twenty inches to five feet and in Belleair is four feet. Illumination is forbidden by some, and only allowed by others, including Belleair, when there is no flashing or color changing and require that shields be installed to minimize the safety impact to drivers. Many municipalities, including Belleair, forbid sign placement in the right-of-way or place more stringent criteria on such signs prior to city approval, and Largo requires a letter of no objection from the electric utility for any sign located within ten feet of rights-of-way or a utility easement. Setback requirements range from five to twenty feet from the road or public right-of-way, and the setbacks in Belleair are ten feet. Signs must be removed once a property is sold or rented and the sign is no longer relevant in all municipalities.

## **B) Real Estate Signs (Multifamily):**

Permits are not required for these in most municipalities. All other municipalities allow only one sign for each lot, however Belleair allows an additional sign that shall not exceed five square feet in size and four feet in height (and must not be more than three feet apart from any other temporary sign on the property). Maximum sign area ranges between two and 40 square feet in the sample selected, and in Belleair it is six square feet per 100 feet of frontage up to 24 square feet. Maximum height for these range from twenty inches to eight feet, and in Belleair it is six feet. Illumination is forbidden by some, and only allowed by others, including Belleair, when there is no flashing or color changing and

require that shields be installed to minimize the safety impact to drivers. Many municipalities forbid sign placement in the right-of-way, including Belleair, and Largo requires a letter of no objection from Florida Power Corporation for any sign located within ten feet of rights-of-way or a utility easement. Setback requirements range from five to twenty feet from the road or public right-of-way, and the setbacks are ten feet in Belleair. Signs must be removed once a property is sold or rented and the sign is no longer relevant.

#### **4) Banner Signs:**

Permits are required by some and not for others (many only allow them on commercial parcels). Belleair allows these banners only with the permission of the Town Manager for a prescribed period of time. Most municipalities allow only one sign for each unit for sale or rent. Maximum sign area ranges between two and 32 sq. ft. in the sample selected. Maximum height for these range from twenty inches to eight feet. Illumination is forbidden by some, and only allowed by others when there is no flashing or color changing and require that shields be installed to minimize the safety impact to drivers. Many municipalities forbid sign placement in the right-of-way, and Largo requires a letter of no objection from Florida Power Corporation for any sign located within ten feet of rights-of-way or a utility easement. Setback requirements range from ten to twenty feet from the road or public right-of-way. Signs must be removed after a 14-day period and frequency of posting is limited to 4 banner signs each year in Dunedin.