

City testing four-day work week for police officers

BY BELKYS PEREZ

The ever-changing physical and financial landscape of the City of Coral Gables has prompted city manager David L. Brown to approve law enforcement changes to better address the dynamics of the City Beautiful.

After careful consideration, discussion and study of incident reports, the Police Department proposed changing the schedules of its uniform police officers from a five-day to a four-day, 10-hour work week.

"The City of Coral Gables is heading into a very challenging year where we must continue to provide exceptional service to our residents despite our reduced budget," Brown said. "The new patrolling program helps address both issues."

The six-month trial period for the program already has shown significant cost effective savings to many areas of the budget. More importantly, it allows sergeants and officers more flexibility in patrolling areas that need special attention without leaving other areas unattended. This is achieved by the creation of two patrol shifts, which overlap during peak times. The measure puts 18 to 21 officers in the field during critical time frames instead of the traditional 11 to 12 officers. Besides the uniform patrol, there always is one unmarked vehicle in

every shift driving throughout the community.

A computer database and the department's intelligence information from investigations are tools used to determine where to deploy the officers while patrolling the rest of the city. Preliminary statistics show an increase in caught-in-the-act arrests by officers now proactively patrolling targeted areas.

"Coral Gables is unique in that there are commercial areas, single family residential, hi-rise living, and areas where all three are combined," said interim Police Chief Richard Naue. "Our patrolling methods must address the safety of all and this new patrolling method has so far shown positive results."

The 4/10 was not adopted to meet budgetary constraints; it is a program the city's law enforcement leaders believe provides a more comprehensive level of service to the residents of Coral Gables. The four-day, 10-hour work week trial period is ongoing and its impact on crime is being reviewed for permanent consideration.

The Police Department wants to stress the importance of reporting crimes and suspicious activities no matter how insignificant it may seem. The community's help is important component to tracking trends and proactively patrolling.

The Police Department's non-emergency number is 305-442-1600.

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whose primary responsibility is to ensure that their network is up and running, all of the time, no matter what. At SYMBITS, we don't "call in sick", and we are always accessible 24/7/365.

3) What was your very first job and how has it affected your business style today? Mowing yards and washing cars at age 10. These jobs taught me that the combination of hard work, dedication, and timing, allow you to make your own luck.

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4) What office gadget could you not live without and why? You are asking a gadget freak to pick only one gadget! If I had to do that, it would have to be my Black Berry. I am sure many others out there would agree.

5) Where's your favorite place to have a lunch meeting and why? I am easy! My favorite place for a lunch meeting is any place that has good food and an atmosphere that allows for a good chat. The Gables has many great places that accomplish both of those requirements!

Q&A

1) What's your favorite part of your job? What I enjoy most about my role and the overall culture at SYMBITS is developing long term, trusted relationships with each of our customers. This mindset allows us to positively impact their businesses in a way that can't be easily replicated.

2) Name one thing that you wish others knew about your business and/or industry? I wish that all small and medium size businesses knew

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