

ST. PETERSBURG CITY COUNCIL
Consent Agenda
Meeting of January 24, 2008

TO: The Honorable James Bennett, Chair and Members of City Council

SUBJECT: Authorizing the Mayor or his designee to execute a Letter Agreement with the Tampa Bay Rays to allow the playing of up to three (3) MLB regular season games during the 2008 season to be played at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex.

EXPLANATION: The Tampa Bay Rays ("the Rays") have requested, in a letter to the City dated January 9, 2008, to play up to three home games during the 2008 Major League Baseball regular season at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex, located in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. This is a similar request to the one that the Club made during the 2007 season. The Rays are making this request because they believe that building a wider regional fan base will lead to long-term success of the Club in St. Petersburg. The Rays commitment to expand their regional market base is consistent with their earlier decision to relocate spring training operations to Charlotte County in 2009 or 2010. The Rays have also emphasized in the attached letter that their "...desire to play home games at the Disney Complex in 2008 has absolutely no connection with the proposals currently under discussion regarding the construction of a new ballpark in downtown St. Petersburg and the redevelopment of the Tropicana Field site".

The Rays have offered the following conditions for the relocation of the 2008 games to the Disney Complex:

- Relocated games will only be games currently scheduled to be played on Monday through Thursday and will not include games against the Yankees, Red Sox, Tigers, or any National League opponent.
- The City will receive compensation for its share of ticket stub revenue for the relocated games based upon the average per game attendance for all Monday through Thursday games played at Tropicana Field during the 2007 MLB season.
- The City will receive 20 field box seats and 6 suite level seats for each relocated game at the Disney Complex, plus one parking pass for every 2 tickets provided.
- The Rays will work with the St. Petersburg/Clearwater CVB to promote Tropicana Field, the City of St. Petersburg, and Pinellas County beaches as tourist destinations during all games played at the Disney Complex.

In addition to the above conditions, which are consistent with what was requested by the City for the relocation of the 2007 season games, the Rays have agreed to include two additional conditions for the 2008 request:

- Extension of the City's use of the Home Plate Rotator Board at Tropicana Field to market the City of St. Petersburg for one-half inning during each 2008 Regular Season home game (the City's use of the Rotator Board expired at the end of the 2007 season).
- City use, at no cost, of Progress Energy Park from April 3 through April 6, 2008 and from April 2 through April 5, 2009 in support of the 2008 and 2009 Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg.

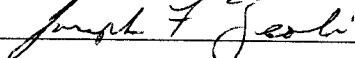
The Rays acknowledge that this request pertains only to the 2008 MLB regular season and is not intended to apply for future years.

RECOMMENDATION: City Administration recommends approval of the attached Resolution authorizing the Mayor, or his designee, to execute a Letter Agreement with the Rays to allow the relocation of up to 3 regular season MLB games during the 2008 season.

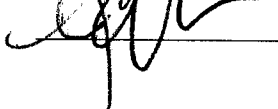
COST/FUNDING/ASSESSMENT INFORMATION: No cost implications to the City.

ATTACHMENTS: Letter Agreement from the Rays dated January 10, 2008
Proposed Resolution

APPROVALS:

Administration: 

Budget: n/a

Legal: 

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, OR HIS DESIGNEE, TO EXECUTE A LETTER AGREEMENT WITH THE TAMPA BAY RAYS ("RAYS") TO ALLOW THE PLAYING OF UP TO THREE (3) 2008 MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL REGULAR SEASON GAMES AT THE DISNEY WIDE WORLD OF SPORTS COMPLEX LOCATED IN LAKE BUENA VISTA, FLORIDA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, The Tampa Bay Rays ("the Rays") have requested consent from the City of St. Petersburg ("the City") pursuant to Section 20.04(c) of the Agreement for the Use, Management and Operation of the Domed Stadium in St. Petersburg, including the Provision of Major League Baseball ("MLB"), as amended ("the Agreement") so that the Rays may play up to three (3) home games during the 2008 MLB regular season at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex located in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, and

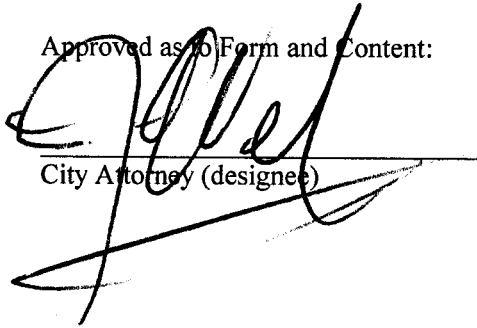
WHEREAS, the City is agreeable to this request subject to certain conditions.

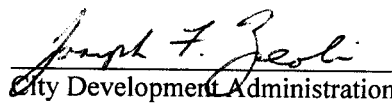
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida hereby authorizes the Mayor or his designee to execute a Letter Agreement with the Tampa Bay Rays to allow the playing of up to three (3) 2008 MLB regular season games at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex located in Lake Buena Vista, Florida in consideration of and subject to the following conditions:

1. Relocated games will only be games currently scheduled to be played on Monday through Thursday and will not include games against the Yankees, Red Sox, Tigers, or any National League opponent.
2. The City will receive compensation for its share of ticket stub revenue for the relocated games based upon the average per game attendance for all Monday through Thursday games played at Tropicana Field during the 2007 MLB season.
3. The City will receive 20 field box seats and 6 suite level seats for each relocated game at the Disney Complex, plus one parking pass for every 2 tickets provided.
4. The Rays will work with the St. Petersburg/Clearwater CVB to promote Tropicana Field, the City of St. Petersburg, and Pinellas County beaches as tourist destinations during all games played at the Disney Complex.
5. The Rays agree to extend the City's use of the Home Plate Rotator Board at Tropicana Field to market the City of St. Petersburg for one-half inning during each 2008 Regular Season home game.
6. The City will be able to use Progress Energy Park at no cost from April 3 through April 6, 2008 and from April 2 through April 5, 2009 in support of the 2008 and 2009 Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg.
7. The Rays acknowledge that this request pertains only to the 2008 MLB regular season and is not intended to apply to future years, and further acknowledge that the granting of this request in no way represents a waiver of, or sets a precedent with respect to, the City's rights under the Agreement.

This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

Approved as to Form and Content:


City Attorney (designee)


City Development Administration



RAYSBASEBALL.COM

January 10, 2008

Mayor Rick Baker
 City of St. Petersburg
 P.O. Box 2842
 St. Petersburg, FL 33731-2842

RECEIVED
 CITY DEVELOPMENT
 ADMINISTRATION

JAN 10 2008

AM 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 PM

Re: Request for City Consent to Playing of Home Games at the Disney Complex

Dear Mayor Baker:

I am writing to request that the City of St. Petersburg ("the City") provide its consent, pursuant to Section 2.04(c) of the Agreement for the Use, Management and Operation of the Domed Stadium in St. Petersburg, Including the Provision of Major League Baseball, as amended (the "Agreement"), between the Tampa Bay Rays (formerly known as the Tampa Bay Devil Rays) (the "Rays") and the City, so as to allow the Rays to play up to three (3) home games during the 2008 Major League Baseball ("MLB") regular season at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex ("Disney Complex"), located in Lake Buena Vista, Florida.

As you know, the Rays believe that building a wider, regional base of support is essential to the growth and development of our organization. This belief was a major impetus behind our decisions to move spring training operations to Charlotte County in 2009 and to play three games at the Disney Complex in 2007. It is also what is driving our desire to play one midweek homestand at the Disney Complex in 2008.

At the same time, we understand that our decision to move these games to the Disney Complex will not come without cost to the City. Therefore, in consideration for the granting of our request, we agree to the following conditions:

- Games relocated from Tropicana Field will only be games currently scheduled to be played on Monday through Thursday and will not include games against the Yankees, Red Sox, Tigers or any National League opponent
- The City will be compensated for its share of ticket stub revenue for each game not played at Tropicana Field based on the average per game attendance for all Monday through Thursday games played at Tropicana Field during the 2007 MLB regular season
- The City will receive twenty (20) field box seats and six (6) suite level seats for each regular season game played at the Disney Complex, plus one (1) parking pass for every two (2) tickets provided herein
- The Rays will work with the St. Petersburg/Clearwater Convention and Visitors Bureau to actively promote Tropicana Field, downtown St. Petersburg, and Pinellas County beaches as tourist destinations during all games played at the Disney Complex
- The Rays will use this opportunity to build a wider regional fan base
- The City will receive use of the Home Plate Rotator Board at Tropicana Field to market the City of St. Petersburg for one half-inning during each 2008 Regular Season Home Game
- The Rays will allow City use of Progress Energy Park at no cost from April 3 through April 6, 2008 and from April 2 through April 5, 2009 in support of the 2008 and 2009 Honda Grand Prix of St. Petersburg
- The Rays acknowledge that this request pertains only to the 2008 MLB regular season and is not intended to apply for future years
- The Rays acknowledge that the granting of this request in no way represents a waiver of, or sets a precedent with respect to, the City's rights under the Agreement

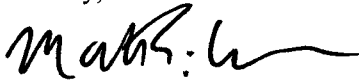
Mayor Rick Baker
January 10, 2008
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I want to reiterate that St. Petersburg is now and will continue to be our home and that the Rays remain committed to our obligations under the Agreement. I also wish to emphasize that our desire to play home games at the Disney Complex in 2008 has absolutely no connection with the proposals currently under discussion regarding the construction of a new ballpark in downtown St. Petersburg and the redevelopment of the Tropicana Field site.

We truly value the City's partnership with the Rays. The successes we achieve in extending our fan base will continue to benefit St. Petersburg through both increased exposure for the City and the attraction of thousands of new visitors from around the region to Tropicana Field and its downtown environs.

Please feel free to contact me at (727) 825-3337 if you have any questions or concerns. If these terms are acceptable to the City, please sign below and return a copy to me.

Sincerely,



Matt Silverman
President

The above terms are hereby accepted by the City

Mayor Rick Baker (or designee)

cc: Michael Kalt
John Higgins
Rick Mussett, Senior Administrator, City Development Administration