

# 2006 Florida Cities of Excellence Awards Program ▶ Nomination Form

Category (Please check one) See Award Criteria for more information. Please print or type. One nomination per page.

**FLORIDA CITY OF EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Name of Municipality Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY SPIRIT AWARD**

Name of Municipality Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated Project \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**MAYOR OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY MANAGER OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated MARTIN P. BLACK, City of Venice

Nominated by City of Venice Mayor and City Council

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY CLERK OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY FINANCE OFFICIAL (DIRECTOR OR OFFICER) OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

**CITY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR**

Name of Individual Nominated \_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of City/Town/Village)

[ OVER ]

# Person Completing Nomination Form

Please print or type.

Name Pam Johnson  
Title Public Information Officer  
Government City of Venice  
Address 401 W. Venice Ave.  
Telephone Number (941) 486-2626 x 2003 Fax (941) 486-2790  
E-mail Address pjohnso@ci.venice.fl.us

## Nomination Certification

This nomination has been voted on and approved by a majority of the city council/commission.

Signed Lori Selzer  
City Clerk

The judges will use the narrative and supportive information to select the award winners. Nominators/nominees are asked not to contact the judges directly.

## Narrative

In the narrative, please be clear and concise, using the Award Criteria to support the selection of your nominee. Please type (or print in black ink), up to 1,200 words, double-spaced on white 8-1/2" x 11" paper.

## Supportive Information

Up to 10 pages of supportive information (newspaper clippings, photographs, letters from constituents, etc.), on 8-1/2" x 11" paper (single-sided) may be provided. Please do not include videotapes, DVDs, CDs or Power-Point presentations.

Submit nominations by **August 18, 2006:**

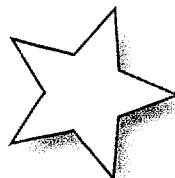
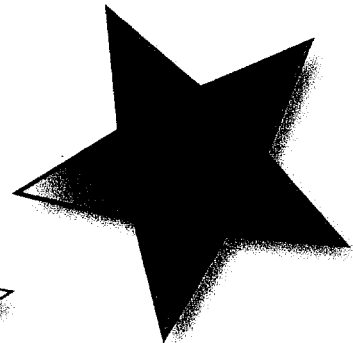
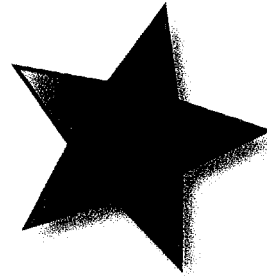
Florida League of Cities, Inc.

Attn: Florida Cities of Excellence

301 S. Bronough Street, Suite 300 (32301)

P.O. Box 1757

Tallahassee, FL 32302-1757



## Florida League of Cities Excellence Awards

### Nomination for City Manager of the Year: Martin P. Black, City of Venice

On June 13, 2006, the City of Venice Mayor and City Council voted unanimously to nominate City Manager Martin P. Black for the honor of the City Manager of the Year Award. It is with pride and pleasure we submit his considerable qualifications for this prestigious award.

Mr. Black began his service to the Venice community in a time of crisis brought about by utilities employees who violated state and federal environmental protection laws. Among Mr. Black's first actions were securing a professional utility management firm and removing alleged violators from city employment. Over the course of the past year, Mr. Black further demonstrated his superior **judgment** and **decisive action** through negotiation and subsequent resolution of all issues with the federal government.

The result was a minimal fine, millions of dollars less than it could have been, and no civil penalties for the city. He achieved this result through a **proactive** and **innovative** approach creating a safer, more efficient and ethical environment. One interesting change of policy is that of reporting every spill to citizens and regulatory agencies regardless of size or impact.

Recently, the Sierra Club visited the city's water reclamation plant. "We found the city of Venice has a few things in abundance; sewage, city employees committed to maintaining open lines of communication with the community, honest appraisals of the challenges

that the city faces in treating wastewater and providing drinking water, and ideas on how to move forward and continue to improve municipal services,” said the club’s regional representative, Stuart DeCew.

“In approaching this problem, the Utilities Department exhibits exactly what every local community needs, transparency and honesty from their local officials,” he said.

As further tribute to his **integrity** and **professionalism**, the federal settlement included an unusual requirement: Mr. Black was named the city’s Compliance Officer to guarantee all regulatory agency criteria be met. Rather than limit training to utilities employees, Mr. Black developed an ethics-training program for all city employees. This **commitment** to educate and personally informing employees of his high expectations is typical of his management style.

Another example of his **initiative** is the incorporation of P.R.I.D.E. into the daily tasks of all city employees. This acronym represents the commitment of city employees to be Productive, Responsible, Innovative, Dedicated and Ethical when serving citizens and providing assistance to fellow employees. Mr. Black’s clear expectation is for the city’s first priority to be customer service. He models this behavior everyday through his **dedication and responsiveness to his customers, the citizens of Venice**. Despite his very heavy workload, he maintains an open-door policy and is available to citizens and staff members at every level. He personally responds to citizens and employees daily, ensuring follow-up assignments are immediately delegated along with expected

completion and notification dates. Mr. Black views these assignments as opportunities for growth and challenge, always reminding his staff he plans for success and will support and assist them when needed.

While Mr. Black is fiscally conservative, he recognizes that well-trained, valuable employees are recruited and retained, in part, through appropriate compensation. In order to ensure fair wages, Mr. Black engaged a professional consultant to complete a comprehensive wage and benefit study. This **dedication to employees** is apparent as he holds regular meetings to keep them informed and spends time with them working at their side in various jobs throughout the organization. He collected trash, patrolled the waterways, trimmed palm trees, and wore a Kevlar vest during a night-shift arrest with police officers, learning first-hand what they do when they are working.

Like other cities across the nation that are finding they must do more with less, Venice is always seeking more efficient returns for money spent. Mr. Black is implementing the Balanced Scorecard system of performance management to help identify the means for continuing the city's high service levels while maintaining healthy general and enterprise fund balances through a cost-effective and efficient business plan. The city's participation in the Florida Benchmarking Consortium provides the opportunity to make service and cost comparisons across Florida.

Mr. Black's **personal and professional integrity** requires an **informed public**. Over the past year he has completed more than 20 public presentations to service clubs and

community organizations. These speaking engagements are usually outside normal work hours on a wide variety of topics ranging from specific neighborhood concerns through forum discussions on regional or state issues. Mr. Black takes special pleasure in these opportunities to meet with citizens and share ideas. He also briefs citizens through a semi-annual City Manager's Report, which appears on the city's Web site: [www.venicegov.com](http://www.venicegov.com). He holds a weekly media briefing to help reporters, and ultimately their readers and viewers, understand the intricacies of the decision making of their local government.

In addition to being a credentialed city manager through the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Mr. Black is also a nationally certified planner (AICP). His dedication to community involvement led to coordinating with planning staff to develop the Envision Venice process. The Envision Venice project incorporated state growth management requirements in an **innovative** community planning approach. It won the Florida Planning and Zoning Association's annual Project Achievement Award for Outstanding Innovation this year.

Recognizing the city's vulnerability to extreme weather events due to its coastal location, Mr. Black implemented several **initiatives** to mitigate negative impacts and protect citizens and their private and public investments. Last year, the city obtained a National Flood Insurance program community rating of six, making it one of the top 100 rated communities in the nation.

Mr. Black also added the following programs:

- Code Red: a telephone system designed to make emergency announcements to all citizens of Venice within a few hours.
- Post-emergency response team: staging city employees (not directly related to emergency services), who will begin distribution of food and water immediately following an emergency event.

Part of the preparation and response is being a good neighbor. The city manager of the city of Naples came to Venice to thank Mr. Black for sending two generators and operating crews immediately after Hurricane Wilma struck.

Mr. Black is restructuring the organization for greater efficiency and to create a risk and safety services division in his department. Its duties will be coordinating pre- and post-disaster response and emergency preparedness within the community, as well as management of organizational safety and OSHA compliance. Another facet of his plan is the smooth transition and succession of leadership as several long-time key personnel approach retirement.

His accomplishments at work are reflected in other parts of his life. His first priority is his family and providing quality opportunities for the future of his two teen-age sons. He is a Boy Scout troop leader and a member of the Venice-Nokomis Rotary Club.

He participates in several professional organizations, including the ICMA acting managers task force, the Florida City/County Management Association, and the American Planning Association. This year, Mr. Black was a presenter at the National League of Cities conference and served as a judge for the Sarasota County Economic Development Awards program.

**SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION ATTACHED:**

Newspaper Clipping

Excerpts from the City Manager's Summary Annual Report

(The entire report is available at [www.venicegov.com](http://www.venicegov.com)).