

# City postpones contract renewal for lakes study

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OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

WINTER PARK — The city will wait for at least a month before it decides whether to give Rollins College a contract to study the city's lakes for a third year.

As it did a year ago, the city commission Monday expressed dissatisfaction with the data submitted by Rollins as the result of its study.

Mayor Hope Strong Jr. said he would like a report that clearly tells the city what it is supposed to do to improve the lakes' condition. Last year after a similar request the study team of James Small Jr. and David Richard, of the biology department, told the city the lakes would benefit if less trash went into them from storm drains.

As a result, Winter Park is installing drainage traps at the end of six storm drains in Lake Virginia. It also is improving its street sweeping program to collect more debris before it enters the drains.

Strong said the city could wait until these measures have been in effect for a year before resuming the lakes study.

City Commissioner Peter Gottfried, a professional environmentalist, said unless information is collected regularly it is difficult to know why certain changes occur in the lakes.

But Gottfried questioned the \$32,684 being charged by Rollins for the study of lakes Virginia, Mizell, Osceola and Maitland. Altamonte Springs has a \$31,000 contract with a private company for the study of 13 lakes. It got its contract through competi-

tive bidding.

"Are we getting the best cost?" Gottfried asked.

Small said because Rollins is a school, not a company, it could not aggressively reduce costs to get a contract. He said the city is getting a more in-depth study and more precise test results by using Rollins than he believes it would get with a private company.

If Winter Park were to concentrate its study on Lake Virginia it might be able to reduce the cost. Small said the city gains little additional information about the condition of its lakes by studying the other three lakes.

"I'm really not upset whichever way you go. I have more than enough things to be doing. But I'm very happy to continue," Small said.

The city is exploring the possibility of dredging muck from Lake Virginia, a costly project requiring state and federal permits. Test data must be submitted to support permit applications, Small said.

"I think if you are going to get into a project to dredge a lake as an experimental thing, you need a regular monitoring of it," Small said.

The commission agreed to have Gottfried meet with Small and the city's lakes and waterways board to work out how the study can be better conducted.

Gottfried will report the results of that discussion to the commission and it will wait until Rollins submits its final report on this year's study before deciding on renewing the contract for a full year. Meanwhile, Rollins will keep testing the lakes monthly.