

CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: Thursday, September 26, 2019
TIME: 9:04 a.m. - 11:43 a.m.
PLACE: Jacksonville City Council Chamber
First Floor
City Hall at St. James Building
117 West Duval Street
Jacksonville, Florida 32202

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lindsey Brock, Chairperson
Ann-Marie Knight, Vice Chairperson
Jessica Baker, Board Member
Frank Denton, Board Member
Charles Griggs, Board Member
Chris Hagan, Board Member
Heidi Jameson, Board Member
Emily Lisska, Board Member
Celestine Mills, Board Member
Betzy Santiago, Board Member
Hon. Matt Schellenberg, Board Member
Hon. Ronald V. Swanson, Board Member

ALSO PRESENT:

CRC Staff:

Carol Owens, Chief of Legislative Services
Jessica Smith, Legislative Assistant
Anthony Baltiero, Council Research
Jeff Clements, Council Research
Paige Johnston, Office of General Counsel
William Coffee, Information systems
administrator.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: We're going to
3 begin. I will call the meeting to order at
4 9:04. I want to thank everyone. And we
5 will start off with approval of the minutes.

6 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: So moved.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Any discussion?

8 All in favor, aye.

9 COLLECTIVELY: Aye.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Any opposed?

11 All right. The meeting minutes are
12 accepted.

13 Remarks from the Chair, those of you who
14 watched, I believe, as Ms. Lisska did to the
15 bitter end --

16 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: I did.

17 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I'm still Chair and
18 a member.

19 And more importantly, we have Judge
20 Swanson, who has joined our ranks. So I
21 can't remember if I had you do what I asked
22 everyone else to do, which is tell us a fun
23 fact about you that is not on your résumé,
24 it's just something that, wow, you know, let
25 me tell you this.

1 Hit the white mike button and then --

2 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Okay. Got it.

3 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Put you on the spot.

4 Now you know how it feels for us attorneys.

5 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: I went to
6 undergraduate school in Tallahassee at
7 Florida State. And in 1967 I met my wife at
8 a keg party. She was out on a date with my
9 roommate. He was six-five and she's
10 five-foot-one. And I asked him after he was
11 out with her if he'd mind if I asked her
12 out. And he said, heck, no, man, that girl
13 doesn't even come up to my chest. So that's
14 a fun fact.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: That's awesome.

16 That's great. Thank you.

17 A bit of scheduling that I wanted to go
18 over. As Former Councilman Schellenberg
19 indicated, the date that I was looking at
20 for our town hall was October 9, and that
21 was a -- excuse me, was it October 9? Yeah,
22 October 9. And that was a -- had a conflict
23 with Yom Kippur and Wednesday services for
24 many. So the next one that I was going to
25 look at to see if it met with everyone's

1 schedule was October 17, that's after our
2 meeting on the 15th, two days after, but it
3 will be before what I hope will be our
4 meeting to where we begin to rank our
5 priorities. And I don't have the calendar
6 where we had all marked good dates or bad
7 dates.

8 You do? Okay.

9 We would do it from 5- -- I believe we
10 said 5:30 to 7:00, hour and a half, or we
11 can do 5:30 to 7:30, two hours. That allows
12 people who would be coming in, but we would
13 do it at the main library downtown. And
14 we're good?

15 COMMISSIONER DENTON: I'm not.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: You're not and
17 you're not.

18 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: (Inaudible.)

19 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: For the 17th, the
20 evening of the 17th, you're okay?

21 COMMISSIONER MILLS: I'm okay. I can do
22 it.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay. Then we will
24 reach out to --

25 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: I won't be

1 here, but that's fine.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: So we would only
3 have two -- all right. So we will move
4 forward then with the 17th as our town hall.
5 And I'm going to do everything I can to make
6 sure that that date gets out there and that
7 people are aware of it so that hopefully we
8 will have a lot of input from the public on
9 that.

10 I also want to make sure everyone is
11 going over -- you should have your copy of
12 the topics. Again, what I'm hoping to be
13 able to do -- what I'm hoping to be able to
14 do is -- you'll notice we have broad topics
15 and then we have smaller bullet points
16 underneath. I'm trying to gather those
17 small bullet points under the broad topics.

18 My thought, and I wanted to get the
19 input from the Body on this, is that when we
20 are ranking, we will rank these broader
21 topics. And we will get -- because we have
22 so many smaller bullet points that will
23 probably fall underneath them, my thought is
24 that we'll have probably three that we say
25 we're going to work on for these broader

1 topics.

2 Underneath those broader topics will be
3 a lot of bullet points. Like, you'll see,
4 you know, with OGC we had several that had
5 fallen underneath it, government structure,
6 those types of things to where we have a lot
7 of different ideas within that.

8 Then we will have the subcommittees that
9 will be formed for each of those. And when
10 we're doing the committee work, again, it
11 will be much like what we're doing here,
12 we'll bring in folks to come and talk,
13 educate us, help us begin to see what areas
14 have the best traction where we can really
15 make a difference.

16 Then those subcommittees will be coming
17 back and reporting to the Body as a whole,
18 which means as a -- as an entire body, after
19 October, I believe, unless we see there is a
20 need to meet more often, then we will meet
21 as a whole once a month.

22 And we will have at that meeting all the
23 subcommittees will come back and report
24 where they are, what they're working on, get
25 feedback from all of us on those issues.

1 And then we can go back and do the committee
2 work that needs to be done. So our meetings
3 as a whole will simply be reporting back,
4 getting feedback from the other members on
5 the Commission and, you know, going through
6 that.

7 Now, our report is due the end of March,
8 but if your subcommittee says, you know
9 what, we think we've got it, we think we've
10 got our consensus, we've got our language
11 down and it's before then, we can go ahead
12 and lock that in and have that set so that
13 we're not scrambling at the end of March
14 trying to put together our final report.
15 Does that seem like a good process?

16 Mr. Denton.

17 COMMISSIONER DENTON: I assume your
18 number three broad topics is arbitrary and
19 aspirational --

20 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER DENTON: -- but that once
22 we start working through these, it might be
23 more. Otherwise, I think we might end up
24 trying to fit something that might not fit
25 under that broad topic. And if this group,

1 we decide we want to look into that area --
2 three seems a little small to me, but I
3 appreciate it as a goal.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: And you're exactly
5 correct. If when we go through the rankings
6 that the top two are very small, discreet
7 issues with a rifle view on it, then,
8 absolutely, we can certainly go through and
9 add more on to it. My concern is if we end
10 up with three broad shotgun ones with five
11 or six bullet points underneath there,
12 that's going to take a lot of committee work
13 to go through those.

14 So with that --

15 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Mr. Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Sorry. The three
18 broad topics, do you have at this point any
19 inclination where you would like to go with
20 that or is that something that we're going
21 to determine as we go?

22 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: So the three broad
23 topics, my goal is that next-to-the-last
24 meeting in October, we will have worked out
25 the language -- that's why I want everybody

1 to look at those topics, and then we can get
2 a fresh copy circulated around to everyone.
3 But that's why I want you to look at those
4 topics, because we're going to rank them.
5 You're going to say, this is my number one
6 priority. We're going to get our own little
7 experiment of rank choice voting. We're
8 going to go through and we're going to write
9 them number one, number two, number three.
10 And we're going to go through and we're
11 going to count them. And we're going to
12 say, okay, this one got the most number
13 ones. Then, okay, what is our number two,
14 does everybody agree with that.

15 And we're going to go through, and those
16 top three vote-getters, I want us to look at
17 those and say, do we think this is enough?
18 Or as Mr. Denton suggested, perhaps one of
19 these is very discreet and we can say, you
20 know what, we can get another broad topic in
21 there that we're looking at.

22 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Are you at all
23 concerned that our town -- our town hall
24 meeting is scheduled for the 17th -- it may
25 produce some significant information that

1 may require us to do additional work prior
2 to determining what our broad areas are, our
3 focus areas are?

4 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: That may occur. If
5 it does, we will deal with it at that time.
6 That's why I was trying to get us two
7 meetings before we would actually, you
8 know -- reserving those last two meetings of
9 October for the priorities. It may be that
10 you're exactly right, that we look at it and
11 come back and we're there on that third one
12 and we're saying, you know what, we need to
13 get some people in here or perhaps even
14 after the town hall meeting we can go ahead
15 and get people to come in and speak.

16 But at this point, that's the plan, but
17 as, you know, Mike Tyson says, Everybody has
18 a plan until they get punched in the face.
19 We'll see how it all works.

20 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Okay. My last
21 question is related to the town hall
22 meeting. Have you sort of thought through
23 what the format of that would be? Is it
24 just primarily a listening session for us?
25 Or is it give-and-take for us to ask

1 questions of the public? Or what are we
2 looking for? Are we looking for people to
3 come with ideas? Or they're coming to see
4 what we're doing?

5 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: My --

6 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Or is this a
7 meeting that we're conducting at the library
8 so people can have another opportunity to
9 participate in a formal CRC meeting?

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes. That is it.
11 It is designed -- my goal for it was to
12 simply have it be us listening to the
13 public. Obviously, if somebody has a
14 question, I'd like to keep the questions
15 down to a minimum so we can get the most
16 input from the public, but the goal is to
17 have that town hall meeting as us listening
18 to them.

19 We will pass out our topics, our broad
20 topics that we're looking at, so that
21 everyone has that there, the public does,
22 they'll have access to that and they'll be
23 able to look at it. But then it's for us to
24 listen to them.

25 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: Will there be a

1 format, structure and time limit for these
2 comments just so that we can get through
3 everybody in a short period of time?

4 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: My goal, again, is
5 to use the same as here, have a three-minute
6 time limit for those making public comment.
7 If we have questions and everything in
8 there, obviously, we'll extend the time for
9 any give-and-take, but that was my first
10 thoughts on it.

11 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Mr. Schellenberg.

13 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Thank you,
14 Chair. As I mentioned to you before the
15 meeting, I just wanted to update you. I
16 spoke to Dr. Leon Haley. He sent me and I
17 think that Carol is going to forward to you
18 his presentation that he did to Jax USA
19 about six months, maybe a year ago, I can't
20 remember. But I think it's -- I'm not going
21 to tell you the direction, but the City owns
22 the facility. The City has to make a
23 commitment for infrastructure for the next
24 five years at \$15 million a year.

25 Operational-wise, though, if you look at

1 the numbers, it really -- our contribution
2 to them has basically been flat. It has
3 gone up, but basically been flat for like 25
4 years. And they take care of most of the
5 indigent in town.

6 So I think it's something that, if you
7 would read it -- I asked him if he wanted to
8 come today. He -- I said, no, why don't we
9 have an opportunity to read his program and
10 then we'll be prepared to ask some questions
11 when he does, in fact, come this next week,
12 or the next meeting.

13 I want to echo Frank's comment. I don't
14 want to do what the Florida Constitution
15 Revision did bundling all these things so
16 really no one knows what actually we're
17 voting for, and be more focussed. I also
18 believe this one town hall meeting will be
19 the first one, but as you break out to these
20 subcommittees, that's when you can get a lot
21 more input going forward for that specific
22 topic. Because some people might not be
23 interested in everything we're looking at,
24 but they might be interested in one idea.
25 So greatly appreciate your willing ness to

1 do all this, having multiple town hall
2 meetings in the future.

3 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: And I will add that
4 if your subcommittee believes that it would
5 be helpful for you to have a town hall
6 meeting for your subcommittee, you're more
7 than able to do that as well.

8 Ms. Lisska.

9 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Mr. Chairman, I'm
10 a little concerned about several of the
11 items under the big headings. So in many
12 cases some of these items, I think, need to
13 be looked at anyway, and yet the broad topic
14 may not come up as a priority. Is it
15 possible after we -- you know, can we maybe
16 create a list of items that don't come up
17 under a broad topic for this Commission to
18 take up as a whole, a body of the whole?

19 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Make it a list of
20 items that don't come up?

21 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: If we follow what
22 your charge roughly is, you haven't held us
23 to this, we pick three main topics, or
24 roughly three, and divide into committees,
25 so that leaves quite a bit of the list. And

1 there are some -- a cleanup issue or two,
2 there are a few other issues, where I
3 consider them the priority, I might not some
4 others. These are just issues under main
5 headings that perhaps we could take up if
6 they don't make the cut.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes. Again, the
8 goal of the ranking of the broader topics
9 assigned to the subcommittee is for that
10 subcommittee to be focused on that
11 overarching topic. So I hope that all the
12 subcommittees will stay in their lane on
13 that broader issue.

14 But the point of having those smaller
15 items underneath it is just a guidance of
16 saying, here are the things -- under this
17 topic, here are the things that we have
18 collectively said should be looked at under
19 that topic.

20 As you go through in your committee
21 work, you may say, okay, well, we've got
22 five items under here, but we really think
23 if we focus in on these two, that we can get
24 consensus and, you know, do that. But it
25 doesn't mean that you don't consider

1 anything that's not listed there.

2 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Or not in that --
3 well, you're saying stay in our lane, I
4 certainly understand that for a committee.
5 I'm talking about areas we do not select
6 that perhaps have a cleanup issue, an issue
7 of great importance but the major area is
8 not a priority. That's -- I'm really
9 talking about the areas that don't make the
10 cut, don't have a committee assigned.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Those areas would
12 not be taken up.

13 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Okay. I'm going
14 to spend some more time studying this and
15 pull out some items, if you don't mind.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Please do, please
17 do, because that's what I'm hoping, you
18 know, especially through these next few
19 meetings, that everybody is doing, so that
20 when we get down to the Commission updates
21 and discussion, is you can come in and say,
22 hey, I've gone through it, I'm looking at
23 this and I would like for us to break this
24 up.

25 I don't want to do formal, you know,

1 motions and votes. I prefer that we do that
2 kind of work on a consensus basis so that
3 we're all looking at it and saying, okay,
4 that makes sense, let's adjust the list that
5 way so that we've got a good, solid list
6 that we can all understand what it is, all
7 understand what each topic covers, and we
8 can then rank our priorities. All right.

9 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I don't see anyone
11 else on the queue, so we will go into our
12 first period of public comment. And I have
13 Ms. Bussard.

14 I apologize, I mispronounced your name
15 the first time. Give us your name and
16 address, please.

17 MS. BUSSARD: No problem. I want to
18 clean up a couple of comments made from the
19 last meeting, the Australian --

20 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Name and
21 address, please.

22 MS. BUSSARD: Oh, I'm sorry. Billee
23 Bussard, 2115 Forest Gate Drive East,
24 Jacksonville 32246.

25 I want to clean up a couple items from

1 the last meeting that people commented on,
2 they talked about Australian schools and the
3 number of nongovernmental schools that they
4 had. I studied this a little bit about 15
5 years ago and there was a lot of controversy
6 because it wound up that lobbying groups for
7 nongovernmental schools were very strong and
8 politically powerful. And those schools
9 wound up actually getting more money than
10 public schools. So I suggest if somebody is
11 suggesting that as a model, that they look
12 at it, look at the schools, the Australian
13 schools.

14 The other thing I did -- as I mentioned
15 to you, I've been trying for years to write
16 a book. As a result of the research I did
17 when I was a journalist looking at
18 education. And I made for you notes that I
19 had taken. It's kind of a timeline showing
20 you what set the stage for school
21 privatization and charters and the money
22 motives behind it. If anybody wants more
23 information or a list of books and
24 references, I'd be happy to give it to you.

25 The other thing is when -- I was

1 concerned about Jason Fischer's public
2 comments. In 2014 he was pressuring the
3 school boards to drop out of a race -- I
4 mean, drop out of a lawsuit about public
5 money, tax money in public schools. I --
6 prompted by no one but my concern, I did
7 this timeline showing Mr. Fischer's
8 connections to charter schools. And if you
9 look at his campaign contributions, you will
10 find a lot of the ties there. So I think we
11 have to look at some of this testimony with
12 a jaundiced eye. Am I done? I'm done.
13 Thank you and thank you for your patience
14 with me.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you very much.

16 Next we have Mr. Nooney.

17 Name and address, please, sir.

18 MR. NOONEY: Hello. My name is John
19 Nooney, 8356 Bascom Road, Jacksonville,
20 Florida 32216.

21 And I just want to start by saying we
22 need to make our Charter great again. I
23 pledge allegiance to the flag of the United
24 States of America, and to the republic for
25 which it stands, one nation under God,

1 indivisible, with liberty and justice for
2 all.

3 Now, we have so many boards and
4 commissions. And it just came to me that
5 here is the agenda for the Charter Revision
6 Commission and after call to order, we don't
7 have the Pledge of Allegiance.

8 Now, I have some handouts. And I was
9 just told it wasn't really time -- or -- but
10 I'll have to make them again. And I'll just
11 flip through it, but here is the agenda from
12 the July 31st Charter Revision Commission
13 and we don't have the Pledge of Allegiance
14 after the introduction by Council President
15 Scott Wilson and we didn't have public
16 comment.

17 Now, you open it up, and I'm just going
18 through some -- well, and the other thing
19 too is the time limit. I hope -- you know,
20 I'm just down to a-minute-20.

21 But here is a Task Force on Safety and
22 Crime Reduction. You know what, and on the
23 agenda, this is a subcommittee, we don't
24 have the Pledge of Allegiance. Here is
25 another one with the Waterways subcommittee,

1 we don't have the Pledge of Allegiance.

2 But yesterday -- and I'm just down to a
3 minute -- I attended the Council on Elder
4 Affairs yesterday right here, yesterday's
5 meeting, the Council of Elder Affairs, call
6 to order, the Pledge of Allegiance.

7 Councilman Sam Newby, at-large, Group 5, was
8 at the meeting, at the beginning and also at
9 the end of the meeting. And he addressed in
10 his remarks, at the beginning of the
11 meeting, about the greatest generation. And
12 here is the Pledge of Allegiance.

13 And so during public comment I just
14 simply said, Will the Council on Elder
15 Affairs sponsor a resolution to the CRC,
16 Charter Revision Commission, that will
17 create a Charter amendment to our Charter
18 that will have the Pledge of Allegiance on
19 the agenda for every board, commission,
20 subcommittee meeting in Duval County? It's
21 that simple.

22 So that is something I hope that you
23 will look into. I'm down to five minutes
24 (sic). That should be in our Charter.

25 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you, sir.

1 MR. NOONEY: Thank you for listening.

2 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. We now
3 move to presentations by invited speakers.
4 And I see the Honorable Mr. Jim Overton in
5 our audience.

6 Sir, you have the floor.

7 MR. OVERTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
8 Good morning. How do you want to proceed?

9 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Well, I know you and
10 I had spoken. And so I think probably if
11 there are some ideas that you have that you
12 think we should be looking at as it relates
13 to your office and then we may have some
14 questions ourselves.

15 MR. OVERTON: And how much time do you
16 think you want to devote to this?

17 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: In general -- what
18 we're trying to work for is about 15 to 20
19 minutes and then the questions after that.
20 Sometimes it gets a bit long, but we'll be
21 respectful of your time.

22 MR. OVERTON: I want to be respectful of
23 yours is more the issue. You have a lot on
24 your plate.

25 So I've been Tax Collector since July

1 the 1st. In this term, I was selected for
2 the unfilled term of Michael Corrigan in
3 last year's November election. Prior to
4 that I was Property Appraiser for 12 years.
5 Prior to that I was on the Council for ten
6 years, Tillie Fowler was an unfilled term in
7 1992. Then was elected twice after that.
8 So that's my experience in this government.

9 I would say that what happened at
10 consolidation in terms of the Tax
11 Collector's Office is that it was sort of
12 lumped together with the other
13 constitutional offices. And they didn't
14 have any real notion of what to do with it
15 other than they had originally intended to
16 put the Tax Collector in the treasury of the
17 city. And they realized that was going to
18 be problematic.

19 So they -- what the Charter says is, to
20 conform to typical Florida government, we're
21 going to have these people elected. So
22 that's where it stood all these years.

23 The Tax Collector, Property Appraiser
24 don't have the autonomy they would have in
25 any other county and state -- well, most

1 other counties in the state of Florida.
2 Miami is another example of a county like
3 this.

4 So only Volusia, Broward and Dade and us
5 that have sort of the system we've got where
6 the Tax Collector and Property Appraiser
7 present their budget to the City in this
8 case. In any other county, that wouldn't be
9 the case; they'd present it to the
10 Department of Revenue in Tallahassee, and
11 the department would -- they have a bunch of
12 ratios and they look at people across the
13 state and they would determine what the
14 budget should be. So that's called a --
15 we're called a budget county and everybody
16 else is called a fee county.

17 So counties that we compete with that do
18 a little better in these jobs, I think,
19 Orlando, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, in
20 particular, have a different system.

21 We operate on a budget of about \$18
22 million. We collect over \$2 billion. So
23 our cost to collect is under one percent.
24 In any other county it would be about a two
25 percent fee.

1 In any other county, the City would pay
2 that two percent fee. The City doesn't do
3 that. So we're cheaper to operate than
4 other counties and we suffer somewhat by
5 comparison because of that. That's what I
6 was talking with you about the other day --

7 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay.

8 MR. OVERTON: -- that we've got this
9 budget system versus a fee system, the
10 people who do better have the fee system.

11 Right now we -- we're spending about
12 \$18.8 million in the city budget every year.
13 If we were on a fee system, we'd be
14 spending -- or we would have access to 53
15 million, \$53.6 million. So that's a
16 significant difference.

17 Now, what happens in those fee counties
18 is they remit back to the county -- well,
19 the various taxing authorities, not just to
20 the county -- but leftover money at the end
21 of the year. So DOR, when you prepare a
22 budget that way, they would expect you to
23 return a large portion of that budget back
24 to the various taxing authorities from which
25 it came. They charge two percent to every

1 one of those taxing authorities and you send
2 some of it back at the end of the year after
3 you've expended your budget.

4 We also -- I think it's important to
5 realize that we are -- and every Tax
6 Collector in the State of Florida does
7 state -- deliver state services at the local
8 level. So virtually everything we do is
9 mandated by statute or constitution. Very
10 little of what we do is mentioned or
11 controlled by the City of Jacksonville.

12 If you look at the Charter, we're
13 mentioned a few times in there. We're
14 described as what the office is going to be,
15 and if it's going to exist, and it's going
16 to be part and parcel to the City of
17 Jacksonville, but there is almost no mention
18 of it. So everything we look at in terms of
19 what our rules are comes down to statute or
20 the administrative rules of the State of
21 Florida, the 12D rules.

22 We use all of the services of the
23 consolidated city, which I think is a good
24 idea, by the way; I think it's economical to
25 do that. We use HR, we use IT, we use legal

1 services. Some of those things are not
2 without their problems because we stand in
3 line with every other division and
4 department of the City for whatever it is
5 we're getting.

6 Right now I'm waiting for a contract
7 from Jones Services, it's been in their
8 possession since July. And we can't get it
9 going. We've got a lease agreement that
10 took three, four months to prepare. We've
11 got -- I asked for -- to get in line on
12 rehabbing our website the first day I came
13 into office in last November. I don't know
14 where we are in the queue, but we're -- we
15 haven't been -- we're not touching it yet.

16 So those types of things -- in other
17 counties those things would be -- you go get
18 a bid, you procure the services and you
19 start. In this county, you know, we're in
20 there with everybody else. So it's --
21 that's a bit of a frustration.

22 With IT, for example, I think there is
23 almost no way we would want to be separate
24 from the county. One of the clerks in the
25 past tried some of that and I don't think it

1 worked that well. In procurement, I think
2 it works pretty well, the way we've got it
3 set up. We use the procurement department
4 and we go through the same public service --
5 what do they call it -- committees, the
6 selection committees that the City is using
7 for all their procurement. That seems to
8 work pretty well.

9 We have some complaint with the General
10 Counsel, which -- this won't be any surprise
11 for them to hear. They assign us a part of
12 one of their staff, who is also assigned to
13 the property appraiser, but she's also got
14 15 other things on her plate, litigation,
15 all kinds of complaints and stuff like that.
16 So we have a -- we kind of have to fight for
17 attention from the General Counsel's Office.
18 So that's one of my complaints about
19 consolidation.

20 I don't know if anything else is
21 something that we want to discuss. We can
22 discuss term limits, but I'm not sure that's
23 an issue that I'm -- on my level I don't
24 have much to say about it, what you might
25 say about it, sir.

1 Generally, I think term limits for
2 constitutional offices are too short, an
3 eight-year term is too short. I don't know
4 what the answer is. Orlando put in a
5 16-year term, they seem to think that's
6 okay. Most counties don't have term limits
7 on constitutional officers, including the
8 sheriff.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I'm sorry to
10 interrupt. You said 16-year term limit, did
11 you mean four four-year terms or --

12 MR. OVERTON: Yeah, four fours. That
13 was the Orlando solution to sort of -- see,
14 Orlando had -- the guy's name is Woods. He
15 was in office as the Tax Collector for a
16 couple of generations. Left office at 94, I
17 think. And you can imagine that he was only
18 partially fulfilling his obligations at that
19 age. Not that there is anything wrong with
20 being 94, but it's a long time to stay in
21 office.

22 I think -- their solution was a 16-year
23 term. I don't know that it's -- any of
24 those term limits are legal, by the way,
25 post Amendment 10, which is in the last

1 election. But, you know, somebody is going
2 to try that one day, and we'll see what
3 happens.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. I
5 have -- oh, a bunch of people popped up on
6 the queue.

7 Mr. Schellenberg.

8 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Through the
9 Chair to Mr. Overton, thank you very much.
10 I only have five minutes, but have you
11 looked at rank voting at all?

12 MR. OVERTON: I have never looked at --
13 I mean, I know they use it in Australia, but
14 I don't know much about rank voting.

15 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: They do it
16 in Maine, as well as a county in Florida.

17 MR. OVERTON: What county in Florida?
18 Is it okay to --

19 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: You can.

20 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: We know each
21 other.

22 I can't remember what it is.

23 MR. OVERTON: I knew one in Maine did
24 it.

25 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: So a couple

1 other questions. Kind of interesting that
2 you served ten years at City Council and, I
3 think, eight years is good for City Council,
4 you probably -- but couple questions:
5 During my time we're losing a lot of polling
6 places because of religious issues, I think,
7 going forward. Do you see eventually we'll
8 go to online voting?

9 MR. OVERTON: We could go to online
10 voting now. There is a security issue, you
11 know, to make sure that there is a handshake
12 on both sides.

13 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: The reason
14 why I say it is, is because this would save
15 substantial amounts of money, because you
16 have to hire -- I can't remember the number
17 per polling place, but they have to be there
18 from 7:00 to 7:00. And this would, I think,
19 save money, that's why I'm asking the
20 question.

21 MR. OVERTON: We have the same issue in
22 our office as far as email addresses are
23 concerned. We're not really allowed to keep
24 email addresses and use email, but we can
25 pay our taxes that way too. I can send you

1 your tax bill by email in a secure way, and
2 you can then pay your taxes without having
3 to get a bill, which is, of course, 3-,
4 \$400,000 a year we'd save in that.

5 So one of these days we're going to
6 figure out a way to make the Internet secure
7 enough so we can do things like that.

8 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Well, I
9 would say that a lot of people do a lot of
10 things on the Internet and they feel fairly
11 secure.

12 The priorities that you said, web pages,
13 why do you think it is that it's taking so
14 long to get the priority for you to have a
15 good -- I obviously look SOE occasionally,
16 it is very cumbersome and not very user
17 friendly.

18 MR. OVERTON: You know, I'm not SOE, by
19 the way.

20 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: I'm sorry.
21 Tax Collector.

22 MR. OVERTON: But I -- well, I use the
23 Property Appraiser's website all the time.
24 It's, frankly, the website I put together
25 when I was Property Appraiser, so, yeah.

1 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: What is the
2 incentive for them to be more responsive to
3 you? Okay, how about this question: We are
4 a consolidated government. Are there
5 certain areas of consolidation today that
6 aren't working? And you mentioned a couple
7 of them. Would you say that maybe we should
8 have a certain amount of independence in
9 some of these? Is that what you're
10 implying?

11 MR. OVERTON: Well, in other counties
12 that's the way it works. And they produce
13 better, they do better. They're more --
14 they're more impressive in terms of the
15 level of service they provide, than we
16 offer.

17 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Then would
18 you do me a favor, send me and the Committee
19 areas in which you think it would be better
20 to -- not de-consolidate, but be a little
21 bit more efficient on your end to let us
22 look at and see if there is anything in the
23 Charter that we might be able to address.

24 MR. OVERTON: I don't know what in the
25 Charter. Years ago -- this is a Mullaney

1 decision years ago. Hogan -- is it okay to
2 talk about a little history here?

3 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes.

4 MR. OVERTON: Mr. Hogan, when he was Tax
5 Collector beginning his second term, elected
6 to be a fee county and sent the letter to
7 the Department of Revenue. And they
8 responded by saying, well, what does your
9 General Counsel say as to what you may or
10 may not do under your Charter. And the
11 decision came back from Mullaney -- it's a
12 long decision -- it essentially said the Tax
13 Collector is part and parcel to the county,
14 so consequently part and parcel of the
15 consolidated government. And so it will
16 present its budget to the City Council -- to
17 the Mayor, actually, in this system, and
18 then be voted on by the City Council, rather
19 than going to DOR with a copy back to the
20 county. So that decision has been -- it's
21 never been challenged, but it's out there,
22 and that's the one we're operating under
23 right now.

24 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Thank you
25 very much, Mr. Overton.

1 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Next I
2 have Mr. Griggs.

3 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you,
4 Mr. Chairman.

5 Mr. Overton, thank you very much for
6 being here and offering your thoughts on the
7 Tax Collector's Office. It is my
8 understanding that the Tax Collector's
9 Office, under our consolidated government,
10 operates pretty much as, you know, the
11 catchall for all of the utilities and bills
12 that need to be paid to our government;
13 correct?

14 MR. OVERTON: Yes. Everything that's
15 collected goes through us, dog tags, to
16 automobiles, to business licenses. If it's
17 paid to the City, there's only about two or
18 three places -- parking, anything that --
19 almost everything that goes through the city
20 budget or the county -- or what would be a
21 county budget or in this case the state
22 operation, which is Department of Motor
23 Vehicles, registrations, driver's licenses,
24 all that comes through us.

25 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: And so those

1 people outside of the consolidated
2 government, like the driver's license
3 offices, which is state, Department of Motor
4 Vehicles, you charge them a fee?

5 MR. OVERTON: We charge them a fee. We
6 charge everybody a fee except the City of
7 Jacksonville.

8 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Okay. What would
9 happen if one of your -- I call them
10 customers; correct?

11 MR. OVERTON: I should correct that. We
12 don't charge the School Board a fee either.

13 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Okay. What would
14 happen if one of your customers, because all
15 of them seem to be customers of yours, went
16 away? I mean, if there was a change in how
17 our consolidated government operated or
18 collected a certain utility and that
19 organization or that authority or that
20 agency no longer needed you to collect for
21 -- on behalf because they were not attached
22 to the --

23 MR. OVERTON: If it ws big enough, we'd
24 just cut staff and, you know, not do that
25 anymore. I mean, suppose the JEA goes away,

1 let's say, which is maybe where you're
2 heading, we collect the JEA fee, but we
3 don't collect the bulk of JEA. We do that
4 as kind of a courtesy, and it's a headache
5 for them. And we can't operate like the
6 JEA, but we can take their payments. But
7 you can take your JEA payment to a lot of
8 places. But if we didn't have the JEA, it
9 wouldn't affect us very much. It's not a
10 big part of our business.

11 If we didn't have Motor Vehicle, that
12 would be a huge part of our business. We
13 have more people and more assets devoted to
14 Motor Vehicle and driver's licenses and
15 state business, straight-up state business,
16 than we do the City.

17 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: And just kind of
18 following with Mr. Schellenberg's question.
19 I think why we're here is we're always --
20 when people come to the podium, we're trying
21 to find a way to support any improvements,
22 any deficiencies through our recommendations
23 at the end of the day. Can you see anything
24 that you haven't said that you want to say
25 that would be better for --

1 MR. OVERTON: No, I don't. And I noodle
2 over this a lot about the fee versus the
3 budget thing, and I know that we have a lot
4 more freedom. But right now we're spending
5 less than one percent on overhead to collect
6 \$2 billion in monies, a-million-four which
7 goes to the City of Jacksonville, the rest
8 goes to School Board, back to Motor Vehicle,
9 and all that.

10 So we are -- I think we're efficient to
11 a fault is what we are in terms of
12 restricted ability for Tax Collector to do
13 the colorful things that they do in Orlando,
14 for example. But I don't know that we could
15 achieve any more efficiency than we already
16 have.

17 Now, over time we will drive more
18 business to the Internet, to
19 Mr. Schellenberg's point. And as we do
20 that, we will be able to reduce our head
21 count over a long period of time.

22 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you.

24 Next I have Mr. Denton.

25 COMMISSIONER DENTON: Hello,

1 Mr. Overton. You said a few minutes ago
2 that you're -- almost everything you do is
3 controlled by state law. In reading the
4 section in the Charter on the tax collector,
5 and I'm not a lawyer and I'm learning here,
6 it says the duties and their compensation
7 and their qualifications and the election
8 and the term and what happens if there is a
9 vacancy. And all of that cites state law.
10 The only thing that cites city ordinance is
11 the term limits. So all these other things
12 are controlled by the state law and the only
13 thing that really is -- that might be
14 considered by this Commission is term
15 limits.

16 MR. OVERTON: I believe that's the case.
17 I don't know -- well, no, the fee versus the
18 budget issue would be addressable by the
19 City as well. That would be -- see, what
20 the state law says is that every year the
21 Property Appraiser and the Tax Collector
22 will submit a budget to the Department of
23 Revenue. And the Department of Revenue will
24 comb through that budget and approve or
25 disapprove or change things or whatever.

1 And but in certain counties where the
2 Charter requires some other method, then
3 that count will do something else, which is
4 the budget process. There is nothing in our
5 Charter that says that. There is nowhere in
6 our Charter that says we're going to be --
7 that the Property Appraiser and the Tax
8 Collector, which are specifically, like I
9 say, delineated in the statute, are going to
10 do anything different than they do in any
11 other county. We just have had over the
12 years this agreement and now decision by
13 Rick Mullaney when he was General Counsel
14 that this is the way we do it, it's part of
15 consolidation, and we're going to do it this
16 way. So we don't lean into that -- we don't
17 lean into that statute any more than we can,
18 I guess.

19 COMMISSIONER DENTON: So the fact that
20 your office is elected is governed by state
21 law, not the city charter?

22 MR. OVERTON: Interestingly, the
23 constitutionals in this county are less
24 autonomous than they are in other counties,
25 but they're also less autonomous than the

1 independent commissions, boards here. Like,
2 we are less autonomous than the JEA, Airport
3 Authority, Port Authority, the Downtown --
4 the Investment Authority. We're more in the
5 government than the Port Authority is, which
6 is -- I've always thought was interesting.

7 COMMISSIONER DENTON: Well, despite all
8 the jokes about the DMV and the agony of
9 having to wait hours, I have to give you a
10 compliment. I went down to your office, the
11 main office, recently and was able to get a
12 new license plate, a new registration and a
13 new driver's license, all of which expired
14 about the same time, in about 15 minutes.
15 So take that as a compliment. Thank you.

16 MR. OVERTON: You know, one of the
17 problems that we have in, I think, every
18 government office -- I know the General
19 Counsel has the same problem and I know the
20 Council Auditor has the same problem -- we
21 tend to bring people in, train them and then
22 they take the skills that we have given
23 them, used in the process of onboarding
24 people, they take those skills someplace
25 else.

1 So we pay our -- the people that you
2 would be dealing with in a situation like
3 that, we pay them less than \$14 an hour in a
4 lot of cases. Well, once they get the
5 skills to operate in the marketplace,
6 they're going to go someplace else. Our
7 turnover rate approaches 20 percent a year
8 at that level of the organization. So it's
9 a real problem for us.

10 COMMISSIONER DENTON: Well, something is
11 working right, at least in my one
12 experience.

13 MR. OVERTON: We're very careful about
14 hiring, and that matters.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
16 you.

17 My list here says Steve Swan.

18 MS. OWENS: They're working on that.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: But it started with
20 an S and had Swan, so I figured I'm going to
21 go with that.

22 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chair.

24 This is kind of follow-up to
25 Mr. Schellenberg's line of inquiry. I'm

1 going to bifurcate my questions, the first
2 from about 50 feet and then go up to 50,000,
3 if we could. And I'm going to zero in on
4 some issues you raised concerning General
5 Counsel.

6 So from the 50-foot perspective, if you
7 have an issue that's emergent and requires
8 you to seek counsel, you're limited to where
9 you can go. You can go to the General
10 Counsel's Office; is that correct?

11 MR. OVERTON: That's correct.

12 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: You have a
13 designated person in the General Counsel's
14 Office that you can go to; is that correct?

15 MR. OVERTON: Yes.

16 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: I'm sure this
17 happens routinely where something has a
18 greater priority than something else. If
19 you prioritize this as a high priority, that
20 person that's designated as your point of
21 contact, they may have many priorities; is
22 that fair to say?

23 MR. OVERTON: They do.

24 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So what might be
25 your number one priority, might be that

1 person's number eight priority; is that fair
2 to say?

3 MR. OVERTON: That's correct.

4 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So if you have
5 something that's a number one priority,
6 that's emergent and time sensitive, and it's
7 that point of contact's eighth priority,
8 what option do you have to try and reconcile
9 your issues quickly, if any?

10 MR. OVERTON: Persuasion.

11 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Which is
12 telephonic --

13 MR. OVERTON: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: -- or email?

15 MR. OVERTON: Either one.

16 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Do you have the
17 option to go to that individual's supervisor
18 and urge a more timely response?

19 MR. OVERTON: Yes, sure.

20 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: And this happens
21 routinely, I would assume.

22 MR. OVERTON: Absolutely.

23 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: But you are
24 limited to where you can go, to the General
25 Counsel.

1 MR. OVERTON: That is true.

2 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So if on one
3 occasion you're dissatisfied with the
4 response, that doesn't matter, that's the
5 response you have.

6 MR. OVERTON: That's true.

7 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Have there been
8 times when you were dissatisfied with the
9 response?

10 MR. OVERTON: I can't give you a
11 specific, but we -- you know, waiting three
12 our four months for a contract to be
13 reviewed is a good example.

14 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Is the contract
15 always reviewed by that one point of
16 contact?

17 MR. OVERTON: No.

18 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: It might be
19 somebody -- it might be the contract
20 division of the General Counsels' Office.

21 MR. OVERTON: It might be somebody that
22 handles contracts in their division, yeah,
23 or department, I guess, yes.

24 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So, basically,
25 you and many others stand in line for the

1 services from the General Counsel.

2 MR. OVERTON: That is true. We stand in
3 line with every other department in the
4 City.

5 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Are there times
6 when you believe that your office or the
7 citizens of the community, that there is a
8 disservice, not by the input that you
9 ultimately receive, but by virtue of the
10 timeliness or --

11 MR. OVERTON: Yeah. In some counties
12 there is a General Counsel within the Tax
13 Collector's Office and a General Counsel
14 within the Property Appraiser's Office that
15 only handle those things. This county,
16 we -- the General Counsel is the final
17 arbiter of all decisions in this county.

18 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: In those counties
19 where there is a General Counsel assigned to
20 respective office, does that General Counsel
21 operationally report to your counterpart or
22 does that person report operationally to the
23 General Counsel?

24 MR. OVERTON: They would report to
25 elected official, which would be the Tax

1 Collector.

2 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So it would be an
3 independent individual working directly for
4 you to --

5 MR. OVERTON: Yeah.

6 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: -- hire or fire
7 as you saw fit?

8 MR. OVERTON: And our caseload is not
9 nearly what the Property Appraiser's
10 caseload is --

11 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: But they have the
12 same issues.

13 MR. OVERTON: But they have the same
14 issues. This issue was more frustrating
15 when I was a Property Appraiser than it is
16 as a Tax Collector. Our stuff is more
17 routine. The Property Appraiser gets sued a
18 lot. And we get sued only occasionally or
19 have a problem, legal problem, only
20 occasionally.

21 Most of our work through the General
22 Counsel's Office is contracts, leases,
23 decisions on run-of-the-mill business
24 issues.

25 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: In terms of

1 deficiencies and service -- let me -- in
2 terms of cost, are there occasions where you
3 see that this delay results in cost to the
4 city government?

5 MR. OVERTON: Well, levels of service,
6 certainly, probably not cost, not dollar
7 cost.

8 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Okay. Little bit
9 of time. But moving to 50,000 feet, what
10 would you suggest?

11 MR. OVERTON: I would have General
12 Counsel assign a lawyer to -- and put
13 somebody in our building that's assigned to
14 us to -- probably to the Property Appraiser
15 and Tax Collector.

16 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Is that something
17 we can fix with a Charter issue?

18 MR. OVERTON: I think you can fix that
19 with an ordinance.

20 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you.

24 Next I have Chris Hagan -- Mr. Hagan,
25 too familiar.

1 COMMISSIONER HAGAN: Mr. Overton, thank
2 you for being here. When I start to think
3 about the Tax Collector, I think we've had a
4 long run really with Tax Collectors in my
5 opinion. That includes you. And I thank
6 you for your service over the many years.

7 That kind of leads into my term limit
8 question. You know, we've had -- since
9 we've had those long runs of very good Tax
10 Collectors, in my opinion, you occasionally
11 have an instance where you have, like,
12 Michael Corrigan, where another opportunity
13 comes and he vacates that seat. So it kind
14 of gets into the: if we do it 16 years and
15 we do continue to have brilliant tax
16 collectors, you know, you may lose those,
17 they may drop off, you may get an
18 opportunity that you can't turn down. And
19 so that is a little bit of a concern of
20 mine, that we extended that to 16 years. So
21 I would like for you to address that as
22 well.

23 Also, in that question, if there was a
24 16-year, would you be okay with, you know --
25 your suggestion was 16 based upon what

1 Orlando does. Would it be only for
2 constitutional officers? I think you
3 addressed that in Mr. Schellenberg's
4 question, but if you'll kind of expand on
5 that a little bit. And, also, would you be
6 exposed to doing election every two years
7 for a term limit of 16 or would you stick
8 with the 4 or would you want to extend those
9 out to 6?

10 MR. OVERTON: I have a lot, but
11 generally speaking, I think two-year
12 election cycles are too short. You see it
13 in the House of Representatives, they're
14 always running, and Congress is the same
15 way.

16 Fundamentally, I would vote against term
17 limits in any case, just because I think the
18 voters can go to the polls and get rid of
19 somebody they want to get rid of any time,
20 every four years if they want to do that.

21 But given the fact that the populus in
22 this county and most of the people in this
23 state want term limits, I think that maybe a
24 different system than an 8-term might make
25 sense. Maybe a 12-year term, you know, you

1 never know what that appetite for this sort
2 of thing is in the public realm.

3 I would say that in the case of the
4 counsel, which is another issue, that an
5 8-year term is pretty short as well. Maybe
6 a 12 is about right.

7 But, in any case, the Council ought to
8 be staggered so that you don't have a
9 wholesale turnover in the Council at any
10 given time. And, also, I've always agreed
11 with the Council election being held earlier
12 so that the first day that you come into
13 city Council on July 1st of the year, you
14 don't get the budget presented to you at
15 that point.

16 As you've seen, the budget is pretty
17 thick. And if you haven't seen that process
18 before, it's pretty daunting to just jump
19 right into it, the budget process the first
20 day.

21 Those are all the things we discussed
22 ad nauseam in this county. And maybe you
23 guys are going to do something this time
24 around, I don't know.

25 By the way, the Council is too large,

1 frankly. We took the national example when
2 we consolidated in Jacksonville, and we
3 accepted the fact that we were going to have
4 14 council people from wards and 5 at-large.
5 And there was no need to really do that,
6 except there was a political reason to do
7 that. The Council should be 11, 9 or 11,
8 something that kind of size. It's an
9 unmanageable small legislature, is what it
10 is.

11 We have all these committee -- the
12 interesting thing about the Council, the
13 Council will have a committee meeting where
14 they make a decision, and the decision is
15 just a recommendation, it can't -- it's not
16 in the legislature where you can kill a bill
17 in committee. The bill still lives outside
18 the committee, so the Council has to kill
19 the bill.

20 So we have a system that has sort of an
21 odd quirk to it; and that is, that the
22 committee is not really making a decision,
23 the committee is an advisory board to the
24 Council. So that's -- I've never seen that
25 any place else. It's unusual.

1 COMMISSIONER HAGAN: Mr. Chairman, I
2 have a follow-up. I was going to ask
3 something else about the fee system and all
4 that, I think you run very efficiently so
5 I'll leave that one out.

6 A question did come up in comment
7 concerning the Office of General Counsel.
8 When you described what kind of the issues
9 that you may run into, it sounds more like
10 maybe a staffing issue. I know that I
11 worked with Paige from the Planning
12 Commission and a lot of other things, and I
13 know they work tirelessly.

14 Would the answer or could the answer be
15 we need additional attorneys or staffing in
16 the Office of General Counsel? Because it
17 sounds like you're represented great, in my
18 opinion; I haven't heard that as an issue.
19 But maybe we need to look at hiring initial
20 attorneys within the Office of General
21 Counsel or maybe some help that they can
22 kind of get some of these things out a
23 little quicker.

24 MR. OVERTON: The issue that I described
25 earlier about quality people coming in,

1 learning the system, being a lawyer in the
2 General Counsel's Office, or the State
3 Attorney's Office, or the Public Defender's
4 Office, for that matter, it's all great
5 learning. And those people tend to learn
6 and leave.

7 I also have always thought -- well,
8 anyway, so you're right about my opinion
9 about the quality of work. I think it's
10 excellent. We get excellent work from the
11 General Counsel's Office. What we can't get
12 is their attention sometimes when we need
13 it. And that's a staffing problem. They
14 have a staffing problem. It's just like the
15 Public Defender and the State Attorney have.
16 It's people want to get some government
17 experience and go someplace else.

18 I had one more point in there, but I
19 forgot it. I'll think of it in a second.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay. I have
21 Mr. Griggs on the queue for the second time.

22 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 Mr. Overton, I really appreciate the
25 comments you made regarding City Council and

1 the Council makeup and some of the
2 challenges regarding committee work. It
3 sounds like we may have been -- we may not
4 have taken the opportunity to ask for your
5 advice around the structure and operations
6 of City Council.

7 I'm a little intrigued by your
8 description of committee work, because we do
9 see that a lot where committee makes a
10 recommendation and then, by the time it gets
11 to Council, there are major changes to it,
12 or the full body gets the chance to, you
13 know, change or vote on something different.

14 Can you talk a little bit more about
15 some of the other challenges you see around
16 our City Council structure and what
17 recommendations you may have, other
18 recommendations besides the size of the
19 Council, which I would imagine would
20 probably be very difficult to adjust --

21 MR. OVERTON: There is a reason we ended
22 up where we ended up.

23 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: And just the
24 recommendations around some of the
25 operations, because in ten years you had to

1 have seen an awful lot that would
2 probably --

3 MR. OVERTON: Well, if you let it, the
4 Council will ruin your business, that
5 happens to a lot of people, because it's a
6 demanding job. There is another meeting,
7 another meeting and a big issue coming up.
8 So you tend to collect -- you walk away from
9 your business for a big part of a lot of
10 days and you're down here. And so your
11 business is sort of falling to the wayside.
12 And anybody -- the best people for Council
13 are retirees and people who are
14 independently wealthy and don't need to
15 work.

16 To get a citizen on the Council and just
17 say we're going to -- you're going to go
18 make these decisions for the City of
19 Jacksonville in your spare time, it's a
20 crazy system. It will take all your time
21 and then more. It's like church: It will
22 take all your time and then more if you give
23 it.

24 So, anyway, I've always said the Council
25 needs to be smaller and needs to be paid a

1 state wage instead of half the state wage
2 and just make it full time. And you'll get
3 better results out of Council that way.

4 Now, there will be more people who will
5 want that job probably because it then
6 becomes a real job as opposed to -- or pay
7 them nothing, and that's another solution.
8 If you pay the Council zero, you will get
9 people who can only afford to give spare
10 time and they will -- but then you'll
11 probably end up with a lot of wealthy
12 people, because they will have the
13 wherewithal to do that. It's a problem in
14 every government, not just this one.

15 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: So how do you
16 think -- if we had 11, what would that look
17 like in your mind, how would that -- in
18 terms of representation? Because one of the
19 challenges that we've heard through many of
20 our presenters is that consolidation was bad
21 for the urban core. And if we had 11 or had
22 a different number, whatever that number is,
23 how would we assure that representation for
24 those communities have been left behind are
25 not further underrepresented going forward?

1 MR. OVERTON: Consolidation has been
2 good in a lot of ways, but to the
3 neighborhoods it hasn't been good, because,
4 you know, we agreed, when we consolidated,
5 that we were going to provide city services
6 to the county line. And, unfortunately,
7 some of the urban core just gets overlooked,
8 because we're always building a fire station
9 way out where the growth is. So it's tended
10 to under-serve certain parts of the
11 community because of it. Particularly in
12 drainage and just curb and gutter traffic,
13 the kind of things that people care about.

14 Parks, people who work in parks, you
15 know, we used to have -- when I was a kid,
16 we had -- there was a guy in the park, you
17 know. He was a coach or something. And he
18 kept the park going and organized games and
19 stuff. We can't afford that. I don't know
20 why we can't afford it, but we can't.

21 And the urban core is part of the town
22 that particularly takes a hit when we don't
23 have people doing that.

24 So, yeah, I don't know what the answer
25 is. If you had 11 councilmen or 9, they

1 would be individually much more powerful.
2 The mayor -- in a strong mayor system that
3 may not be the way to go. We have
4 intentionally a strong mayor system of
5 government here. And so we have --
6 therefore, we have an intentionally weak
7 City Council, that really has only the
8 budget as the major lever. And, frankly,
9 the Council -- generally speaking, the
10 Council is not properly prepared to work on
11 a budget with the complexity that ours is.
12 It's a big ask to have somebody walk in here
13 and look at that budget and understand it.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
15 you. I see the Sheriff is here. I have
16 just a quick question for you, Mr. Overton.
17 Did I understand that, under the general
18 system, the way the majority of the state
19 works is that your office would submit a
20 budget, it would go to the State Department
21 of Revenue, they approve it, the office
22 collects a two percent fee, and then at the
23 end of your budget year, you, up to, say,
24 18.8 is what you spent here, say you
25 collected the 20, you only spent the 18.8,

1 would the balance then be returned to the
2 general fund of the City?

3 MR. OVERTON: The balance would be
4 returned to the various taxing authorities
5 from which that money came. So the City
6 would be one of those taxing authorities.
7 But, yeah, I mean, in our current situation,
8 it would be -- we're spending 18.8 million
9 to run our operation. And that situation
10 would be receiving \$53.6 million. So a big
11 portion of that would go back to those
12 taxing authorities.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay. Because I'm
14 looking at this -- for fellow Commissioners,
15 it's Section 6.04 is where the Mayor is
16 submitting the budget to the Council,
17 because I'm trying to figure out where in
18 this -- is your proposal to have your budget
19 approved by the Department of Revenue or
20 could we still have it approved by the
21 Mayor's Office and the Council, and then
22 still have you collect the two percent fee,
23 but then that money would set you -- all the
24 approval process -- in the spirit of
25 consolidation, the approval process would

1 still stay here locally, but the collection
2 would be through the fee instead of --

3 MR. OVERTON: It would cost the City
4 more money, the City itself would -- the
5 municipality of the City of Jacksonville.
6 Right now the City contributes about \$7
7 million on our \$18 million budget, that's
8 their contribution, yet they control the
9 whole thing. So it's -- it would cost them
10 more than that \$7 million if we were to do
11 it that way. And that's always been the
12 objection. I get it. But it doesn't work
13 that way in most counties.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay. And, also,
15 for my fellow Commissioners, I believe it's
16 Article 7 is where we got the General
17 Counsel's Office, and there is discussion in
18 there in 7.02 where they talk about Council
19 for the independent agencies. And I know
20 that there are certain authorities that have
21 inhouse assistant General Counsels. So I
22 think that was -- in fact, Mr. Weinstein was
23 here several weeks ago and talked about just
24 that. If you have an Assistant General
25 Counsel for each of the independent

1 authorities and for the constitutional
2 officers, and then you maintain a General
3 Counsel who is, for lack of a better phrase,
4 above the fray, then the ability to be that
5 single arbiter for consistency within the
6 City, it removes any, you know, perception
7 of favoring this one or that one because you
8 have --

9 MR. OVERTON: So the mayor would have --

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: An assigned, yeah,
11 so General Counsel for the Mayor's Office.

12 MR. OVERTON: And we have one and the
13 Sheriff would have one and those people
14 would have to argue things out and then the
15 General Counsel, the main General Counsel,
16 would be the arbiter -- the final arbiter,
17 of decisions. I think that system would
18 work if you want to propose that.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
20 you very much for your time. Thank you for
21 your service to the City.

22 MR. OVERTON: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Next on
24 our agenda is Sheriff Mike Williams.

25 Sir, you have the floor.

1 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So good morning. It
2 was good to come and see Jim's presentation.
3 I was preparing for today and looking at the
4 Charter. I'm really prepared to answer more
5 questions. I don't have a presentation.
6 There is not a lot in the Charter that
7 really ultimately concerns me. I'm not
8 bringing an issue here today. I know there
9 is some issues that I can comment on, but
10 really, in terms of the Charter and how it
11 impacts the Sheriff's Office, I don't have a
12 lot of major concerns as I stand before you
13 today.

14 Some of the things I've heard in
15 conversation, again, I think I can weigh
16 into the conversation about. But in terms
17 of any big impacts or any recommendations
18 that I'm bringing you, I'm bringing you none
19 this morning in terms of the Charter.

20 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Sheriff,
21 your name and address?

22 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Mike Williams,
23 Sheriff, Duval County, address 501 Bay
24 Street, 32202.

25 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you. I do

1 have somebody on the queue if you're ready
2 to take questions.

3 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Absolutely,
4 absolutely.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Ms. Mills.

6 COMMISSIONER MILLS: Good morning,
7 Sheriff.

8 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Hey. Good morning.

9 COMMISSIONER MILLS: Thank you for
10 coming to speak to us. I just have a few
11 questions. I wanted to talk about how the
12 body cameras that have been in place, how
13 they're working so far. Also, I wanted to
14 talk about the emphasis on juvenile fighting
15 in school. And I had some questions about,
16 you know more, Coffee with a Cop, I wanted
17 to ask you about that.

18 Also about the 100 officers that you did
19 receive, the adversity training and have you
20 looked into -- is there any way we can look
21 into like -- I know as a little girl coming
22 up, we had certain police officers that we
23 got used to being around, so it opened up
24 the relationship to trust, to be able to
25 talk about if you see something, say

1 something. So I just wanted to know your
2 thoughts on that.

3 And, also, I see that the Tax Collector
4 is doing the new concealed weapon licenses,
5 I wanted to know how do you feel about that;
6 and also the buyback program.

7 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Okay. Great. So a
8 lot to unpack there, you have to walk me
9 through that, keep me on track.

10 So body cameras, first of all, so we --
11 almost immediately upon coming into office,
12 we explored the body camera program. I had
13 some privacy concerns initially. Those were
14 addressed by the state legislature with some
15 legislation, obviously. Once that was
16 corrected, really no need at that point to
17 not move forward with the body camera
18 program.

19 The concern I had was with Florida's
20 broad public records laws, we could
21 potentially have a situation where an
22 officer was wearing a body camera, went into
23 a home and made no arrest. So there was no
24 criminal case, which happens a lot. Maybe
25 it was a domestic issue, maybe it was an

1 argument between a husband and a wife,
2 again, nothing that rose to the level of
3 even potentially a report being written.
4 But all of that interaction would have been
5 recorded by a body camera.

6 So prior to this legislative change,
7 your neighbor could have called us and said,
8 hey, I would like the body camera footage
9 from that call last night in my neighbor's
10 house. And by law we would have had to give
11 that to them. And so lots of footage of
12 dead bodies, other things like that, none of
13 that was really addressed when the body
14 camera program first began to be discussed
15 in the state.

16 So the legislature made those changes.
17 So it was nothing about privacy of police
18 officers or transparency; it was really
19 about the public's privacy that gave me some
20 concern. Again, once that was addressed, we
21 moved forward with the program.

22 We did a lot of research, spent a lot of
23 time -- we have seven community-wide
24 meetings in town, really town hall type
25 meetings to discuss people's concerns about

1 body cameras, pros and cons. That took
2 several months.

3 We, again, researched camera policy,
4 labor contracts, lots of things from --
5 really in one box or another about 75
6 different agencies around the country we
7 looked at. And we really chose, after that,
8 someone to model an implementation plan. We
9 chose LAPD because they are really five
10 times the size of JSO, but they were
11 implementing a complete agency-wide body
12 camera program.

13 So many agencies in the country will
14 tell you they have a body camera program,
15 but it's not a complete body camera program.
16 For instance, Philadelphia was about -- I
17 may get this number off a little bit,
18 roughly 5,000 police officers, 3,000 police
19 officers, somewhere in that neighborhood.
20 They only have 500 officers in body cameras.

21 So our vision was to have every officer
22 below the rank of lieutenant to wear a
23 camera every time they were in uniform. So
24 that's why we chose LAPD, that was their
25 model.

1 So, really, as we get to fast-forward to
2 the end of this year, we will finish our
3 really issuance of the body cameras to all
4 uniform officers. So we've done about,
5 again, three-quarters at this point, and
6 we'll finish that out end of the year.

7 We were very fortunate to receive a
8 grant from the Department of Justice. We
9 got a million dollars for implementation of
10 the body camera program here in
11 Jacksonville.

12 This budget year, the budget we just
13 passed Tuesday night, this is the first
14 budget that has any body camera dollars in
15 there. Most of the -- we talked about the
16 anticipated cost, implementation and annual
17 cost had come in under what we expected. So
18 we anticipated really about a \$5 million
19 startup and about \$3 million a year. And we
20 came in at probably just under 3 million on
21 startup and right at a million a year for
22 the maintenance of the program.

23 So we have seen great benefits really,
24 to be honest with you, in the body camera
25 program. You have a couple different

1 avenues where it's very helpful. People
2 really like to focus on the interaction
3 between the community and the officers. And
4 there is a lot of that and a lot of it is
5 good.

6 So I talked to one of the officers who
7 was wearing the camera -- we did a pilot for
8 several months. I talked to one of the
9 officers wearing the camera, I said, hey,
10 how do you like the camera. He said,
11 Sheriff, I love it. He said, every time I
12 walk up to someone, I tell them, I just want
13 to let you know our interaction is being
14 recorded by the body camera.

15 If you haven't seen it, it's a big black
16 box laying right in the center of their
17 chest. They look down at that box and fix
18 their hair and say, well, we just want to
19 thank you for your service, officer.

20 And, again, I've always said, listen, if
21 it makes the community act better, good. If
22 it makes the police officers act more
23 professional, that's good too.

24 And we've seen that. We've seen what's,
25 I think, beginning stages of a significant

1 reduction in complaints on police officers.
2 And, again, why that happens, it could be
3 both sides of the equation, and I'm okay
4 with that.

5 And then we've seen some investigative
6 benefits. We've got some -- we're able to
7 capture street interviews on camera. I
8 mean, all those things that we typically
9 would document and report. Now we have
10 video evidence to support that documentation
11 as well.

12 So still working the bugs out between --
13 it's a process that works now. We have
14 still a lot to learn in terms of the
15 interaction with the State Attorney's
16 Office. They're still trying to digest what
17 is really an enormous amount of video
18 evidence to process and look through, you
19 know, as we continue to collect this.

20 So we've addressed it on the cost end,
21 being that the storage, all of it, is
22 impacted in one fee for the year; so we're
23 not paying additional money for storage.
24 It's unlimited storage based on the fee you
25 pay. So it's really now about processing

1 all that evidence and what does that look
2 like and how do we use it appropriately in
3 our interaction with the State Attorney's
4 Office and the Public Defender's Office, all
5 that. So we're working through that. But
6 we've got some of those things in place to
7 help with that, streamline that a little
8 better.

9 But other than that it's been a very
10 beneficial program for the agency. So we're
11 happy with it.

12 Part two I can't remember now.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I was just going to
14 say, for our process here, if we could
15 really try and focus our questions on
16 Charter related issues. There is a lot of
17 stuff, obviously, that we would want to
18 discuss with the Sheriff, but if we can keep
19 our focus on Charter related issues. If you
20 want to repeat back your questions and then
21 you can wrap up --

22 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Sure. Some of those
23 I can wrap up.

24 You had two or three questions about
25 community engagement. So, obviously, we put

1 a heavy interest in community engagement.
2 I'm a firm believer that you have to work in
3 partnership with the community; and that is,
4 you mentioned having officers in an area
5 where people become familiar with that, we
6 do that. We leave officers assigned to --
7 unless you request a transfer, you're
8 assigned to the same neighborhood for as
9 long as you are working in that division,
10 again, unless you request to be moved
11 somewhere. That does help build that
12 rapport with neighbors and relationships in
13 neighborhoods.

14 Coffee With a Cop is one example of the
15 things we do to try to drive the community
16 and the officers together in an environment
17 absent the need for police service, if that
18 makes sense.

19 Obviously, we're talking to a
20 million-plus people a year who are in need
21 of police service, but we want to try to
22 have some conversation with people in the
23 community when there is no need for that so
24 that we're not building a relationship in
25 the middle of a crisis. Even if it's just a

1 crisis in their mind, it's a crisis for
2 them. So we want to have to continue to
3 create opportunities to do that. Coffee
4 With a Cop is one way.

5 Our Sheriff's Watch program is one way.
6 You know, we meet with policemen working in
7 your neighborhood once a month, talk about
8 issues -- not big city Jacksonville issues,
9 but what's happening in your neighborhood
10 and bring problems to the table and work
11 together to solve those problem. So that's
12 a great program.

13 A lot of different things with our
14 communication section, really pushed out all
15 the way to the patrol division. One of the
16 things we adjusted was to have a lot of
17 community engagement-type activities driven
18 throughout the agency, not just in one
19 division, not just in the communication
20 division, but have all the officers involved
21 in that. So we've been able to put a lot of
22 things in place that have done that. It's
23 been very successful.

24 We're running a program now that really
25 hasn't gotten a lot of attention, but it's

1 going to be hugely beneficial. It's a
2 partnership with Bethune-Cookman. And it's
3 a great -- it's led by Randy Nelson, who is
4 the Criminal Justice Chair, who is a
5 terrific guy.

6 And so it's really a series of three
7 meetings that you have, about 30, 40 people
8 at a time. They meet with the community,
9 talk about law enforcement concerns, then he
10 meets with a group of officers, talks about
11 community concern. Then we all come
12 together and lay all those concerns on the
13 table.

14 It really does a lot to -- we have a lot
15 of officers very community minded. We have
16 a lot of young officers who haven't been
17 exposed to this as of yet. So this is a
18 great way to do that. So we just renewed
19 another cycle of training with them. And
20 really it's going to take a couple years.
21 I'd like everybody in the agency to go
22 through, and that's really our plan moving
23 forward. So one of the best community
24 engagement programs, so to speak that I've
25 seen. And we've tried a lot. And this is

1 one of, again, the most productive ones that
2 we've seen. So we do a lot in terms of
3 that, you know, outreach and community
4 engagement.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay. I've got
6 seven people on the queue here we want to go
7 through.

8 Next I have Mr. Griggs.

9 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you,
10 Mr. Chairman. Sorry about that. I was kind
11 of reading the Sheriff's section of the
12 Charter here.

13 But I know that -- and thank you,
14 Sheriff Williams, for being here.

15 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yes, sir. Good
16 morning.

17 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: I know that as
18 part of the Charter there is something
19 that's called the Sheriff Disciplinary
20 Hearing Board. And the board is made up of,
21 I think it's five people; correct?

22 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Correct.

23 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Two people you
24 appoint, two people who are appointed or
25 recommended by the person who is being

1 accused and then one person from all four --
2 of the other four people; correct?

3 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Right, yes, sir.

4 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: What is the
5 rationale for not having a citizen be a part
6 of that?

7 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So in that
8 disciplinary process, that board is one of
9 several ways that an employee can choose how
10 to have his discipline grieved. So in this
11 case, this is not really a review of the
12 discipline the employee is being charged
13 with in that circumstance. It's the
14 employee grieving really the discipline that
15 was issued to him, if that makes sense.

16 So as an employee, let's say I have a
17 policy violation and I receive a, you know,
18 level-two reprimand. I think that's too
19 much. I'm going to go to the union and I'm
20 going to appeal that discipline. That's
21 where this process comes in play.

22 So there is an avenue for a civilian
23 review of that, and that is the Civil
24 Service Board. So the Disciplinary Hearing
25 Board is not something that has to occur.

1 It rarely happens, to be honest with you.
2 Most employees will -- really the tactic is
3 they schedule the board to buy themselves
4 some time, and then they cancel it and wait
5 to go to the Civil Service Board.

6 So the Civil Service Board, obviously,
7 is all civilians. And then they review the
8 discipline.

9 But, really, from the standpoint of -- I
10 think, if I'm understanding the basis of the
11 question, they're reviewing the discipline
12 based on is it appropriate based on the
13 incident. They're not reviewing the
14 incident, if that is kind of where you're
15 coming from on that.

16 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you for
17 that. So what would be the proper posture
18 for, say, a citizen who had a challenge with
19 a law enforcement officer? Where would that
20 entry point be and where -- and is that a
21 part of the Charter? It is something that's
22 just your policy? It will change from
23 sheriff to sheriff? Or is it something that
24 we can make -- that we can kind of work with
25 here as a part of Charter Review?

1 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So in order to make a
2 complaint, again, you can make it with
3 anybody. Obviously, it's routed through
4 internal affairs and it's investigated. One
5 of the things that stops really the whole
6 state, kind of a civilian review board, is
7 state statute. So Law Enforcement Officers
8 Bill of Rights really keeps complaints on
9 police officers confidential until they're
10 complete, so the end of process.

11 So when you have some agencies around
12 the state who have some component of that,
13 really it's a review of something that's
14 already completed. They have no ability to
15 impact at all.

16 So rather than -- so that really
17 draws -- people realizing that I don't have
18 an impact in the way this discipline is
19 issued, it's not -- people are not going to
20 get engaged in that.

21 And so you really want these issues kind
22 of dug into -- and it's got to be based on
23 facts and evidence, not a motion, it's not
24 those type of things. So that's the
25 challenge there is that, once that process

1 is complete, it's all open. And I think
2 that's where you have some challenges around
3 the state. How open is it? How open should
4 it be? We try to be as completely
5 transparent as we can in accordance with
6 state law. As soon as we're able to release
7 findings, we release them immediately.

8 We've got a great web page that we put
9 up just probably a year ago, maybe a year
10 and a half. We track all officers while
11 shootings. From the day the shooting
12 occurred, we put suspect demographics,
13 officer demographics, location, press
14 conferences that we've held, all the way
15 through the review board of that, which is,
16 again, confidential by state law. But we
17 post that video online to be able to, again,
18 be transparent with the community about what
19 that process looked like.

20 So I think one of the -- as I talk with
21 the community about review boards and that
22 type of thing, one of the challenges is and
23 the main driver is we don't know what
24 happens in that process. Well, that's on
25 us. You may not by state law be able to

1 weigh into the process as it's going on.
2 But at the end of it, we should be able to
3 show you the process so you can see A to Z,
4 here is what it looked like, here are the
5 decisions that were made, you know, here are
6 the people involved. None of that is
7 confidential after it's complete.

8 So if that's where you're headed with
9 that question -- and that's come up a couple
10 times in the last few years, it's the same
11 around the state. We're not unique. It's
12 not a JSO policy that drives that.

13 I would say, in terms of transparency,
14 we are one of the more transparent agencies
15 in the state when it comes to sharing this
16 information when it's appropriate and
17 allowed by state law.

18 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you.

19 Mr. Chairman, just one quick follow-up
20 to that.

21 I do believe that your process is
22 probably one of the best in the state. What
23 I would like for us to do, if there is a way
24 for us to be part of or at least look at it
25 as a part of our recommendations for the

1 Charter, I don't know at this point what
2 that would look like, but what I would like
3 to see is us try to get as close to
4 transparency in how these situations are
5 handled so the public feels more comfortable
6 about the process itself.

7 Because the way it is now, the people
8 feel like the information goes into a vacuum
9 and, like you said, they don't know anything
10 about it until it's over. It's very
11 difficult to trust the process when you have
12 no information about what's going on as the
13 process is happening.

14 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yeah. And I think
15 that's the challenge. You're right, as the
16 process is happening. I think in terms of,
17 you know, showing the process A to Z, as
18 soon as state law allows us to, I think we
19 do. I appreciate that, thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
21 you.

22 Next we have Mr. Schellenberg, followed
23 by Ms. Knight.

24 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Through the
25 Chair to the Sheriff, good to see you again.

1 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Good morning.

2 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Couple
3 questions: Some sheriffs are appointed
4 versus elected. Your opinion on that?

5 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Obviously, I'm in
6 favor of an elected sheriff. I think the --
7 what you see in terms of if you look around
8 the country, police chiefs that are
9 appointed, I think immediately upon any
10 crisis in a community, that police chief is
11 fired. It buys whoever the elected official
12 is a little more time to make a change or
13 get the heat off of them, that type of
14 thing. The average tenure of a police chief
15 in the United States is about three years.

16 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: I read the
17 same thing. I agree with you.

18 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: That can be a
19 challenge.

20 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: So how about
21 the term limits on sheriff? Rutherford did
22 12. It makes sense, you get a feel for it.
23 What do you think about two four-years or
24 two six-years or some number longer than two
25 four-years?

1 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: I think term limits
2 is a good thing. I think you can have a
3 discussion about how long that is, is it 8,
4 is it 12, is it two sixes. I think there's
5 value in having that conversation. Having
6 been in the seat now for five years, there
7 is -- every -- not every sheriff's office is
8 the same, let me say that, obviously.

9 But being here there is a lot of things
10 that you learn in the course of five, six,
11 seven years. And you take those with you
12 when you go. As close as Rutherford and I
13 worked together, you know, day one in that
14 seat was nothing like I anticipated. You
15 just can't know it until you experience it.
16 So you do lose a bit of experience when the
17 term is over. But I think there is some
18 value to having a limit there as well.

19 So I would agree with the argument that
20 every four years the community gets to pick,
21 and that's a term limit mechanism in and of
22 itself. But, again, I think that, you know,
23 six sixes, I've heard that before, that's
24 something worth conversation, maybe 12
25 years.

1 I'm all about fresh ideas, though. I
2 think 12 would be the max in my opinion. I
3 don't think that anything more than that is
4 really productive.

5 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Thank you,
6 sir. Couple questions, because you have
7 basically an independent IT department; is
8 that correct?

9 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yes, essentially.

10 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: I understand
11 your position. Maybe it's better for us to
12 know, because I know it's not consolidated
13 with the City.

14 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Not completely. So
15 really I've driven more consolidation with
16 city IT in the last five years than we
17 probably ever have, quite frankly. And
18 there are areas where we can't consolidate,
19 that's what we're focused on; and there are
20 areas we cannot based on the data that we
21 store and how to seize this information.
22 Criminal justice information systems
23 nationwide are regulated by state and
24 federal law, lots of, you know, very
25 stringent requirements. The City, though,

1 has come onboard with some of those
2 requirements allowing us to interact a
3 little more.

4 So we'll continue to look for those
5 efficiencies. They meet constantly now. We
6 talked about that. But there's, again, more
7 steps being taken. I don't think we can
8 ever completely merge because that data and
9 the way we have to share data with other law
10 enforcement agencies in state and federal
11 regulations, but I believe there are some
12 efficiencies we could create. And we have
13 worked and are working to try to --

14 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Just one
15 other quick question, it has nothing to do
16 with the Charter, just a little information.
17 The retirement changed a couple years ago.
18 How does that affect the quality and
19 quantity of people that are applying here?
20 Because it used to be we were the big dog
21 and all the other places would want to come
22 here. We had a time that they actually
23 left. Have you seen a change? And, of
24 course, the average age is substantially
25 less than it was many years ago.

1 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: It is. On the
2 corrections side, it has been reduced at the
3 state level.

4 So we have not seen a negative impact.
5 Again, I was in favor of a move away from
6 the pension to that defined contribution
7 plan. We've not seen a negative impact. We
8 are now -- that's right side, so to speak.
9 We are drawing people in. We don't lose
10 people to surrounding counties anymore. We
11 see that course as corrected, and we do draw
12 people back in now.

13 There is a challenge nationally in
14 creating police officers. Our attrition
15 rate was higher last year than it has been,
16 but that's one year. I wouldn't call that a
17 trend as of yet. I would not equate that to
18 the change in retirement package.

19 Remember we talked about the retirement
20 package is part of the pay and benefits
21 package, pay is a big part of that as well.
22 The Mayor has been good at addressing that.
23 There is a new contract that will come up
24 next year.

25 And so, you know, you have to be

1 competitive in the pay range. Our
2 retirement package is competitive. So those
3 two things together will keep us as
4 competitive as the market will allow.

5 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Great.

6 Thank you very much, Sheriff.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you.

8 Next up, Ms. Knight.

9 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: Hello,
10 Sheriff. How are you?

11 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Good morning.

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: I see your
13 role as the protector. And we've worked a
14 little bit together in the past. And I've
15 seen what your staff do to make significant
16 efforts to measure your work, and I respect
17 that.

18 I see our responsibility as a community
19 to help you not have such a busy job. And I
20 define the community as, of course, us here,
21 the general population, our elected
22 officials, and our role as we respond to
23 things like this, you know, providing an
24 input.

25 There has been some discussion or lots

1 of discussion here by my colleagues and
2 presenters around several of those terms,
3 the tale of two cities, unfulfilled
4 promises, communities left behind, services
5 to the county line was a recent comment
6 today.

7 You know I'm a health care
8 administrator. My focus is usually around
9 the social determinants of health. That
10 includes education, what we call a built
11 environment. For those that may not know
12 that term, that's roads, sidewalks, parks
13 and so forth, income and, of course, health
14 itself.

15 When we think about your work, as it
16 relates to some of these topics earlier,
17 ones I just mentioned, tale of two cities,
18 unfulfilled promises, communities left
19 behind, how can we as a Charter Review
20 Commission help you to decrease crime in the
21 sense of those topics?

22 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So we have -- that's
23 a great question. We have -- and you're
24 right. All of those things impact, you
25 know, what really is the main driver of our

1 main crime issue in our community, which is
2 a violent crime issue. So if you look at us
3 compared to other cities around the country,
4 we have a similar challenge. We are very --
5 we're not worse, we're not better, but we're
6 not worse.

7 And I have conversations, again, with
8 law enforcement leaders nationwide. And the
9 conversations are always the same. And so
10 it's great in terms of the ideas I pull in,
11 but you do hear the same challenges in
12 communities all around the country.

13 So we have chosen to, you know, grab the
14 issue, talk about it as much as we can, stay
15 on top of it. And here is a great snapshot
16 of that: Crime in general for our city
17 today is down from where it was last year
18 almost five percent, that's really been the
19 trend for the last couple of years. Violent
20 crime is either flat or up, depending on
21 what categories you look at. So it doesn't
22 follow the normal crime trend. It is a
23 trend in and of itself, really. So that's
24 why we've chosen, again, to focus on it.
25 It's been that way for several years.

1 So we do a lot when it comes to the
2 ground zero area of that. So the people
3 driving violence in our community is a small
4 number of people, but they drive a
5 significant portion of the violence. So
6 they are prolific in how they commit this
7 violence.

8 So we do a couple different things in
9 that area, both in terms of outreach and
10 enforcement, because you have to do both.
11 So we're knocking on doors, we're talking to
12 family members. We're engaging people
13 engaged in that street, gang, gun culture.
14 We try to have a lot of interaction with
15 them on the front end of the equation. When
16 I say that, telling them what they're
17 exposed to; telling them, hey, if you get
18 caught with a bullet in your pocket, you're
19 going to jail for 30 years, did you know
20 that.

21 So all we're trying to do is make them
22 stop for a minute and think about what it is
23 they're about to do. Because many of these
24 instances that we see that turn into five,
25 six, seven, eight shootings in a row start

1 over something as insignificant as you
2 looked at me the wrong way, or you stepped
3 on my foot.

4 So that lands in our lap, we have to
5 address that. And that's the -- I call that
6 the concerns of today and this weekend.
7 Those are ours to handle.

8 We need the community support,
9 obviously, and we have to work to build that
10 in terms of solving cases and having
11 witnesses cooperate. And we get that to a
12 great extent depending on where the incident
13 occurred.

14 I like to say, you know, we have
15 something -- Grand Parks as a neighborhood
16 gets talked about a lot. Grand Parks made
17 some great headway, though. If we have a
18 shooting in Grand Park, we get a lots of
19 calls from the neighborhood of Grand Park
20 that says, here is what we know, here is
21 what we saw. If we have a shooting in the
22 club at 2 o'clock in the morning with 100
23 people there, nobody saw anything. So
24 that's the challenge, that's where the
25 driving force is.

1 But when you talk about the community
2 at-large, now you start talking about
3 prevention opportunities. You start talking
4 about intervention. All of those things are
5 equally important. And so it's not
6 enforcement or prevention. So it's not do
7 we invest in kids, but not give officers the
8 resources they need to do their job, you
9 have to do both.

10 Is it we don't invest in kids, but we
11 are going to invest in the reentry program
12 for people coming back from prison to give
13 them an opportunity to be successful? You
14 can't pick one. You have to do that too.
15 So we talk a lot about that prevention,
16 intervention, enforcement.

17 And when community weighs in, other than
18 the incident base, be involved in the case,
19 be a witness, tell us what you know, which,
20 again, we get a lot of. The community's
21 role is really the prevention end: getting
22 involved in the lives of young people early,
23 making sure there is an opportunity for
24 them, making sure that they're not standing
25 on a street corner after school or in the

1 summer, they're in a Boys and Girls Club,
2 they're in a PAL, they're doing something,
3 keeping busy.

4 So you look at a seven-year-old boy or
5 girl today, where are they when they're 17?
6 That's the question. Are they graduating
7 from high school? Are they going off to
8 college? Are they joining the workforce?
9 Are they joining the military? Or are they
10 already a gang member? Are they already a
11 drug dealer? Are they already indebted to
12 these circumstances? So that's where the
13 community has to weigh in.

14 And the other end of the equation with
15 reentry as well, we're heavily involved in
16 both of those areas, as well as the
17 enforcement piece of the equation. It's all
18 part of the package.

19 There are some in the community that
20 favor prevention over enforcement, some that
21 favor reentry over enforcement. And I
22 understand that. But enforcement is a part
23 of the equation as well. We just have to be
24 judicious about that. We've got to be very
25 strategic about that. And we work to do

1 that and we'll continue to work to do that.

2 But the community-wide effort -- I get
3 asked a lot from business people in the
4 community: How can we help you, Sheriff?
5 What can we do for you?

6 And I'm quick to tell them, we're well
7 taken care of by the City and the City
8 Council from an equipment standpoint; you
9 don't have to buy us anything. And not
10 every sheriff's office and police department
11 in the state is like that. So, again, we're
12 fortunate in that area.

13 But if you want to help us, go get
14 involved in the life of a young person, get
15 engaged in a nonprofit that does that either
16 through your church or through -- I always
17 promote PAL, I love PAL, but there are
18 others that do it too. The Boys and Girls
19 Club is a great example of that. We're
20 great partners with them. Go get involved
21 in some reentry services, get involved with
22 Kevin Gay Operation of New Hope, hire an
23 ex-offender. Do those kinds of things as a
24 community and that's going to help us at the
25 end of the day.

1 So this community-wide effort is just
2 that, I think you -- you know, if we're very
3 intentional about giving people a lane to
4 get in, you know -- we don't need roving
5 bands of citizens out patrolling the
6 streets, we don't need that. What we need
7 is a band of citizens engaged in the lives
8 of young people and helping ex-offenders as
9 they come back from prison, that's where we
10 need the community to weigh in, that's where
11 we need the support.

12 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: I don't ask
13 many questions. So I'm locked in on your
14 comments as it relates to opportunities.
15 It's clear where the majority of violence is
16 occurring. And as it relates to some of the
17 discussions we've been having around these
18 unfulfilled promises, do you believe if we
19 can remedy that, however, with
20 infrastructure support, would it be directly
21 in support of reducing your workload, so to
22 speak?

23 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yeah. Infrastructure
24 in terms of education, in terms of job
25 opportunity, yeah, absolutely. There's no

1 doubt about it. You're always going to
2 have -- you're never going to eliminate, and
3 you know that. But can you -- do we see
4 people who, were they given a different
5 circumstance, he may have made a different
6 choice, yeah, we see them every day. You
7 always have a sociopath, you're going to
8 have them. Especially in a community our
9 size, you have your fair share.

10 But can you -- I don't have any with me
11 today, it wouldn't take me an hour to bring
12 you a couple cases and say, in my opinion,
13 more opportunity, a different choice, more
14 opportunity, a different choice, absolutely,
15 I agree with that.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you.

17 Next we have Judge Swanson, followed by
18 Ms. Baker.

19 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Thank you,
20 Mr. Chairman.

21 Sheriff, thanks for being here today.

22 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yes, sir. Good
23 morning.

24 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Sheriff, a couple
25 of years ago I retired as a judge from the

1 First District Court of Appeals in
2 Tallahassee. There was a case that came
3 before me shortly before I retired that I
4 want to address as kind of a talking point
5 to get to a broader issue. The case
6 originated out at the beaches. It was a
7 child pornography case involving computer
8 pornography. And it was worked by both
9 Atlantic Beach and, as I recall, Neptune
10 Beach. And the case came up on appeal on
11 jurisdictional issues, cross city lines
12 between the two police agencies. And
13 however it was resolved doesn't really
14 matter.

15 But that's kind of always been a thought
16 in my mind about the efficiency of multiple
17 police agencies within the county. And
18 whether or not there are conflicts that
19 arise as a result of that, whether or not
20 that's the best or most efficient policing
21 practice for the community and whether or
22 not there should ultimately be some
23 recommendations concerning changes
24 concerning the independent police agencies
25 at the beaches for any reason or no reason.

1 And the answer may be yes, the answer may be
2 no. But I'd appreciate your thought process
3 on -- and you understand my question,
4 obviously.

5 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

6 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So I'd just
7 appreciate your thoughts on the beach --
8 whether or not that's the best structure for
9 government policing agencies. Thank you.

10 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yeah, good question.
11 So we have -- we're fortunate in Duval
12 County. If you just look south to South
13 Florida, you have a county with 23, 30
14 different police agencies in the county.
15 Obviously, that's -- you're going to have
16 issues there, you just will with that many.

17 So we have the Duval County School Board
18 Police Department here that has their own
19 jurisdiction in the schools. And then we
20 have the three beaches communities. And
21 really, from a working day-to-day standpoint
22 with us, we don't have any issues. Their
23 working relationship together has improved
24 over the years. And so they've got to get
25 MOU signed, they have to do things their

1 county -- city commissions have to get
2 together to allow some of that
3 cross-jurisdictional work to happen. And,
4 quite frankly, I don't know where they are
5 today in that. I know it's improved. I was
6 involved in the conversation about a year
7 ago with some traffic enforcement operation
8 that they wanted to kind of be able to merge
9 lines. It was a DUI arrest, I think, that
10 led to that conversation, a DUI arrest
11 outside of the jurisdiction.

12 So while we don't have an issue with
13 them, they do sometimes have an issue
14 amongst themselves. It seems to be driven
15 by the personality of whoever the chief is
16 at the time. They have a really good group
17 down there today, and so I don't anticipate
18 any issues there.

19 How efficient is it? I think the people
20 who live at the beach, the beaches community
21 like having their own police there. They
22 deal with some unique issues. And I don't
23 mean this in a derogatory way, but they deal
24 with a small town piece of that. So they
25 have their police officers and allow them to

1 do things that we certainly would not have
2 time to do. And so they like that, they
3 like that personal touch, so to speak. So I
4 don't think that you would ever get them to
5 agree to give that piece up.

6 But as long as those agencies and
7 cities -- and, really, those police chiefs
8 work for those city managers. So as long as
9 you have good working relationships there,
10 you can work through any of those
11 jurisdictional issues that you have, because
12 everybody is going to manage their own
13 resources, nobody wants to patrol the other
14 city. But where those lines touch, you
15 know, crime doesn't know that, and public
16 safety issues don't realize that. So you
17 have to be able to have some flexibility
18 there. As long as they're working together,
19 they have that.

20 The best example of all of us working
21 together is during hurricanes. So we've had
22 three or four really, really strong
23 interactions with them in the last two or
24 three years, and they've been fantastic.
25 They've been great to work with. And I'm

1 speaking just from the public safety
2 standpoint.

3 They were down here at EOC. They manage
4 their own EOCs in their city. And, again,
5 that's to get the information that they want
6 to get to their community directly to them,
7 and we're good with that. But they also
8 have a presence here at the county level.
9 So they are heavily engaged in that.

10 So as I stand here before you today, I
11 would make no recommendations about making
12 any changes.

13 I will tell you that issues that come up
14 that may prompt that conversation,
15 personally I believe are more
16 personality-driven than anything else.
17 There is -- the ability to have everybody
18 work together and it be effective and
19 efficient is there.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
21 you.

22 Next Ms. Baker, followed by
23 Ms. Santiago.

24 COMMISSIONER BAKER: Hi, Sheriff.

25 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Good morning.

1 COMMISSIONER BAKER: I read about a
2 positive partnership that you have with the
3 Mayor's Office and the State Attorney's
4 Office. Can you talk about that partnership
5 and how it's grown or changed over the last
6 three and four years? And is there anything
7 that we can do as a Commission structurally
8 to further strengthen that partnership or
9 keep it for future mayors and sheriffs and
10 state attorneys?

11 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Great question. We
12 have been very fortunate in our relationship
13 with the Mayor's Office and the City
14 Council, both. And none of this has been --
15 you know, I'm quick to tell people in the
16 community, this is not a rubber-stamp issue.
17 I go over and make -- the hundred police
18 officers that somebody mentioned earlier,
19 you had to go sell that and explain the
20 data, why that was important, why we needed
21 that. And we have done a lot of work up to
22 that point. But that's an example of the
23 kind of things we do. We go to the Mayor's
24 Office, here is what we need, here is why we
25 need it, here is the data to support it.

1 And he listens, I think that's the number
2 one thing I can say that really drives that
3 partnership, is he's always willing to
4 listen when we bring these issues to the
5 table, as is the Council. Every Council
6 President, you know, I've dealt with every
7 Council Member at some level, all of them
8 are willing to listen.

9 In the city government today, from my
10 perspective, we're in as good a position as
11 we have been in a long time. Puts a little
12 pressure to get something positive done
13 because there is no -- should be no hurdles,
14 really. But that relationship, again,
15 continues to grow. We treat it very
16 professionally in terms of, again, we're
17 always going to provide the data to back up
18 information to be able to support our ask,
19 basically.

20 The State Attorney, similar. So we have
21 a unique relationship with the state, really
22 around our state. We work with them as
23 cooperatively as we can from the very
24 beginning of these cases. So I've always
25 been a firm believer that we can -- our

1 arrest threshold and our prosecution
2 threshold are two different things. So
3 while we often, obviously, make arrests and
4 do that sometimes when we have to, it may
5 sometimes put undue pressure on the
6 prosecutor because the time table starts.
7 So what we try to do is get the prosecutors
8 involved early on so that we're building the
9 best prosecuting case we can from the very
10 beginning.

11 So do prosecutors sometimes drop cases
12 that we disagree with? Yes, but sometimes
13 we give them a case that's hard to
14 prosecute. And we both acknowledge that.
15 So we get that out of the way. And with
16 Angela Corey and with Melissa Nelson, we
17 have a great working relationship.

18 Really the CGIC, the Crime Gun
19 Intelligence Center, is a great example of
20 that. The Mayor put forth some funding to
21 build out the space. The State Attorney's
22 Office gave us the space. They have
23 attorneys working in that space. We've got
24 ATF. We've got our investigators working to
25 get -- every day working together, sitting

1 in an office together working on gun issues
2 in this community. So that's really the
3 best example of seeing how that worked
4 together.

5 But those relationships are invaluable,
6 in my opinion, to public safety in this
7 community. You need only look back at the
8 previous administration, for whatever
9 reason, but those relationships didn't
10 exist. It certainly hurt the community
11 because of that. So, again, I think that
12 any time you can have a cooperative working
13 relationship, the better off. Fortunately
14 we have that.

15 COMMISSIONER BAKER: Just a follow-up:
16 So what can we do in the Charter
17 potentially? Can we require quarterly
18 meetings between the three of you? Would
19 that make sense? Is there anything we can
20 do for the future to ensure that there are
21 continuing relationships between the three
22 of you? Because it seems like those are the
23 most important relationships.

24 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: That's a good
25 question. You know, really they don't exist

1 exactly like that, but there are required --
2 we have to interact together. So I think
3 it's to the detriment of the Sheriff and the
4 Mayor and the State Attorney in the criminal
5 justice arena to not have those
6 conversations. So really for us, because
7 the Council and the Mayor are so heavily
8 involved in the budget, control the budget
9 so tightly here in Duval County, that drives
10 those conversations. So I think that's
11 there. The Sheriff can never pull away and
12 say, I'm not going to talk to the Mayor.
13 That's not going to happen.

14 So I think the best thing really is let
15 it happen organically. There are already
16 things there that would drive that, drive
17 those conversations to happen.

18 And, again, this is a great example of
19 take the people out of the equation, the
20 process works. It's working now. There is
21 no reason why it shouldn't continue to work.
22 So, typically, when there are partner
23 issues, it's just people in process. And
24 our process is good here.

25 COMMISSIONER BAKER: One more follow-up:

1 So historically you think it has worked or
2 has been an organic relationship?

3 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Oh, absolutely.

4 COMMISSIONER BAKER: Even previous to --
5 in your predecessor?

6 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Correct. I'll agree.
7 Or not, and then you see the reasons why or
8 the outcome of that.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right.
10 Ms. Santiago, I saw you drop off the queue.
11 Are you still wanting to --

12 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: I think you've
13 addressed all my questions, thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Then Mr. Denton,
15 first time.

16 COMMISSIONER DENTON: Good morning,
17 Sheriff.

18 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Good morning, sir.

19 COMMISSIONER DENTON: One of the things
20 that we're thinking about, one of our big
21 topic areas, is whether or not the Charter
22 should include some requirement for
23 strategic planning of the City generally.
24 And given your area of responsibility as you
25 noted earlier, and I agree with you

1 entirely, is those are well beyond law
2 enforcement. It also includes prevention
3 and consideration of some of the issues that
4 lead to some of the crime issues and then
5 all the way to reentry.

6 Could you talk about whether you think
7 from a sheriff's perspective that a
8 strategic planning process every five years
9 or one year would be helpful in your area of
10 responsibility?

11 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So short answer to
12 that is, yes, I think it would be. I don't
13 know what that would look like, the nuts and
14 bolts of that. But, as an example, so years
15 ago I want to say -- I may be going back to
16 2004. We had a matrix audit come in, so an
17 audit to the Sheriff's Office. And it was
18 really driven by -- you may remember the
19 process. It was driven by, at the time,
20 Mayor Peyton, Sheriff Rutherford, I don't
21 remember who the Council President was at
22 the time.

23 But they really were looking at -- the
24 Sheriff said, hey, we had a spike in violent
25 crimes. The Sheriff said, I need more

1 resources. Mayor Peyton basically said,
2 hey, let's dissect the agency and find out
3 what exactly you need. So beyond just the
4 Sheriff saying, I need more, I need more,
5 Officer Rutherford was open to that.

6 So that assessment team came in and
7 spent months doing an assessment and then
8 provided a document, a report really, to the
9 Sheriff's Office, the Council President and
10 the Mayor. And not only did it have in
11 there a recommendation with a lot of
12 supporting data of the number of officers
13 that this community needed in their opinion,
14 but it also had efficiencies. For the
15 Sheriff's Office, it was a great checkup.

16 So we had some challenges with that
17 particular company, but the idea was, I
18 thought, fantastic at the time.

19 So we're in the process of doing that
20 now. So we have the International
21 Association of Chief of Police really onsite
22 this week, coincidentally, and they'll be
23 here two or three more times over the next
24 several months. And they're doing just
25 that, it's a checkup for the agency. It is

1 a nuts to bolts, you know, how does this
2 work, are you being efficient here, is this
3 best practice. Part of it will also be, you
4 know, based on the challenges you have in
5 your community, do we feel like you're
6 staffed appropriately. If not, here is a
7 recommendation of what we think a staffing
8 number should look like. So, again, that's
9 just part of it.

10 They're going to analyze the zone lines
11 as well. Our zone lines have been the same
12 for 20-plus years. And population has
13 changed, growth has changed. You know,
14 that's something that we feel like we need
15 to look at as well, and they're going to do
16 that.

17 I mentioned a couple months ago to a
18 couple Council people not a bad idea to do
19 that every five to seven years for the
20 Sheriff's Office. Now, you know, another
21 Sheriff may have a different view of that,
22 but I think it's a good checkup. It's a
23 good way to drive, obviously, the Council,
24 the Mayor's Office and the Sheriff's Office
25 together and talk about the internal

1 workings of the agency. I think it's
2 important. So we're doing it now. That's
3 something -- it's similar to that. But
4 that's the same kind of thing, I think,
5 where you sit down, you talk about the
6 direction, you set a goal, let's work
7 towards it.

8 We do those things now, but I don't know
9 if we do it at a high enough level maybe.
10 So it's definitely worth discussion to talk
11 about doing something like that as a
12 community, as an entire city and kind of
13 outline everybody's role in that.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
15 you.

16 Let's see. Yes, so it will be -- oh,
17 Ms. Lisska popped up for the first time.

18 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Sheriff Williams,
19 hello.

20 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Good morning.

21 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Thank you. I have
22 enjoyed listening to you.

23 I'm wondering what instigated the visit
24 of the International Association of Chief of
25 Police. Was that driven by you, staff or

1 requirement of some sort?

2 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yeah. We just chose
3 to do it. So it was something I wanted to
4 do a couple years ago and then just didn't,
5 obviously. We put it on the back burner,
6 put it on the back burner. And this was the
7 year we chose to bring that to a head and do
8 it.

9 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: So no requirement
10 anywhere?

11 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: No, ma'am.

12 COMMISSIONER LISSKA: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Next we
14 have Ms. Mills, for the second time.

15 COMMISSIONER MILLS: Hi, Sheriff.

16 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Good morning.

17 COMMISSIONER MILLS: I just wanted to
18 tell you and congratulate you on partnering
19 with Bethune-Cookman for having the
20 workshop. I heard a lot of people say a lot
21 of good things about it. I do thank you for
22 sharing with me and with the Charter about
23 the relationships in the community as it
24 relates to the City of Jacksonville, because
25 I do think that that's very important that

1 we know what's available so we can regain
2 the trust and hopefully take our City and
3 keep it in safe hands. Thank you so much
4 for your input this morning.

5 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Next, Mr. Griggs,
8 for the second time.

9 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you,
10 Mr. Chairman.

11 Thank you, Sheriff Williams. Again, I
12 just wanted to -- Mr. Denton sort of stole
13 my thunder a little around strategic
14 planning. And, again, I, like Ms. Mills,
15 appreciate the work you're doing around
16 social justice with Bethune-Cookman, we
17 heard a lot of good things about the
18 program.

19 But I'm wondering if you are, the
20 Sheriff's Office, is involved in any other
21 long-term strategic planning efforts that
22 involve local partners. And when I say
23 that, I'm using the example when I was at
24 the health department, we worked, along with
25 other community agencies, organizations and

1 the private sector, in developing, helping
2 to facilitate the development of a community
3 health improvement plan. And as part of
4 that, a representative from the Sheriff's
5 Office would be there. And at the end of
6 that process, there are deliverables that
7 each agency or partners or what have you
8 will participate in. And I recall the
9 Sheriff's Office being a part of that
10 because those are the things that identify
11 some of the social determinants of health
12 that are going on in our community like
13 Ann-Marie mentioned earlier.

14 So I'm wondering if you have any other
15 local strategic partnerships at addressing
16 social determinants of health and social
17 injustice issues.

18 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So if I understand
19 your question correctly, the answer is, no,
20 we don't have long-term strategic
21 partnerships in place that do that. We are
22 engaged in multiple partnerships working day
23 to day with, obviously, like Kevin Gay
24 Operation New Hope, prevention opportunities
25 that we weigh into. Those -- if that's

1 where you're talking about, those type of
2 things, yes. But in a strategic plan that
3 involves other city agencies or nonprofits
4 involved in that, not really. We are not
5 driving any of that. We participate in some
6 of it, but we're not driving any of that.

7 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Okay. And my
8 follow-up to that would be is there a
9 process for the public or citizens or
10 organizations to be able to introduce data,
11 programs or policies they believe that will
12 be helpful to your job at JSO and specific
13 to a particular situation? Let's just say
14 an organization had a way, they felt they
15 had an evidence-based program or a new
16 policy they felt like would help reduce
17 problems in our community in a certain area
18 of town, what is the process of introducing
19 that information to you or to whoever in
20 your department to receive that information?

21 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So right now there is
22 not a formal process for that because we try
23 to engage -- every zone commander is heavily
24 engaged in daily activity -- I say daily --
25 activity with nonprofits working the area.

1 I'm always available, as you know. I mean,
2 I'm always available to listen to those
3 ideas. And a lot of those were brought to
4 me directly from the community. A lot of
5 those come through the Sheriff's Watch
6 meetings or some other community outreach
7 avenue that we have where somebody says,
8 hey, I have an idea. And, again, a lot of
9 them, they call directly and say, I would
10 like to speak to the Sheriff about this.
11 And I make a point to always make myself
12 available to hear that.

13 And we've gotten some good things out of
14 that. That's where the Bethune-Cookman idea
15 came from, as a matter of fact. So we're
16 always open to hear that. Not really a
17 formal process when you put something in a
18 queue and, you know, have it evaluated and
19 all that. It's really just about having a
20 relationship with somebody. Now, that is a
21 formal process with a zone commander or just
22 reaching out to my office and getting the
23 opportunity.

24 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you.

25 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yes, sir.

1 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Next I see
2 Ms. Baker, second time.

3 COMMISSIONER BAKER: Hi, Sheriff. I
4 just wanted to dig a little deeper into the
5 strategic planning process that you said has
6 been done before and you are doing now. Is
7 it really just looking into inefficiencies
8 in your office, like the details of the
9 zoning? Do you need more officers? Do they
10 also recommend programs that could help our
11 City, like, ShotSpotters that we've done?

12 And, also, does it include the Mayor and
13 the State Attorney when they're conducting
14 their investigations? And would it be
15 helpful to include them? Just, if we can
16 put that in writing to do this, I just want
17 to know more about what you would suggest.

18 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So they do include
19 them. There is an interview with the Mayor
20 and there is an interview with the State
21 Attorney, they actually interview the police
22 chiefs in the surrounding -- in
23 our jurisdictional area, they interview
24 those and they talk to the surrounding
25 sheriffs as well about relationships. So

1 there are different facets to this.

2 The only area they are not covering in
3 this assessment is our corrections piece.
4 And that's a separate deal. And we're
5 looking to do a similar assessment for that
6 process. But they do all of that. So it's
7 in efficiencies, you know, looking at zones,
8 talking about staffing, and then
9 programming. From a programming standpoint,
10 what's the best practice as it relates to
11 this? What evidence-based practices are you
12 using?

13 I will tell you that, as much work as
14 we've done in the area of violent crime,
15 there is not an evidence-based practice in
16 the country that we're not doing here. Now,
17 all of that is kind of just now coming
18 together, but when you talk about the focus
19 of deterrent strategies, we do it with the
20 National Network For Safe Communities out of
21 John Jay College in New York, you talk about
22 true violence as a piece of that puzzle,
23 technology like ShotSpotter, the realtime
24 crime cameras.

25 If you look around the country at what's

1 evidence-based and what works, everything is
2 here now, within the last, you know, six
3 months. So now it's time to let that stuff
4 work.

5 So they may bring something new to the
6 table, we're always looking. We're always
7 looking for new ideas and new things, but I
8 much prefer the things that we know have
9 worked in other communities. They have some
10 scientific evidence behind them or results
11 from somewhere else.

12 So right now we've got what I think is
13 the right combination of strategies and
14 programs and technology. Now you just have
15 to let it work.

16 But that's part of what they'll do.
17 They'll evaluate that. How are we using
18 that? Are we using it correctly? And, oh,
19 by the way, have you thought about adding
20 this? Have you thought about adding that?
21 So they do a lot of that work.

22 COMMISSIONER BAKER: And how often would
23 you recommend that this happen? Did you say
24 every five to seven years?

25 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: I think five to seven

1 years would be appropriate. It's been
2 longer than that since we had it last time.

3 COMMISSIONER BAKER: When was the last
4 time?

5 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: 2004, and that was
6 the first time. And that was really driven
7 by a crisis. So, to me, I think, you know,
8 some kind of schedule where there is an
9 analysis done of the agency and how that --
10 because it doesn't take long to get off
11 course, you know, you can imagine. So
12 requiring something like that is going to be
13 beneficial to the community.

14 COMMISSIONER BAKER: Thank you. That's
15 very helpful.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you. I don't
17 see anybody else on the queue.

18 I have a couple questions. One is
19 probably just more informative for our
20 Commission, and I don't know if you've had
21 the opportunity to see the City Council
22 strategic plan that was initiated by then
23 Council President Bowman. But Ms. Johnston
24 or Ms. Owens -- you're not going to be here
25 any longer, so I'm not going to ask you --

1 if we can get a copy of that strategic plan,
2 as well as I know that the Council just
3 passed legislation authorizing that to
4 occur, go forward on, I believe, an annual
5 basis --

6 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Right.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: -- in there, that
8 might be helpful since strategic planning is
9 something that continues to percolate up to
10 the top in our discussions, that might be
11 something for us to look at as a Commission
12 in understanding -- look at the legislation
13 and the strategic plan itself in there.

14 I had a question about -- obviously, you
15 work with the State Attorney's Office. How
16 much interaction does your office have with
17 regards to OGC, Office of General Counsel?

18 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yeah, good question.
19 A lot, as you can imagine. I don't know
20 what the other volume is. I have to guess
21 we're probably top users of services from
22 OGC, close to it. And unlike Jim, so I have
23 a little different -- I've had a different
24 perspective. I approached Jason awhile back
25 to General Counsel about potentially having

1 someone assigned in the office. So years
2 ago Larry Pritchard, who many of you may
3 remember, was actually assigned to work for
4 the General Counsel and sat in the Sheriff's
5 Office. And when Larry retired, we never
6 really replaced that position.

7 Larry originally started as a legal
8 advisor from the State Attorney's Office,
9 retired from the State Attorney's Office,
10 was hired by OGC, and really continued as a
11 legal advisor for the Sheriff in -- assigned
12 to our building.

13 We currently have a legal advisor from
14 the State Attorney's Office that is there to
15 advise on criminal issues. So they have a
16 period of time where they're on-call,
17 officers can call and ask questions. State
18 Attorney also provides an on-call state
19 attorney for that. There is enough work
20 volume, obviously, for them to stay busy
21 with that. But we've had, again,
22 conversations about representation in the
23 building.

24 Jason made a great point to me, and it's
25 absolutely true, we have such a wide variety

1 of issues, I don't know that I can have one
2 attorney in our building to address all
3 those issues. So we have a number of labor
4 and disciplinary issues that come up.
5 Derrel Chatmon obviously is the lead at OGC
6 for a lot of that. We have Steve Powell,
7 Sean Granat that do a lot of the law
8 enforcement related litigation that happens.
9 People sue the agency for a variety of
10 reasons. And, again, five or six others
11 that we deal with on a regular basis. So
12 we're getting some expertise there in terms
13 of those areas, and they're so diverse.

14 What we asked for recently was really to
15 have somebody be a traffic cop, so to speak
16 for that, sit in our building. Andy Kantor,
17 who is there with the State Attorney's
18 Office, may assume that role for us; we're
19 in those conversations now. But not so much
20 to litigate for us. A little bit different
21 than, I think, what Jim was talking about.
22 Really just more of a -- again, to kind of
23 marshal different things, to keep tabs on
24 different legal issues as they're coming and
25 going.

1 So maybe not a bad idea to have a -- I
2 may be the only Sheriff in the state that
3 doesn't have his own attorney that speaks
4 for the Sheriff. And so I haven't had any
5 issue. And, again, I get a lot of great
6 advice, so I can't bring you an example.
7 But it's -- this is a bad process for us, it
8 works for me. But it may not be a bad idea
9 to look at that, someone who is -- I don't
10 know how, if they would work for GC, I don't
11 know how that would work, but --

12 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: That was -- I don't
13 know if you were here when we had the
14 discussion with Mr. Overton, but I think it
15 was Mr. Weinstein was the one who put
16 forward this general idea of an Assistant
17 General Counsel with each of the independent
18 authorities. Obviously, to do that, you
19 know, with each individual constitutional
20 office as well.

21 One thing that is also interesting is in
22 the duties for the Sheriff under the
23 Charter, it talks about enforcement of laws
24 under the Constitution, general special laws
25 of Florida, but it doesn't reference our own

1 municipal code. Along the lines of
2 Ms. Lisska, that might be something on a
3 clean-up. I was just going through and I
4 said, well, that's funny, it doesn't mention
5 anything about our enforcement of our local
6 laws through there.

7 And I also believe -- you talked about
8 with regards to the interaction with the
9 beaches, that grew out of the issue of
10 consolidation of those communities wanting
11 to maintain their autonomy within that.

12 Judge Swanson, far be it for me to
13 refuse a judge anything he asks. I saw that
14 you did pop up here on the queue.

15 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: It's not user
16 friendly to me. I'm getting my sea legs.

17 Sheriff, I just have a very abbreviated
18 question. It goes to school safety, student
19 safety. And I know that there is another
20 independent law enforcement agency that's
21 involved directly in that. And your
22 relationship would be indirect or less
23 direct; is that fair to say?

24 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Yes. On a day-to-day
25 basis, that is correct.

1 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: This is a
2 structural question in terms of school and
3 student safety, active shooter issues, those
4 kinds of things that are so preeminent for
5 anybody that has a child or really
6 preeminent for anybody that's a citizen.
7 Structurally, are we doing it right or could
8 there be some structural changes that maybe
9 we could address with recommendation that
10 would enhance the safety of schools and
11 teachers and citizens in the school
12 environment?

13 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Great question. I
14 think we're moving in the right direction.
15 The one improvement that I would like to
16 see -- and, of course, it's budget
17 constraints that impact this, but I'm a fan
18 of having a police officer in every school,
19 not a guardian, not a school safety
20 assistant. Although that's what we do today
21 to bridge that gap, and that's what the
22 legislature obviously has given people an
23 opportunity to do, it falls short of being a
24 sworn police officer in the school.

25 There is a lot of great benefit there,

1 obviously, in terms of the interaction,
2 relationships, all that happens. Those
3 officers are rarely the disciplinarians in
4 the school. That's not what they do. But
5 they are well trained and they are there and
6 can respond should one of those crisis
7 incidents occur on campus.

8 You know, currently today, because of
9 the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Act, we have
10 the ability to really train -- screen and
11 train an employee that the School Board
12 hires to be a school safety assistant. So I
13 like the idea that they have someone with
14 the sole responsibility of being protector
15 of the school.

16 I'm not a fan of arming teachers. I
17 think teachers have enough to do in the
18 classroom as it is and teachers are not
19 professionals when it comes to law
20 enforcement and responding.

21 The idea that there is a roving band of
22 retired policemen and veterans who will do
23 that job is just not true. Veterans and
24 retired police officers go get other jobs.

25 Our challenge here was that the school

1 safety assistants from the School Board were
2 paid about \$12 an hour. So, as you can
3 imagine, you don't have a very strong
4 applicant pool for that kind of work.

5 We experience -- and this started two
6 years ago -- or a year ago we started. So
7 we experienced, obviously, by the applicants
8 brought onboard by the School Board, half of
9 them did not pass the screening, which we
10 are required to do by state law now. And
11 the ones that did pass the screening, half
12 of that group didn't pass the training. And
13 we are required to train them because of
14 state law.

15 So there has been an adjustment made.
16 The School Board is paying 20-plus dollars
17 an hour now, so that's going to improve the
18 pool. Obviously, immediately, at the
19 beginning of school last year, when the new
20 legislation came into effect, we were short
21 100 police officers, guardians, something,
22 to cover elementary schools. So we had our
23 high schools and middle schools covered. We
24 had nobody in elementary schools.

25 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Well, Sheriff, if

1 I can just follow up on that, I'm trying to
2 understand the "we" in your response.

3 Structurally?

4 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Structurally it's the
5 Duval County School Board's responsibility.

6 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Structurally
7 would you before -- or structurally, in your
8 opinion, would it be safer for the community
9 to be -- for this to be your responsibility?

10 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: So I would prefer us
11 or the Duval County School Board --

12 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Us, who is us?

13 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: JSO or Duval County
14 School Board be staffed with enough police
15 officers to cover that, either one. As long
16 as it is a state certified law enforcement
17 police officer that is on campus, that would
18 be my preference.

19 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Well,
20 structurally would that officer respond or
21 report to you or to somebody else? Which
22 would be the best practice?

23 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Best practice, in a
24 perfect world, they all belong to me, in a
25 perfect world.

1 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: So that's a
2 structural change --

3 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: That's a big
4 structural change, yeah, that's huge. So
5 you're talking about the addition of -- in
6 addition to what we may need in public
7 safety in Jacksonville, you're talking about
8 an initial 150, 160 police officers for the
9 Duval County School Board and the school
10 responsibility.

11 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: That you would
12 absorb somehow.

13 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: Correct.

14 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: But that would,
15 in your opinion, be the best practice?

16 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: In my opinion, again,
17 if I were starting from scratch, all of
18 those -- there would be a police officer in
19 every school and they would work for the
20 Sheriff's Office.

21 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
24 you.

25 Thank you, Sheriff Williams, for your

1 time here today. Is there anything else you
2 want to share with us?

3 SHERIFF WILLIAMS: No. I appreciate
4 your work and thanks for having me.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you.

6 All right. Now we come to Commission
7 updates and discussions. If anybody has had
8 an opportunity to meet with anyone or talk
9 about certain issues, I know
10 Mr. Schellenberg had already mentioned
11 talking with Doc Mullaney (sic).

12 And are you going to have that report,
13 that --

14 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: It was sent
15 to me last night. I had Ms. Owens print one
16 copy for me just because I like it. She's
17 going to send it out to all of you in a PDF
18 file.

19 Is that correct, Ms. Owens?

20 So you can review it and ask Dr. Haley
21 whatever you might ask.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Thank
23 you.

24 Ms. Jameson.

25 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman. For discussion, I would like
2 to get a sense of how we are determining
3 these upcoming four meetings that we have
4 left as a large group before we get to the
5 committees. What is the structure of who
6 gets invited? How they're invited? Who
7 invites them? And then, again, because we
8 only have limited four meetings left, how do
9 we determine who gets invited?

10 Again, we have a lot of people on these
11 lists of resources that we would like to
12 hear from. But, again, with that limited
13 time, how do we determine who actually gets
14 those last four meetings, let's call it?

15 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Well, we've kind of
16 been maintaining a list as we go along for
17 scheduled speakers. And when someone has
18 said, hey, I would like to have this person
19 invited, we've tried to honor those requests
20 and get in there.

21 Again, there's nothing that prevents us
22 from talking to them once we get the
23 priorities and going back and re-inviting
24 them to come at the committee level.

25 So what I have tried to do as Chair is

1 give us broad ones. Like, one, I'm going to
2 be following back up with Ms. Boyer to come
3 and speak. I have that set on there so that
4 she can share with us some of the things
5 that were accomplished and the things that
6 weren't accomplished through her task force.

7 And here is what we have so far, I have
8 here in my hand, we have Sherry Magill and
9 Audrey Moran set for October 2nd. We do not
10 have anyone as it is on October 11th. I
11 have -- we've sent out requests, I believe,
12 to the independent agencies, following up on
13 those, haven't heard anything back yet with
14 regards to those on the issue of strategic
15 planning and interaction with consolidated
16 government. But, again, if as it seems,
17 this idea of a strategic plan procedure that
18 we would put into the Charter, if that
19 becomes one of the big topics, then
20 obviously that would be something for the --
21 that subcommittee to really drill down in on
22 and understand the intricacies of how that
23 works with each of those independent
24 agencies.

25 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: Will we be able

1 to get a copy of that list of who is
2 upcoming? For me, it would be helpful to
3 prep what exactly is in the Charter with
4 seeing who our presenters are for that day.
5 If we can get that list ahead of time, I
6 think that would be very helpful, that we
7 can all prepare what's specifically in the
8 Charter, what we would like to be included
9 in the Charter just so we can structure
10 those conversations.

11 Again, I'm a little worried with only
12 having four meetings left. I want to make
13 sure that we're able to go through all these
14 discussions.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Very good. I will
16 do it.

17 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Next, Ms. Knight.

19 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: So preface my
20 first comment with I joined the Commission
21 when I was at a previous institution, so
22 there is no bias there. In our Commission
23 topics, and I actually like to call it our
24 issues list, there was -- there is a bullet
25 listed as dedicated funding for the health

1 department. And I'm wondering was that
2 comment regarding UF Health. Is that a
3 correction or should that be corrected?

4 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes, Mr. Griggs.

5 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: I actually made --
6 sort of made that recommendation, but it
7 wasn't really a recommendation
8 recommendation. What it was, was an
9 opportunity to review this section in the
10 Charter that speaks to health -- I can't
11 remember the terminology now, but we do have
12 under there the health care facilities
13 authority, but there is something there that
14 allows for in the Charter dedicated funding
15 for health care issues. If I can get a
16 chance to look back, I can tell you exactly
17 what it is.

18 I think at an earlier meeting I asked
19 about the, I guess, dormant authorities that
20 are listed in the Charter, ones that we
21 haven't seen operational, like the Sports
22 Development Authority, whatever it's called.
23 And this was an opportunity to revisit a way
24 to have dedicated funding and maybe perhaps
25 support the needs of the indigent care

1 dollars that UF Health needs, and as well
2 the public health unit.

3 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: So I'll
4 definitely try to make sure I compliment
5 your recommendation on the list.

6 The other piece I have concern about is
7 on our list we have great sub-bullets around
8 some very heavy, important topics, but the
9 Urban Core Investment Authority is a sole
10 bullet. If you look at our topics list, I
11 just caution us as a Commission, there are
12 many of our topics and sub-bullets in other
13 areas that would easily apply to the Urban
14 Core Investment Authority idea that I think
15 Commissioner Griggs can -- suggestion, to
16 include the dedicated funding, to include
17 the strategic plan idea, to include creating
18 our own -- budget, City Council budget, and
19 comments around independent authorities.

20 So when we get to the point that we're
21 really flooding the list, I think it would
22 be important to really draw overlaps with
23 topics so we can see the magnitude of any
24 one of these major bullets, because I think
25 that's going to help us with our decisions.

1 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: My question on
2 trying to organize this, are you saying that
3 those bullet points under the broader topics
4 should fall underneath that broader topic as
5 well?

6 COMMISSIONER BAKER: There's multiple.

7 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: Yes. Say that
8 one more time to make sure --

9 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I was just cheating
10 and looking over at your paper, and I saw
11 where you had marked individual bullet
12 points that were under other broader topics.
13 Are you saying that we should include those
14 other bullet points beneath that broader
15 topic of the urban core?

16 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: Yeah, or
17 simply, instead of doing bullets, we could
18 order it by numerical -- alphanumerical
19 order and just do cross-reference, because I
20 think it will help us when we're deciding
21 what topics are most important to us, to
22 realizing the impact across multiple
23 editors. Does that make sense? Because if
24 we look at them independently, so just say
25 if you look at OGC by itself in some of the

1 topics underneath, the sub-bullets, there
2 may be complimenting or other impact, other
3 bullets on the list. I think it would be
4 important for us to realize that, the
5 magnitude of any of these things. And,
6 again, to my initial point, the Urban Core
7 Investment Authority, we need to realize
8 that many of these sub-bullets do have
9 impact on that opportunity that we should be
10 paying attention to.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Okay. So what I
12 would ask and maybe we can get -- did you
13 receive that list? Do you have it
14 electronically in Word?

15 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: No, I do not.

16 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Then,
17 Ms. Owens, if we can get that list, I
18 believe I sent it to you in Word when I was
19 working around on it, and send it out.

20 If you have ideas or things to include
21 in that, then we can get that and we can
22 look at it, because that's exactly what I'm
23 hoping we're beginning to do, is refine that
24 list to where we all agree these are the
25 items that we're going to be looking at so

1 we all know how we can rank them.

2 And I think it's a very good point, if
3 we did a Venn diagram, there would be a
4 bunch of overlaps on all of these. You
5 know, just again from today, strategic
6 planning is one that seems to really rise to
7 the top of making sure that the consolidated
8 government, that each silo is talking to one
9 another on that.

10 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Mr. Schellenberg.

12 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Thank you,
13 Chair, just a couple things. The funding, I
14 think, has to do with UF Health also is what
15 you were thinking of. Just to Jackson
16 Memorial in Miami and Tampa General and
17 Tampa, they have a dedicated funding source
18 for their hospitals that are almost
19 identical to UF Health. I think that we
20 should reach out to Dr. Haley as soon as
21 possible. He's a very busy guy, and rightly
22 so. I think he said he had like 7,000
23 employees, he's extraordinarily busy over
24 there. Find out what his schedule is and
25 also have him first on the list, the speaker

1 so he can get in and out.

2 VICE CHAIRPERSON KNIGHT: I think he's
3 October 2nd.

4 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Did he say
5 yes to that?

6 MS. OWENS: Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: If you could
8 put him right off the bat, I'd greatly
9 appreciate it. He asked me to do that.

10 Understanding scrubbing and all that
11 kind of stuff, I think when we go into
12 subcommittees, we might very much -- even
13 though we might have scrubbed them now, they
14 might come back in subcommittees because of
15 the various conversations we're having with
16 additional expertise. So I understand what
17 we're trying to do, but -- in subcommittees,
18 but you never know what directions they
19 might end up. And I think that's critical
20 for the chairs of these subcommittees to
21 recognize and for the whole Committee to
22 recognize going forward.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yeah. And -- I'm
24 sorry. Were you -- okay. You put your mike
25 down, so that means yes. Do you know,

1 Mr. Schellenberg, exactly how those
2 dedicated funding sources are created for
3 Jackson Memorial? I ask that because if you
4 could point us to --

5 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: Sales tax,
6 dedicated sales tax. And I think Jackson
7 Memorial -- these are old numbers, but I
8 think they get a couple hundred million
9 dollars a year to run that hospital.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I was just looking
11 at specifically how it's structured. Is it
12 through an ordinance code? Is it through a
13 charter?

14 COMMISSIONER SCHELLENBERG: That part I
15 don't know, Chair. But that's easily found
16 out, and I'll find out. I'll see what I can
17 do. I'm pretty sure it will be open.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Mr. Griggs seems to
19 have some input on this.

20 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chair, I can answer that question, as it
22 used to be my job.

23 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: (Inaudible) --
24 money.

25 COMMISSIONER GRIGGS: The indigent care

1 dollars, public health unit money, under
2 Chapter 154 from the Florida statutes, each
3 county that's supposed to have a public
4 health trust fund, that fund -- that trust
5 fund is supposed to be funded through --
6 typically funded through a taxing district.

7 Jacksonville, Duval County, is the one
8 large community that doesn't have a
9 dedicated taxing district to support that
10 public health trust fund, which makes the
11 annual funding subject to who is ever, you
12 know, administratively in office and
13 whatever the Council approves. So
14 typically, whatever UF Health has gotten has
15 fallen underneath that number which they
16 typically can get, that's why it's been --
17 they work to maintain that.

18 And also the duties of the county health
19 department, which are the clinical indigent
20 care, environmental and disease control,
21 those numbers, those funding dollars, are
22 supposed to come from the city as well. And
23 that's why you see some of the facilities
24 that are owned -- that are run by the health
25 department, owned by the city.

1 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Excellent. We have
2 a subject matter expert. Thank you.

3 Judge Swanson.

4 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: Thank you. I
5 really am soliciting some guidance for
6 thoughts from the Chair. I'm new,
7 obviously.

8 And so one of my thoughts from today's
9 testimony of the Sheriff, in particular, was
10 concerning structure and the best practice
11 so far as school safety, student safety,
12 active shooter responses, those kinds of
13 things. And he clearly indicated in his
14 view a structural change might be
15 appropriate for consideration.

16 I don't know, given my database at this
17 point, whether or not that's something that
18 would be addressed by this Commission in
19 terms of a macro change recommendation or
20 not. So I solicit guidance from you, your
21 thoughts concerning that, number one.

22 And number two, if there is a thought
23 that that might be appropriate, I think we
24 should pursue that with some additional
25 testimony.

1 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: And question to
2 Ms. Johnston, which I have all respect for
3 you and Ms. Sidman because I can't imagine
4 having any elected officials as my client
5 and worse than that be lawyers who are
6 elected officials appointed through here,
7 because you get questions and you have to
8 dance on the tips of your toes.

9 Do you know with regards to the Duval
10 County School Board police force, is that a
11 creature of local ordinance or is that a
12 creature of state statute?

13 MS. JOHNSTON: Through the Chair to the
14 Commission, I don't know that off the top of
15 my head. I would have to look into it. But
16 in terms of the structure with the schools
17 having police officers, I think a lot of the
18 new requirements came out of the state law
19 from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Act. So
20 to the extent of having -- where the Sheriff
21 was talking about having police officers at
22 each of the schools, some of that seems to
23 be a result of the state law changes. So we
24 also have to look at what part of it is the
25 state law requirements versus what we can do

1 in the Charter in terms of structure.

2 But I will look at how the School
3 Board's police force is structured and get
4 that information to the Commission.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. And,
6 Judge, to follow up on that, our report goes
7 not only to the City Council, but also to
8 the Duval Legislative Delegation, so to the
9 extent that there are state laws that we
10 would recommend specifically as it relates
11 to Jacksonville, that is within our charge
12 to look at those things.

13 Mr. Hagan.

14 COMMISSIONER HAGAN: Thank you,
15 Mr. Chairman. When I was looking over this
16 list, one of the things that's pretty
17 important to me is streamlining. I don't
18 see streamlining government making sure that
19 we're operating efficiently. I don't see it
20 in there, but I've seen several different
21 spots where it can fit under. I want to
22 make sure that's either a bullet point or
23 something maybe that could be under
24 government structure or something like that.

25 And maybe if we made it a bullet point,

1 the other thing I was going to mention is
2 city incentives. I know those have been
3 pretty important as we try to attract
4 companies in Jacksonville. And I don't know
5 how that would play into effect into the
6 Charter, but if it could, I think it would
7 be really important to make sure we had
8 something in there basically saying that
9 it's in our Charter, it's in our
10 Constitution, we are open for business and
11 we want to do everything we can to make sure
12 that we have a competitive advantage over
13 anywhere else in the state or country.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: And I have reached
15 out to Daniel Davis, there at the Chamber of
16 Commerce, to see if there were any issues
17 like that. I believe he was going to be
18 getting internally with his team to see if
19 there is perhaps something that could be
20 coming that way. So I haven't heard back.

21 Ms. Baker.

22 COMMISSIONER BAKER: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chair. I would like to add the
24 Sheriff's recommendations of the strategic
25 plan every five to seven years. I think

1 that could fall under the citywide strategic
2 planning or maybe other areas.

3 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I agree, we'll make
4 sure that's in there.

5 Next I have Ms. Santiago.

6 COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: Good morning. I
7 just have a quick question for you. I know
8 that we have invited Mike Hogan to come
9 speak, and that he addressed, based on our
10 list, that he didn't have any issues. But
11 do we have questions for him, since it seems
12 like there is so much on what we've
13 discussed about elections and staggered
14 terms and whether or not -- could we do the
15 same thing that we just did with Sheriff
16 Williams with Mike Hogan?

17 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: I can reach back out
18 to him, yes.

19 Next, Judge Swanson, did you want to
20 speak again?

21 COMMISSIONER SWANSON: No.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: You're off, okay.
23 Ms. Jameson, were you back on again?

24 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: I just had a
25 clarifying question. I thought we had

1 re-invited those that had initially said
2 they didn't have an issue, I thought we were
3 going to re-invite them to, again, do that
4 same: if they didn't have a presentation,
5 we could still ask them relevant questions.

6 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Did they go to --
7 just sent it to the authorities, okay. We
8 just sent that to the authorities. But
9 we'll send it out to those who have not
10 already come and spoken who are
11 constitutional officers.

12 COMMISSIONER JAMESON: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: All right. Seeing
14 no one else on the queue, any other business
15 or things anybody needs to talk about?

16 Then we will go to our final public
17 comment. And I have one from Mr. Nooney.

18 Name and address, please, sir.

19 MR. NOONEY: Hello. My name is John
20 Nooney, 8356 Bascom Road, Jacksonville,
21 Florida 32216.

22 I am so glad that we have a court
23 reporter. I swear that the testimony I'm
24 about to give is the whole truth and nothing
25 but the truth and not a Charter Revision

1 Commission fib.

2 You know, what I just want to read is --
3 and this is my public comments that's in the
4 minutes. John Nooney, our waterways are the
5 soul of the community. He recommends a
6 Charter amendment requiring CRAs and the DIA
7 to ensure public access to waterways. The
8 School Board headquarters should be a public
9 access point. Mr. Nooney said that, since
10 the adoption of ordinance 2014-560E, he
11 wonders if citizens really have legal access
12 to 4.8 miles of city waterfront downtown and
13 whether that access is subject to federal
14 enforcement. The ordinance has a chilling
15 effect on public access. He recommended
16 inviting Kay Ehas of Groundwork Jax, to
17 speak at a future meeting about river
18 access. Speak for the river while you have
19 the chance.

20 And let me just say, you know, very
21 quickly, you know, when you look at the
22 structure, I just -- you know what, I
23 participated in One Spark. It had a
24 waterways component access to it. And they
25 wanted to seize my watercraft. You know, I

1 just sat there.

2 In fact, I even called up the paper.
3 You want a front-page headline? Go right
4 ahead, just take me away. And so, anyway,
5 that's 2014.

6 Now right here, I'll talk about this,
7 you know, Florida Times Union, every issue,
8 it's still worth getting into. This is the
9 armory. Now the legislation was 2013-384.
10 Now, when you look at our Charter, the last
11 Charter Revision Commission was 2009. So,
12 anyway, this is just September. So then
13 after 100 years we have the Emerald Trail.

14 So where I'm going with this is you
15 know, when I did -- we are now under federal
16 with downtown. So your invited speakers
17 should be U.S. Coast Guard Sector
18 Jacksonville, Captain Jim Suber, FWC. You
19 know, you'll be -- and then JSO, Lieutenant
20 Shawn McCormick, we expanded the marine
21 division.

22 So, again, I want to be one of the
23 biggest cheerleaders, but like I said,
24 everything is legislation, 2017-1 was the
25 trespass, you know, public park. What will

1 be the ramifications for this?

2 So, anyway, again, a Charter amendment
3 to address the CRA and DIA, if we're giving
4 away, for example, and I'll just use the
5 armory, because that's what's right now on
6 the table, the public access will be
7 guaranteed for the people of Jacksonville
8 for all.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you.

10 MR. NOONEY: Well, thank you for
11 listening.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Next we have
13 Ms. Goforth.

14 Name and address, please, ma'am.

15 MS. GOFORTH: Claire Goforth, my address
16 is on file.

17 I'm just here because I'm writing a
18 story for Jax Lookout about the Charter
19 Revision Commission process. And I have
20 emailed most of you, heard back from a few,
21 and I've spoken to a couple, but I do not
22 have contact information for Judge Mills,
23 Ms. Lisska -- I'm sorry, Judge Swanson,
24 Ms. Mills and Ms. Lisska. So if you want to
25 see me after, I can give you my email

1 address and we can work it out. There are
2 just a few questions, very simple. Thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Thank you, and thank
5 you for at least letting the public know
6 about the process we're doing and how we're
7 working hard to get their input. Thank you
8 for your --

9 MS. GOFORTH: My pleasure.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Anything else for
11 the good of the order?

12 Oh, you know what, I'm glad you stood
13 up, because I want to thank you for your
14 work here that you've been doing. I want to
15 thank you, I'm sure I speak on behalf of
16 everyone that's been involved in any aspect
17 of city government during your tenure, for
18 your service, your selfless service.

19 Folks, these folks have been here and
20 helping us, just us, because remember as
21 I've said, they all had full-time jobs that
22 took up their day-to-day activities before
23 we convened. And the efforts that they've
24 given to us and the support they provided to
25 this Commission led by Ms. Owens, soon to be

1 taken over by Ms. Matthews, I personally
2 appreciate it.

3 I just wanted to thank you and to
4 recognize you and say, (applause).

5 MS. OWENS: I asked Jessica to come
6 down. This is Jessica Matthews, she's
7 taking my job as the Chief of Legislative
8 Services, which will include the Charter
9 Commission. And so you'll be in good hands.

10 CHAIRPERSON BROCK: Yes, I have had the
11 privilege of working with her as well. Big
12 shoes to fill. But I know you're going to
13 help us.

14 All right. With that, we're adjourned.

15 (Meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.)

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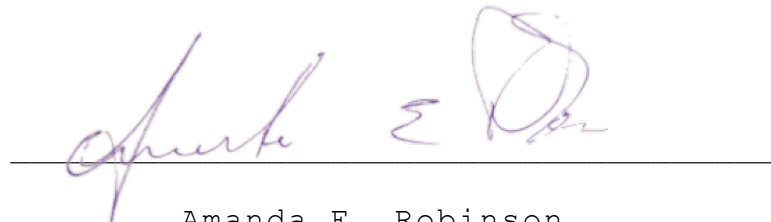
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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF DUVAL

I, Amanda E. Robinson, Registered
Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that I
was authorized to and did report the foregoing
proceedings; and that the transcript, pages 1
through 153, is a true record of my stenographic
notes.

DATED this 4th day of October, 2019.



Amanda E. Robinson,
Registered Professional Reporter