

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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**SPECIAL AD HOC COMMITTEE ON JACKSONVILLE’S**

**NEIGHBORBOOD BLIGHT MEETING MINUTES**

**November 19, 2014**

**10:00 a.m.**

**City Hall**

**117 W. Duval St., 1st Floor**

**Lynwood Roberts Room**

**Attendance:** Council Members Denise Lee (Chair), Greg Anderson, John Crescimbeni, Bill Gulliford Warren Jones, Jim Love

**Excused:** Council Member Bill Bishop

**Also**: Karen Bowling – Mayor’s Office; Peggy Sidman and Cherry Shaw – General Counsel Office; Dan Macdonald – ECA Dist. 8; Robert Campbell – Office of Council Auditor’s; Yvonne Mitchell – Council Research

See attached sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

Council Member Gulliford called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

The meeting began with introductions from the committee and attendees.

**Minutes**

Motion/2nd Move to approve November 5th – Gulliford/Love (6-0)

**Old Business**

1. Media Campaign Update – Paul Martinez and Aleizha Batson

Ms. Batson and Mr. Martinez submitted the latest revision to the mobile application. The committee was provided two options for the final design. CM Crescimbeni offered a third option which included bridge background from picture #1); and overlay of the trash and icon from picture #2. Additionally, it was suggested to make text amendments on the second and third bars for consistency. Mr. Martinez commented there would be additional opportunities to make improvements but it was necessary to move forward to have the application ready in January for the campaign kickoff.

Motion/2nd to approve third option with text amendments – Crescimbeni/Love (6-0)

1. Top Middle and High Schools Truancy /Crimes Report – Paul Soares

Mr. Soares provided a detail overview of the statistical data submitted to the committee. The report highlighted the top five middle and high schools; listed the actual number of truants for September, October and year-to-date. Mr. Soares explained the process of determining the actual number of truant days as it applies to the percentage and population. There was discussion regarding possible reasons for increased truancy during certain months; correlation between truancy and crime statistics; and inability to track dropouts. Mr. Soares commented the report was forwarded to JSO to make a comparison.

CM Anderson will lead this subcommittee in gathering additional information and present report at the next meeting.

1. Report on DCPS Community Family and Engagement Division Organizing Students in Area Clean Ups – Paul Soares

Mr. Soares stated that once event details have been confirmed information will be provided to the DCPS Community Family & Engagement Division to determine how students can assist. He will continue to communicate with Ms. Batson for event details.

1. Discussion with Community Development Corporations (CDCs)

CM Lee shared with the eight organizations present the purpose of the written request to attend the meeting. In an effort to resolve blight, everyone’s participation is needed especially from the organizations that are in the neighborhoods. It was discussed that too much money is being provided to CDCs from various government entities for the requirements not to be met. CDCs need to be more proactive with resolving the fines from their properties prior to receiving additional funds from the City. It should be noted that some properties were acquired with fines while others have been added afterwards.

The organizations present:

Jim Coggin – Operation New Hope

Colin Bingham – Community Development Coalition Corporation

Paul Tutwiler – Northwest Jax CDC

Mary Kay O’Rourke – Habitat for Humanities

Ed Gaston – Wealth Watchers

Reggie Fullwood – Metro North

Bishop E. Johnson – Grace and Truth

Dr. Bernard Wilson – Helpful Citizens

There was extensive discussion with representatives. Ms. Elaine Spencer will draft a standard form and submit to organizations for completion to ensure all requested information is provided to the committee. It was suggested CDCs begin meeting to promote more collaboration, pursue active organization of neighborhoods, and resolving their fines. All the representatives were asked to contact Mr. Prado to determine whether or not they had any fines on properties.

CM Lee requested Mr. Campbell provide how much fine forgiveness has been provided to each CDC prior to acquisitions and afterwards at the next meeting.

Ms. Scott encouraged CDCs to take care of their properties as an example in the community. This prevents Municipal Code and other City departments from having to utilize service time to address the maintenance of privately owned property.

It was later stated that the organizations are Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) except for HabiJax which is a CDC. The reports the organizations are due at the next meeting in three weeks.

1. Update on 13th Street and Moncrief Road - CM Lee

CM Lee reported JSO informed her that the convenience store does not have a current prep license. Mr. Prado will follow up on the actions taken by the Department of Health. In response to request, Mr. Prado will discuss MCC process with handling complaints on businesses.

1. Automatic Cans for City Service Areas – Jeff Foster

Mr. Foster explained the order was ready to be placed to order 54,000 cans for the City of Jacksonville service areas. There are only two colors left: brown and grey. CM Love agreed to grey for his district.

**New Business**

None

**Announcements**

1. Library parking tickets can be validated at the end of the meeting.
2. Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, the next Stand Up for Your Neighborhoods Blight meeting is Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 10:00 a.m., in the Lynwood Roberts Room.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Anino commented that Jacksonville was getting better with the efforts to clean up Jacksonville.

Ms. Gregory shared her complaint had been resolved; and inquired whether she would have to go through the same process again to get property mowed.

Ms. Thompkins reported a Highway Clean Up in the Riverview Neighborhood on last Saturday, November 15th. She commented afterwards neighbors drove down each street and noted addresses of blighted areas. The list will be provided to the committee. Additionally, Ms. Thompkins shared her appreciation to City departments for good customer service.

Ms. Brooks requested assistance with organizing her neighborhood.

Ms. McCastler shared various youth pastors were organizing to meet with Dr. Vitti to provide mentorship to youth as an effort to decrease truancy and reduce gun violence.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Yvonne P. Mitchell, Council Research Division (904) 630-1679

Posted 11.21.14 2:00 p.m.