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| **GREG B. ANDERSON**  **PRESIDENT**  Council Member,  At-Large Group 4  Office (904) 630-1398  Fax (904) 630-2906  E-Mail: GAnderson@coj.net |  | 117 West Duval Street  City Hall, Suite 425  Jacksonville, FL 32202 |
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| **OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL** |
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July 14, 2016

5:00 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes for June 8, 2016**

**Topic**: Future Plans for Hemming Park

**Location**: 117 W. Duval Street, Ste. 425, Conference Room A

**In Attendance**: CP Greg Anderson, CVP Lori N. Boyer, Laura Dyer (City Council), CM Sam Newby, CM John Crescimbeni, CM Danny Becton, Sam Mousa (Office of the Mayor), Ali Korman Shelton (Office of the Mayor), Heather Reber (Council Auditors Office), Daryl Joseph (Parks Dept.), Wayne Wood (FOHP), Vince Cavin (FOHP), Bill Prescott (FOHP), Jake Gordon (DVI), Debbie Buckland (DVI), Jim Bailey (DIA), Leeann Krieg (ECA, At-Large Group 4)

**Please refer to Sign-In Sheet for full list of attendees.**

**Meeting Convened**: 5:00 p.m.

**Topic**:        Future Plans for Hemming Park

**Location**:                117 W. Duval Street, Ste. 425, Conference Room B

**In Attendance**:        CP Greg Anderson, CVP Lori N. Boyer, Laura Dyer (City Council), CM Sam Newby, CM John Crescimbeni, CM Danny Becton, Sam Mousa (Office of the Mayor), Ali Korman Shelton (Office of the Mayor), Heather Reber (Council Auditor’s Office), Daryl Joseph (Parks Dept.), Wayne Wood (FOHP), Vince Cavin (FOHP), Bill Prescott (FOHP), Jake Gordon (DVI), Debbie Buckland (DVI), Jim Bailey (DIA), Leeann Krieg (ECA, At-Large Group 4)

**Please refer to Sign-In Sheet for full list of attendees.**

**Meeting Convened**:        5:00 p.m.

Council President Greg Anderson opened the meeting by stating that the purpose of this meeting is to form a unified vision among the stakeholders of Hemming Park. He opened the meeting by asking Heather Reber (Council Auditor’s Office) to address the financial status of Hemming Park. Ms. Reber stated that she was recently in receipt of the financial statements from the Friends of Hemming Park (FOHP) and she is in the beginning stages of her review. She stated that she hopes to have the final numbers by the end of the month.

CP Anderson reviewed the listed vision of FOHP along with their listed services. Mr. Vince Cavin (FOHP) confirmed that CP Anderson was correct in their list of services.

CP Anderson opened the meeting to all the stakeholders of Hemming Park.

Mr. Wayne Wood (FOHP) stated that they are proud of the work they have done. Mr.Vince Cavin (FOHP) stated that he believes FOHP has raised the spirit of the park along with exceeding fundraising goals originally set. He further stated that FOHP has met the requirements of the RFP. Mr. Cavin pointed out that people now feel safe in the park and that attendance as it relates to females has significantly increased in the park. CM Crescimbeni raised the issue of the attendance survey being completed by FOHP and possible lack of transparency that creates. He suggested that for an independent perspective, a third party entity should be brought in to complete a new survey.

Mr.Wood recommended that this is a city park and he feels the city should fund it accordingly. The original RFP was written so that FOHP provided programming to make the park feel safe and populated. In his opinion, these expectations have been exceeded. He stated that it is important that Hemming Park not be managed by the COJ. Mr. Cavin reiterated that he believes they have revitalized the park. Mr. Bill Prescott (FOHP) also pointed out that they did fundraise at a surplus and his disagreement with the thought that FOHP has overspent.

Council Vice President Boyer asked for clarification on the management and maintenance portions of Hemming Park. Mr. Darryl Joseph (Parks & Recreation Dept.) stated COJ handles the trash pickup, the security, the maintenance of the pavers, electrical maintenance, irrigation, maintenance of the fountains as well as tree trimming and daily cleanup. CVP Boyer also pointed out that the City pays for the electric. CP Anderson inquired about the JSO officers that are typically seen in the park. It was clarified that while they are not assigned to the park, they are strongly encouraged to stay in or near the park. Mr. Cavin also stated that they are providing social services for park visitors, which is located in the Downtown Library.

Mr. Crescimbeni asked how often the FOHP Board meets to which Mr. Wood replied that they meet monthly. He stated that these meetings are noticed and open to the public. He also clarified to Mr. Crescimbeni that he never stated FOHP would be self-sustaining at any point. In his mind, this is a partnership. Mr. Crescimbeni asked for the minutes of the board meetings to be sent to his office.

CP Anderson opened the meeting to all other stakeholders to provide their input. Mr. Gordon stated that from DVI’s perspective, it is important to have public space downtown. He stated that animating the park is vital to grading the success of the park. He believes that we need to reevaluate the goals and perhaps set new goals going forward. Debbie Buckland (DVI) stated that DVI has helped to change the conversation surrounding downtown. They want the park to be successful and an important part is to program over the problems.

Mr. Jim Bailey (DIA) stated that no one is more concerned than DIA. He expressed concerns with their budget and financial practices. Mr. Bailey stated that he felt that the statements regarding frugality don’t jive and we have to be able to afford what we are doing. He pointed out that those who perform and program the park are all paid to do so. At this point we cannot afford to keep going at the rate we are going.

Mr. Joseph stated that from the City’s perspective, we have to manage the expectations and with what we clarify as success. We need to get people out of the buildings and into the park. He also stated that we need the programming to be free and the park to be an amenity and not paid programming. He would envision the programming to have more daytime programming and not constantly after hours programming. He suggested we research cities like Chicago, Detroit and Tampa, so that we might mirror a path they took. In the future, we certainly need to have a clear understanding on funding spends. CM Crescimebni asked what the COJ could do with $500,000 dedicated to programing Hemming Park and asked Mr. Joseph to prepare a proposal. Mr. Joseph agreed to prepare such a document.

CVP Boyer stated that she wanted to follow up on statements that were made by Mr. Joseph.  She stated that she agrees with his concerns about programming being primarily after work hours. Many of the concerns with Hemming Park stem from the fact that it acts as a front door to City Hall and it needs daytime programming. We need a place for the employees that work downtown to enjoy during the day as well as an acceptable setting for businesses viewing downtown as a potential market. CVP Boyer’s second point was to make it a family friendly destination. There is a perception that Hemming Park is not friendly for children.

CP Anderson asked Ms. Kerri Stewart from the Mayor’s Office to provide input. Ms. Stewart stated that the Mayor is very active in the park and they would agree that the park must remain family friendly. Ms. Stewart stated that she thinks the park is going through some growing pains and it may be time to re-evaluate how we measure success in the park. When we set the new standards for the park, we can look at what we are willing to contribute in the future. Mr. Sam Mousa (Mayor’s Office), elaborated that he felt the agreement with FOHP would not have originally been made had the City Council known FOHP would keep coming back. Mr. Mousa and Ms. Stewart agreed that going forward, the contract needs to be tightened.

CP Anderson thanked everyone for attending and the meeting was adjourned.

**Meeting Adjourned**:  6:40 p.m.

**Minutes:**   Leeann Krieg, ECA to CP Greg Anderson.

**Attached:** Meeting Notice, Meeting Handout, Sign In Sheet, Disc.

cc:        Council Members/Staff

Cheryl Brown, Director/Council Secretary

Carol Owens, Acting Chief, Legislative Services Division

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