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|  | **OFFICE OF THE**  **CITY COUNCIL** |  |
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**SPECIAL AD HOC COMMITTEE ON JACKSONVILLE’S**

**NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**May 16, 2016**

**4:00 p.m.**

**City Hall**

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

**Council Chamber**

**Attendance:** Council Members Garrett Dennis (Chair), John Crescimbeni, Al Ferraro, Tommy Hazouri, Joyce Morgan

**Also**: Paige Johnston – General Counsel’s Office; Robert Campbell – Council Auditor’s Office; Sam Mousa, Jordan Elsbury, E. Denise Lee – Mayor’s Office; Crystal Shemwell - Legislative Services Division; Yvonne P. Mitchell – Council Research Division

See attached sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

Council Member Dennis called the meeting to order at 4:03.m. The meeting began with introductions of committee and attendees.

**Administration Update**

Mr. Bill Joyce, Operations Director with Public Works, distributed event totals for the 2016 Tire and Sign Buyback. It should be noted that despite the numerous community activities on the same day, the tire buyback was very successful with an overall collection of 15,781 tires and 2,801 signs. CM Gulliford stated the Special Ad Hoc Committee on Solid Waste discussed long term alternatives to tire disposal; imposing a City disposal fee; and implementing a buyback initiative for youth organizations where they raise money, become engaged and environmentally sensitive to the community. Chairman Dennis requested that Administration consider hosting the tire buyback event twice a year. Mr. Joyce stated the event debriefing meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 19th. It was highly encouraged for the planning committee to ensure utilization of the commercial during next year’s publicity campaign. Areas of improvement noted were: 1) need for additional clipboard assistants; and 2) a buffer between receiving line and bins for smoother transition. Waste Pro was acknowledged for being a large contributing partner. Mr. Crawford, Waste Pro, commented that thirty of the fifty bins used were purchased brand new and painted by the hauler.

Ms. E. Denise Lee provided an updated report on fight blight initiatives and the systematic property inspections for review. The Fire Department completed a community outreach event in District 1 (CM Morgan). The committee encouraged Administration to be more proactive in exchange of information prior to upcoming events, initiatives and/or promotions to ensure Council members have the opportunity to participate and inform constituents. Chairman Dennis suggested that a representative from Public Relations begin to attend N.I.C.E. meetings.

*Assignment*

* Mr. Joyce will provide an action plan for improving the buyback event for next year.
* Mr. Elsbury will provide a media breakdown of all the publicity used specific to the event.

**Vacant Registry Funds**

Ms. Coles stated the fund total is approximately $2 million. The staff expects to submit its recommendations for appropriation of funds through legislation within the near future. Currently, the recommendations are being reviewed by the division chief. In response to CM Gulliford’s question, Mr. Campbell confirmed that zombie foreclosure properties will be identifiable based on the requirement to register. Therefore, fines and fees are traceable.

Chairman Dennis stated the next meeting will focus on the allocations of registry funds to better assist each district. Therefore, he requested Ms. Coles gather all pertinent information and submit to committee for review prior to next meeting.

Assignment

* Ms. Coles will email committee members a copy of the fund’s strategy categories, staff recommendations and any other pertinent information
* Mr. Campbell will provide the exact and projected amount in the fund.

**NICE 2016 Wrap up**

CM Dennis requested subcommittee chairs to prepare a written report about their assigned legislation and action taken by the committee. The reports are due at the last meeting.

CM Crescimbeni

2014-553 Snipe Signs

2015-361 Vehicle Requirements

2015-377 Backing in Cars

Donation Bins

CM Gulliford

2015-519 Residential Donations

**Public Comments**

Tracie Thornton presented a copy of three blighted properties and asked the committee how they would feel living in a neighborhood where they passed by dilapidated and dangerous structures every day. She provided a definition of blight and suggested efforts are put into fostering the arts, helping citizens develop neighborhood pride, and holding property owners accountable for attributing to blight.

Mary O’Rourke stated HabiJax and Northeast Florida Builders Association will be hosting “Blitz Build” during the week of June 6, 2016. There will be twelve (12) new homes constructed and five (5) rehabilitation projects completed in the New Town neighborhood. On Monday, June 6th at 8:00a.m., HabiJax will celebrate its 2000th home in Jacksonville.

In response to CM Crescimbeni’s inquiry about the accusations against HabiJax, Ms. O’Rourke commented that HabiJax has been working with Legal Aid since 2006. HabiJax has been forthcoming with documentation and providing experts since the initial complaint. She stated scheduling meetings with homeowners and Legal Aid has resulted in numerous shifts and long gaps of time. It should be noted there has not been a filed lawsuit against HabiJax, City of Jacksonville, and Jacksonville Housing Authority. This case has been in mediation since 2006. Ms. O’Rourke will contact committee members to schedule a meeting for further discussion. Ms. Paige Johnston will contact Ms. Lawsikia Hodges to provide committee an update from OGC.

Next meeting will be June 6, 2016 in the Council Chambers. There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 5:11p.m.

Yvonne P. Mitchell, Council Research Division

Posted 05.18.16 4:30 p.m.