



**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**SAMUEL "SAM" NEWBY**  
COUNCIL MEMBER AT LARGE GROUP 5  
OFFICE (904) 630-1387  
FAX (904) 630-2906

SUITE 425, CITY HALL  
117 WEST DUVAL STREET  
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202  
E-MAIL: SNEWBY@COJ.NET

May 24, 2016

3:00 p.m.

**FINAL REPORT**

**TO:** The Honorable Council President Greg Anderson

**FROM:** Council Member Sam Newby, Chair

**RE:** Final Report of the Special Committee on Electronic Communications

---

**CHARGE:** Review and assess council policy regarding electronic communication taking into account potential technology solutions to enhance public records storage. Make recommendations for any addition, modification, or deletion to the policy or if necessary recommend legislation.

**MEMBERS:** Sam Newby, Chair  
Anna Lopez-Brosche  
Garrett Dennis  
Aaron Bowman  
Danny Becton

**CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

As Chair of the Special Committee of Electronic Communications, it is my honor to report that the Committee has officially concluded its work on the subject as charged by the Council President. Maintaining public trust is paramount for the Jacksonville City Council; for that reason, transparency is of the utmost importance. As technology continues to advance, it brings a host of concerns that have created doubt among some constituents. This Committee's main goal was to review the current policy and to proactively come up with a recommendation to address such issues in the future. Prior to our discussions and deliberations, the committee members considered the following items to aid in drawing a conclusion:

1. Ordinance versus Council Rule versus executive policy
2. Capturing electronic communications for the public record

The Committee believes the following should be implemented, all of which have been incorporated into legislation being drafted by OCG for introduction in late May 2016.

1. Members unanimously advocated for a resolution that would require the Council President to annually promulgate an executive policy regarding texting regulations for the Council so that the policy can be easily adjusted as circumstances and changing technologies may dictate.
2. Members collaboratively recommend that the Council **not** pursue issuance of City devices to all council members or the acquisition of data capture technology because it is not an efficient, realistic and cost-effective means of resolving the issue. Personal responsibility is incumbent on each council member to resolve the issue
3. Members additionally advocated for better training of council members and staff as one resolution to the public records problems and controversies the Council has experienced in the past year. The Council Director and the Ethics Director are anxious to tailor a training, to add to the annual required training, to meet the council members' needs and to make the process more effective and informative

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to chair this Committee and to work with my fellow Council Members who have devoted their time and energy to efforts of maintaining public trust. I offer my thanks to the Council Director, Ethics Department and IT Department for their commitment as well. It is my hope that the full City Council will support these proposed changes so that we may continue to work toward a more transparent environment to ensure the public that the Council is making ethical decisions for the greater good.

Please contact Chiquita Moore, ECA Group 5 At-Large, at (904) 630-7144, for additional information or correspondence.

SCN/cdm

cc: Council Members/Staff  
Cheryl Brown, Director/Council Secretary  
Dana Farris, Chief, Legislative Services Division  
Carol Owens, Assistant Chief, Legislative Services Division  
Jeff Clements, Chief of Research  
Kirk Sherman, Council Auditor  
Office of the General Counsel  
[CityC@coj.net](mailto:CityC@coj.net)  
Posted Meeting – City Council Calendar  
Electronic Notice Kiosk – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor City Hall  
Public Notice System – City Council Web Page  
Media Box  
File Copy