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| **OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL** |
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September 16, 2016

4:00 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes for September 15, 2016**

**Special Committee on Hemming Park Subcommittee On The Hemming Park RFP Process**

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

**In Attendance**: CM Greg Anderson (At-Large, Group 4); CM Anna Lopez Brosche (At-Large, Group 1); CM Reggie Gaffney (Dist. 7); Daryl Joseph (COJ-Parks Dept.); Greg Pease (COJ-Procurement); Ali Korman Shelton (COJ-Mayor’s Office); Jackson Short (JSO)

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

**Meeting Convened**: 4:15 p.m.

Council Member Anderson opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and stated that the purpose of this meeting is to determine certain measurements for success in Hemming Park. Throughout his research, CM Anderson stated that he found all successful parks had a certain thing that brought people to the park and this could be a monument, food kiosks, multi-use courts, special landscaping or other amenities.

CM Anderson stated that at the last full committee meeting, it was discussed that the following words could be used to describe a successful Hemming Park: welcoming; engaging; clean; safe; attractive; business-friendly. CM Anderson also stated that once measurements are set, we will be able to obtain an opinion from the Office of General Counsel whether a MOU to the current contract or an RFP is required.

CM Anderson asked from Asst. Chief Jackson Short (JSO) to clarify the current safety of Hemming and for suggestions of ways the City could assist JSO in the enforcement piece. Mr. Short opened by stating that he felt it is important to manage expectations. If the goal is to clear the people out of the park, they may leave but they will find somewhere else to go. The fact that the homeless shelters and bus terminals are located downtown contributes to the homeless population centralizing in Hemming Park. Mr. Short stated that it is also important to remember that not all problems are created by homeless people. CM Anderson inquired how many arrests have been made in the park and Mr. Short replied that it was just shy of 200 arrests YTD. There are multiple squads of officers both in vehicles and on bicycles that are downtown at differing hours. Mr. Short stated that one area of the Code that he would suggest tightening would be in Chapter 28 where it deals with the disturbance of the peace. He stated that JSO officers need more clarity on what language is considered inappropriate in the park because otherwise they may be hesitant to enforce current laws due to a possible freedom of speech issue. JSO would also like to have the authority to enforce the park rules which they are not currently able to do. An additional suggestion would be clarification on the ability to feed the homeless in the park because at this time there are ways to avoid being cited.

CM Anderson thanked Mr. Short for all of the input and that he would like to see the conversation continue with all the stakeholders of Hemming so that we can all remain engaged in the success of the Park. Mr. Short suggested that a measurement of success for the park as it relates to the safety element may be the number of calls JSO receives about the Park rather than the number of citations written in the park. JSO has the ability to breakdown the types of calls received and this would be a mechanism to gauge the safety of the Park. CM Anderson and Council Member Anna Lopez Brosche agreed to that point.

Council Member Reggie Gaffney addressed his concerns that we may be targeting the homeless population and that he believes this population is one that doesn’t understand the law. He suggested that it may be a lack of education about the current laws. CM Brosche expressed appreciation for his input but stated that she believed the goal is to focus on the unlawful people in the park. This is not a focus on the law abiding citizens in the park rather it is a focus on those who are disrupting the park by breaking the law. CM Gaffney stated that he is still concerned we may cite the homeless too many times and they will simply be pushed into another area downtown. CM Anderson acknowledged CM Gaffney’s point and stated that the city may look into the possibility of reinstating some form of the Homeless Day Center but that is a topic for another meeting.

Mr. Daryl Joseph (Parks Department) stated that he felt a public campaign regarding safety in the park would be helpful. He further stated that safety can be a perception issue and making people aware the park is safe would assist with gaining foot traffic. Mr. Joseph also added that a measurement that would need to be added would be clarification for the management of the park to provide security from sunrise to sunset as is standard at other COJ parks.

CM Anderson moved on to address the issues of making Hemming clean, attractive and welcoming. He asked Mr. Joseph if there is a schedule in the current contract for the number of times the park is pressure washed. Mr. Joseph stated that there is not but that it can be added as a measurement. In addition, CM Anderson asked that there be a required number of trash cans placed in the park as a measurement. CM Brosche addressed the point of making the park welcoming and the issue of hosting events at the park. At this time, we are requiring the management to host a certain number of events to gain a certain headcount though we do not provide funding for them to host these events per the current contract. Mr. Joseph stated that a solution for this measurement may be requiring the management to obtain free events like a press conference such as the one recently held to announce the Monster Truck Jam. Mr. Joseph will further clarify this measurement with Mr. Greg Pease (Procurement).

CM Anderson asked Mr. Joseph if he had any suggestions about how we can make the landscaping in the park easier to maintain and if we could engage local organizations to participate. Mr. Joseph agreed that this is a possibility and could be an opportunity for local gardening groups. CM Anderson asked him to look into this issue and report at the next meeting.

CM Brosche addressed the topic of conducting a survey to poll the surrounding businesses and residents as a measurement of success for the park. CM Anderson asked Mr. Pease if this is something that could be included in a possible RFP. Mr. Pease stated that he has not formed an RFP with that requirement included but he didn’t see a reason that could preclude it. Mr. Pease encouraged everyone to be clear on how the survey is developed and that the questions in the survey have clear, definitive answers. It was suggested that UNF be contacted for possibly assisting in the survey process. CM Anderson agreed to look into it.

CM Anderson concluded the meeting by restating the different measurements for success that were discussed and reviewing the committee members’ tasks.

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

**Meeting Adjourned**: 5:40 p.m.

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

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

cc: Council Members/Staff

Cheryl Brown, Director/Council Secretary

Dana Farris, Chief, Legislative Services Division

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