

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SAFE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS**

**MEETING MINUTES - AMENDED**

**City Council Chamber, 1st floor, City Hall**

**March 14, 2018**

**1:00 p.m.**

**Location:** City Council Chamber, City Hall – St. James Building, 117 West Duval Street

**In attendance:** Council Members Reggie Brown (Chair), Anne Brosche, Lori Boyer, Garrett Dennis (arr. 1:03p), Bill Gulliford, Katrina Brown (arr. 1:06p)

**Also**: Paige Johnston and Peggy Sidman – Office of General Counsel; Tommy Carter – Council Auditor’s Office; Jordan Elsbury – Mayor’s Office; Adri Segui – Legislative Services; Yvonne Mitchell – Council Research Division

**Meeting Convened**: 1:01 p.m.

Chairman R. Brown called the meeting to order, and the attendees introduced themselves for the record. He reviewed the agenda and provided brief comments regarding the process in tipping communities throughout the county and the utilization of inmate services.

Assistant Chief Claude Colvin, JSO - Montgomery Correctional Facility, stated that inmate labor is available; however, there is a lack of adequate staff for supervision. There were five community projects positions cut from JSO’s budget in 2008 that have not been replaced. These positions were assigned to inmate crews that cleaned up blighted communities five days a week. Currently, there is only one community projects position with an inmate crew in the community four 10-hour days a week. Asst. Chief Colvin provided examples of work completed by the inmates in improving blight issues. He will be requesting two additional officers at the next budget hearing. He wants to eventually have enough positions to have inmate crews in each zone.

CM Gulliford commented that the Council does not set the priorities of the Sheriff’s Office. Therefore, negotiations are necessary with the Sheriff to consider more resources toward blight efforts. CM Boyer requested that the Auditor’s Office and Office of General Counsel inform the committee on whether the Council could appropriate funds designated for blight in the Sheriff’s budget. Also, she asked for information on local governments that allocate funds to third-party entities to supervise inmate crews for purposes of blight removal, and whether officers could be leased through other city departments. CM Dennis suggested that the committee consider advancing legislation to utilize available funds from the Special Law Enforcement Trust Fund. Chairman R. Brown stated he would schedule a notice meeting with the Council President to discuss funding of blight cleanup initiatives. Asst. Chief Colvin noted that Sheriff Williams allocated funds for two part-time positions designated for blight efforts; however, he is unable to find adequate staff. He said there were approximately 100 inmates at Montgomery Correctional Facility eligible to work. CM K. Brown requested data on the number and types of projects completed, by the one officer and inmate crew, over the past couple of years.

The committee offered the following recommendations for advancing efforts toward blight initiatives:

* Increase pay wages by $7.75 per hour for part-time positions – CM R. Brown
* Create a full-time position – CM K. Brown
* Change the two part-time positions into one full-time job - CM K. Brown
* Utilize $45,000.00 in the Special Law Enforcement Trust Fund – CM Dennis

CM Boyer reviewed the description of use within the trust fund. The paragraph references the Florida Statute which permits the allocation of fund towards safe neighborhoods. Therefore, an amendment may not be necessary to utilize the funds. CM Gulliford suggested involving Sheriff Williams in the discussions and possibly creating a long-term solution.

Stephanie Burch, Neighborhoods Department, reviewed the 1995 Neighborhood Bill of Rights (NBOA). There was discussion regarding timely response notification to residents. In response to Chairman Brown’s inquiry, Ms. Burch shared that there was no uniform measurement tool; however, she recommended that all issues be reported through the C.A.R.E. system for tracking purposes. Ms. Burch offered to forward each member a database linked to registered neighborhoods in their district. This information can assist Council members with providing an official response within one working day. CM K. Brown requested that notification to the district council member is an added function to the database. Also, she asked for a white paper on the resources available or necessary for the items listed in the NBOA along with a timeline of upcoming presentations to CPACs to obtain their input.

Ms. Burch distributed the Neighborhood Services Toolkit Guide. The department is updating the document, so committee members were asked to review and provide any recommendations. She provided a status report on the matching grants awarded in the fall. There are currently 26 contracts pending signatures for neighborhood grants.

Paige Johnston, OGC, provided background regarding the concerns about retention ponds. The primary issues involve blight and maintenance. After some research, it was determined that a registration process needed to be implemented to ensure ponds are properly maintained and in compliance. Ms. Johnston stated that legislation is being drafted to formalize a process and provide enforcement parameters.

CM Boyer announced that legislation had been drafted regarding the installation of additional crosswalks within this fiscal year, and an educational campaign to highlight pedestrian safety and fight litter.

Dave McDaniel and Kathleen McGovern, Public Works, presented information regarding a planting plan to implement in the Brookview Park and Moncrief/Myrtle Avenue neighborhoods to assist with tipping the communities. Ms. McGovern identified areas for various types of trees in both neighborhoods. She stated some of the benefits of trees include decreasing the heat index, reduced air pollution, reduced stormwater runoff, and beautification. The preliminary cost assessment for Brookview Park neighborhood is $27,000. It was suggested that Ms. McGovern meet with Council Members K. Brown and S. Wilson about the tree plans before the next meeting. Pending a report at the next meeting, the committee would like to move forward with legislation.

CM Dennis distributed draft legislation that proposes mandatory project goals of 10 percent participation per contract by Jacksonville Small Emerging Businesses (JSEB). He reported that a lien fund currently has 2.4 million dollars available to assist in building safe and healthy neighborhoods. These funds could be allocated to cover services like property demolitions. Also, he encouraged the committee to consider reallocating funds from the Foreclosure Property Registry to improve neighborhoods.

Council President Brosche provided a brief review of her meetings with the various CPACs. Many of them have established subcommittees for parks and safe neighborhoods to offer recommendations. CP Brosche will forward the committee the reports for further discussion.

CM K. Brown suggested that members request a copy of all open C.A.R.E. tickets within their districts. She asked Mr. McDaniel to forward the organizational chart layout to the committee members.

The next meeting is Wednesday, March 28, 2018, at 1:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers.

March 28th Meeting Upcoming Topics:

1. Utilization of inmates with tipping communities
2. Best practices from Code Enforcement, Office of Blight Initiatives, and Solid Waste
3. Reduction of C.A.R.E. issue response time
4. 10% mandatory participation goal draft legislation

April 11th Meeting Upcoming Topics:

1. Utilization of 2.4 million dollars in lien fund
2. Utilization of Foreclosure Property Registry funds
3. Mowing & Landscape Division presentation

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

\* The written minutes for this meeting are an overview of the discussion. For verbatim comments, the audio version may be retrieved from the Office of Legislative Services.

Minutes: Yvonne P. Mitchell, Council Research

03.26.18 Posted 12:00 p.m.

Tapes: Special Committee on Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods meeting – LSD – 03.14.18

Handouts: Special Committee on Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods meeting – 03.14.18