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|  | **OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL** |  |
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June 6, 2018

(1:00 P.M.)

**TASK FORCE ON OPEN GOVERNMENT**

**MEETING MINUTES**

(PRELIMINARY)

**CHAIRS:** Hank Coxe, Esq. and Dr. Sherry Magill

**MEMBERS:** Ywana Allen

Rachael Fortune

The Honorable Alberta Hipps

Ron Littlepage

Michael Lockamy-EXCUSED

Audrey Moran

The Honorable Jim Overton

Sabeen Perwaiz

Cleve Warren-EXCUSED

**Also:** Colleen Hampsey- Council Research; Thomas Carter-Council Auditor’s Office; Rita Mairs-Office

of General Counsel

For all other attendees, please see sign in sheet.

**Meeting convened:** 1:09 pm  **Meeting Adjourned:** 3:38 pm

**Introductions**

The Co-Chairs, Hank Coxe and Sherry Magill, called the meeting to order. The Task Force members approved the minutes from the May 24, 2018 meeting.

**Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office-Public Records**

Agnes Carswell, Public Records Manager for the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office, and four of her public

records coordinators gave a presentation about the process and systems used for JSO record requests.

Since March 2017, they have fulfilled almost 80,000 records requests of varying types. Ms. Carswell

described a multi-step process for public records requests which abides Chapter 119 Florida Statutes and

are initiated online, by phone, in person or by mail. Some requests, such as accident reports, can be

handled quickly at no cost to the public. For more complex requests, the requester is given one estimate

after JSO unit liaisons indicate the length of time needed to retrieve the documents. A second estimate is

then given once the time for redaction is identified. When asked about delays, Ms. Carswell said that the

requests take time to fill due to the time it takes to be fastidious in removing confidential

information or anything that may impact an ongoing investigation. Additionally, the JSO unit liaisons

who compile case files prior to redaction, are active duty officers who have to balance record request

tasks with field work. The Task Force requested a one page breakdown of the typical time spent, fees, and

relevant department/units for JSO record requests, which will be provided by Ms. Carswell.

When asked about document retention and JSO archives, Ms. Carswell said that all files from before the

year 2000 are in paper form or microfiche. JSO is in the process of researching alternative archival

methods, to withstand both time and possible emergencies or disasters. JSO uses the GovQA software

system for managing and tracking public records requests and Ms. Carswell mentioned that ideally it

would be helpful if there were software compatibility throughout the consolidated government. Ms.

Carswell emphasized that transparency is a top priority for Sheriff Mike Williams, which carries over into

the policies and approach for the whole office. The public records staff receives continuing education

through training throughout the state and are working towards areas of expertise for each coordinator, for

efficiency and effectiveness. When asked if record requests from the media are processed differently than

those from the general public, Ms. Carswell said that requests are handled in the order in which they are

received. When asked if JSO records requests are subject to political review before fulfillment or release,

Ms. Carswell said they are not.

**Discussion**

Ron Littlepage read a personal prepared statement for the record, which is on file. This week the Task Force members will conceptualize ideas and topics for the chapters or sections for the final report, which will then be distributed to all members before the next meeting.

Future meeting plans- Carla Miller to discuss the City’s gift policy, State Attorney Melissa Nelson. The Task Force requested a second invitation be extended to Councilmen Bowman and Wilson, to talk about their perspectives on transparency for their upcoming council leadership terms.

The Task Force Survey report on public access to government was distributed to the members for

discussion at the next meeting.

**Public Comment**

John Nooney spoke about the need for more public participation during committees.

Conrad Markle spoke about the recent Inspector General resignation and the publishing of public notices. Both comment cards are on file.

With no further business, the Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 3:38 pm.

**The next Task Force Meeting will be Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at 1:00 pm in the Don Davis Room, 117 West Duval Street, First Floor.**

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Posted 6.6.18 5:00 pm