

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

117 WEST DUVAL STREET, SUITE 425

4TH FLOOR, CITY HALL

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

904-630-1377

**TASK FORCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS HISTORY MEETING - AMENDED**

**Lynwood Roberts Room, 1st floor, City Hall**

**June 13, 2018**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Location:** Lynwood Roberts, City Hall – St. James Building, 117 West Duval Street

**In attendance:** The Honorable Warren Jones (Co-Chair), Ju’Coby Pitman (Co-Chair),Tony Allegretti, Dr. Alan Bliss, Dr. Richard Danford, Brenda Frinks, Dr. Tim Gilmore, Chris Hand, Maria Hane, The Honorable Rodney L. Hurst, Sr., The Honorable Rahman Johnson, Hope McMath, Monica Smith, Adonnica Toler, Lloyd Washington

**Also**: Council President Anna Brosche; Yvonne P. Mitchell – Council Research Division

See sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

**Meeting Convened**: 10:13 a.m.

The Honorable Warren Jones and Ju’Coby Pittman, Co-Chairs, called the meeting to order and attendees introduced themselves for the record.

Ms. Monica Smith reported that Visit Florida has committed to reconnecting with Travel South USA to allow Florida cities to participate with the U.S. Civil Rights Heritage Trail. She stated that Visit Florida would be contributing approximately $15,000 towards the U.S. Civil Rights Heritage Trail marketing initiative. It was shared that each city must pay a $3,500 one-time fee to Travel South USA to be considered onto the trail. Mr. Ken Lawson, Visit Florida CEO, is expected to attend the special meeting on June 20th to discuss the process and answer any questions.

In response to the inquiry regarding the legal foundation of the Confederate monument remaining in the Hemming Park, Mr. Steven Durden, OGC, stated there was no legal requirement of the monument staying in its current location.

In regards to artifacts at the Ritz Theatre, Mr. Durden clarified that conditions could not be placed on donations made to the city. He stated that OGC would handle the development of the contracts to ensure the proper terms and provisions. Mr. Tony Allegretti mentioned that Art & Public Places is currently working with Ms. Lawsikia Hodges on Chapter 126, *Ordinance Code,* with improving the acceptance of gifts process. Council President Brosche requested a review of the content for similarities in accepting donations that would assist in establishing a transparent process for the Ritz Theatre to receive any physical civil rights artifacts. Mr. Allegretti will follow up with Ms. Hodges.

Mr. Lloyd Washington shared a 3-D video presentation of the proposed Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing Park as a memorial site of Johnson Brothers, James Weldon Johnson, and John Rosamond Johnson. The Durkeville Historic Society has requested the entire block between Adams, Johnson, Lee, and Houston Streets. Dr. Alan Bliss commented that a potential services contract is pending with the Rummell Munz Company for the same property. Thus, the question is how the park would fit into the property’s future development? Mr. Washington is aware of the contractual talks; however, he was informed by Mr. Aundra Wallace, DIA CEO, there have not been any final arrangements made for the site. The estimated cost for entire park project is $2.5 million. Mr. Washington stated there had been discussions with various government officials about the designation of the site being a federal and state park. It was suggested that Mr. Wallace is invited to the next Task Force meeting to address the various concerns related to the property and to discuss LaVilla as a potential Civil Rights District.

The committee was provided a copy of the draft letter submitted by Mr. Rahman Johnson regarding the Confederate statute in Hemming Park. Mr. Johnson stated the letter was a request to the Council to begin discussions on the removal of the statute. In response to an inquiry, Council President Brosche explained that Jessie Ball DuPont Fund conducted a series of meetings along with the Leadership Jacksonville to engage citizens in gathering feedback regarding historical monuments, parks, and people. The report was issued by the DuPont Fund. CP Brosche will forward a copy of the report for distribution to the members.

There was an extensive dialogue regarding the importance of the Task Force working within the boundaries of the charge issued by the Council President. Although a crucial discussion topic, the concern is maintaining the Task Force’s credibility related to its original charge to provide recommendations on reflecting and educating individuals about Jacksonville’s rich civil rights history. Council President Brosche clarified that she would not extend the charge of the Task Force. She appreciates the work of the members and recognizes their efforts to engage the community in the process. She likes the idea of the letter being submitted from as citizens and not members of the Task Force. The letter will be forwarded to members and suggested revisions should be sent to Ms. Yvonne Mitchell. One suggestion includes the differentiation of individuals instead of the Task Force as a whole submitting the request. Mr. Chris Hand suggested that co-chairs of subcommittees submit a list of their recommendations to Ms. Mitchell by Friday, June 18th to provide time to distribute to members before the next meeting.

There was discussion regarding the Council President-Designate Aaron Bowman’s WJCT interview and the direction of the Task Force. CP Brosche commented that she was willing to maintain the work of the Task Force and host meetings after it sunsets on June 30th. This would allow the members to work together, visit locations, and provide time to define how to they want to move forward as a group. CP Brosche is committed to conveying and advocating for the existence of the group after outlining a more strategic framework. Mr. Hand mentioned the importance of keeping the lines of communication open with Council President-Designate Bowman to foster his support with the short and long-term goals of the Task Force. Dr. Alan Bliss offered to host an Ad Hoc Committee on Civil Rights through the Jacksonville Historical Society to continue the work of the Task Force. Mr. Allegretti supports the idea of an ad hoc committee until the group can convene as another task force or commission. Co-chair Pittman plans to meet with CP-Designate Bowman to discuss the recommendations and importance of continuing the work of the Task Force.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Mr. Chris Hand acknowledged the guest speakers that presented at the various Finance subcommittee meetings. Based on the recommendations from the other subcommittees and general Task Force discussions, the Finance subcommittee considered possible funding sources for five goals:

* Placement of the Civil Rights Timeline on the COJ website
* Utilization of the Ritz Theatre as a repository of physical artifacts
* Development of a digital repository
* Participation in the U. S. Civil Rights Trail
* Establishment of a Jacksonville Civil Rights District/Trail

Mr. Hand provided a detailed breakdown of the following recommendations as it relates to the five goals.

1. Utilization of Duval County Tourist Development Council (TDC) funding opportunities
2. Pursue Public Grant Funding and foster relationships with other state entities (i.e., National Parks Service, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Florida Association of Museums)
3. Establish a robust private giving program

Ms. Smith suggested that the Task Force recommend the allocation of funds to the submission of at least two sites for the U.S. Civil Rights Heritage Trail. Mr. Hand commented that the Tourist Development Council (TDC) would be an ideal source for one-time funds. The Task Force will vote on the recommendations at the next meeting.

Inventory Subcommittee Report

Task Force members were provided a final copy of the timeline. Dr. Tim Gilmore requested the members to review the document and give feedback to Ms. Mitchell. The Task Force will vote on the timeline at the next meeting.

Marketing Subcommittee Report

Ms. Smith reminded the members that the U.S. Civil Rights Heritage Trail focuses on the history between 1955 and 1968 with the following criteria: must include faces and stories of courage and conviction, recommends videos and content directed toward younger audiences, and has sites of historical significance. As a reminder, Mr. Ken Lawson will attend the next meeting to discuss the U.S. Trail further.

Repository Subcommittee Report

Mr. Johnson stated that the subcommittee had completed its task and awaiting the finalization and approval of the timeline which will be forwarded to the Jacksonville Public Library. Ms. Adonnica Toler noted she would follow up with the Office of General Council regarding establishing a contract for the Ritz Theatre to receive donations.

Council President Brosche informed the Task Force of her plans to petition for a lynching monument, currently displayed Alabama, to be relocated to Jacksonville as a memorial of the City’s history. She believes that the memorial should be placed in Hemming Park. Also, she intends to establish a committee and a fund for citizen contributions. She solicited feedback from Task Force members. Dr. Richard Danford offered to serve on the committee. There was public comment received from Christopher Martin.

The next Task Force meeting is June 20, 2018.

**Meeting adjourned:** 12:08 p.m.

The written minutes of this meeting are an overview of the discussion. The audio version of the meeting may be retrieved from the Office of Legislative Services.

Minutes: Yvonne P. Mitchell, Council Research

06.22.18 Posted 9:30 p.m.

Tapes: Task Force on Civil Rights History Meeting – LSD

06.13.18

Handouts: Task Force on Civil Rights History Meeting

06.13.18