**Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization**

**of Expenditures (TRUE) Commission**

**Niki Brunson, Chair**

**INTERNAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**July 26, 2018**

**3:00 p.m.**

**City Council Conference Room B**

**Suite 425, City Hall**

**Attendance:** TRUE Commissioners Daniel Henry, John Roberts, Jon McGowan, Niki Brunson (arr. 3:25)

**Excused:** Commissioners Keshan Chambliss, Ben Wasson

**Also**: Jeff Clements – Council Research Division

See attached sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Henry at 3:06 p.m. and the attendees introduced themselves for the record.

Commissioner McGowan felt that the TRUE Commission needs to determine what its relationship will be with the full City Council and the Council leadership in a way that gives the commission some legitimacy and influence. Without a defined mission and good communication with the Council, the commission will never have much influence. Part of the commission’s difficulty is its extremely broad mission and authorization and the fact that the members have often disagreed among themselves about what the commission should be doing and where it could be most useful. The authorization is so broad that it’s difficult to hone in on a few issues and do substantive work. Mr. McGowan said that the attitude of the Council President toward the body is very important because it affects how the commission’s work will be received. Commissioner Roberts said that it will be important to find out what the City Council is interested in and how the TRUE Commission could be helpful in addressing those issues.

Jeff Clements described Council President Bowman’s City Council strategic planning session held shortly after his election to choose priorities for the council to work on in the coming 1, 3 and 5 years. He described how the TRUE Commission has chosen and studied issues in years past, which frequently were generated by particular interests or professional backgrounds of individual commissioners where they could apply their expertise to particular City issues. An idea was suggested to narrow the TRUE Commission’s scope somewhat to focus its attention and options. Commissioner McGowan suggested that the commission involve itself in public facility maintenance, litter prevention, and similar quality of life issues in the short term since those seem to be top priorities of the council as expressed in their strategic planning session. Commissioner Roberts suggested that if the City was more effective with its own public facilities and grounds maintenance and was more effective in code enforcement, many of the quality of life issues would be under better control.

Commissioner McGowan suggested utilizing a similar process to President Bowman’s strategic planning process, choosing short-term and long-term issues for the Commission to address. He said that he has been attending CPAC meetings around the City recently and found that they all operate very differently, are different sizes, and address different issues and priorities. The group discussed the history and function of the CPACs and the potential for them to be modified as discussed by several council members and City Chief Administrative Officer Sam Mousa in several noticed meetings to discuss implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on Consolidated Government. One suggestion is to have 7 CPACs matching the 7 School Board districts, which would impact on the TRUE Commission’s membership. Would TRUE’s membership need to grow to add additional appointments by the Mayor and Council President to match the additional CPAC appointment?

Commissioner McGowan suggested that establishing personal connections with council members is very important and will add to the commission’s credibility and relevance. The commissioners in attendance talked about their personal skill sets and how they might be relevant to the commission’s work. Mr. McGowan suggested starting with park and public spaces maintenance (costs and funding, processes, effectiveness measures, etc.) as an initial study issue to mesh with the City Council’s emphasis on a clean city. The group discussed whether septic tank remediation is a topic to which the TRUE Commission might contribute. Commissioner McGowan suggested that it fundamentally is a high level policy issue that the commission would be well advised to avoid and let the Mayor, Council and JEA tackle it. Commissioner Roberts advocated for working on code enforcement issues as a second study topic, investigating how the Code Enforcement Division does its work, how often it inspects properties, whether it is proactive or reactive, the division’s budget, etc. The group decided to recommend park and public space maintenance as the first topic of study and to let the full commission debate and decide on whether to become involved in code enforcement issues. Chairwoman Brunson will inform the full commission about today’s discussion at its meeting next week, and then she will schedule a meeting with Council President Bowman to discuss the commission’s plan for the next year.

The group briefly discussed where the revision of the Policies and Procedures Manual stands, and what it will take to complete the revisions and finalize the document. They believed it was close to being complete, with the public relations policy still awaiting resolution of differing perspectives.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Jeff Clements, City Council Research Division

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