**Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization**



**of Expenditures (TRUE) Commission**

**Niki Brunson, Chair**

**LEGISLATIVE TRACKING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**December 6, 2018**

**3:00 p.m.**

**City Council Conference Room A**

**Suite 425, City Hall**

**Attendance:** TRUE Commissioners Niki Brunson, John Roberts

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

See attached sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

The meeting was called to order at 3:09 p.m. and the attendees introduced themselves for the record.

The following City Council legislation was discussed:

2018-747 (ORD-MC Amend Sec 21.07 (Fiscal & Budgetary Functions), Article 21 (JEA), City Charter, relating to JEA's Annual Contribution Payment): Commissioner Roberts thinks the JEA’s agreements with the City concerning transfer to the City of excess nitrogen credits at no cost, one-time donations for septic tank phase-out projects, and other similar no- or low-cost arrangements constitute a hidden tax on ratepayers. He believes the JEA could lower its rates if it didn’t give things at no cost to the City; the city government benefits but the JEA ratepayers bear the costs.

2018-858 (Auth Commercial Dev Area Prog Loan in the up-to, Max Amt of $55,000 to Born in the South, Inc. D/B/A 1748 Bakehouse): the loan will help pay a portion of the costs of establishing a bakery/restaurant on North Main Street.

2018-859 (authorizing economic development agreement and incentives for Project Turtle): the deal incentivizes the expansion of an existing manufacturing operation in the city to create 108 new jobs. A QTI grant and REV grant are authorized.

Commissioner Roberts asked if it would be appropriate for the TRUE Commission to recommend that the Council Auditor audit all or some percentage of OED incentive agreements to see if the incentivized companies are meeting their job creation and capital investment targets and if the incentive payments are being properly made. He noted that the OED does not publish an annual report on the results of the incentives it negotiates.

2018-828 (authorizing economic development agreement and incentives for Project Flamingo): the company is a national distributor of hair and skin care products and proposes to construct a new 200,000 square foot distribution center and create 30 full-time and 400 seasonal jobs.

2018-833 (appropriating a $550,000 federal grant to supervised family visitations for victims of domestic violence)

2018-834 (Appropriation of $2,447,536.46 ($1,199,292.87 to Neighborhoods - Municipal Code Compliance for Nuisance Abatemt Contractual Svcs & $1,248,243.59 to Public Works Dept Nuisance abatement appropriation)): this is an annual appropriation of nuisance abatement fine, penalty and interest revenue from the revenue account to several expenditure accounts to pay for nuisance abatement services, largely provided under contract.

2018-855 (Amending Zoning Code regarding Planned Unit Developments): Jeff Clements explained that this bill derives from the work of several council members holding several meetings to discuss the reason for the proliferation of PUD zonings in Jacksonville. The group felt that the current waiver language included in PUD zoning ordinances does not sufficiently inform council members or the public about what typical zoning regulations are being waived in the PUD. This ordinance will require more specificity about what exactly is being waived.

2018-836 (Approp $228,545.85 from Environmental Protection Bd Trust Fund & FDOT grant to begin Pilot Study to evaluate the application of naturally occurring Microbe Products to wet detention ponds): the pilot study involves the application of microbial products in detention ponds to determine if water quality improvements can be obtained. This may help the City meet its state-mandated water quality improvement targets.

2018-837 (Appropriating $2,050,000 from Tourist Dev Council (TDC) Development Acct to provide funding for two addnl CIP Projects): the bill would fund the construction of a new Jacksonville visitor center in the Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts (on the river side of the building near the Jacksonville Landing) to replace the existing leased center on Laura Street near Hemming Park. The other project would be a projection and sound system and viewing area to accommodate projection of live performances from inside the T-U Center (i.e. Jacksonville Symphony concerts), movies, and other content onto the wall of the CSX building or the T-U Center itself as a downtown tourist attraction.

2018-835 (Approp $15,000.00 from Environmental Protection Bd (EPB) Trust Fund to provide support for the Jax Envirothon): the Envirothon is a problem-solving competition for high school students to help teach environmental concepts. The EPB has supported the Envirothon for a number of years as part of its mission to educate the public on issues important to the environment.

The minutes of the Legislative Tracking Committee meeting of November 15, 2018 were approved unanimously.

Themeeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Jeff Clements, City Council Research Division

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Posted 12.7.18 11:30 a.m.

Tape: TRUE Legislative Tracking Committee 12.6.18 meeting – Legislative Services Division