

**JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

**Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction**

**Neighborhoods Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**March 15, 2019**

**2:00 pm**

**Conference Room A**

**Fourth Floor, City Hall**

**117 W. Duval Street**

Chair: Ronnie King

E. Joyce Bolden-Absent

Amy Donofrio-Excused

Josh Cockrell-Excused

Ben Frazier-Absent

Larry Cook

Sam Harrison

**Topic:** Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction –Neighborhoods Subcommittee

**Attendance:** Colleen Hampsey- Council Research; Chiquita Moore- Mayor’s Office; Carol Owens, Crystal Shemwell and Ladayija Nichols- Legislative Services

For all other attendees please see the sign in sheet

**Meeting Convened:** 2:00 pm

Chairperson King convened the meeting and welcomed the members. This was the second meeting of the Neighborhoods Subcommittee. The members reviewed some requested documents supplied by council research which included homicide statistics by zip code for 2017-2019 and community assets by council district (libraries, community centers, and parks). One member asked for more information on areas with high concentrations of traffic citations and vehicle accidents to assess neighborhood road safety.

Stephanie Burch, Director of the Neighborhoods Department, was in attendance to speak about the various procedures associated with her department. Ms. Burch talked about the due process required for the disposition of condemned properties (there are currently 300 homes not in historic districts awaiting demolition), the difficulties related to absentee property owners, and the need to incentivize home ownership. The subcommittee requested a list of city owned properties which are not in use, both commercial and residential, which are waiting to be boarded up or demolished. When asked about characteristics which make a neighborhood “healthy”, Ms. Burch mentioned finding a balance between home ownership and rental properties and how that impacts neighborhood stability. Additionally, Ms. Burch talked about a JSO program, in partnership with the Neighborhoods Department, which trains landlords on lease/contracts issues and code enforcement procedures.

Bill Joyce, Public Works Operations Director, was in attendance to answer questions about service requests and public works procedures. Incoming requests or complaints are logged into the CARE database and tracked to completion. Issues which pose safety risks are addressed more quickly, and approximately 80 percent of service requests come from council districts 7, 8, 9, and 10. There were several questions about trash and tire collection and litter/blight. Mr. Joyce explained that there is regular bulk pick up in all parts of the city but many residents are not aware of the schedule. When asked about what they would do with more funding, Mr. Joyce said he would like to see more equipment for use in the mowing/landscaping projects. It was also mentioned that they could use more marketing materials for the code compliance and solid waste divisions.

Paul Crawford, Deputy Director of the Office of Economic Development, was in attendance to speak about food scarcity. The OED is using a consulting firm to conduct a study about grocery store locations and food deserts. According to Mr. Crawford, there are 40 food desert census tracts (those with 500 residents more than a half mile from a grocery store) which equates to 1/3 of the city. 15 of those food desert census tracts are in the NW quadrant of Jacksonville. In contrast, there are 247 convenience stores in the NW quadrant. The study will be completed soon and may suggest non-traditional food shopping to address grocery store scarcity, such as mobile markets or home delivery options.

The subcommittee requested that at the next meeting there be representation from JSO, JEA, JSEB (Jacksonville Small & Emerging Business), JTA, and the Planning Department. With no further business, Chairperson King adjourned the meeting. The next Neighborhoods Subcommittee meeting will be on April 5, 2019 at 2:00 pm.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 3:31 pm

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Tape: Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction Neighborhoods Subcommittee -Legislative Services Division 3.15.19