

# JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

**Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction**

**Subcommittee Chairs Meeting Minutes**

**May 3, 2019**

**9:00 am**

**Lynwood Roberts Room**

**First Floor, City Hall**

**117 W. Duval Street**

**Topic:** Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction Subcommittee Chairs meeting

**Attendance:** Council President Bowman; Council Member Newby; Colleen Hampsey – Council Research; Carol Owens and Crystal Shemwell – Legislative Services

For all other attendees please see the sign in sheet

**Meeting Convened:** 9:00 am

This was a meeting of the subcommittee chairpersons to address future planning. Carol Owens, Chief of Legislative Services, reminded the group to always introduce themselves for the record. Council President Bowman was in attendance to discuss the Task Force’s plans for continuation. The consensus among the chairpersons was to continue with the Task Force mission. The subcommittee chairs each spoke briefly about their progress and reviewed the draft subcommittee report. The draft report outlines each group’s efforts thus far and includes proposed emergency budget increases for KHA to provide funds for mentoring, teen programming and juvenile re-entry programs.

Mr. Gentry spoke about the need for a solid strategic plan for the Task Force to follow to address crime reduction, the need for a consistent funding source for children’s services and continuity of programming across mayoral administrations. Ms. Glasser agreed, noting that family mentoring should be considered with any budget requests, and she said that the subcommittees need more time to figure out specifics on funding. Chairman Griffin said that these proposed funding increase for KHA would be included in the normal budget process and would not be allocated from $1 million outlay for the Task Force coming in the next fiscal year. CM Newby told the group that this is a good time to submit such requests, as the mayor’s office is currently crafting the budget, and that any requests should be concrete and not abstract in nature. CP Bowman reminded the group to keep an eye on what legislation is coming out of the current session in Tallahassee, as some of it may be relevant to the Task Force’s mission.

Mr. Denton spoke about consistent funding sources and other counties which have passed referendums to fund children’s service councils. Mr. Gentry expressed concerns about the timing of trying to get such a referendum on the ballot, particularly since the school board is working to add a sales tax referendum to the November ballot to pay for capital improvements. Ms. Grant spoke about needing for funding for an awareness campaign, a common theme for several subcommittees, and said she will draft a budget for the recommendations from the Mental Health and Substance Abuse subcommittee. Mr. Geismar said that he would like to hear from KHA as to how they would spend any additional dollars and whether they have the capacity to increase services.

Ronnie King questioned the necessity of including any funding specifics in the report at this time and the efficacy of existing programs which already receive KHA funding. According to Mr. King, simply giving KHA more money seems like the easy answer, but may not be the right choice. Mr. King mentioned the 50 homicides so far this year in Jacksonville and wondered if the perpetrators of those crimes would have been deterred by mentors or other programs. Both Mr. Griffin and Mr. King agreed that the Task Force should drill down into the neighborhood data to make specific recommendations to reduce violent crime. Since a very small percentage of the city’s population commits the greatest number of violent crimes, the Task Force should figure out how to reach that group to affect change. The group agreed that an asset and liability map should be created for the city’s neighborhoods.

Dr. Danford spoke about the need for a direct and clear method for the public to communicate with city officials, aside from the public comment portion of council meetings. He emphasized the importance of community support for any steps taken by the Task Force. CM Newby said that the turnout for the Task Force community events has been minimal. It was also said that the marketing of those events could have been stronger. Mr. Griffin added that the quantity and diversity of the Task Force membership make it so for all purposes they represent the community.

Mr. Gentry mentioned the urgency to create more programming for juveniles involved in the justice system, especially those released from residential confinement. Mr. Griffin said that there is a need for both the quality of and quantity of youth programs, which should include innovative grass roots organizations who may not ordinarily receive grants from the City.

Public comment: Mr. Harris spoke about the need for the Task Force to take action, as homicides keep increasing. Mrs. Schellenberg spoke about the urgency of increasing programs before summer begins, extending hours at the YMCA on the Northside, and creating a City mentoring coordinator position.

Mr. Jones talked about the quality disparity between the city’s athletic fields and the need for business partnerships with athletic associations in high poverty neighborhoods. With no further business, Task Force Chair Griffin adjourned the meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 10:26 am

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Posted 5.7.19 5:00 pm

Tape: Task Force on Safety and Crime Reduction Subcommittee Chairs meeting - Legislative Services Division

5.3.19