**Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization**

**of Expenditures (TRUE) Commission**

**Daniel Henry, Chair**

**LEGISLATIVE TRACKING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**October 3, 2019**

**3:00 p.m.**

**City Council Conference Room B**

**Suite 425, City Hall**

**Attendance:** Commissioner John Roberts

**Excused**: Commissioner Jim Mazur

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

The meeting was convened at 3:05 p.m.

Commissioner Roberts asked how collective bargaining works in the City - do the City unions communicate with other fellow unions around the state and try to bargain for the same things, or is each negotiation independent? Do all union members in the City get the same thing, or are all the unions different? Mr. Clements said it used to be the practice that everyone got basically the same package, although that may have changed with the pension reform negotiations several years ago when public safety’s needs were somewhat different from the rest of City employees and they reached different agreements. He was unaware of whether the unions in Jacksonville communicate with fellow unions around the state to develop a standard set of negotiating points. It has been the historical practice that the City’s non-unionized employees get the same pay raises as the unions get.

Commissioner Roberts is also interested in the overall plan and capacity of the city’s general aviation system (which uses 4 different airports). Does the Aviation Authority balance capacity at the various facilities or does each airport operate pretty much independently of the others? If they balance the capacity, how does that play into the decision to extend or not extend the runway at Jax Ex at Craig Airport?

The following bills were discussed:

2019-737 – amending the Edward Waters College football stadium construction agreement: the amended agreement will provide for City to pay the contractor’s invoices for work performed directly rather than EWC paying the contractor and then asking the City for reimbursement of the expenses.

2019-738 – LISC lien subordination for Breeze Homes to build affordable housing on Trout River Boulevard: the City has a nuisance abatement lien on the property proposed by LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) to be used for affordable housing. The bill authorizes subordination of that lien to the banks mortgage lien to make the loan possible. The City’s lien is protected by a letter of credit obtained by the developer.

2019-731 - appropriating $390,673 from Special Council Contingency to pay the City’s membership dues to the Northeast Florida Regional Council: on the night the city budget was adopted in late September, Council Member Ferraro proposed a floor amendment to re-appropriate the amount of the dues the City pays to NEFRC to a contingency account in anticipation of appropriating it to as-yet undetermined waterways purposes. He also filed a resolution authorizing the City’s withdrawal from the NEFRC and asked that the resolution be adopted as a first reading emergency upon introduction. The emergency request failed and the resolution was referred to committees. Technically the City may be in default of its membership agreement with the NEFRC counties because it has neither withdrawn nor appropriated funds to pay its dues. NEFRC Executive Director Beth Payne has been at several committee meetings this week making the case for the Council to change its mind and rejoin the organization. This bill would appropriate the dues back out of the contingency fund to the dues and memberships fund to maintain membership in the NEFRC.

2019-732 – Ordinance Code amendment to create a Corrections Department Literacy Program: would authorize the Sheriff’s Office to provide a literacy program to its inmates, subject to annual appropriations or other available funding. The intent is to reduce recidivism by helping inmates gain literacy skills that will serve them well in their transition back to productive lives after their release.

2019-734 – appropriating $237,869.97 from the JIA/CRA Trust Fund, Investment Pool Earnings account to the Future Years Debt Reduction Category: the bill appropriates interest earnings above the budgeted amount for FY18-19 to an account to pay down debt service in future years.

2019-725 – Ordinance Code amendment requiring that, in the event of a JEA recapitalization event (privatization), a portion of the sale proceeds must be used to pay off the JEA employees’ unfunded accrued pension liability. During the debate on a previous bill that awarded JEA employees extra years of credited pension service toward their retirement in the event that the utility is privatized, the Council Auditor noted that there was no provision for dealing with the unfunded accrued pension liability that would be left in the General Employees Pension Plan (of which JEA employees are members) if the JEA employees were removed from the system. Brian Hughes of the Mayor’s Office said at one hearing that the Mayor would likely propose that a portion of the guaranteed minimum $3 billion sale proceeds could be used for this purpose. Council Member Carlucci proposed this amendment to require that such a payment be made on the net present value of that accrued liability, net of the proceeds of the pension sales surtax.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

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