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**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION
CITY-WIDE STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Don Davis Room, 1st floor, City Hall**

**December 16, 2019
1:30 PM**

In attendance: Commissioners Betzy Santiago (Chair), William “W.C.” Gentry (arr. 1:40), Nick Howland, Emily Lisska (arr. 1:40), Chris Hagan (arr. 1:49)

Also: Kealey West – Office of General Counsel; Anthony Baltiero – Council Research Division; Sharonda Davis and Jessica Smith – Legislative Services Division

Guest Speakers: Hon. Bill Gulliford – Former Councilmember & Council President

Meeting Convened: Presentation started at 1:37 PM. Commissioner Santiago officially called the meeting to order once there was a quorum at 2:28 PM.

Call to Order / Remarks from Chair – At the time that the meeting was scheduled to convene, the subcommittee did not have a quorum with only Chairwoman Santiago and Commissioner Howland present. After consulting with Council staff, Chairwoman Santiago decided to let the guest speaker start his presentation as the other subcommittee members were anticipated to be present, but were running late.

Presentation by Hon. Bill Gulliford – Former City Councilmember & Council President – Mr. Gulliford started by saying that he did not have a presentation, but would entertain a question and answer type of forum. Mr. Howland spoke about the 2014 Blueprint for improvement II and asked if the subcommittee should use the first recommendation from that report as a basis for creating a strategic planning group. The first recommendation was the establishment and makeup of such an entity. Mr. Gulliford spoke about the process of working with the task force and noted that Lori Boyer was the real driving force behind the task force. Mr. Gulliford noted that following the task force’s report, multiple bills were put forward to try and advance the recommendations from the report. He continued by opining that it is unfortunate that many of the recommendations from the previous CRC were never properly debated or discussed. Chairwoman Santiago mentioned that one of the recommendations from the current CRC is to require the Council to take action on the CRC recommendations.

Mr. Gulliford presented the idea of eliminating term limits as a way to advance recommendations and retain institutional knowledge. He provided examples of other cities that have had successes due to not having term limits for Mayors and other elected officials. He continued to opine on continuity of government noting that in the current government system in Jacksonville with term limits, it would be very difficult to find ways to retain continuity and foster a successful strategic plan. He said that the possibility of some type of hybrid strong mayor/city manager type of government might work with the city manager transcending elected officials' terms. Mr. Gulliford spoke about the role of the At-Large Council members noting that they could be used as conduits for city-wide strategic initiatives.

Chairwoman Santiago asked about the possibility of using the local CPACs as the basis for the strategic planning group. Mr. Gulliford feels that the CPACs tend to be all over the place, vary dramatically in composition and scope, and can be ran be individuals with personal agendas that differ from the goals of the City. He continued to note that the CPACs are typically concerned with immediate interests and not long-term city-wide strategic initiatives.

Mr. Gulliford opined on issues with continuity of government initiatives. He talked about his time on the Opioid Commission and said that once he left office, the commission continued but the scope changed and started to include other areas such as vaping. Mr. Gulliford stressed that continuity from term to term is essential to make a strategic plan successful.

Chairwoman Santiago mentioned that they had previously discussed the idea of including staff financing in the budget to fund staffing for strategic planning implementation. She asked about other ways to measure whether or not a strategic plan is effective either through staff, some sort of dashboard, or other methods. Mr. Gulliford agreed that if a strategic planning group was created that there would be a need for support staff. He continued to opine about the need for staff and noted that the individuals needed for this type of strategic planning group have many other interests, both professional and personal, and probably wouldn't be able to give the time required to do the work of creating and implementing a strategic plan. Chairwoman Santiago asked how often a strategic plan should be reviewed and how often should the group come together. Mr. Gulliford noted that it should be reviewed every year and that if there is good support, the group should meet quarterly throughout the year. He continued by saying that pulling everyone together would help to eliminate redundancies and duplicities in efforts between different organizations trying to do the same things.

Mr. Gentry asked about the practicality of having the department heads and top leaders of the City being actively involved in the strategic planning process. Mr. Gulliford agreed and continued stating that this is why a staff is needed, and particularly a strong staff member that can champion the process. Mr. Gentry mentioned that he had not thought of this before, but asked if the five At-Large Councilmembers, a few people appointed by the Administration, a few appointed by the independent authorities, and maybe an appointee from the Chamber of Commerce could be the vehicle for creating and implementing a strategic plan. Mr. Gulliford agrees and thinks that Mr. Gentry's proposal is exactly how to do it.

Ms. Lisska agreed with Mr. Gentry's idea and continued by asking Mr. Gulliford about his thoughts on term limits. Mr. Gulliford stated that he is a strong opponent of term limits, but notes that the public won't support the elimination of them. Mr. Gulliford continued by talking about the reliance of institutional knowledge by the way of staff and lobbyists. He provided an example of how a lobbyist can have vast amounts of institutional knowledge and a new councilmember has practically none. Ms. Lisska asked Mr. Gulliford what he would change in the Charter. Jokingly, Mr. Gulliford said to swap out the Mayor form of government and replace it with a benevolent dictatorship. He continued by discussing the current government structure and noted that the Mayor's appointments can completely strip down the government causing a great loss in institutional knowledge. He stated that he is not sure how to fix that issue, but referenced his previous idea of having some sort of city manager that transcends

Administrations. Ms. Lisska asked if the Charter should give the Council the ability to override a new Mayor's appointments. Mr. Gulliford stated that the Council did make those changes in regard to the appointment of the General Counsel. Ms. Lisska continued and rephrased the question to ask if only the City Council can override a new Mayor's appointments, and should the Mayor have less power. Mr. Gulliford asked if she meant once a Mayor appoints someone, they lose the ability to remove that person from their position. Ms. Lisska said that essentially, she wants to know if the Mayor should have less power in the Charter regarding appointments. Mr. Gulliford provided examples from his time on the Council and the Rules Committee and stated that essentially, once the appointments get to the Council, it is pretty much just a formality to approve them. He continued by differentiating between appointing someone to one of the independent authorities vs. appointing someone to something less functionally significant such as the Ethics Commission and that the process should be different for each. Ms. Lisska asked if there is anywhere in the Charter where strategic planning could be more directly taken up without the formation of a commission. She provided an example of multiple historical buildings being demolished without a plan for the property post demolition. Ms. Lisska rephrased the question to ask if there is somewhere in the Charter that could remedy the notion that if a city-owned building is to be demolished that the property will have a strategic purpose. Mr. Gulliford noted that there was approval for the demolition because it was included in that year's budget. He continued by talking about the political nature of the budget process noting that district councilmembers sometimes have to approve things that they don't necessarily agree with to be able to get their projects approved and funded. Mr. Gulliford continued by asking if the creation of strategic group is a successful first step in the process. Ms. Lisska agreed and thanked Mr. Gulliford for the new ideas that he presented.

Mr. Howland asked if the 2014 Task Force looked at other cities when developing their strategic plan recommendation. Mr. Gulliford said that they did look at other cities, but noted that he was not present at all of the task force meetings and subsequent subcommittee meetings. Mr. Howland asked about the challenges involved with creating the Opioid Commission, particularly as it related to getting the other government agencies invested. Mr. Gulliford opined that if there was more of a strategic plan in place, the Opioid Commission could have functioned better and could have started their work sooner. He provided additional examples referencing affordable housing issues and LUZ zoning codes. Mr. Howland talked about the School Board referendum issue and opined that having a strategic plan in place could have helped to avoid the issue. Mr. Gulliford agreed and noted that the same can be said about the current JEA issues.

Chairwoman Santiago asked Mr. Gulliford for his thoughts on how to introduce a strategic plan/strategic planning group. Mr. Gulliford suggested putting it as a requirement in the Charter and finding a champion in the Council to push it forward. Ms. Santiago asked about a bill that was circulated to the CRC by Commissioner Schellenberg, 2013-79-A, that talks about establishing a council of leaders that is similar to what would be set up in a strategic planning group. Mr. Gulliford stated that much of the work that was done when he was on the Council never saw the light of day or was ignored in practice. Ms. Santiago asked about how to enforce a strategic plan. Mr. Gulliford believes that if you get people on board and invested in establishing the strategic planning group, it wouldn't be necessary to enforce it. The problem is getting people initially invested in it. He continued to say that you have to include it in the budget process and to try and find possible private funding. Ms. Santiago asked about how to measure the success of the strategic plan. Mr. Gulliford suggested to have a yearly report. He continued by noting that it would benefit the strategic planning group if they identified one task to focus on and do well. This would show success and garner public support. Ms. Santiago asked about how to gather community engagement in the strategic planning process. Mr. Gulliford suggested to reach out to different interest groups and invite them to come out in some type of forum to share their ideas.

Following Mr. Gulliford's presentation, Chairwoman Santiago officially gavelled the meeting to order at 2:28 PM to conduct the subcommittee's business that required a vote.

Approval of Minutes – Chairwoman Santiago asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2019 meeting. Commissioner Lisska noted that she had a minor issue with the phrasing of one of her comments from the minutes, but decided that she does not want anything amended at this time. Chairwoman Santiago noted a typo on page 2 of the minutes. The phrase said, “H noted...” and it needs to be changed to, “He noted...” Mr. Gentry had a concern about a portion of a conversation that was not included in the minutes, but that portion was included and was pointed out by the other commissioners and no amendment was asked for. The amended minutes were approved contingent upon the aforementioned revisions.

Other Business – Chairwoman Santiago started by talking about the bill, 2013-79-A, and asking if it should be used as a guide for when the subcommittee starts creating their recommendation. The subcommittee discussed their status on their “homework assignments” of looking into other cities and comparing their strategic plans. Mr. Hagan was not present at the previous meeting so Ms. Santiago asked if he could research London, Canada. A discussion was had about guest speakers and Ms. Santiago noted that Joey Grieve – City CFO will be coming back to complete his presentation that was interrupted previously by a fire drill. She said that she wants the subcommittee’s recommendations to be completed by the end of January to allow for time for additional tweaks and because the subcommittee can disband once their recommendation is complete.

A discussion between the commissioners was had to decide the makeup of the final recommendation and what pieces to include in the submission to the full CRC. Mr. Gentry provided a suggestion of what to include in the recommendation to establish a city-wide strategic plan, including membership, scope, setting timetables, annual reviews of each agency, providing recommendations to the Council, and funding. Mr. Gentry also suggested to use the Blueprint as a guide, find the “holes” in the original plan, and adapt the plan to “plug the holes”. Chairwoman Santiago suggested the possibility of breaking the task of creating the recommendation down into five parts with each of the subcommittee members working on an individual topic. A discussion was had and Mr. Gentry suggested to have everyone look at the original Blueprint for Improvement II and make their suggested tweaks to the recommendation. Everyone would then come back and compare the suggestions to iron out what should be tweaked. It was decided to go with Mr. Gentry’s suggestion. Ms. Santiago suggested that everyone go back and review the minutes of previous meeting to get a refresher on the thoughts and ideas presented by previous speakers.

A discussion was had about the idea of utilizing the At-Large Councilmembers as the core of the strategic planning group. Mr. Gentry added that on top of the At-Large Councilmembers, the Administration, the independent authorities, and maybe the nonprofit sector could pick a representative to be a part of the group. It was also noted that having the At-Large Councilmembers as the core of the strategic planning group would help to bring a balance of power by having the Council being at the forefront of the strategic planning process.

The commissioners discussed the idea of changing the wording of the original Blueprint recommendation to remove the advisory board and just have those people as potential individuals to use as representatives on the actual strategic planning board. It was suggested by Mr. Gentry to allow for some “space” for future strategic planning groups to be able to choose their representatives based on current needs and situations, but encouraged to give the group of potential representatives some sort of title. The discussion continued to talk about the potential size of the strategic planning group. Chairwoman Santiago noted that if the original Blueprint model was used and if you added in the At-Large members, there would be at least eighteen members in the group. Ms. Lisska said that eighteen would be too many and the group agreed that the list of members would need to be narrowed down. Mr. Gentry reiterated his previous point and suggested that the best way to create the group would be to use the five At-Large Councilmembers, the Administration picks a representative, and the independent authorities would have to come together to

meet and choose a single representative to represent them all as a group and go from there. Mr. Howland suggested the idea to delegate the strategic planning goals to each of the five At-Large Councilmembers to give them each something to focus on and for them to coordinate the efforts to meet their particular goal.

The discussion continued by talking about the number of goals or initiatives that the strategic planning group should come up with. The consensus among the group is that there should only be somewhere between three and seven, ideally five, goals or initiatives for the strategic planning group to focus on. Ms. Lisska noted that she is hesitant to put a firm number on the amount of goals. She agrees that there shouldn't be an unlimited or high number of goals, but she feels that putting a firm number on the issue could limit the future group in their efforts. Chairwoman Santiago noted that whatever the amount, the subcommittee is going to have to put something down in writing that has structure that more than likely will include a number of group members, how they are selected, and a number of goals to include. The discussion shifted to talk about making the strategic plan measurable for success. Mr. Howland suggested tying the strategic plan to the Mayor's annual report in some way. Ms. Santiago suggested the idea of having the goals or priorities rotate each year so the each one gets a year as being the primary focus.

Chairwoman Santiago started to conclude the meeting by reiterating the group's homework assignments. She asked each member to reach out to their research city and try to have some more information about them and the next meeting. She also tasked the group to read the Blueprint for Improvement II and come back to the next meeting with suggestions of what to keep or change in the strategic planning recommendation. The group discussed future meeting dates with the next meeting being held on January 3rd, 2020.

Public Comment (as time permits) – No public comment speaker cards were received.

Chairwoman Santiago adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 3:07 PM

Minutes: Anthony James Baltiero, Council Research Division
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12.20.19 Posted 10:00 AM