

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION**

**URBAN SERVICES DISTRCT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Don Davis Room, 1st floor, City Hall**

**March 2, 2020**

**4:00 p.m.**

**In attendance:** Commissioners Frank Denton, Celestine Mills (arr. 4:17), Ann-Marie Knight (arr. 4:19)

**Also**: Commissioners Lindsey Brock, Jessica Baker, W.C. Gentry, Ron Swanson; Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Juliette Williams – Legislative Services Division

**Meeting Convened**: 4:11 p.m.

Commissioner Denton convened the meeting without a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the committee meeting of February 21, 2020 were deferred pending arrival of a quorum

Committee discussion

Commissioner Denton recalled that the full commission had conceptually approved the committee’s recommendation to create an Urban Core Development Authority at its last meeting, with the understanding that specific charter language would be drafted to implement the recommendation. The group agreed to use the Downtown Investment Authority as a model but felt that some of the DIA’s authorizing language was confusing with regard to the Advisory Committee, so would not be used. Paige Johnston said that a member of the Office of General Counsel had reviewed the DIA’s authorizing language and found that some of the Charter Article 20 language appeared to be outdated and left over from the DIA’s predecessor agency, the Jacksonville Economic Development Authority. Ms. Johnston said that the attorney had also opined that a UCDA could be created in the Ordinance Code rather than via a Charter amendment. Several commissioners said they would be satisfied if the Council chose to take it up as an amendment to the Ordinance Code, as long as there is progress toward adoption.

A quorum was achieved at 4:19 and the meeting officially convened.

The group discussed specifics of the proposed amendment language, including funding recommendations, board size and appointment mechanism, and other features. The group agreed that 3 members of the board should be residents of the UCDA zone. Commissioner Gentry recommended that some specific criteria be required of the board members; the group discussed requiring experience in health, education, crime, the environment, business experience, etc. as categories that would be relevant to the work of the authority. Commissioner Swanson advocated for increasing the size of the board to 9 and including one or more business people on the board who have experience with investing in and operating businesses. There was general agreement to use the language of the DIA authorization in Ordinance Code Chapter 55 with regard to funding. Commissioner Denton recommended adding language regarding use of state, federal and private funds in addition to an appropriation from the General Fund. Commissioner Baker recommended modeling the job qualifications for the UCDA CEO on the qualifications for the DIA CEO, with the omission of architecture as relevant job experience. The group discussed other related job experience fields that would be helpful, including urban area redevelopment, health and human services, community building, and the like. Paige Johnston will send out the DIA CEO job qualifications from a 2012 ordinance. Commissioner Gentry recommended letting the UCDA board create the job qualifications in its by-laws.

The members present divided up the drafting task among them: Gentry – findings and purpose and creation; Baker – board and appointment, including powers and duties, and the CEO; Brock – funding. The various pieces will be sent to Paige Johnston for assembly into a final draft document for consideration at the commission meeting on Thursday.

Commissioner Baker suggested that the commission recommend that Article 20 of the Charter be removed since it is outdated – the DIA is now in the Ordinance Code and no longer in the Charter as its predecessor, the JEDC, was.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the committee meeting of February 21, 2020 were **approved unanimously as distributed**.

Public Comment

Stanley Scott with the African American Economic Recovery Think Tank took offense at the committee’s discussion earlier about the qualifications for the UCDA CEO and the need for that person to preferably have a master’s degree. He thinks what is important is commitment to making the community better, not an advanced degree. Jacksonville has a long history of doing the same thing over and over and always getting the same result. What needs to happen is to ask the community what they want and need and then hire someone committed to doing that.

**Meeting adjourned:** 5:23 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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