

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

117 WEST DUVAL STREET, SUITE 425

4TH FLOOR, CITY HALL

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

904-255-5137

**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON RESILIENCY**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONTINUED OPERATIONS**

**Virtual meeting via Zoom – no physical location**

 **July 23, 2020**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Location:** Virtual meeting via Zoom – no physical location

**In attendance:** Subcommittee members Garrett Dennis (Chair), Angela DeMonbreun, Sandra Fradd, Mark Green, Lisa King, Joe Loretta, Amanda Polematidis, Jim Robinson, Jim Seaton, Nikole Ward

**Also**: City Council Members Randy DeFoor (Chair of the Special Committee on Resiliency), Joyce Morgan, Reggie Gaffney; Cheryl Brown – Council Secretary/Director; Jeff Clements, Yvonne Mitchell and Anthony Baltiero – Council Research Division; Steve Cassada, Eric Grantham and Melanie Wilkes – Council Support Services; Beth McCague and Susan Stewart – Jaxport; John Pappas and Bill Joyce – Public Works Department; Bill Killingsworth, Susan Kelly and Kristen Reed – Planning and Development Department; Jason Harrah – US Army Corps of Engineers; Susan Grandin – Office of General Counsel; Kurtis Wilson - JEA

**Meeting Convened**: 9:03 a.m.

Chairman Dennis convened the meeting and introduced the committee attendees. He read the subcommittee’s charge.

Mr. Dennis asked the subcommittee members to give a brief description of their background and their interest in serving on the Special Committee on Resiliency.

Council Member Randy DeFoor, Chair of the Special Committee on Resiliency, welcomed the members and thanked them for their service in dealing with issues for which she has a great passion.

Chairman Dennis expressed his hope that the subcommittee would be producing legislation to deal appropriately with the identified problems and bring about positive action to solve those problems. He hopes that the subcommittee will be a vehicle for remedying the unfulfilled promises of consolidation and providing resiliency for the entire city. He thanked the city staff for their good work in support of the committee.

Bill Killingsworth, Director of Planning and Development, discussed the work his department has already done in the area of resiliency and noted that the Adaptation Action Area working group developed policy recommendations that are ready to be considered as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and ultimately amendments to City regulations. Public Works Director John Pappas recommended that the subcommittee review the staff presentation made to the full Special Committee early in its process and consider what has been completed and what has not. The Public Works Department is in the process of reviewing its infrastructure to prioritize a list of the most essential and most threatened elements for immediate hardening for resilience purposes. The work of that study will feed into the work of this subcommittee. Council Member DeFoor said that numerous studies have been done and come to the same set of recommendations – what is needed is action and implementation of those recommendations. Commissioner Loretta recommended that the subcommittee start by having the members read the reports of the work already done by the Adaptation Action Area working group and the Storm Resiliency and Infrastructure Development Review Committee as a starting point for discussion.

The group discussed scheduling of future meetings. Thursday mornings were acceptable to the subcommittee, with the exception of conflicts with Finance budget hearings in August. July 30th was suggested for the first meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Jeff Clements and Cheryl Brown discussed the Government in the Sunshine Law and its impact on the subcommittee members. Written instructions will be sent out to the members and a formal ethics training will be held in the future.

Jim Seaton recommended that the first step for the Special Committee be the adoption of a definition of “resilience” and what elements are subsumed under that heading. The committee needs to decide if it intends to take a broad or narrow focus and whether to focus just on infrastructure and regulations or expand to economic and social factors such as education, housing, crime and the like. Chairman Dennis recommended that members who come across interesting articles and other information that would be of interest to the subcommittee please send them to Jeff Clements of the City Council Research Division for circulation to the group. Council Member DeFoor urged concentration on doable action items. Lisa King asked if it is too late to develop a recommendation for inclusion in the upcoming budget hearings for the FY20-21 budget. She noted that the Charter Revision Commission had recommended creation of an Urban Core Development Authority and suggested that that recommendation might be relevant to the work of this committee. Chairman Dennis asked Susan Grandin of the General Counsel’s Office to research what is necessary to hold a bond issue citizen referendum for infrastructure needs to deal with the magnitude of the problems and shortfalls. Ms. Grandin said that the City is the recipient of 2 planning grants from the Florida Resilient Coastline Program of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection which should help with planning efforts. Mr. Dennis said he will invite the Council Auditor to participate in the next meeting to discuss bonding possibilities.

Joe Loretta said that the Adaptation Action Area study recommended the appointment of a City Chief Resilience Officer. Many studies have been done both in Jacksonville and in similar coastal cities on the subject of resilience so there is a wealth of information available and plans already produced. Jim Robinson said that proper funding of maintenance is equally as important as new construction projects and leverages the investment in those facilities to work as originally designed. Council Member Gaffney said he is very supportive of the work of the Special Committee and hopes that funds can be found to make action happen sooner rather than later. Council Member DeFoor asked Mr. Robinson to provide the subcommittee with thoughts on priorities from his perspective as a former Public Works Director for the City.

Public Comment

Jason Harrah of the US Army Corps of Engineers in Northeast Florida said that the Corps has a South Atlantic Comprehensive Study underway and Jacksonville has been recognized as a priority target area. It will identify projects that can be substantially funded by the Corps of Engineers and he will be happy to have a presentation made to the subcommittee at a future meeting. He said that there is a good resilience program in place for Jacksonville’s beaches and Dr. Kevin Bodge is under contract to the City as its coastal engineering expert. In response to a question from Chairman Dennis, Mr. Harrah explained the various federal funding sources and the timing for getting funding from those programs.

Sean Lahav, Resilience Coordinator for the Northeast Florida Regional Council, offered the Council’s assistance with the subcommittee’s work and noted that the Council has developed a Resource Resilience Exposure Tool that is available to the public online. He offered to make a presentation at a future meeting on their work and available resources. He will be meeting with Council Member DeFoor next week to discuss the Regional Council’s resources.

Jim Seaton asked what the Corps of Engineers and Northeast Florida Regional Council are using as the rate of sea level rise for their planning purposes. Sean Lahav of the NEFRC said they use National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration data which predicts 2-3 feet of sea level rise overall in the next 50 years.

Bill Killingsworth said that subcommittee meeting on the Thursdays of City Council committee weeks are very difficult for the Planning Department because he has a regular department head meeting in the mayor’s office that morning and much of the rest of the department staff is preparing for the Planning Commission meetings early Thursday afternoon.

Next meeting – July 30th, 8:30 a.m. via Zoom.

**Meeting adjourned:** 10:11 a.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

jeffc@coj.net 904-255-5137

7.24.20 Posted 9:30 a.m.