

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON RESILIENCY**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, PROTECTION OF LOCAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

**AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

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

**July 30, 2020**

**11:00 a.m.**

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

**In attendance:** Subcommittee Members Joyce Morgan (Chair), Michael Boylan (Vice Chair), Michael Bonts, John Burr, Josh Gellers, Ashantae Green, Barbara Gubbin, Bill Hoff, Joey McKinnon, Kelly Rich, John Sapora, Alan Zube

**Also**: Council Members Randy DeFoor and Garrett Dennis; Jeff Clements, Yvonne Mitchell and Anthony Baltiero – Council Research Division; Cheryl Brown – Council Secretary/Director; Steve Cassada, Eric Grantham and Melanie Wilkes – Council Support Services; Susan Stewart – Jaxport; Bill Killingsworth, Susan Kelly, Kristen Reed – Planning and Development Department; Susan Grandin – Office of General Counsel; John Pappas – Public Works Department; James Richardson – Environmental Protection Board; Jason Harrah – Army Corps of Engineers; Sean Lahav – Northeast Florida Regional Council; Hai Vu – JEA

**Meeting Convened**: 11:03 a.m.

Chairwoman Morgan convened the meeting and welcomed the subcommittee attendees. Council Member Randy DeFoor said the Infrastructure Committee had a great meeting this morning and she is looking forward to good work from all the committees.

Sean Lahav of the Northeast Florida Regional Council made a presentation on his organization’s regional survey on resilience focusing on the Jacksonville responses. He started with a definition of resilience which relates to the recovery from and adaptation to emergency events. He distinguished between “stresses” (long-term processes like sea level rise) and “shocks” (short-term events like hurricanes). The survey asked participants to rank various vulnerabilities by order of importance and found that hurricanes/ storm surge was the top priority followed by sea level rise and inadequate infrastructure. Mr. Lahav reviewed several protection strategies that could be pursued such as sea wall construction/heightening, one-way stormwater valves, living shorelines, building elevation, and retreat from storm-prone areas.

When questioned about types of protection strategies, Jacksonville survey respondents favored “green infrastructure” or nature-based solutions slightly over stormwater improvements and well more than “grey infrastructure” hard structure solutions. Mr. Lahav recommended that the Special Committee hear from the North Florida Land Trust about the possibilities for acquiring land for resilience purposes. Regarding accommodation strategies, the responses were fairly evenly distributed across support for green public areas, plans and policy, and community preparedness. Jacksonville residents showed strong support for sustainable development, green infrastructure and social equity as highly ranked opportunity areas. The survey showed an overwhelming “no” response from respondents about whether their community is doing enough about resilience, and an overwhelming “yes” about whether the region should have a Climate Compact.

Mr. Lahav told the committee the NEFRC’s Regional Resilience Exposure Tool, which is available to governments and to the general public, has many data layers of technical information that can be overlaid with social and economic factors to see who is most impacted by environmental challenges. NEFRC has a wide variety of resources available to governments and the general public. There is a Resilience in a Box checklist for small businesses and free educational talks can be provided by NEFRC staff on a variety of topics. He noted there are both government perspectives about what government can and should do, and individual perspectives about what people can do for themselves to protect their property and livelihoods.

Council Member Boylan said his Mandarin district was hit by a “monsoon” Tuesday night (4 inches of rain in an hour), which highlights the fact that Jacksonville’s infrastructure is not prepared for that intensity of rain. We need to be recognizing the impacts of new development on existing development and take that into account in land use and zoning decisions.

James Richardson suggested the committee might consider holding a town hall or other public meeting to educate the public about what the 3 subcommittees are doing and to gather public opinion on land use and development priorities and issues. Ahsantae Green asked about demographics of the Jacksonville respondents to the NEFRC survey – age, race, gender, etc. – and how well they understood the terms and concepts being asked about by the survey. Mr. Lahav said his agency has a ready-to-go public participation process to both inform and question the public at an event. They also have an online version of the same process that they’ve done for the City of Neptune Beach.

Council Member Dennis said his committee this morning heard about Public Works preparations for the impending tropical storm and also talked about Houston’s $2.5B infrastructure bond issue in 2017. Next Wednesday the committee will look at the proposed CIP and what deals with resilience issues. They may propose moving funding from other areas to Public Works to deal with immediate problems. Staff will email out the CIP to this committee. He said leadership and prioritization will be needed to get some immediate action.

Barbara Gubbin said that as the committee talks to the community about resilience, it needs to utilize trusted community leaders and institutions to convey the message. Most people are too busy with their lives to think much about this topic and are hard to reach. We need trusted community messengers to spread the word. John Sapora said LISC, City Council members and others are community leaders who have credibility to organize the community. The committee needs to deliver much of the good content that has been shared with the subcommittees to the community, focusing on what directly impacts their neighborhood. Charrettes and town hall meetings should be led by community facilitators, not government employees for the sake of credibility.

Definition of resilience: Ms. Morgan read a proposed definition from the agenda document. Ms. DeFoor suggested adding a sentence regarding disproportionate impact on certain disadvantaged communities. Mr. Boylan suggested that the first sentence really encapsulates what the definition is about. Ms. Green said the message needs to be very simple – how prepared is our community to bounce back successfully and quickly? Ms. Gubbin suggested giving examples of events we’re talking about, and that we’re talking about both short term and long-term trends and events (short term – hurricane response; long term – sea level rise that may make some neighborhoods unlivable). Josh Gellers recommended using simple bullet points like “plan, withstand, respond, recover, adapt”. Sean Lahav said he provided the definition on the agenda and it came from the City’s Chief Resilience Officer selection process. He agrees with emphasizing both bouncing back from a short-term impact and long-term evolution and adaptation to changing conditions. Joey McKinnon felt that a town hall meeting would probably generate lots of comments about the City’s current shortfalls in infrastructure and a list of specific problem areas and not so much about planning for the future. Alan Zube said he’s researched other communities’ resilience studies and two common words are “withstand” and “respond”.

Working groups: the groups will separate into several group chats during the next committee Zoom meeting to do their work and then report back to the full committee. Mr. Boylan asked John Burr if he would be willing to co-chair the Editorial/Regular Reports Working Group, to which he agreed. Chairwoman Morgan reviewed the subject areas of the working groups.

Community Asset group: John Sapora (Chair), Alan Zube

Identification and prioritization of assets

Editorial/Regular Reports Group: Michael Boylan (Chair), John Burr (Co-Chair), Barbara Gubbin, Joshua Gellers

Compiling information from the Special Committee and developing editorial content for print and electronic media

Media Group: Ashantae Green (Chair), Joey McKinnon (Co-Chair)

Social media publicity direct to the community

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 5, 2:00 p.m. – concurrent working group meetings; continued discussion of definition of “resilience”.

**Meeting adjourned:** 12:34 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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