

City of Jacksonville

*1st Floor - Council Chamber
117 W. Duval Street*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 24, 2020

11:30 AM

Virtual Meeting

Special Committee on Social Justice and Community Investment

*CM Matt Carlucci, Co-Chair
CM Brenda Priestly Jackson, Co-Chair*

Meeting Convened: 11:33 am Meeting Adjourned: 1:10 pm

Attendance:

Council Members Carlucci, Priestly Jackson, Salem, DeFoor, White, Newby, Dennis and Pittman

I. Introductions

CM Carlucci welcomed the group, called for introductions and reviewed the agenda.

II. Discussion- Affordable Housing – Dawn Lockhart, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Mayor’s Office

Dawn Lockhart, Director of Strategic Partnerships - Mayor’s Office, gave a presentation about affordable housing. Ms. Lockhart said that housing affordability is based upon an assumption that people pay 30 percent or less of their income on housing. However, there are many low and moderate income residents who pay more, 50 percent of their income or higher. This leaves little left over for savings, or emergencies. Ms. Lockhart noted that many workers deemed essential in the COVID-19 pandemic fall into this category. High housing costs also lead to increases in the school mobility rate, as families have to move to find affordable housing. This can adversely affect children, both psychologically and academically. Ms. Lockhart also made the connection between housing and health care, particularly during the pandemic, as people need housing security when being asked to stay at home or work from home. Ms. Lockhart highlighted the need for more affordable housing stock in Jacksonville, and around the country. The building of such housing can improve housing security and be a multiplier for neighborhoods through job creation (construction etc). Ms. Lockhart talked about some of the Mayor's housing programs, to assist with homelessness and encourage developers to build affordable housing. Ms. Lockhart also talked about the creation of a community land trust, to foster affordable homeownership opportunities and maintain affordability over the long term.

CM Carlucci thanked Ms. Lockhart for her presentation and extended an offer of support. CM Salem noted the connection between housing and mental health. CM DeFoor agreed and added that housing connects to everything. CMs Priestly Jackson and Newby said they would prefer that the committee focus on the list of priorities already identified.

III. Proposed Legislation Discussion CM Carlucci - Ordinance 2020-418, Capital Improvements in the Pre-Consolidation City Boundary (estimated funding \$500,000) CM Priestly Jackson -Infrastructure funding and a special taxing district to fund children's services

CM Carlucci - Ordinance 2020-418, Capital Improvements in the Pre-Consolidation City Boundary (estimated funding \$500,000)

CM Carlucci discussed his bill, which would set a CIP spending target of 33 percent for the area within the pre-consolidation boundary map to fulfill promises of consolidation. CM Boylan pointed out that there are areas of Mandarin that need infrastructure enhancements which were not included in the decision to consolidate. CM Newby noted that there are needs throughout the city, not just in one area. CM Salem said he would support the bill going through the committee process for debate, but was not ready to offer his support of the bill at this time. CM DeFoor agreed that the bill needs input from all council members through the committee process. CM White agreed, and said that the old city limits encompassed roughly 68 square miles, which is a small portion of the city overall. CM Carlucci reiterated his commitment to fulfilling the promises of consolidation. The committee held a hand vote for support and 5 CMs voted to move the bill to standing committees, with 2 in dissent (Newby and Priestly Jackson).

CM Priestly Jackson -Infrastructure funding and a special taxing district to fund children's services

CM Priestly Jackson said that the taxing district would be discussed at the next meeting, as well as septic tank remediation. She then yielded her time to CM Pittman for a presentation about Clanzel Brown Park on Montcrief Road.

CM Pittman spoke about a grant from the Cal Ripken Jr. Foundation which could transform the park into a sports complex, benefiting the community. Kevin Carrico, VP Operations of Boys and Girls Club, explained the Ripken Foundation, and their mission to help neighborhoods in need throughout the country. Clanzel Brown Park was selected by the Foundation, for the neighborhood level of need and its location. The Boys and Girls Club would potentially manage the programming at the park and hope for funding through KHA to do after school and summer camps.

Daryl Joseph, Parks Department talked about how this would be great for the park and the neighborhood, and that the details are being discussed at this point.

Mike Weinstein, KHA, said this grant opportunity arose after the RFP for afterschool/summer camps went out, and that \$250,000 would be needed for 100 kids to participate in afterschool/summer programs at Clanzel Brown Park. If this is included in this year's budget, or if council can come up with most of the money (at least half) then they could avoid coming back for a direct contract later.

CM Carlucci expressed his support, and suggested that maybe the Mayor's Office can also contribute to the project costs.

CM Dennis asked about the City's liability due to COVID-19 and how it could affect the agreement. Mr. Carrico said the Boys and Girls Club provides liability insurance after agreements are signed.

CM Salem said how much he loves baseball, supports the idea but questioned the details of the recurring financial obligation. He suggested CM Pittman to have noticed meeting about the project, and to get Mayor's input.

IV. Discussion-Abandoned Properties - Michael Chao, Chief of Municipal Code Compliance (estimated funding \$250,000)

CM White talked about abandoned properties and how they affect neighborhoods, and suggested contributing \$250,000 more to go towards demolishing dilapidated/abandoned housing.

Mr. Chao, Chief of Municipal Code Compliance said his department tears down/condemn unsafe structures and abandoned properties. It is something of a long due process, on average takes 6- 8 months, because of the required notification of parties/owners etc. The goal is to bring properties back into tax roll, and decrease blight influence in neighborhoods. The City last year took 212 structures down, fewer this year because of the pandemic - 87 as of today, mostly council districts 7, 8, 9, and 10. Liens are then placed on the property, so eventually the City will get paid back on the investment.

CM White made a motion to put CM Gaffney's proposed CRA money towards abandoned properties, to give MCC extra money (\$250,000) to go toward demolition. CM Salem said he's confused by the allocation process. CM Priestly Jackson said eventually this committee will have a total plan, and that CM priorities will make up the parts of a comprehensive plan that will be agreed upon.

CM Salem talked about mental health services in jails as one focus for this committee, and plans to collaborate with JSO on the issue. He also talked about a meeting he had with the Sheriff and State Attorney about body camera policies, and there is a new policy which he didn't read but will be made public soon.

CM Newby said he will be speaking at a future meeting about a funding request (\$250,000) from the Safety and Crime Reduction Commission for emergency response in hot crime areas.

V. Other Legislative Concerns of Council Members

VI. Public Comment (as time permits)

One attendee spoke about structural racism in public policy, racial sentencing disparities, social norms, and equity. One talked about institutional racism, the negative impact of criminal records on employment, and second chances legislation. One spoke about the legacy of white supremacy, and one spoke in glowing support for all of the other speakers' sentiments.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
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Posted: 8.27.20 5:00 pm