

**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 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING**

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

 **October 22, 2020**

**4:00 p.m.**

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

**In attendance:** Subcommittee members Matt Carlucci (arr. 4:08) and Randy DeFoor; Subject matter experts Brooks Andrews Shannon Blankinship, Sarah Boren, J. Logan Cross, Bruce Fouraker, Ashantae Green, Kevin O’Halloran, Adam Hoyles, Nancy Powell, Joshua Rosenberg, Adam Rosenblatt, Jim Schwarz, Guillermo Simon, Steve Swann, Quinton White

**Also**: Jeff Clements, Yvonne Mitchell – Council Research Division; Steve Cassada, Eric Grantham and Melanie Wilkes – Council Support Services; Kealey West – Office of General Counsel; Nick Primrose – Jaxport; Sean Lahav – North East Florida Regional Council; Susan Kelly – Planning and Development Department; Kelsey Cox – Public Works Department, Melissa Long– Environmental Quality Division; James Richardson – Environmental Protection Board

**Meeting Convened**: 4:01 p.m.

Council Member Randy DeFoor convened the meeting and turned the meeting over to Brooks Andrews. Mr. Brooks asked Ms. DeFoor for an update on the Chief Resiliency Officer ordinance just introduced. The bill was filed by Council Member Carlucci to create the position in the Planning and Development Department and will be amended to add a definition of the term “resilience”. Adam Hoyles said he thinks the position would be better not serving at the pleasure of the Mayor as that could tend to make it more subject to political pressure. He understands that all City division chiefs serve at the pleasure of the Mayor so perhaps it has to be that way. Ms. DeFoor said that having the position created in the Code is more stable than just being a position existing in the budget year-to-year. Matt Carlucci said he wants to negotiate with the administration to have that office be a division of the Planning Department. Mr. Andrews hoped the position will be apolitical and long-term. Bruce Fouraker asked if it would be possible for the position to be appointed by the Council rather than the Mayor. Kealey West of the General Counsel’s Office said that typically a division chief, as a departmental official, is subject to appointment by the Mayor.

Council Member DeFoor reported that tomorrow’s Special Committee meeting will feature presentations by Roderick Scott (Flood Mitigation Industry Association) on flood mitigation best practices and Julie Shiyu (Smart Home America) on best practices for residential and commercial building.

Mr. Andrews said that Ken Godwin has joined the ranks of the subcommittee’s subject matter experts and he looks forward to his participation. He reported that the subcommittee’s questions were posed to JEA after the last meeting, the responses were received today, and will be posted on the subcommittee’s page for all to read. Mr. Andrews said his understanding is that Ms. DeFoor want to wrap up the Special Committee’s work by the end of the year. Ms. DeFoor said she wants recommendations from the subcommittees by the end of November for the full Special Committee to consider in December.

Mr. Andrews reviewed his working group reporting spreadsheet and invited the working groups to add columns as they feel necessary to convey the work and the observations of their group.

Working Group Breakout Sessions

The working groups broke out into separate sessions from 4:30 to 5:05 p.m. Following the breakouts the working groups reassembled and reported on their discussions.

Hazard 1: Shannon Blankinship said the group is trying to mold its observations into the spreadsheet format. Topics discussed today included the City’s previous Storm Resiliency and Infrastructure Committee recommendations, including the need for coordination and communication among FDEP, SJRWMD and the City about identifying and maintaining stormwater retention ponds, especially those without clear ownership or a responsible maintenance party. It was suggested to look at other cities for how they achieve their Community Rating System high scores. Septic tanks are a major issue, as they’re still being installed in areas that will be subject to sea level rise. A suggestion was made to look at how Brevard County regulated septic tanks to protect the Indian River Lagoon from effluent effects. Land acquisition was proposed, particularly how to prioritize areas that should be protected, such as tributary headwaters. Finally, what kind of protections should be in place in coastal areas, floodplains and other sensitive areas that need to hold increasing amounts of water?

Hazard 2: Adam Hoyles said the group spent a lot of time talking about trees, including recommendations from the City’s Tree Commission to amend the development regulations. Four proposed GIS mapping data layers could be used to prioritize plantings - heat island map, redline map, poverty map, flood factor map. The working group is nearly ready to report on trees and move on to another topic.

Hazard 3: Sarah Boren said they have developed 7 categories of recommendations, some of which may overlap with other Resiliency Committee subcommittees. Tree canopy – recommending 20% increase by 2040. There’s a problem with lack of enforcement of what’s already on the books; a required annual report for accountability may be advisable. They discussed the various options for getting something done – Comp Plan amendments, development regulations amendments, action by the Chief Resilience Officer. Mr. Carlucci said he is interested in the concept of lack of enforcement of existing regulations and wants to know what isn’t being done and what it would take to do better. Ashantae Green reported discussion about the temperature of the St. Johns River, heat islands and other stressors and whether they should be tackled now or later. Brooks Andrews said there’s a limit to what this Special Committee can do in the short term and it will need to focus on what can be done immediately and what will take longer, especially after the CRO is hired and can tackle longer-range issues.

Sarah Boren said the shared spreadsheet should be useful for showing interconnections and relationships of issues across working groups. Kealey West will look at the Sunshine Law implications of allowing council members on the Special Committee to access the spreadsheet via a shared drive.

Council Members Carlucci and DeFoor thanked the participants for their continued involvement and sharing their expertise throughout the lengthy special committee process. They won’t know if the group can meet in person again until the Governor’s order allowing virtual meetings is either renewed or not at the end of the month. Ms. West noted that outside of the exemption created by the Governor’s pandemic executive orders, state law requires that a quorum of members be physically present to have a meeting, but there can still be a virtual element for others to observe.

Next meeting – November 5th, 4:00 p.m.

**Meeting adjourned:** 5:35 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

jeffc@coj.net 904-255-5137

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