City of Jacksonville

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

# Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 22, 2021

8:30 AM

Virtual Meeting

# Safety and Crime Reduction Commission

Meeting Convened: 8:30 am Meeting Adjourned: 10:10 am

Attendance:

Chairman Mark Griffin; Vice Chair Dr. Constance Hall; CM Samuel Newby; Commissioners Camille Burban, Larry Cook, Richard Danford, Frank Denton, Tom Geismar, William (W.C.) Gentry, Josh Cockrell, Ellen Glasser, Ronnie King, Timothy Sloan, Shamika Baker Wright, Vicki Waytowich, Shelley Grant, Julie Davis, Katoia Wilkins, Tracy McGeathey, Assistant Chief Lakesha Burton, Tia Leathers, Kimberly Miller, Dr. Nicoa Garrett

1. Call to Order – Chairman

Chairman Griffin convened the meeting wishing everyone a happy new year.

1. **Opening Remarks & Greetings Chairman Griffin reviewed the agenda.**

**Chair Griffin announced that Linda Joseph submitted a letter of resignation. Chairman Griffin suggested that Julie Davis assisted with determining what constitutes a quorum due to the number of members and the pandemic. Chair Griffin reminded the commission of the restraints on voting or taking any form of formal action on items regarding the need for a physical quorum required under the Sunshine Law. For now, the meetings are for discussion until the commission can meet in person. Members have indicated via survey they will be willing to meet in person once vaccinated. Chair Griffin asked that members notify the staff once you have been vaccinated or change your mind and are willing to meet in person.**

**Julie Davis advised she will be meeting with Councilman Newby to work on the Sunshine concerns to work on having more freedom to work with liaisons on the committee. Ms. Davis stated discussion can be had regarding changes to the quorum requirement.**

1. **Review of Minutes – 12.4.20 Safety and Crime Reduction Commission Meeting.**

**Chair Griffin noted that Katoia Wilkins name was missed spelled; Wilkens and should be correct to the spelling Wilkins.**

1. **Administrator’s Report**

Dr. Garrett announced that collaborative efforts regarding starting a small pilot program in the Zone 2 Justina area of Arlington had been discussed. Part of the initiative will include meeting with families one-on-one, so they feel safe to share. This is meant to empower the residents and give them ownership of their community providing them with the ability to offer input to assist in determining what is needed in the community to improve safety. Data collected can then be passed on to KHA and other organizations to ensure that programming is meeting the needs of the community.

Dr. Garrett reported that Operation Boost is being funded by the social justice and community redevelopment committee and provided the projected timeline for the project.

* January 26th Council will hold a public hearing for the bill
* February 1st NCSPHS Committee will address the bill
* February 2nd the Finance and Rules Committee will address the bill
* February 9th the bill will be addressed by the full council

Dr. Garrett stated that funding for Operations Boost should be available 10 to 15 days after being addressed by full council. Tentatively a recruitment expo will take place on March 27th. The outcomes for Operation Boost are recruitment, registration, and enrollment, explore and career operations, program completion, employment placement, employment retention, and pay it forward. Phase II would be to assess, reset and start the process over again. Next, confirming of branding, conformation of the Operation Boost expo to all take place by the middle of March. The registration process will take place online and in person. Some challenges include the event location which has not been determined at this time. The program needs to recruit at least 50 people from the WIC program and 100 from Florida State College at Jacksonville. Dr. Garrett advised she is putting together an inventory of all programs that work directly or indirectly with reducing crime or preventing crime. Dr. Garrett stated she is reviewing the 300 plus programs to determine how they work, and if they work to best serve the community. Dr. Garrett stated she is waiting on 2019-2010 homicide states from Assistant Chief Derrick Miller.

Comments and Questions:

Commissioner Camille Burban stated she is not sure of the role she plays on the commission. Chair Griffin acknowledged that operation Boost is not the commissions project and should be referred to as they and not we.

Commissioner Tom Geismar thanked Dr. Garrett for pulling together information regarding other programs as it will assist the commission with decision making and the commissions strategic planning and prioritizing issues to address. Mr. Geismar stated the Justina area partnership program sounds promising and the commission should be sure to watch the effect it has in empowering the people in their community.

Commissioner Vicki Waytowich expounded on the 4th circuit juvenile advisory board and advised that it is time for the board to put together another 3–4-year comprehensive juvenile justice plan. Ms. Waytowich advised the plan is meant to guide the City however there is no solid comprehensive plan with quantitative information in place to assist the various committees and elevate the need to redo research that has already been done. Adding funding to add an administrator to synthetize all the various information regarding programs throughout the city would be very helpful to everyone.

Commissioner Richard Danford stated that he is concerned that the commission will not have a tangible plan or recommendations that address the City’s homicide problem, by the end of the commissions term. Mr. Danford feels the commission should focus on how to decrease the murder homicide rates verses collecting information on the numerous programs in the City.

Commissioner Shamika Baker Wright asked if Dr. Garrett could provide a copy of her report. Ms. Wright asked if the commission planned on holding a meeting to discuss it priorities to prevent collecting duplicate information and proposals.

Commissioner Ellen Glasser stated she feels there is no clear direction or mission and would like to look at other strategies.

Commissioner Williams (W.C.) Gentry stated commission has not asked the police to provide information pertaining to what they plan to do or are doing differently to address violent crime.

Assistant Chief Lakesha Burton stated that to address violent crime you must collaborate. In order to stop long term violence must address the cycle collectively by empowering the people.

Commissioner Ronnie King stated that its important to look at the commissions capacity and what we can do as a community to reduce crime in our city. Must hold originations accountable that can assist with the reduction of crime.

Commissioner Timothy Sloan stated that the commission needs to be in the community collaborating with various organizations allowing the community to take owner ship. There needs to be accountability regarding the maximization of money.

Assistant Chief Lakesha Burton reiterated commissioner Ronnie Kings statement, that the commission needs to look at the capacity in which it can function and focus on one location in need by dissecting the area to see where the gaps are and evaluating the pieces. Address the issue from the inside by getting communities to buy in to their neighborhood.

Commissioner Dr. Connie Hall stated that everyone brings their interest and expertise to the table, but in order to make a great impact we must bring our strengths together in order to maintain a strategic focus that we can identify movement that’s going to have an impact on the City of Jacksonville as a commission. where the needs are. Dr. Hall stated she is concerned with the fact that many of the murders are gang related and wonders how the commission can address this problem. Dr. Hall agreed that looking at Justina is a good start in identifying where the need is and how to get into the community to provide the services needed.

Chair Griffin thanked everyone for their comments and agreed with Dr. Hall that the commission must bring all their ideas together. Chair Griffin stated that the next meeting will be a strategic planning meeting. Chair Griffin asked that everyone read over the May 6, 2019 Final Task Force report as he believes it severs as the commissions play book and will refresh what was done as a subcommittee. Chair Griffin stated he would like to approach the next meeting as a SWAT Analysis where each member submits what they see as the commission’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, and threats to staff. The information will be compiled and used as a bridge to begin the commissions discussion to assist setting priorities and give Dr. Garrett more clarity regarding her task as administrator of the commission. Chair Griffin reiterated the charge of the commission, which is to look at all the programs and departments that receive funding and make recommendations to the administration and City Council in terms of funding. The year-to-year statistics will be available at the strategic meeting to help pinpoint the certain types of crime. Chair Griffin stated he believes the Justina Road area is the perfect area for a pilot program.

Commissioner Richard Danford stated that he would like to go on record that the commission use the recommendations made last year and that the commission review the Neighborhood Bill of Rights, which states neighborhoods have the right to be involved and included in the planning process. The Neighborhood Bill of Rights is a council ordinance and Mr. Danford would like to see the commission include the use of it in its work to reduce crime and make Jacksonville safe.

1. **KHA Funding Subcommittee**

Subcommittee Chair Timothy Sloan thanked the KHA Subcommittee members who were able to attend the meeting on Friday, January 15, 2021. Subcommittee Chair Sloan reminded the commission that they are to coordinate with KHA to guide/direct funding towards commission priorities. The subcommittee focused their meeting on two topic areas: full-service schools and programming. Subcommittee Chair Sloan stated he has submitted paperwork to Dr. Garrett requesting the subcommittee have three more meetings; Friday, February 5th, 12th, and 19th each with two different topics to discuss with KHA. The goal is to wrap up all discussion by February 19th and present the subcommittees recommendations to the full body on Friday, February 26, 2021. Subcommittee Chair Sloan asked commission members to submit any topic or subject they would like to see funded or discussed please send your suggestions to Dr. Garrett. If topic or subject is not part of KHA, please send it to Dr. Garrett anyway.

Comments and Questions:

**Commissioner Shamika Baker Wright stated that she believes it is time to revisit, prioritize and select three or five of the previous recommendations that came out of the old commissions.**

**Commissioner Frank Denton stated he would like to build on Commissioner Wrights comments regarding the creation of the report from the previous subcommittees of the various task forces and asked that Dr. Garrett resend that report to the members of the commission so all the work previously done does not get lost and can be discussed going forward.**

**Chair Griffin stated that KHA is looking for a more specific direction to make sure they ear mark the best use out of the funds. Chair Griffin reminded commission members that the commission cannot direct who gets funding.**

**Commissioner Vicki Waytowich stated that program piece milling is not productive. The issue is systemic and needs to be addressed as such. A comprehensive strategy or strategic plan is needed to assist with keeping track of the programs that work and wish to continue funding.**

**Commissioner Shelley Grant agreed with Commissioner Waytowich’s statements. The commission needs a plan and not lose sight of mission. The commission must be sure to match programs with what the commission is trying to accomplish and needs to be very targeted and focused. There are no quick fixes.**

**Chair Griffin stated that as a commission they cannot direct who gets funded. But would like to watch the organizations that are making the greatest impact with the services that they provide and help guide KHA regarding those organizations and the services they offer.**

**Commissioner Shamika Baker Wright asked if the commission could receive another presentation on Operation Boost to better understand the program. Ms. Wright stated that children in programs such as Boy & Girls Club, KHA, and United Way are not committing crimes. Ms. Wright asked, how will the commission reach the children that are not being reached and are not in those type of programs.**

**Commissioner Dr. Connie Hall suggested that the commission look over the strategic plan and be prepared to think differently or out of the box. Keeping in mind the times we are in, as we are still in a pandemic that has impacted everything and everyone’s life. The Commission should think about moving out of the comfort zone of trying to fit recommendations and strategy on what already exist. Direct targeted conversations will need to be had to really effect the community.**

**Commissioner Tom Geismar state that Justina there is a process there that the commission should pay close attention to. Which includes listening to people’s stories and empowering them. The process can be very beneficial to various locations as well**

**Assistant Chief Lakeshia Burton stated that commissioner Wright is thinking in the right direction. A needs base assessment should be done for each area as every area has different needs and having boots on the ground will assist in identifying what resources are in the community, where the gaps are, and the children who are not getting assistance.**

**Chair Griffin stated he believes having the right people such as Assistant Chief Burton and Tia Leather in the community to have those important discussions is key.**

**Commissioner Ellen Glasser stated she likes the idea of focusing on a project but would like to pick more than just one and the data should help determine where to focus.**

1. **Mental Health Funding Subcommittee**

Chair Griffin stated that three hundred thousand dollars was funded for mental health because of the Safety and Crime Reduction Commission. Chair Griffin would like to track the disbursement of those funds and the areas they were allocated. Chair Griffin has asked Dr. Garrett to assist in locating where the funding was allocated or distributed.

1. **Next Meeting – Strategic Planning Session**

**Chair Griffin reiterated he would like the commission to read over the report from May 6, 2019. Dr. Garrett will resend all the subcommittee reports out as well. The commissioners will receive instructions on how they should respond in terms of the SWAT analysis that will be compiled. Chair Griffin asked that everyone adjust their schedules to extend the duration of the meeting from 1.5 hours to 2 hours; 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

1. **Public Comments – 3 Minutes Each**

Tracy McGeathey provided information pertaining to the Operation Boost program, its funding, and its focus. Ms. McGeathey stated she would be happy to put together a presentation regarding the Operation Boost program. Ms. McGeathey stated that the programs focus is jobs, food disparities, and shelter.

Mr. Stanley Scott stated that he believes the commission should look at taking a holistic approach when addressing the issues and should make sure the community is involved in the decision of what is needed to improve communities.

1. **Wrap-Up and Adjournment**

With no further business, Chairman Griffin adjourned the meeting.

Minutes: Michelle Godwin-Ware, Neighborhood Services Office Michellegw@coj.net 904.255.8236