**Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization**



**of Expenditures (TRUE) Commission**

**Daniel Henry, Chair**

**MEMBER TO MEMBER VIRTUAL MEETING OF**

**MEMBERS OF THE TRUE COMMISSION**

**Preliminary Meeting Minutes**

*The minutes of this meeting are preliminary until reviewed and*

*approved by the TRUE Commission at a future meeting.*

**February 9, 2021**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Virtual meeting via Zoom platform**

**Attendance:** Commissioners Daniel Henry, John Roberts, Bruce Tyson, Velma Rounsville, Keshan Chambliss, Ramon Day (arr. 9:08), Mark Merritt (arr. 9:34)

**Excused:**

**Absent**:

**Also**: Jeff Clements and Yvonne Mitchell– Council Research Division; Steve Cassada and Melanie Wilkes– Council Staff Services

The meeting was convened at 9:03 a.m. and the members introduced themselves for the record.

Workshop discussion

Chairman Henry invited the commissioners to propose ideas for the commission’s work program for 2021.

Commissioner Tyson suggested project management as a topic to see if City projects are being completed in a timely manner and how funding is allocated and tracked to the end of the project, including adding additional funding if needed or reallocating excess funds after project conclusion to other purposes.

Commissioner Tyson also suggested studying the accident rate for police and fire vehicles, which could be folded into a larger study of the Sheriff’s Office spending and strategic plans. He said he could handle the risk management on vehicles part himself due to his long experience with the City’s Risk Management Division.

Commissioner Day thought JSO would be a good study – historical spending patterns (4 budget years for historical context), staffing levels, how the office is organized, national staffing standards (officers per 1000 population, number of calls handled, distance covered responding to calls), staffing deficiencies and a glide path to increased staffing. Commissioner Chambliss is interested in what JSO is doing about prevention, its strategy for combatting the violent crime rate, and how manpower and resources are allocated.

Commissioner Rounsville said she is interested in the Jacksonville Small and Emerging Business (JSEB) procurement program and the work of the Special Committee on JSEB. The special committee is looking for funding for a new procurement disparity study and is considering proposing legislative changes to the JSEB program. She said she wants to see where the Special Committee lands with its recommendations and then decide how to proceed from there on the topic.

Commissioner Roberts said Jacksonville has a “silo” problem, meaning that it doesn’t compare itself to peer cities to see how City government is performing. He also believes that Jacksonville doesn’t transition well from one mayoral administration to another – the new mayor tends to throw out the previous one’s priorities and starts something new. He thinks Jacksonville should talk to peer cities and see how they handle continuity between administrations and if they have any better system than ours. Commissioner Tyson said the continuity aspect ties into his earlier comments on project management and how things get tracked to completion. Commissioner Henry noted that the Charter Revision Commission several years ago talked about creating a City Strategic Plan that would span administrations. Commissioner Roberts suggested looking at the City’s Comprehensive Plan and how that does or does not affect continuity of projects. In response to a question from Chairman Henry about whether a committee should be created to tackle this topic, Commissioner Tyson recommended that a committee be created with more than 2 members to handle the work.

Commissioner Day suggested a study of primary health care clinics, focusing on maternal and prenatal health care, especially preventive care. He is curious about what the Health Department is doing, how could things be enhanced, and what might be done in conjunction with Mayo Clinic, Baptist Medical Center, Ascension Health (St. Vincent’s), and UF Health’s assistance. He recommended starting with a 2-year plan and then developing a 4-year plan for the consideration of the next mayoral administration in 2023-27.

Commissioner Tyson cautioned that the TRUE Commission doesn’t have much manpower, so can’t tackle too many projects at once. Chairman Henry agreed that lack of membership is really a problem. Several years ago the commission talked about alternate ways to get seats filled, including possibly allowing the commission to make its own appointments. He said it might be time to tackle that issue again and find ways to get a full membership. Commissioner Day suggested that perhaps the commission’s authorizing ordinance needs re-writing, perhaps to a system of 19 members appointed by the 19 council members plus 6 CPAC appointments for a total of 25. Recent mayors seem uninterested in appointing members to the TRUE Commission.

Commissioner Merritt suggested a study of how Jacksonville’s crime rate and law enforcement budget compare to other similar cities. Every big city is dealing with violent crime spikes, so are any of them doing something about it? He recommended looking at 10-15 comparable cities nationwide on their public safety spending and crime rates. Commissioner Day suggested that this might be wrapped into the JSO budget project discussed earlier. Suggestions for comparable cities included Charlotte/Mecklenberg County and Nashville/Davidson County.

Time estimates for suggested projects:

* City vehicle accidents (Tyson leading) – estimate 4-6 months, depending on how quickly data can be obtained
* JSO crime prevention priorities (Chambliss leading) – depends on how quickly JSO is willing to come and talk, 3-4 months
* JSEB (Rounsville leading) – will know better when JSEB Committee adopts its final report
* Comparison of Jacksonville with other cities (Roberts leading) – depends on how much manpower can be devoted to a survey and research; 2-3 months with a major effort, 6 months at normal pace
* Primary health care (Day leading) – 6-9 months
* JSO historical spending and staffing (Day leading) – 4-5 months since lots of data already exists

Scheduling of suggested projects:

Q1-2 – JSO crime prevention spending FY16-17 to present

Q1-2 risk management and City vehicle accidents

Q1-3 Jacksonville crime/police spending comparison survey with comparable cities

Q2 – JSEB study

Q2 – TRUE membership and appointments

Q3 – primary health care

Q4 - JSO budget information FY14-15 to FY19-20

Commissioner Day suggested that the commission could do the 3 JSO projects as one large report with 3 sub-aspects (prevention, historical spending and manpower, comparison with other comparable cities). After more discussion, the group decided to undertake that study as a committee of the whole since everyone wanted to participate. The group needs to meet again to discuss data points, comparable cities, etc. Jeff Clements will ask the Council Auditor’s Office what kind of detailed JSO budget is available on spending by organizational division (patrol, corrections, homeland security, community service, etc.).

Staff was asked to poll the membership about their availability for a meeting in the next 2 weeks.

Chairman Henry volunteered to help Commissioner Tyson with the risk management project. Mr. Tyson will collect his thoughts and send them to Mr. Clements and then set an initial meeting date. Commissioner Roberts will also draft a plan for the performance comparison study and circulate it to the membership.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

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