

# City of Jacksonville

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



## Meeting Minutes

**Monday, March 8, 2021**

**3:00 PM**

**Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall & Virtual**

## **Special Committee on Social Justice and Community Investment**

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

Meeting Convened: 3:00 pm    Meeting Adjourned: 4:35 pm

Attendance:

**Committee Members Priestly Jackson (Co-Chair), Carlucci (Co-Chair), Salem, DeFoor and Newby; Excused: CMs Boylan and White**

**Also: Council Member Gaffney; Council President Hazouri; Peggy Sidman, Office of General Counsel; Phillip Peterson, Council Auditor's Office; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research**

**I.        Introductions**

- II. **SJCIC Jobs Initiatives, Other Proposals and Presentations**
  - a. **Tia Leathers, Executive Director Family and Community Engagement (DCPS), 5000 Role Models of Excellence Program**
  - b. **Literacy Pros Jacksonville, Rodney Wells, Youth Leadership Advisory Council President, and Susan Kanuit, Literacy Pros Jacksonville President**

Tia Leathers, Executive Director Family and Community Engagement DCPS, spoke about the 5000 Role Models program. 5000 Role Models began in Miami in 1993 to address and end the pattern of minority boys being incarcerated, entering the drug trade, or dropping out of school at disproportionately high rates. It launched in Duval County in 2015 with the mission to connect students to positive adult role models whose successes can inspire them to achieve. The program is in operation in 17 DCPS schools. The students dress in formal attire - dress shirts, pants and ties - which has been found to positively impact esteem and behavior. Their funding request will go primarily towards uniform costs.

The following criteria are considered for student selection:

- The student needs a positive male role model in their life;
  - The student has exhibited leadership skills that need to be developed;
  - The student is eligible for free or reduced lunch;
  - The student has a record of involvement with a social service system;
  - A member of the immediate family has been incarcerated (or member of the household);
  - The head of household is a single parent;
  - The head of household is not a custodial parent;
  - A teacher, counselor, social worker, or community-based service organization recommends the student.
- Students in the program have increased their GPAs, decreased their behavior referrals and improved chances of promotion.

Dr. Jennifer Blalock and Rodney Wells, Literacy Pros Jacksonville Youth Leadership Advisory Council, spoke about the correlation between literacy and incarceration. 70 percent of incarcerated adults cannot read at a 4th grade level and most incarcerated youth are a year or two behind their peers academically. The newly formed Youth Leadership Council is student created and student led, and works to support and promote youth literacy in our community. Their funding request is \$20,000 for an awareness billboard campaign (in zip codes 32206, 8, 9,10,and 18) using photos of DCPS students to encourage literacy and make reading seem 'cool'. The funds would also cover free books for teens, events and posters in various community centers. The campaign would provide visual affirmation of positive reading behaviors and celebrate literacy and achievement.

- III. Discussion of Proposed SJCIC Infrastructure
  - a. Council President Hazouri
    - i. Resurfacing
    - ii. Sidewalk Repair
    - iii. Drainage System Rehabilitation
  - b. Septic Tank Phase Out List

Council President Hazouri was in attendance to speak about infrastructure priorities and distributed a list of Public Works road resurfacing, sidewalk repair, and drainage system rehabilitation projects. CP Hazouri spoke about the long lasting visible impact of infrastructure improvements, especially in under-served neighborhoods, and suggested that the committee utilize their funds for some of the projects on the list. John Pappas, Director of Public Works, said that it is difficult to estimate the amount of jobs created by completing the some or all of the listed projects. Mr. Pappas also mentioned that many drainage projects were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as inmate work crews became unavailable. CM Salem asked if and how much is included in the overall City budget for infrastructure improvements. Mr. Pappas indicated that they are included each year, but that there are new projects that arise and the budgeted amount is never enough to complete them all fully.

CM Carlucci said he believes the biggest value per dollar would be to invest in sidewalks.

CM Priestly Jackson read the committee's charge aloud and said that while the listed projects are important, they may not be in keeping with the committee's mission to further equal access and opportunity for all citizens of Jacksonville and to strive to establish programs and policies which serve to eradicate systemic bias as well as honor the unfulfilled promises of consolidation. CM Priestly Jackson also said that the committee could influence public works policy instead, to affect the project prioritization process.

CM DeFoor talked about the connection between unfinished infrastructure projects, blight and crime. She also noted that sidewalks in disrepair are perilous for the elderly population.

CM Gaffney said that the committee's priority should be to fund the proposed programs for which presentations have been made, particularly to smaller innovative programs usually left out of City funding.

CM Newby agreed, saying that the people in the neighborhoods need help first, that people are dying in the streets, and that the roads and sidewalks can be repaired after the safety/well-being of the residents has been addressed.

CM Carlucci said that infrastructure improvements are an enduring community investment.

CM Salem said that the remaining SJCIC funds are insufficient to make a dent in the long list of projects provided by CP Hazouri, and that increasing public works funding is something to be taken up in the annual budget process.

CM Priestly Jackson said that the committee is not yet in a position to decide on funding allocations, and that the groups that made presentations would be decided upon prior to choosing how to spend what funds are remaining.

CP Hazouri expressed disappointment that the infrastructure improvements may have

to find an alternative funding source.

**IV. Other Legislative Concerns of Council Members**

**Funding Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Noticed Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target Population and Neighbors/Constituents to be served:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Legislation Files [ ] Yes [ ] No**

None were shared at this meeting.

**V. SJCIC Evaluation Rubric**

The members discussed the proposal criteria and assessment rubric. It was requested that research staff score the applications for completion, and then the committee will make funding recommendations at the next meeting on March 22nd.

**VI. Miscellaneous**

**VII. Public Comment (if time permits)**

There was no time remaining, nor cards submitted, for public comment.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Posted: 3.10.21 5:00 pm