

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

**(NO PHYSICAL LOCATION)**

**CM JOYCE MORGAN CM BOYLAN**

**SAFER TOGETHER WORKSHOP MINUTES**

**APRIL 23, 2021**

**10:00 am**

Meeting Convened: 10:00 am Meeting Adjourned: 12:04 pm

Attendance: CM Morgan and CM Boylan

Also: Paige Johnston, Office of General Counsel; Heather Reber and Jeff Rodda, Auditor’s Office; Richard Distel and Yvonne Mitchell, Council Research; Dr. Tammy Hodo and Dr. Brian Van Brunt

CM Morgan opened the meeting and talked about the recent verdict in the George Floyd case. CM Morgan said it is very important to listen to both sides and have an open conversation about the topic of police accountability, and that engagement in the topic is crucial. CM Boylan said he has reflected on the George Floyd verdict and having various voices at the table is important in moving forward. CM Boylan spoke about the importance of being responsive to the needs of the community and also that those speaking out need to be a part of the process. The topic for today’s workshop is the Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office budget.

Dr. Hodo talked about Florida House Bill 1 and said it was important to recognize the newly signed law. Carnell Oliver said he believes that HB 1 is designed to take away local control. Chief William Clement talked about House Bill 1 and said that it formalizes the appeals process if the sheriff’s office thinks their budget was unduly cut. Dr. Hodo said that Florida is among the top five states with the most law enforcement officers. Director Bruno talked about the pros and cons of a consolidated government for JSO.

Chief Clement gave a JSO budget overview by position, as well as a comparison in the budget from last year to this year. The budget increased by approximately $3 million from last fiscal year. Chief Clement said that 63% of the budget goes towards salary and benefits. Director Bruno said that the rate of pay varies depending on seniority and the union.

Director Bruno went over the population of inmates within the 3 JSO correctional facilities from 2017 to 2021. In 2017 there were 2,879 inmates, in 2018 there were 3,003 inmates, in 2019 there were 3,206 inmates, in 2020 there were 3059 inmates, and currently in 2021 there are 3,588 inmates. Director Bruno gave a breakdown of the 3 facilities and where these inmates are in the legal process. Dr. Hodo asked about the bail system and the number of inmates in jails due to not being able bail themselves out. Director Bruno said the cash bail system is a function of the courts and not the sheriff’s office. Carnell Oliver asked if leg monitoring could be used more often. Director Bruno said that JSO deals with the housing of inmates and does not have a voice on who is monitored upon release.

Dr. Hodo asked about the inmates’ satisfaction with their health care. Director Bruno talked about the partnership with Armor Correctional Health Services, a nation-wide service that works for the jail system and has a focus on health care and serving the large inmate population. CM Morgan talked about the cycle of inmates going back and forth from the jail system to homelessness. Director Bruno said this is very complicated, and when you are homeless there is a higher chance that you are dealing with substance abuse issues. Director Bruno said it is essential to give the co-responders and officers the most training to have the largest toolbox to deal with these circumstances. Dr. Hodo asked if the jail is at or above capacity. Director Bruno said there are many moving pieces with medical services during covid-19 and the need to quarantine which has led to a higher-than-normal population.

YSRYL YSRYL asked what the yearly budget is to house an inmate. Director Bruno said it is about $90 a day per inmate. Bobbie O’Connor asked if the JSO can respond to events without needing an officer. Director Bruno talked to the limitations of CSO officers and since they have a narrow definition this makes it hard to use them in certain situations - they are not social workers and cannot write tickets. Dr. Hodo asked about grant-based funding is and where it is directed. Chief Clement said that grants can cover everything from officers to mental health counselors and it is based on availability. Stanley Scott said there should be a workshop meeting without JSO that is a community focused discussion. Mr. Scott also voiced displeasure with JSO’s statistics.

Wells Todd said the issue is deeply rooted in the relationship between police officers and the black community. Mr. Todd said small infractions are used to make up for funding gaps which then creates a vicious cycle, impacting jobs and livelihoods. Dr. Hodo talked about the statistics in the census that show the city of Jacksonville is not fully integrated. Keziah Anderson said inmates are charged for medical services and housing in Jacksonville jails. She asked if these fees help cover the JSO budget or if inmates accrue debt over the time in jail. Chief Clement said not all inmates of charged the $15 fee. If they are arrested again, any cash in their possession will go to that debt which then goes to the general city budget. Director Bruno said these are inhouse fees and not fees based in the courts, so they do not stop people from voting. Nicole Hamm asked about officer recruiting and training in the budget. Director Bruno talked about the state recruitment facility and the training which is based on the state’s requirements. Director Bruno gave an overview of the recruitment and background assessments of new officers.

Andrew George asked about the breakdown of police activities. Director Bruno said that community engagement makes up 30%. Mr. George said he does not see enough of the community-based focus in JSO. He said when JSO moved out of the schools this decreased the positive impact they had in the community. Director Bruno said that it is an issue between time and money, and that having JSO connect with the community is important. Dr. Hodo went over a PowerPoint which compared the budgets for Indianapolis and Louisville, which are both consolidated government cities, and their police budgets to Jacksonville’s police budget.

Dr. Hodo talked about youth and the budget for preventive measures. CM Morgan talked about the upcoming meeting which will cover the Kids Hope Alliance, Teen Court, Drug Court and Cure Violence from the Mayor’s Office. CM Boylan circled back to the larger picture of building a relationship with the community and he talked about the work being done in the Social Justice Committee.

Minutes: Richard Distel, Council Research

[RDistel@coj.net](mailto:RDistel@coj.net) 904.255.5140

Posted 4.28.2021 5:00 pm