**MEETING MINUTES**

**Group 3 At-Large Town Hall**

**Local Option Gas Tax and Septic Tanks**

May 19, 2021

5:00P.M.

**Location**: Mandarin Senior Center 3848 Hartley Road, 32257

**Attendees**: CP Hazouri, CM Ferraro, CM Boylan, Jordan Elsbury, Nat Ford

**Meeting Convened**: 5:00PM

Council President Hazouri talked about the topics which would be covered in this Town Hall meeting and introduced Jordan Elsbury from the Mayor’s Office and Nat Ford the CEO of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority.

Jordan Elsbury, Chief of Staff, went over the Jobs for Jacksonville program and went over the goals of the administration through the history which led to this Local Option Gas Tax.

Mr. Elsbury discussed the background of the Economic Recovery Task Force, which is where the local option gas tax idea began. The partnership between the City and JTA would take on many projects and create many jobs and Mr. Elsbury also stated these projects would total 72 and economic impact of 1.6 billion dollars in economic Development with 7,600 new jobs.

Mr. Elsbury talked about last year the city was shut down, and during that time a task force was formed made up of the Chamber, Business Community, JAA, JEA and others to help form a plan coming of the pandemic. The city needed job security to determine what capital projects and a need to use these projects to stimulate the economy. He stated that there was a need to identify a revenue source. The tax at hand would generate over 1 billion dollars for 72 projects, guaranteed to improve infrastructure (roads, resurfacing, and drainage).

Nat Ford discussed the needs in infrastructure in Duval County and the vision of the JTA for a more accessible city to all. Mr. Ford talked about the need for a second ferry, public transportation, bus stops that needed upgrading and ADA accessible. He discussed the future of the Skyway, new development in San Marco, Riverside, Brooklyn and the stadium. Mr. Ford talked about new technologies to keep people connected with the city of Jacksonville.

Mr. Elsbury explained to a member of the community that the gas tax is an example of paying into a system you use. The more you pay the more you are using the city’s infrastructure and this tax helps to maintain and grow those same roads. Members of the community emphasized worries of the Local Option Gas Tax and its impact on small businesses as well as its impact on seniors. Mr. Elsbury gave a breakdown of where the funding will go towards in the city’s infrastructure plans. CP Hazouri said this septic tank legislation is historical and emphasized its impact for the City of Jacksonville.

CP Hazouri talked about the importance of safety and the value this tax will have on infrastructure and the development of Jacksonville. Mr. Ford talked about the innovation of autonomous driving cars and answered questions about its future and where they could be found driven in downtown Jacksonville. CP Hazouri said this investment through the gas tax will help to invest in the septic tanks.

Mr. Elsbury talked about how this Local Option Gas Tax will go towards city-wide projects that need this funding. Mr. Elsbury talked about how this will help to double the amount of funds that can go towards infrastructure development and maintenance. Mr. Elsbury suggested to the audience to look at the information posted in the back of the room. A member of the audience asked when will these projects start to commence. Mr. Elsbury said these projects are set for the next 5 years. CP Hazouri talked about the importance of these projects and its impact on the future of Jacksonville.

**Meeting Adjourned**: 7:07PM

**Minute**s: Prepared by Amber Lehman, Executive Council Assistant, At-Large 3, 904-255-5185, alehman@coj.net.

cc: Council Members and Staff

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