

City of Jacksonville

117 W Duval St
Jacksonville, FL 32202



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

10:00 AM

Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall

Special Committee on Parks and Quality Life

Council Member Randy White, Chair
Council Member Randy DeFoor, Vice Chair
Council Vice President Terrance Freeman
Council Member Kevin Carrico
Council Member Joyce Morgan
Council Member Ron Salem
Council Member Ju'Coby Pittman

Meeting Convened: 10:00 am Meeting Adjourned: 11:20 am

Attendance: Council Members White, Freeman, Pittman, Carrico, Morgan, Salem and Carlucci

Excused: CM DeFoor

1.Call to order

Chair White called the meeting to order and invited two attendees to provide public comment regarding the need for a pickleball courts and a recreation center in the Heckscher Drive area. CM Morgan asked Daryl Joseph, Parks Director, about any future plans for that area. Mr. Joseph said that he is aware of the pickleball craze, and that the parks master plan will identify any gaps in services/centers in parts of the city.

2.DuPont Fund Presentation: President- Mari Kuraishi

Mari Kuraishi, President of Jessie Ball duPont Fund, went over a PowerPoint that detailed the Riverfront Activation Plan, the project's scope and the extensive public input process. They held a series of public meetings, programs/tours and conducted a survey that yielded over 3000 responses. The main takeaways from all of those interactions were that the river is the 'star' of the city, residents want river access and varied river activities, safe welcoming public spaces, and a variety of transportation options to get to and around the Riverfront. According to the survey results, 34 percent of Jacksonville respondents never go to the riverfront to enjoy the outdoors, and 20 percent rarely do. Ms. Kuraishi covered the need for interconnected riverfront access, activation of the Riverwalk through programs and classes, attracting more private investment/business, getting people transported to the riverfront, the Emerald Trail, and creating weekday program series.

CM Carrico asked about parks intertwining with the Emerald Trail. CM Salem talked about the Shipyards project, the Four Seasons Hotel and making the river front area accessible to all regardless of socioeconomic status. CVP Freeman spoke about downtown as a neighborhood and how parks are a part of the character. CM Carlucci talked about holistic river activation and the success in other cities like St. Petersburg and Tampa.

3.DIA Presentation: CEO- Lori Boyer

Lori Boyer, DIA, gave a presentation about downtown as a destination for tourists and locals, and integrating world-class parks with high-quality development. Ms. Boyer said that a vibrant sustainable riverfront relies on a mix of parks, civic centers and private development. DIA has numerous projects adjacent and surrounding the river in development and/or construction, with the goal to provide a cohesive and interconnected system linking downtown, the river and nearby neighborhoods. The Riverwalk as of now is a patchwork of materials, furnishings , landscape materials and storyboards. The plan for future projects is to be intentional with the design of everything from park equipment, public art, signage to landscaping.

4. Council Members Comments and Discussion

CM Morgan spoke about the river front as a quality of life element and asked about the Core to Coast program.

CM Pittman requested a project timeline from DIA, and associated costs.

CM Carlucci talked about the need for parks accessible to all Jacksonville residents, and about the American Heritage River designation.

Mr. Joseph emphasized the level of stakeholder coordination on these projects, with the Parks Department, DIA, duPont and many others. He also highlighted the originality of design for many park improvements, not 'cookie cutter' style playgrounds etc.

CM Freeman asked for a listing of City community centers and what programs they offer. He also mentioned free baseball clinics for youth.

5. Discuss Next Date for Meeting

The next meeting will be November 3, 2021 at 10:00 am.

6. Comments from the Public

Mr. Oliver talked about human and physical infrastructure, the city's low millage rates, and how great parks can't be created on shoe string budgets.

Mr. Nooney talked about river accessibility.

7. Adjourn Meeting

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Posted 10.18.2021 5:00 pm