



JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Critical Quality of Life Issues Special Committee: Homelessness Working Group Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2022

9:00 a.m.

**Lynwood Roberts Room
First Floor, City Hall
117 W. Duval Street**

Topic: Critical Quality of Life Issues Special Committee: Homelessness Working Group

Attendance: Council Members Boylan and Howland; Noel Comeaux, Northeast Florida Regional Council; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

Subject Matter Experts: Dawn Gilman, CEO Changing Homelessness

Convened: 9:03 am

Council Member Howland convened the meeting and listed the group's progress to date.

Council Member Boylan welcomed the group and thanked the chairs for their leadership. CM Boylan reviewed the committee's charge and went over the next steps. The CQLI Special Committee will meet on November 17th to discuss the first draft of the final report, the report will be finalized at the December 7th meeting, and then presented to council at the last council meeting before the holidays – December 13th.

Dawn Gilman, Changing Homelessness, spoke about the work from this group. She said that the group heard presentations from Dr, Savage, K.O. Campbell, the Mayor's Office, Veterans Affairs, and from other communities (Miami, Minneapolis and Atlanta). She noted that solutions for homelessness are incremental, not immediate. Ms. Gilman talked about common themes from the group's meetings, such as a sustainable revenue source, targeting specific populations and having measurable goals.

Discussion

There was a discussion about lessons learned in this process and possible policy choices that would 'move the needle' to reduce homelessness in Jacksonville. The following items were mentioned:

- The success of the Atlanta program (building affordable units in mixed income complexes using City dollars matched by the private/philanthropic sectors)

- The importance of case management
- Repurposing vacant public buildings for housing
- Zoning reform
- Resident aversion to housing homeless in their neighborhoods (NIMBY)
- Political will to push back on neighborhood complaints and find solutions to homelessness
- Continuous and dedicated revenue streams
- Housing project on the Northside (previous Lake Forest Elementary parcel) with a set aside for DCPS staff and homeless families
- The importance of wraparound services (healthcare, employment/income)
- Homeless preference housing vouchers and a partnership with JHA
- A governmental structure to oversee and coordinate services (KHA model)
- A government body to provide oversight and funding (a board/council similar to the one in Orlando)
- The lack of permanent supportive housing units locally
- The cost to house vs leave folks unhoused (costs from medical care and law enforcement)
- Social determinants of health as related to homelessness
- Involving insurance companies in housing solutions
- Barriers to utilizing emergency homeless shelters (background checks, sobriety requirements and drug testing, pets, religion, separating families from spouses and/or children, safety/theft, mental illness and aversion to congregant spaces)
- Homeless youth
- Involving downtown businesses in homelessness solutions
- Homelessness diversion and prevention
- United Way 211 hotline as a limited resource
- Master leases and shared housing/roommates
- Referendum related to funding for homelessness services and a dedicated revenue stream
- Political will to enact county-wide solutions

Public Comment

Pastor Barlow talked about the City's responsibility to help the homeless, corporate welfare and about requiring a 5 percent contribution to homeless programs from any entity receiving economic incentives from the City.

Carnell Oliver spoke in support for Pastor Barlow's plan.

CM Howland wrapped up the meeting and said that the group may recommend in the final report: council funding a study for long term homelessness strategies and solutions, leveraging the business and faith-based communities to assist with diversion and prevention programs, and redesigning shelters to meet the actual needs of those facing homelessness (more privacy, and family options).

The next meeting for the full Special Committee on Critical Quality of Life Issues will be November 17th at 1:00 pm.

Adjourned: 10:58 am

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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