



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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June 12, 2023

5:00 PM

Noticed Meeting Minutes

20230522 Minutes CM Joyce Morgan's May Town Hall Meeting

Monday, May 22, 2023, 6:00 PM.

Topic: This Town Hall Meeting provides a forum to continue discussions of District 1 projects and update constituents about City Council District 1 issues.

Location: River City Baptist Church – Merrill Road Jacksonville, Florida 32211

Attendance: Council Member Joyce Morgan (District 1), Rev. Bryan Samms (Pastor River City Baptist Church), Bill Joyce (Project Manager, Jacksonville Transportation Authority), Alex Sifakis (CEO, JWB Real Estate Capital) Steve Long (Director of Public Works City of Jacksonville) Ms. Dolores Tillisch (District One Resident) Matt Tuohy (Chair Arlington CRA Advisory Board), Ken Amaro (Council Member Elect, District 1) Chester Aikens II, (ECA City Council District 1) Joe Johnson (ECA District 11/ Future ECA District 1) Members and constituents of City Council District 1.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan opened her May Town Hall Meeting at River City Baptist Church by welcoming everyone. CM Morgan next introduced the Senior Pastor of River City Baptist Church, Bryan Samms, to give the welcome and opening invocation.

Pastor Bryan Samms: Pastor Samms, Senior Pastor of River City Baptist Church, opened the meeting by giving the members in attendance a welcome and information about River City Baptist Church and continued giving the opening invocation.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Following the invocation, Council Member Joyce Morgan led the assembled group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Council Following the Pledge, Council Member Morgan introduced Bill Joyce from the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. He attended this evening's meeting with his colleague Greer Gills to discuss the Merrill Road corridor "Complete Streets Program."



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Director Bill Joyce: Director Joyce thanked and congratulated Council Member Morgan and gave a background of the project that would take place on Merrill Road. He detailed the project's different phases, gave an overview of how the agency plans to work on the project, and noted that the undertaking is part of the Local Option Gas Tax. Mr. Joyce also pointed out that this endeavor concerns safer sidewalks, better pedestrian walkability, and better lighting. The project's limits occur on Merrill Road from the University Blvd./Merrill Road roundabout to the Townsend Blvd. intersection. Mr. Joyce affirmed that they had their scope and were very close to posting advertisements for 30 days to select a design group to design the project. After Director Joyce's remarks, he went on to take questions from the neighbors in attendance regarding mobility for pedestrians on foot and bicycles. Director Joyce also addressed the possible removal of power poles and driveways, which must be addressed as a safety issue.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan thanked Director Joyce for his comments updating the group about the improvements scheduled for Merrill Road. Council Member next introduced Alex Sifakis, the owner and CEO of JWB Real Estate.

Alex Sifakis: Mr. Sifakis thanked Council Member Morgan for her introduction and gave background information about his company JWB Real Estate. He next his plans for the Arlington area and how he felt the College Park development is the gateway to Arlington and the rest of the City of Jacksonville, leaving downtown. Mr. Sifakis commended CM Morgan for her leadership over her term and acknowledged the incoming Council Member in attendance, Council Member Elect Ken Amaro. Mr. Sifakis next gave an overview of his project at the intersection of Arlington Expressway and University Blvd North, stating that it is his focus to bring restaurants and retail back to the area with the addition of Winn Dixie (who expects to open by Labor Day 2023). Mr. Sifakis also discussed the challenges presented during the project's demolition and discovery phase and is now securing leases with retailers, having Donatos Pizza signed, and hoping to add a national bank and ice cream shop. Mr. Sifakis finished by going into more detail about the project and stating his excitement about its opening. Mr. Sifakis finished by taking questions from the audience about the status of the Arlington Bait and Tackle shop and the possible return of the Ice Machine to the property.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan thanked Mr. Sifakis for his remarks and hard work at his College Park development. Council Member Morgan next introduced City of Jacksonville Public Works Director Steve Long for his monthly report.

Public Works Director Steve Long: Director Long thanked Council Member Morgan for her introduction and discussed the Lone Star Road connection project with Tredinick Parkway. Director Long stated that the plans for the project are currently about 90% complete. Director Long gave an



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update about the Woolery Drive outflow project, saying that the City has all the materials in place and is now awaiting approval and hopes to begin work in about 30 days. Director Long followed those remarks by describing a few resurfacing projects planned for the near future, including University Blvd., from Justina to Ft. Carline Road on the Eastern end. There also will be resurfacing project on the Western end of Fort Caroline from University Blvd. to University Club, and finally, on Wedgfield Blvd to Arble Road near the Arlington Post Office. Director Long also noted that the Macy Ave. drainage improvements are being constructed. Arlington Road Bridge wants to complete the repair process in 30 to 60 days. (There is a CIP item to replace the bridge entirely in the long term, but this is a quick fix in the short time). Director Long finished by answering questions from the group. He received a compliment from a constituent dealing with an item where the Public Works Department helped with a neighborhood issue involving the JEA. He addressed a couple more problems clarifying the timeline of one of the projects handled earlier. Director Long ended by stating that it has been a pleasure serving the constituents of District 1 and assured the group that he and his team are committed to handling each community member's concerns to the best of their ability when a problem is identified.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan thanked Director Long for his Public Works updates and remarks.

Chester Aikens II – Chester Aikens II briefly interrupted the town hall meeting because Dolores Tillisch, an Arlington/District 1 resident who frequently attends town hall meetings, wanted to present councilmember Morgan with a cookie bouquet in honor of all her hard work over the years.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan thanked Ms. Dolores Tillisch for the beautiful cookie bouquet. Council Member Morgan informed the group that she fully intends to continue community outreach as the next Duval County Property Appraiser. She hasn't yet identified whether it would be through CPACs, community Town hall meetings, or a combination of both. Council Member Morgan assured her audience that the education would continue. Council Member Morgan next covered a handout distributed to the group about the planned obelisk in the center of the University Boulevard and Merrill Road Roundabout that will be installed just before she leaves the office in June. Council Member Morgan also noted that the Wawa on the corner of University Blvd. and Arlington Road is still on track to open during the second week of June. Council Member Morgan finished by taking questions from the group assembled, including answering questions regarding a possible development at the St. Isabel neighborhood at the northern end of University Blvd. near Arlington Park. Council Member Morgan next introduced Chair of the Arlington CRA Matt Tuohy.

Arlington CRA Chair Matt Tuohy: Chair Tuohy thanked Council Member Morgan for her introduction and stated that he had been on the Arlington CRA Advisory Board for the last six years.



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Mr. Tuohy noted that he arrived in this neighborhood years ago as a freshman at Jacksonville University. He talked about the changes in the neighborhood and stated how walkable it was back then and how Council Member Morgan assured him they would get it back. He spoke about the success of the CRA, particularly the CRA Zoning Overlay, and described the achievements of the partnerships between the City's independent agencies and the City of Jacksonville. Chair Tuohy finished by thanking Council Member Morgan again for everything she has done to help build a strong foundation for the Arlington community.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan next answered a zoning question from the audience about a change at a property (proposed apartment or rental community) at the end of Merrill Road. Council Member Morgan introduced Council Member Elect Ken Amaro, who wanted to introduce his new ECA, Joe Johnson, to the community.

Council Member Elect Amaro: Council Member Elect Amaro thanked Joyce for her efforts over the past eight years and wished her success in her new role as the Property Appraiser. Council Member Elect Amaro stated that he looks forward to continuing to move the community forward. Council Member Elect Amaro followed his remarks by introducing his ECA, Joe Johnson, who will replace Morgan's current ECA, Chester Aikens, working with him in his Council Office.

Joe Johnson: Mr. Johnson introduced himself and stated that he has been with the City working in the same capacity (Executive Council Assistant) as Danny Becton's aide in Council District 11 for almost two years. Mr. Johnson said he looks forward to working with Council Member Elect Amaro to fight for the Arlington Community.

Council Member Elect Amaro: Council Member Elect Amaro thanked Mr. Johnson for his remarks and thanked Council Member Morgan again for her efforts working for the citizen of City Council District 1.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan next acknowledged Steve Matchett, a District 1 constituent and Arlington CRA Member who spoke about a proposed car wash on University Blvd. across the street for the new College Park development.

Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan finished the meeting by addressing a few more items, including continuing to manage future Town Hall Meetings and addressing the fact that registration for the upcoming series of CommUniverCity classes aimed at citizens getting to know their city is coming up soon. Council Member Morgan also addressed that nominations are open for the City of Jacksonville Neighborhoods Department's "Neighborhoods Awards Program."



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Council Member Joyce Morgan: Council Member Morgan finished the meeting by stating that one of the hardest parts about the transition to her new office is that she is unsure if her assistant Chester Aikens will be coming with her. Still, she knows he will make the best decision for himself and his family. Council Member Morgan thanked him again for his service to her and the citizens of District 1. Council Member Morgan finally signed off one last time and assured her constituents that she would still be around, and even though she will have a new position, she will remain active in the Arlington Community. Following her last remarks, she wishes everyone a good evening.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:07 PM

Minutes: Minutes Completed by Chester A. Aikens II, ECA District 1, Completed on June 1, 2023

The written minutes for this meeting are only an overview of what was discussed. For verbatim comments for this meeting, please listen to the audio CD.

The following items have been submitted for public record. Please contact legislative services for these items:

1. Meeting Minutes
2. Meeting Agenda
3. Meeting Notice
4. Meeting Sign In Sheet

cc: Council Members and Staff
Margaret "Peggy" Sidman, Director/Council Secretary
Merriane Lahmeur, Chief Legislative Services
Yvonne Mitchell, Chief, Administrative Services Division
Jeff Clements, Chief, Research Division
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