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SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW JSO PRIMARY FACILITIES

Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2023

11:30 a.m.

Location: Don Davis Room, 1st floor, City Hall

In attendance: Council Members Michael Boylan (Chair), Chris Miller, Jimmy Peluso

Also: Council President Ron Salem; Director Larry Schmitt – JSO Department of Police Services, Director Kevin Goff – JSO Department of Corrections, Assistant Chief Scott Dingee – JSO General Support Section, Sgt. Aaron Park - Pre-trial Detention Center, Chief Deloris O’Neal – JSO Support Services, Ben Carder - JSO Facilities Manager; Carla Lopera – Office of General Counsel; Jeff Clements – Council Research Division; Phillip Peterson – Council Auditor’s Office; Anna Brosche – Finance and Administration Department; Nina Sicker, Steve Long – Public Works Depart; Karen Bowling – Chief Administrative Officer; Public Defender Charlie Cofer; Beth Payne and Annie Sieger – Northeast Florida Regional Council

Meeting Convened: 11:30 a.m.

Chairman Boylan convened the meeting and the attendees introduced themselves for the record. Mr. Boylan reported that many working group meetings have already taken place and several tours have been taken of the Police Memorial Building (PMB) and Pretrial Detention Facility (jail). There are substantial needs in both facilities that must be addressed immediately to keep the buildings safe and functional and that will be the main topic of today’s meeting. Although the lifespan of those buildings is coming to an end and they will be replaced at some point in the future, there are immediate needs that must be addressed. There will also be an update on the progress of the working groups to date at the end of the meeting.

Immediate Needs Analysis

Sgt. Aaron Park presented a list of the most immediate needs in the Pretrial Detention Facility, which include: elevators are old and beginning to be unrepairable; fire pump is old and needs to be replaced;

some HVAC chillers are original to the building and need replacement; the electrical system was not designed for today's loads so power surges and outages are common; the plumbing systems have experienced many problems because of their age; mold conditions needs to be remediated due to HVAC system problems.

CM Miller asked about ways to remediate repetitive flooding issues caused by intentional inmate activity. Sgt. Park said the planned work can help alleviate some of that, but not entirely eliminate the results of intentional behavior. In response to a question from Chairman Boylan, Sgt. Park described the work done in recent years by Public Buildings using CIP funding (one A/C chiller replaced, water pump replaced, doors repaired, plumbing repairs, etc.). President Salem asked about the total cost for immediate needs for both buildings – Sgt. Park said approximately \$16M for the two combined. The City has spent about \$12M over the past 5 years on the jail. CM Peluso asked if the \$9M for the jail needs is a 1-year ask or if it could be spread over several years. Sgt. Park said these are crucial needs to get back to a standard condition, so it is a 1-year ask. CM Peluso hoped that state funding could be obtained to help with these costs since it's on top of the City budget just approved. President Salem said the current jail will likely have to last at least another 5 years until a new facility- can be designed, funded and built.

JSO facilities manager Ben Carder reviewed a list of top priority items for the Police Memorial Building. The building is 45 years old and has many needs for both operational integrity and for the safety and comfort of the employees working there. There has been some CIP funding since 2018 for HVAC and skylight work. The most important needs include: connect main data network closed to uninterruptible power source; add radio room to emergency electrical panel; test and rebalance the HVAC system; replace A/C supplemental units; install ballistic protection at public building entrances; install backup compressor to communications center air handler. Maintenance needs include additional skylight work, parking lot drain cleaning; parking lot resurfacing; water main shutoff valve replacements.

President Salem asked if the future jail and PMB need to be connected or in close proximity. Mr. Carder said there are a lot of connected functions that would make close proximity very useful. Director Schmitt said a PMB replacement is a much simpler process than a jail because it's just an office building and therefore much easier to build. It would be convenient to have the PMB near the jail. In response to a question from Mr. Salem, Mr. Carder said there is currently 74,000 sq. ft. of JSO administrative space in locations outside of the PMB. Director Schmitt there are lots of facility options and considerations to balance with their cost and efficiency. The best arrangement would be a campus of buildings housing different functions in close proximity to each other, but that's probably the most costly option. In response to a question, Mr. Carder said some of the traffic control equipment for the downtown area (cameras, stoplights, etc.) is in the basement of the PMB that would be very detrimental if it flooded.

Chairman Boylan said the immediate needs appear to total \$9M for the PMB and \$6.6M for jail and he asked the special committee members for their views on whether these are needs that have to be funded now. CM Miller said absolutely yes. CM Peluso said yes on the jail, but he has questions about the PMB, how much outside space is being utilized, how long the current building can continue to be used, etc. President Salem said he would like to coordinate with the administration on what funding sources might be available, how much could be tapped immediately, and how much can be programmed in the FY24-25 budget.

Working Group Progress Reports

Chairman Boylan distributed a summary of his Working Group on Administrative Facilities' meetings and findings to date. The group heard 2 presentations at its last meeting on comparable facilities being built in other cities and will get 2 more at its next meeting. He thanked JSO for being so involved in the process to date.

Mr. Boylan said the mid-point full Special Committee meeting will be delayed until February to allow the working groups a little more time to accomplish their tasks.

Mr. Boylan reported that CM White's Working Group on Improvements to Existing JSO Facilities has completed its task with the list of the two sets of priorities distributed today.

CM Peluso said his Working Group on Adjudication, Intake and Rehabilitation has done a good deal of work on intake and adjudication and will now be moving on to recidivism. They toured UF Health (where inmates are taken for health care) and the courthouse and discussed procedures for booking, court appearances, transport, the MHOP program, etc. The working group will be looking at the bail system and may do tours of the City' Montgomery Correctional Center and of jails in other cities. Mr. Peluso said he would like to have until the first couple of weeks of January to finish up tours and produce a report.

CM Miller said his Working Group on Housing and Custody found that the identification of initial short-term needs is important and remediation needs to start happening soon. He thinks this "special committee with working groups" model is the way that all major City issues need to be addressed. The first 2 meetings were mostly data collection and understanding current conditions. The overcrowding, insufficient facilities, age, and wear and tear have been carefully documented. The third meeting started looking at what a future facility should be, how big, and with what facilities. He thinks a tall building is not the way to go and a campus setting of low-rise buildings would be the best. The fourth session will hear from companies in the corrections construction business to learn about the current state of the art and what's being built in other cities. Mr. Miller thanked Chief Judge Day and Public Defender Charlie Cofer for giving tours and describing current facilities and needs for the future. They have quantified the current state and will concentrate on looking forward to a new facility. He invited participation in the December meeting from companies that design and build correctional facilities about best practices and examples of lessons learned from less-than-ideal projects.

Chairman Boylan said both the PMB and jail face parking challenges, especially when the Shipyards West project gets underway on the riverfront and eliminates the future park space currently being used for employee parking. DIA Executive Director Lori Boyer suggested the possibility of using available space in City parking garages, possibly in conjunction with a shuttle system. He said two themes have stood out to him throughout this process: 1) future facilities should be outcomes-based and promote rehabilitation of inmates to have productive futures; 2) the physical and mental health issues of the inmate population must be successfully addressed. President Salem said he's asked the Auditor's Office to look at the financial picture at UF Health Jacksonville because they handle so much of the inmate physical and mental health care needs. The City needs to know what's the best way to handle those functions in the future, probably through an in-house infirmary, so there's no need to transport many inmates to UF Health with the attendant transportation and security costs.

Meeting adjourned: 12:30 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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