



## OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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### **Noticed Meeting Council Member Jimmy Peluso RE Commercial Corridors January 2, 2024 Minutes**

**Location:** City Hall at St. Jame, Lynwood Roberts Room, located at 117 West Duval Street, Jacksonville, FL 32202

**Attendance:** Council Member Jimmy Peluso, Council Member Tyrona Clark Murray, Council Member Reggie Gaffney, Council Member Ju'Coby Pittman, Mr. Joe Whitaker, Director of Small Business Initiatives Brian Bergen, Small Business Project Manager Ella Sherrod, Auditor Thomas Carter, Executive Council Assistant Roshanda Shine, Executive Council Assistant Brooks Dame, Pastor Leo Dawson, Anthony Brown, Carnell Oliver, Kenneth Grady, Tabitha Byers, Dennise Cook,

**Meeting Convened:** 3:30 p.m.

Council Member Jimmy Peluso thanked the audience for their attendance. He explained that the purpose of this meeting and his goal was to look at areas of town that have been economically left behind and how to invest and restore them. Council Member Peluso identified the Northwest Jacksonville Economic Development Fund (NWJEDF).

Director of Small Business Initiatives Brian Bergen explained the NWJEDF and its existing programs, including grants. Council Member Peluso noted the program had been utilized by large businesses to build warehouses; he expressed his desire to see mom and pop businesses owners utilize it. The Council Member reported that he would be looking at REV grants, small business opportunities – both grants and loans – as he worked on revising the policy. Council Member Reggie Gaffney shared his displeasure at seeing businesses in his district close, noted resources should be able to be distributed over 3-5 years. Council Member Ju'Coby Pittman asked if churches were included; Mr. Joe Whitaker responded not at this time. Mr. Whitaker shared the origins of the NWJEDF. Council Member Peluso shared he would be drafting a memo based on this conversation that would look at what could be done for existing structures, and also how to encourage infill and new construction. Council Member Gaffney asked how much was currently in NWJEDF; Mr. Whitaker responded approximately 3 million. Council Member Pittman agreed it was time to reduce the barriers.

Neighbors expressed support for resources in neighborhoods that included the Northside, Durkeeville, New Town, and others. Neighbors expressed a desire to see the city increase infrastructure, specifically City sewer and water services, into neighborhoods around the Urban Core currently without. Neighbors noted the detrimental effects of redlining on these communities and correlated poor zoning laws to lack of economic opportunities. Neighbors expressed optimism.

Small Business Project Manager Ella Sherrod shared a handout for the current NWJEDF. Council Member Peluso confirmed his next step was to draft a memo for EOD to review and then he would call a second noticed meeting. He thanked the community and the neighbors for their attendance.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 4:52 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Brooks Dame, Executive Council Assistant to Council Member Jimmy Peluso. The following items were submitted for public record and can be accessed by contacting the Legislative Services:

20240102 Noticed Meeting CM Jimmy Peluso RE commercial corridors  
20240102 Agenda Noticed Meeting CM Jimmy Peluso RE commercial corridors  
20240102 Minutes Noticed Meeting CM Jimmy Peluso RE commercial corridors  
20240102 Handout 1 Noticed Meeting CM Jimmy Peluso RE commercial corridors

cc: Council Members and Staff

Margaret “Peggy” Sidman, Director/Council  
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