

City of Jacksonville

*117 W. Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 22, 2024

12:00 PM

Council Chamber

Special Committee on Homelessness & Affordable Housing

*Council Member Joe Carlucci, Chair
Council Member Ken Amaro, Vice-Chair
Council Member Raul Arias
Council Member Jimmy Peluso
Council Member Chris Miller*

Attendance: CP Salem; CMs J. Carlucci, Peluso, Miller, Arias, Amaro (12:55 pm arrival), Boylan and Johnson

Also: Mary Staffopoulos, OGC; Phillip Peterson, Auditor's Office; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Meeting convened: 12:03 pm

Meeting adjourned: 1:30 pm

Introductions & Opening Comments

Chair Joe Carlucci welcomed the group and called for introductions. He provided a brief review of the committee's progress thus far.

The committee discussed the configuration and duties of the Homelessness Initiatives Commission. When established, the Commission will make funding recommendations, subject to council approval, from the Homelessness Initiatives Special Revenue Fund. The Commission will be comprised of 7 voting members, 3 Mayoral appointees and 4 Council appointees, all subject to council approval. The members will serve 3 year staggered terms. Additionally, there will be a non-voting city council liaison and a non-voting liaison from JSO. The members should have some knowledge about programs/services for and the needs of the unhoused population. Per the ordinance, the Commission will meet at least monthly with the exception of November/December. CP Salem suggested adding language to state that the Commission should only have one meeting during the summer.

The committee talked about 2024-41, now in committee. The ordinance provides for funding for homelessness initiatives through certain economic development agreement incentives, similarly to the funding source used by the Jacksonville Upward Mobility Program ("JUMP"), created by Ordinance 2022-0886-E.

New Business Updates

There was a discussion about the requirements for the Commission to create a 3 yr strategic plan, an annual action plan, and to review both of those plans and make recommendations for changes each year. The reporting deadlines may need to be adjusted as needed based on how long it takes to get the Commission members seated and up and running. The group talked about the benefits of a 3 year strategic plan (to align with council member terms) versus a 5 year strategic plan (to permit 'big picture' planning). CP Salem asked about member conflicts. Mary Staffopoulos, OGC, said individuals who work for agencies/serve on the boards of entities that receive funding will be precluded from serving as members.

The committee agreed to: a 5 year strategic plan for the Commission, with a December 31st reporting deadline; retaining the requirement for the annual action plan with a September 1st due date; adjusting the deadline for the review report on both plans to be due March 1st to align with the City budget schedule. They also agreed to limit the number of summer Commission meetings.

Ms. Staffopoulos will draft the ordinance with the agreed upon changes, and file it as sponsored by this committee.

Discussion

The committee talked about various sources of revenue for the Homelessness Initiatives Special Revenue Fund. CM Peluso said he reached out to Rep. Wyman Duggan regarding state authorization for a discretionary document stamp fund to go towards affordable housing. Document stamps are used on various legal documents (deeds, bonds, mortgages) with a fee added that is a certain percentage of the total consideration paid. CM Peluso said there is no guarantee of Tallahassee approval, and he noted that the amount garnered through doc stamps fluctuates with economic conditions.

The committee discussed 2024-41 which designates funding equal to 4% of the approved economic development agreement incentives approved during a calendar year, with the exception of projects located within Community Redevelopment Areas, to the Homelessness Initiatives Special Revenue Fund to be used for programs, initiatives, or services to assist the chronically unhoused population. This year there was roughly \$35 million in incentives, of which 4 percent is \$1.4 million, as an example. CM J. Carlucci mentioned further legislation to cap the 5%, so no other percentage could be earmarked for other programs. CM Arias said capping it would be unfair to other council members. CP Salem noted that this is not a true revenue source, in that it essentially draws from general City revenue. CM Peluso talked about creating a special taxing district as a dedicated funding source. CP Salem spoke about involving the private sector, specifically the business community that could match City funds. Cindy Funkhouser, Sulzbacher, suggested getting the developers more involved, especially downtown developers who receive City incentives and would benefit from resolving downtown homelessness. CM Peluso talked about community benefit agreements with developers who receive City incentives to obligate them to future contributions. CM Arias noted that homelessness exists throughout the city not just downtown.

CM J. Carlucci talked about building permit fees and using some portion of those fees for homelessness assistance. Mary Staffopoulos, OGC, noted that neither diverting portions of permit fees, nor tacking onto permit fees, are allowed per state statute.

Stakeholder Comments

Alex Sifakis, JWB, gave a presentation about affordable housing and the "missing middle". He said that affordable housing can be created through policy without incentives. He talked about the Mayor's infrastructure transition committee, affordable housing subcommittee's recommendations. Among those recommendations was a strategy to increase density and promote construction of the missing middle through zoning reform and Planning Department policy changes. Mr. Sifakis talked about supply and demand as related to housing stock and rental costs. He talked about the economics of density, wherein a single home on one lot has a higher rental price to achieve a 5% profit. However, if a duplex or quadplex are constructed on the same size lot, the cost for rent would decrease based on scale. He spoke about allowing ADUs on all properties in urban areas, and expanding multi family zoning (90% of the city is zoned for single family housing now). Mr. Sifakis recommended hiring a zoning consultant to look at the current zoning and recommend changes based on the city's needs. CM Peluso expressed his support for zoning reform. CM Miller said that as downtown becomes more developed, the need to offer developer incentives will decrease or disappear entirely.

Closing Remarks

CM J. Carlucci said that the next meeting will be February 5th at noon. With no further business, he adjourned the meeting.

There was no public comment due to time constraints.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
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