

# City of Jacksonville

117 W. Duval Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32202



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 15, 2024

1:00 PM

Council Chamber  
1st Floor, City Hall

### Jacksonville Waterways Commission

*CM Jimmy Peluso, Chair*

*CM Mike Gay, Vice Chair*

*CM Tyrona Clark-Murray*

*CM Ken Amaro, Alternate*

*Jon Michael Barker*

*Robert Birtalan*

*Lane Burnett - Excused*

*Representative Kiyon Michael - Excused*

*Mark Devereaux*

*Andrew Fraden*

*Marc Hardesty - Excused*

*Richard Hartley*

*Richard J. Redick*

*Jill Haskell - General Public Rep.*

*Jack Meeks, Ex-Officio*

*Adam Hoyles, Ex-Officio*

*Rebecca Bolton & Vanessa Galan, Legislative Assistants*

*Shannon MacGillis, Office of General Counsel*

*Dr. Gerard Pinto, Jacksonville University*

*Eamon Webb, Chief of Research*

*Jim Suber, Waterways Coordinator*

**Meeting Convened: 1:01 PM      Meeting Adjourned: 1:43 PM**

**1. Call To Order**

**2. Rollcall**

**Present**      8 - Commissioner Robert Birtalan, Commissioner Jill Haskell, Chair Jimmy Peluso, Vice Chair Mike Gay, Commissioner Jon Michael Barker, Lane Burnett, Mark Devereaux, and Richard Redick

**Excused**      6 - Ex-Officio Adam Hoyles, Commissioner Andrew Fraden, Commissioner Richard Hartley, Commissioner Tyrona Clark-Murray, Commissioner Marc Hardesty, and Rep. Kiyan Michael

**Absent**      1 - Jack Meeks

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**5. St. Johns River Status Report on Water Quality & Manatees**

Contact:

Dr. Gerard Pinto, JU

Dr. Gerard Pinto gave a status report update on the St. Johns River. He explained that salinity levels are within normal levels. He reported that water levels had been about a foot above normal levels previously but were regressing back to the norm with decreased rainfall over the past week. He noted that there have been no new reports of major algae blooms. He stated that there had been two manatee deaths in the area and that the area may see a migration of manatees from Blue Springs.

**a. Manatee Protection Plan Implementation Report**

Contact:

Dr. Gerard Pinto, JU

**6. Public Comment**

**7. New Business**

**[2024-0073-E](#)** ORD Approp \$122,091.00 in Fund Bal from the Environmental Protection Fund to Assist in the Ecological Restoration of Hogans Creek by Prov Funding to Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc. for a Water Quality Credit Pilot Proj in the Branches Off of McCoys Creek; Invoking the Exception of Sec 126.107(g) (Exemptions), Ch 126 (Procurement Code), Ord Code, to Direct Contract With Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc.; Apv & Auth the Mayor, or Her Desig, & the Corp Sec to Execute & Deliver That Certain Funding Agrmt btwn the City & Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc.; Prov for City Oversight by the Neighborhoods Department, Environmental Quality Div; Req Annual Reports & a Final Report

to Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board (Second Revised B.T. 24-054) (Dillard) (Req of Mayor) (Co-Sponsors CMs Clark-Murray & Peluso) (JWC Apv)

1/23/24 CO Introduced: R, F, TEU, JWC

2/5/24 R Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/6/24 F Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/6/24 TEU Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/13/24 CO PH Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/20/24 R Amend/Approve 6-0

2/21/24 F Amend/Approve 6-0

2/21/24 TEU Amend/Approve 7-0

2/27/24 CO Amend/Approve 16-1 (Diamond)

Public Hearing Pursuant to Ch 166, F.S. & C.R. 3.601 - 2/13/24

James Richardson of the Environmental Protection Board explained that this bill should reflect that this project involves McCoy's Creek and not Hogan's Creek. He explained that appropriates funds to Groundwork Jacksonville to be able to secure water quality credits for the project.

[2024-0079-E](#) ORD Auth the Mayor to Apply to the Florida Inland Navigation Dist (FIND) for 2024 Grants to Undertake Specified Waterways-Related Projs; Auth the Mayor, or Her Desig, & the Corp Sec to Execute & Deliver All Grant Agrmts btwn the City & FIND, as Well as All Docs Related to Such Grants; Acknowledging Willingness to Meet Funding Requirements; Prov for City Oversight by the Parks, Recreation & Comm Svcs (Dillard) (Req of Mayor) (JWC Apv) (Co-Sponsors CMs Clark-Murray, Diamond & Pittman)

1/23/24 CO Introduced: NCSPHS, F, JWC

2/5/24 NCSPHS Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/6/24 F Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/13/24 CO PH Read 2nd & Rerefer

2/20/24 NCSPHS Approve 7-0

2/21/24 F Approve 6-0

2/27/24 CO Approve 17-0

Public Hearing Pursuant to Ch 166, F.S. & CR 3.601 - 2/13/24

Brian Burket, Waterfront Project Manager, explained that this bill gave final approval to the recommended Florida Inland Navigation Projects, with the three projects being a bulkhead replacement at Mike McCue Park, a fishing pier replacement at Blue Cypress Fishing Pier, and Wayne B. Stevens Boat Ramp improvements.

Mr. Burket clarified that total funding will total about \$5 million, with \$2.25 million of those being FIND dollars with the rest a City match. The deadline to apply is late March, and the City will receive the result of its application around September or October.

**8. Old Business****a. St. Johns River Shoaling Task Force Update**

Contact:

CM Gay

CM Gay explained that the previous meeting had been delayed to allow for more time to put together evidence that shoaling was the direct cause of undesirable environmental consequences. He asked Shannon MacGillis of the General Counsel's Office whether she had received photographs that could be used as evidence regarding this issue, and she clarified that she had. CM Gay requested that they be sent to his office so that he could put together organized evidence to present to relevant stakeholders, including Florida Department of Environmental Protection. He noted that Andrew Tully's testimony in public comment further cemented that the shoaling is causing issues.

CM Gay asked Brian Burket, Waterfront Project Manager, about the status of shoaling markers, and Mr. Burket clarified that these markers were going through the permitting process.

**b. River Accord Task Force Update**

Contact:

CM Peluso

CM Peluso reported that the 1/19 River Accord Taskforce had generated good discussion. He noted that the Basin Management Action Plan needed to be updated by 2025 and that the next meeting would be held on 2/23/2024 at 10:00 AM in the Lynwood Roberts room. He stated that having specific projects to present would help the City get ahead in securing state funds under the new BMAP. He noted that public access to waterways will be an issue of greater concern in this meeting.

**c. Derelict Vessel Task Force Update**

Contact:

CM Peluso &amp; Commissioner Barker

CM Peluso affirmed that each taskforce had been doing good, detailed work.

Commissioner Barker thanked Captain Suber for his help in contacting relevant stakeholders involved in the issue of derelict and at-risk vessels.

CM Peluso explained background regarding the issue of moving vessels once they are deemed as "at-risk" and stated that it was a goal of the taskforce to put together legislation to make this process more efficient.

Commissioner Devereaux asked whether boat owners could consent to their boats being towed; Commissioner Barker explained that they could but often do not and that the issue is moving the boats of uninvolved or belligerent boat owners who illegally dock their boats and do not consent to having their boats towed. He stated that the goal of the taskforce is to find balance between respecting property rights and enforcing current laws, with the status quo being too lenient to uninvolved boat owners.

Public Comment:

Andrew Tully explained that strong cross-currents had been negatively affecting properties on Shad Creek, which he believed to be caused by dredging upstream. He noted that floating docks were being removed from the creek, which would make the effects of these strong currents worse.

John Nooney spoke on legislation 2024-0034-E, a \$508,000 FEMA grant, which he noted did not go before JWC. He stated that public access to waterways is being crushed throughout the City and that the FIND projects being approved by the Commission did not add any new access points.

## 9. Adjournment

**Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act, accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow 1-2 business days notification to process; last minute requests will be accepted; but may not be possible to fulfill. Please contact Disabled Services Division at: V 904-255-5466, TTY-904-255-5476, or email your request to KaraT@coj.net.**