



# Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization of Expenditures (TRUE) Commission

Dr. Keshan Hargrove, Chair

## TRUE COMMISSION PRELIMINARY MEETING MINUTES

*(Note: these minutes are not official until reviewed and  
Approved by the commission at a future meeting)*

**August 7, 2025**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Lynwood Roberts Room, 1st floor, City Hall**

**Attendance:** Charles Barr (Acting Chair) Commissioners: Stephanie Oglesby, Velma Rounsville, Ramon Day, Kim Pryor, Bruce Tyson, Chris McHugh, Daniel Henry,

**Excused:** Commissioners: Anthony Zoubini, Kevin Luhrs, Dr. Hargrove, Alexander Hoffman, and Andrea Letizia

**Also:** Nayeli Jimenez & Colleen Hampsey– City Council Research, Jason Teal – Council Secretary/Director

Acting Chair Charles Barr convened the meeting at 4:03 p.m. and the attendees introduced themselves for the record.

Acting Chair Barr reminded members that the TRUE Commission's purpose is to review revenues and expenditures, focusing on how public funds are raised and spent rather than investigative matters. He emphasized that the commission is not a civil review board and asked that discussion remain centered on financial oversight. Commissioner Day added that the original TRUE Commission, created in 1988, placed similar emphasis on monitoring expenditures rather than solely on revenue. Acting Chair Barr concluded by reiterating the need to stay focused on evaluating departmental funding requests and spending practices.

### Approval of minutes

The minutes of the June 5, 2025 commission meeting were approved unanimously as distributed.

### JSO- Division of Investigations and Homeland Security – Director Ed Cayenne

Director Cayenne presented JSO's proposed FY26 budget of \$638 million, a \$4.8 million increase from FY25. He noted that 80% of the budget is committed to salaries and benefits under contractual agreements, with the remainder covering required operational costs, leaving limited funds for new initiatives. He highlighted investments in technology such as the Real Time Crime Center, license plate readers, and forensic tools, and reported that JSO actively secures state and federal grants to offset costs.

He referenced successful operations, including a multi-state narcotics investigation resulting in major arrests and seizures. Director Cayenne also described the internal budget process, in which departmental priorities are consolidated and finalized by the Sheriff to balance fiscal responsibility and public safety. He concluded by emphasizing Sheriff Waters' commitment to sound financial stewardship and noted recent declines in crime.

Acting Chair Barr asked about the recent reorganization of patrol zones. Director Cayenne explained that JSO converted patrol zones into districts following a year-long data review. The change redistributed officers more evenly across districts to address population growth, reduce response times, and expand the role of community service officers.

Mr. Barr also asked about the transition to silver SUVs. Director Cayenne stated the change was cost neutral, initiated from an officer suggestion, and phased in only as vehicles are replaced. Commissioner Pryor inquired about fuel efficiency and visibility concerns. Director Cayenne explained that sedans are no longer produced for law enforcement and SUVs are better suited for Florida's conditions. He acknowledged the visibility concern and said he would share the feedback with Sheriff Waters.

Commissioner Day requested patrol staffing, calls for service, and response time data by district for FY23/24 and FY24/25 when available. Director Cayenne agreed to provide the information through the crime analysis unit.

Commissioner Oglesby asked whether costs of disposing of recovered military ordinances are passed on to families. Director Cayenne responded no, noting this is covered by JSO's hazardous device unit, often with federal support. She also asked about crime reductions. Director Cayenne reported significant declines in violent crime and homicides, attributing the results to improved deployment, technology, and investigative resources.

Commissioner Henry asked about the use of artificial intelligence. Director Cayenne said JSO is beginning to explore AI for intelligence analysis and courthouse security, with potential efficiency benefits. Mr. Henry also asked whether AI has been used to review JSO financials. Director Cayenne said he would follow up with the budget office.

Commissioner Rounselle asked about the size of the budget increase compared to last year. Director Cayenne said the \$4.8 million increase was mainly due to contractual raises, though changes in unfunded liabilities affect year-to-year comparisons. Commissioner Tyson asked about new officer positions. Director Cayenne said JSO did not request new positions in FY26, as 40 new positions were added last year through a federal grant and improved hiring has reduced overtime.

Commissioner Henry raised concerns about JSO's relocation from the Police Memorial Building to the Florida Blue building, asking about storm vulnerability and potential healthcare uses of the old facility. Director Cayenne noted that the Memorial Building is city-owned, and future use is a city decision. He said building engineers assured JSO that flood risk will not affect operations at the Florida Blue site.

Commissioner Pryor asked whether JSO previously paid rent for the Police Memorial Building and noted that moving to Florida Blue appears to add leasing costs. Director Cayenne responded that lease terms were approved by City Council and are considered more cost-effective than constructing a new facility. He added that consolidation of staff from multiple leased sites into one location will improve efficiency and reduce costs.

#### Council Secretary/ Director- Jason Teal

Jason Teal, City Council Director/Secretary, addressed the Commission regarding public records requests. He explained that boards and commissions act as collegial bodies, meaning official actions must be taken by a majority vote within the scope of their enabling legislation. While individual commissioners may submit public records requests as private citizens, requests made under their role as commissioners should first be sanctioned by the full body. Mr. Teal noted that Florida law allows agencies to charge for extensive requests that require significant staff time, and the City Council's policy is to fulfill requests under thirty minutes of staff time at no cost. He emphasized the importance of narrowing broad requests to avoid unnecessary burdens.

Mr. Teal identified Commissioner Luhrs as having submitted a recent request regarding the UF land swap that was considered overly broad and resource intensive. Colleen Hampsey, Chief of Research, confirmed the request would have required extensive cross-departmental work. Acting Chair Barr remarked that the Commission had not authorized such a request, reiterating that in the past staff gathered information at the direction of the full body, not at the initiative of individual commissioners. Mr. Teal agreed and explained that while any commissioner may request records personally, they cannot invoke their title to compel staff compliance without Commission approval.

Commissioner Pryor asked whether a motion was required for requests such as those directed to JSO during the meeting. Mr. Teal clarified that requests made openly during Commission proceedings are acceptable because all members have an opportunity to object, whereas unilateral requests outside meetings are not binding. Commissioners discussed that such requests may proceed by implied consent unless objection is raised.

Commissioner Henry asked whether Commission meetings could be live streamed, noting prior questions on the issue. Mr. Teal explained that the City recently expanded public access through YouTube, with most meetings posted within 24 hours. He said he would follow up on whether TRUE Commission meetings could be broadcast live.

#### Public Comment

John Nooney addressed the Commission, referencing prior legislation and his involvement with the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). He requested that the TRUE Commission consider adopting a resolution recognizing his efforts to advance potential land acquisition projects that would increase public access to waterways in Duval County. He identified three privately owned properties in different council districts that he believed should be acquired for this purpose.

Commissioner Day asked for clarification of Nooney's request, noting that his remarks were difficult to follow. Nooney explained that he was not seeking funding from the Commission or the City, but only a resolution recognizing his personal efforts to advocate for public access. Commissioner Pryor sought confirmation that the request was simply for recognition, and Nooney agreed.

Commissioner Day stated that if Nooney would prepare a draft resolution in proper form, he would bring it forward for Commission consideration. Nooney agreed to do so.

#### Council Auditor's Report

None

#### Audit Committee

None

### Legislative Tracking Committee

None

### Chair's Comments

None

### Old Business

None

### New Business

Commissioner Day introduced two items. First, he proposed that, as in the prior year, the Commission review the proposed City budget, with individual members assigned to cover different portions of the budget hearings, and report back at the September meeting. At that time, the Commission could decide whether to adopt a resolution and forward its feedback to City Council. Acting Chair Barr and Commissioner Rounsville noted that assignments would need to be made promptly to ensure adequate coverage of the budget hearings. Commissioner Henry raised the timing of Council's wrap-up session on August 22, but Mr. Day responded that Council would deliberate the budget throughout September and could still incorporate the Commission's input.

Mr. Day then introduced a draft resolution supporting City Council's proposal to reduce the ad valorem millage rate by 1/8 mill for FY 2025–2026. He explained that while property values and tax rolls continue to increase, this reduction would still result in significant new revenue for the City while signaling the importance of fiscal discipline. Day moved adoption of the resolution. Mr. Barr seconded the motion, expressing support for giving taxpayers some relief.

Commissioner Henry questioned whether it was premature to support the reduction without first completing the Commission's budget review. He noted Council had already begun identifying cuts and expressed concern about the long-term impact of permanently reducing the rate. Commissioner Pryor agreed, stating she could not support the resolution without first reviewing the budget. Commissioner Rounsville also expressed hesitation. Commissioners Barr and Day reiterated that modestly reducing projected revenue would not threaten City finances but would encourage fiscal restraint.

Mr. Day concluded that annual increases in property values had generated tens of millions in new revenue and that limiting that growth by a small margin would not impair services but would show taxpayers that fiscal responsibility was being exercised.

Commissioner Henry offered an amendment to the resolution. His amendment proposed that, if the resolution were adopted, the Commission should also identify specific budget reductions to offset the estimated \$13 million impact of the millage cut before transmitting its support to City Council. Commissioner Pryor asked how such reductions would be identified, and Mr. Henry explained they could be drawn from the same budget review assignments already being planned. Mr. Day declined to accept the amendment, arguing that the resolution was intended to address revenue policy, while expenditure cuts would be considered separately through the budget review process. Barr agreed, opposing the amendment.

The amendment was moved and seconded, the amendment failed via hand vote.

Returning to the main motion, Barr confirmed there was already a motion and second. With no further discussion, the resolution supporting the 1/8 mill reduction was adopted.

Next meetings

Audit Committee – at the call of the Chair as needed when new audits/reports are released

Legislative Tracking Committee – at the call of the Chair as needed

Full commission – September 4, 2025

The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 PM

Minutes: Nayeli Jimenez- Council Research Division

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