



## OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32202

### January 9th Meeting Minutes

CM Matt Carlucci called the meeting to order at 2:14 PM. He was joined by Council Members Jimmy Peluso, Nick Howland, Joe Carlucci and Will Lahnen. CM Carlucci explained that the purpose of the gathering was to foster communication and collaboration as the members entered the final year and a half of their current terms, allowing each to outline their specific legislative and community priorities.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Allison Miller addressed the group regarding upcoming changes to the JTA Connection Plus program scheduled for February 1st. She expressed significant concern over how these changes would affect the disabled community's access to essential transportation. John Nooney followed with a comment regarding potential land acquisitions for local waterways and the status of artificial reef funding. He also touched upon pending legislation affecting Pottsburg Creek.

CM Jimmy Peluso opened the member discussion by focusing on housing stability and historic preservation. He spoke at length about the city's high eviction rates and proposed the creation of a rental registry and an ombudsman position to assist tenants and improve code compliance. Additionally, CM Peluso suggested a rehabilitation program specifically for historic commercial buildings and churches, arguing that such a measure is necessary to prevent "demolition by neglect" and to maintain the character of Jacksonville's older neighborhoods.

CM Nick Howland centered his priorities on the "bread and butter" of local government: public safety and infrastructure. He highlighted the success of current public incentive plans in driving job growth and advocated for continued investment in Cecil Field to further establish it as a premier aerospace hub. CM Howland emphasized that maintaining a focus on essential services and economic development would ensure the city's long-term financial health.

CM Joe Carlucci shared that his primary focus is on managing approximately \$20 million in District 5 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects currently in the design phase, including a major revamp of San Marco Park. As chair of the downtown special committee, his aim is to gain clarity among stakeholders and move toward weaning developers off completion grants. He reported that the committee had already identified funding for nearly \$30 million in existing downtown obligations.

CM Will Lahnen echoed the need for fiscal responsibility and a focus on core infrastructure. He suggested that the city needs to "right-size" the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to ensure that the volume of projects remains manageable and well-funded. He specifically mentioned the importance of basic services like road resurfacing. Furthermore, CM Lahnen expressed a desire

to expand initiatives that support veteran-owned small businesses, noting the significant veteran population in the region.

CM Matt Carlucci concluded the priority sharing by presenting a list of goals. He spoke about the need to retrofit infrastructure in historically "redlined" neighborhoods to ensure safety and equity for residents. He reiterated his commitment to seeing the Laura Street Trio project reach a successful conclusion and discussed the necessity of a \$2.50 monthly increase to the solid waste fee to align it with the actual cost of service. CM Carlucci also highlighted the importance of Riverfront Parks and updated the Council Members on the \$750,000 investment from the Weaver family for Peace Memorial Park.

In the ensuing discussion, the members agreed on the importance of addressing the JTA Connection Plus concerns raised during public comment. CM Carlucci and CM Lahnen committed to meeting with the Council Auditor and JTA leadership to seek a resolution. CM Carlucci also proposed holding monthly "Sunshine" meetings to maintain the spirit of collaboration established during this session. The members closed by expressing a collective desire to work together to make Jacksonville a leading city in the Southeast.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 PM.