

City of Jacksonville

*117 W. Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 9, 2026

10:00 AM

**Council Chamber,
1st Floor,
City Hall**

Special Committee on the Future of Downtown

*Council Member Joe Carlucci, Chair
Council Member Ron Salem, Vice Chair
Council Member Raul Arias
Council Member Matt Carlucci
Council Member Jimmy Peluso*

*Legislative Asst: Steven Libby
Research: Colleen Hampsey
Auditors: Phillip Peterson
OGC: Carla Schell*

Special Committee on the Future of Downtown

Attendance: CMs. J. Carlucci, Salem, Howland, Arias, Peluso, Carlucci, Boylan and Miller

Also: Brittany Norris, Mayor's Office; Phillip Peterson, Auditor's Office; Carla Schell, OGC; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Meeting convened: 10:01 am

Meeting adjourned: 12:29 pm

I. Call to Order & Introductions

Chair J. Carlucci convened the meeting and called for introductions.

II. Downtown Parks Update

Daryl Joseph, Parks Director, gave a presentation about downtown parks. Mr. Joseph talked about Artist Walk and activities at that location, including movie nights, and the ice rink that drew 30,000 visitors in its first year. Mr. Joseph spoke about Riverfront Music Plaza, slated to be completed this spring, and the upcoming procurement process for the cafe. He talked about RiversEdge Park which is open and the pavilion that is under construction, Shipyards West and Metro Park (still in the design stages), and Friendship Fountain which had more than 750,000 visitors last year. Mr. Joseph mentioned the James Weldon Johnson Park project and the community input in the planning.

CM Salem noted the activity and families utilizing Riverfront Plaza, and he asked about the overall budget for park improvements. Mr. Joseph indicated that the projects are on budget.

CM Peluso asked for more information about the Jaguars' downtown park maintenance obligation per the Community Benefits Agreement, and he asked about the Fire Museum.

CM Carlucci asked about signage to alert visitors about areas where dogs/scooters are permitted. CM Arias talked about fitness programs in parks, a holiday themed market place, dog parks, maintenance, and park adjacent restaurants. There was discussion about overtime pay for park staff.

CM Boylan asked about the partnership with the Riverfront Park Conservancy.

CM J. Carlucci asked about expanded parking opportunities near Friendship Fountain.

III. DIA – Colin Tarbert:

- **Parking Availability**
 - **Friendship Fountain & Riverfront Parks**
- **Riverfront Plaza Restaurant Disposition**
- **Gateway Parcel A Development Update**
- **Independent Financial Consultant Update**
 - **Scoring**
 - **Procurement**
- **EverBank Proposal - Downtown Office Retention**
 - **Incentive Consideration:**
 - \$9.8MM / 10 years**
- **Future Projects List Proposal**

Colin Tarbert, DIA, gave a presentation about the future of downtown. He talked about public parking, noting that there are 48,000 spaces downtown including metered spaces, garages and surface lots. Mr. Tarbert talked about City and private garage options to park near Riverfront Plaza and Friendship Fountain.

CM Salem asked about the parking costs for private and City garages. CM Arias talked about free parking or potential vouchers, and he asked about garage occupancy rates. CM J. Carlucci asked about the parking agreement for RiversEdge, the lot by the DCSB building and by the Main Street Bridge. CM Peluso asked about monthly garage rates and offering downtown employee discounts.

Mr. Tarbert spoke about the Riverfront Plaza development concept for mixed use with a hotel, condos and retail/restaurant. CM Carlucci asked about incorporating resiliency into the design. Mr. Tarbert talked about the CRA Parcel Restaurant, for which proposals are due by March 27th. CM Peluso asked about the beer garden, and the use of TIF funds for incentives. There was discussion about the benefits/significance of a river front restaurant.

Mr. Tarbert talked about the retention of Everbank offices on Bay Street. The lease for Everbank is ending and a request was made for a City grant to offset the cost of remaining Downtown. This item is scheduled to go before the DIA Board February 18th. Mr. Tarbert mentioned the downtown office vacancy rate, around 30%, and how that compares with peer cities. The committee talked about a retention grant and the precedent of such. CM Carlucci asked about the ROI for a retention grant, and suggested a 5 year lease review to be included in the lease agreement. CM Arias asked about other large tenant leases downtown, like the IRS.

CM Salem asked about Everbank's costs for security, and he mentioned the impact of the PATH program on the downtown homeless population. CM Arias asked how many Everbank employees work from home or hybrid schedules. CM Miller asked about building specifics, like the number of floors used by Everbank, ownership, and where they would move if they left downtown. CM Carlucci emphasized the momentum of downtown projects. CM J. Carlucci asked for more information about costs for security, noted as a reason for relocation. Steve Diebenow, on behalf of Everbank, said that there would be an avoidance of costs for 7 security guards if Everbank relocated. CM Howland asked about Everbank's contributions as a community partner.

Mr. Tarbert talked about projects in the pipeline and contemplated completion grants. CM Salem expressed opposition to continuing to offering completion grants, suggesting interest free loans instead. CM Peluso asked for an update on the Laura Street Trio. CM Miller asked Mr. Tarbert

about incentives offered to developers in Baltimore, where Mr. Tarbert worked previously. Mr. Tarbert indicated that Baltimore has certain tax abatements by right, and utilizes TIF financing.

IV. Adjourn

Chair J. Carlucci adjourned the meeting at 12:29 pm.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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Posted: 2.19.26 5:00 pm