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Notice Meeting CM's Peluso RE Apprenticeships
October 19, 2026
Lynwood Roberts Room 12:00 PM

Attendees: Council Members Jimmy Peluso (D7), Shannon MacGillis Office of General Counsel, Lance Fout SMART Local 435

Call to Order: 12:01 p.m.

Summary

Call to Order

Council Member Jimmy Peluso called the notice meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m. The meeting focused on potential ways the City of Jacksonville could encourage apprenticeship participation in public works projects and economic development agreements while complying with applicable Florida law.

Summary

Opening & Purpose

Council Member Peluso opened the discussion by revisiting a proposal to encourage the use of registered apprenticeships on City-related projects. He explained that the original legislative approach had raised legal concerns following a court ruling involving the City of St. Petersburg. The discussion focused on identifying a legally permissible path forward that would support apprenticeship opportunities without unlawfully restricting contractors' ability to compete for public works contracts.

Peluso emphasized that the intent was to establish aspirational goals and recognize employers that participate in apprenticeship programs, rather than impose mandatory staffing requirements.

Legal Guidance Regarding Public Works Projects

A representative of the Office of General Counsel discussed Florida Statutes Section 255.0992, concerning public works projects, and a court case involving apprenticeship and staffing

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requirements adopted by the City of St. Petersburg. According to the legal guidance provided during the meeting, the court struck down provisions of the St. Petersburg ordinance as null and void. The discussion also referenced an amicus brief filed by the State of Florida.

The legal representative explained that municipalities are restricted from requiring contractors or subcontractors working on public works projects to employ specified staffing levels or apprenticeship percentages. The representative cautioned that a policy described as an aspirational goal could still present legal concerns if it affected bid eligibility, scoring, rankings, or the submission of bids.

The discussion highlighted the need to distinguish between encouraging apprenticeship participation and imposing requirements that could be interpreted as controlling a contractor's staffing decisions. The legal representative indicated that any proposed language would need further review before determining whether it could be implemented lawfully.

Potential Use of Aspirational Goals and Procurement Scoring

Council Member Peluso and other participants discussed whether apprenticeship participation could be recognized through the City's procurement process without creating an unlawful mandate.

Potential approaches included:

- Establishing aspirational goals for apprenticeship participation.
- Collecting information about contractors' use of registered apprenticeship programs.
- Exploring whether apprenticeship participation could be acknowledged through procurement practices or other lawful mechanisms.
- Reviewing whether existing procurement procedures provide flexibility to recognize contractors that voluntarily maintain apprenticeship programs.

Participants discussed whether contractors could receive additional consideration or points for employing apprentices. The legal representative cautioned that, if apprenticeship participation affected the evaluation or ranking of bids, the approach could be viewed as an impermissible requirement under the statute. Further review of the applicable law and proposed policy language was recommended.

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The group also discussed the importance of ensuring that contractors without apprenticeship programs would still have a fair opportunity to submit bids.

Economic Development Incentives and Agreements

The meeting considered whether apprenticeship participation could be encouraged through economic development incentives rather than through requirements imposed on public works contractors.

Participants discussed the City's existing economic development practices, including incentives and completion grants. One proposal involved exploring whether an incentive agreement could recognize a company's voluntary commitment to hire apprentices. Another possibility was to examine whether some grant funding could be made available earlier in a project, subject to appropriate commitments and safeguards.

The discussion referenced the City's Stand for Service Act as a potential point of comparison for how incentives may be structured for businesses. Participants noted that economic development agreements involving private development may present different legal considerations from contracts for public works projects on City-owned property.

The legal representative cautioned that changing the form of a policy—from an ordinance to an internal policy or other administrative practice—would not necessarily resolve the legal issue if the substance of the policy still imposed a prohibited staffing requirement.

No final determination was made regarding the legality or feasibility of a particular incentive structure. Additional legal and administrative review was considered necessary.

Procurement Review and Coordination

Participants identified the City's procurement process as an area requiring additional examination. The discussion referenced the Chief Procurement Officer, Dustin Freeman, as a potential resource for reviewing procurement procedures and determining what flexibility may exist under current law.

The group also discussed consulting with appropriate legal counsel and reviewing the language of any proposed legislation before moving forward. Participants expressed interest in determining whether apprenticeship participation could be recognized in a manner consistent with state law while maintaining fair competition for City contracts.

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Council Member Peluso indicated a willingness to continue exploring potential legislative or policy options, provided the approach received sufficient legal review.

Public Comment

No public comment speaker cards were identified during the meeting.

Next Steps

The discussion identified the following potential follow-up items:

- Consult with the City's procurement leadership regarding current procurement practices and possible lawful approaches to recognizing apprenticeship participation.
- Obtain additional legal review of potential legislative language, procurement scoring methods, and incentive structures.
- Explore whether economic development agreements and incentives could support apprenticeship opportunities without violating restrictions applicable to public works contracts.
- Continue discussions with relevant Council Members and City staff to determine whether a legally supportable policy or legislative proposal can be developed.

These items were discussed as potential next steps; the transcript does not establish that a formal directive or binding action was adopted.

Adjournment

With no further discussion reflected in the transcript, Council Member Peluso indicated that the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:29 p.m.