



Duval County Legislative Delegation

CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE JANET ADKINS

VICE CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE MIA JONES

SENATORS
AARON BEAN
AUDREY GIBSON

REPRESENTATIVES
JANET H. ADKINS
JAY FANT
MIA L. JONES
CHARLES MCBURNEY
LAKE RAY

Minutes
Delegation Organizational Meeting
& General Public Hearing
Wednesday, December 3, 2014
117 W. Duval Street, Council Chambers

Former Chairman, Daniel Davis called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m., followed by the invocation and pledge.

Members present: Senators Bean and Gibson; Representatives Adkins, Fant, Jones, McBurney and Ray.

A quorum was present. The agenda was adopted unanimously by voice vote.

Former Chairman Davis opened the floor for nominations of Chair of the delegation and recognized Representative Ray, who nominated the Representative Adkins. There being no further nominations, Representative Adkins was elected unanimously as Chair.

Former Chairman Davis opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair of the delegation and recognized Representative Ray, who nominated the Representative Jones. There being no further nominations, Representative Jones was elected unanimously as Chair.

Former Chairman Davis thanked the members for working with him; he then passed the gavel to the new Chair, Representative Adkins, who led the meeting.

Representative Ray made a motion to confirm the appointment of Paula Shoup as the new Delegation Coordinator. The motion was confirmed by unanimous voice vote.

Delegation members introduced themselves and their staff members.

The Chair outlined her priorities for the delegation this year: 1) pension reform and 2) mental health reform. Workshops will be organized in the following weeks to receive input from the community and experts on both issues.

A Resolution was presented to Chief Judge Donald R. Moran.

SPEAKERS:

Alvin Brown, Mayor – expressed two requests: 1) work together to grow the economy through support for the Jaxport, enterprise zone program & investment in the television and film industry
2) help the city avoid threats to financial stability especially in regards to the Communication Service Tax and the sharing of juvenile detention costs.

Bill Gulliford, City Council Member – requested that the delegation consider allowing local jurisdictions to levy a half-cent sales tax to reduce the unfunded pension liability.

Representative Jones – requested clarification from the Chair about what the focus of the delegation will be regarding pension reform.

The Chair clarified that the focus of the delegation will be primarily on state law.

Senator Gibson – expressed that with regards to pension the delegation must stay focused on state law.

Jerry Holland, Supervisor of Elections – discussed how online voter registration prevents fraud and creates cost savings.

Brian Taylor, CEO, Jaxport – provided an update of projects at the port including Mile Point, ICTF, purchase of new cranes, and harbor deepening.

John Delaney, President, University of North Florida– requested continued support for a school building project and an advanced manufacturing materials project.

John Keane, Executive Director, Police and Fire Pension Fund – expressed that he and his staff are available to help provide insight on pension matters.

Russ Armistead, CEO, UF Health Jacksonville – requested the delegation’s support in addressing budget shortfalls.

Layne Smith, Director of Govt. Relations, Mayo Clinic – detailed the recent hiring of a nano medicine specialist who will lead a new cancer research program.

Dr. Kelli Wells, Duval County Health Department – discussed updates including accreditation of Health Department sites, Ebola readiness program, plans to improve state standings through community education initiatives, and a tobacco cessation program.

Senator Gibson – requested members assigned to health related committees to pay special attention to minority health funding.

Todd Roobin, Jacksonville Film & TV Office – discussed the state’s film industry tax credit

program.

Michael Stewart, Director of External Affairs, JAA – discussed funding for infrastructure at the Cecil Spaceport, which includes extending the taxiway in order to begin horizontal launches.

Jason Roth, United Way of NE Florida – discussed ALICE Report and partnering with providers & government to focus on low income constituents.

Melissa Long, Chief of Environmental Quality Division – discussed the 1) EPA’s new ozone standards & need for a reduction strategy in order to achieve new standards, 2) narrowing the focus of septic tank program, and 3) effect of reduction in funding to petroleum cleanup program.

Representative Ray – questioned Melissa Long on 1) the standards the EPA was using to determine air quality and 2) if the City was investigating the effect of its conversion of trucks to natural gas would have on the County’s ability to meet EPA standards.

Melissa Long – explained data and modeling would be used to measure the City’s compliance with EPA standards.

Representative Ray – expressed the delegation’s support and asked that Ms. Long continue to monitor the City’s environmental standards as is under the policies of the Commissioner of Agriculture.

Michelle Tappouni, Chair of Environmental Protection Board – discussed the EPB’s legislative policy initiatives including improving the St. John’s River basins and restoration projects, use of local sources of water first, public ownership of ground water, septic tank remediation and home rule.

Reginald Gaffney, Community Rehab Center – requested focus on Medicaid expansion, the formation of a joint committee with the JCCI, and improved transportation for people with mental health issues.

Susan Main (CEO)/Theresa Little, Early Learning Coalition – requested Guiding Stars of Duval Quality Rating Improvement System be a pilot program for the state of Florida.

Representative Jones – questioned Susan Main about changing provider/childcare testing.

Susan Main – referred to the materials in the binders for further details.

Jim Kowalski, Executive Director, Jacksonville Area Legal Aid – discussed Chap. 516 regarding predatory lending, Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act, and Consumer Protection section 559.715.

Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent, Duval County Public Schools – discussed funding dedicated to improving low performing elementary schools and requested postponing the issuing of school

grades.

Steve Gilbert, CEO, Communities in Schools - discussed activities of program.

James Whittaker, ARC Jacksonville- discussed update of ARC village which will be breaking ground next fall.

Nathaniel Ford, JTA – discussed progress in past year including extension of the gas tax, route optimization initiative, and completion of contract to convert portion of vehicles to compressed natural gas. Requested continued funding for SJRF and rail infrastructure.

Barbara Gubbin, Director, Public Library – discussed improvement in past year including program to help small business, early learning computer stations, smart boards for genealogists. Requested reinstatement of state aid at the rate it was at in 2001.

Patricia M. Dodson, Managing Director & Assistant State Attorney – discussed merit retention bonuses and public records requests.

Denise Marzullo, Executive Director, Mental Health America of NE Florida – discussed system changes, prevention and best practices regarding treating mental health.

John Heyman, CEO, Jacksonville Children’s Commission – requested support for Healthy Families Florida, Rep. Jones’ legislation to provide access of low income families to quality medical care, early learning centers, and Federal 21st Century Community Learning Center.

Mark Middlebrook, St Johns River Alliance – discussed Water Symposium and the St Johns River Caucus.

David Abramowitz, NE Regional Director, DCF – expressed intention to improve services this coming year.

Bob Miller, CFO, Family Support Services – discussed foster care services.

Representative Jones – Questioned Bob Miller regarding foster children aging out and available services.

Bob Miller – Expressed the difficulty involved in contacting everyone, but that they do try to make contact with each child to make them aware of available services.

Captain Daniel Bean (Retired), Jax Historical Naval Ship Association – video presentation on the USS Adams.

Jacquelyn Perry/Robert Lee (CEO), Beaver Street Enterprise Center – detailed economic development outcome of the business incubator.

Steve St. Amand, Junior Achievement of North Florida – discussed activities of program.

The Chair clarified if Steve St. Amand was opposed to the financial literacy bill.

Steve St. Amand – Explained there are portions he's against, but not financial literacy in general.

Senator Gibson – Requested to know exactly what he was against in the financial literacy bill.

The Chair requested to be provided that information as well.

Theresa Rulien, CEO, Child Guidance Center – discussed focus to destigmatize mental illness, providing funding for appropriate mental health treatment and early detection.

Jim Clark, Daniel Memorial – discussed activities of program.

Mary Nash, Jacksonville Children's Commission – discussed Healthy Families Program.

Michael Sweeney, Associate Professor, FSU – discussed academic success of incoming freshmen and efficiency of funding.

Daniel Foley, Executive Director, City Year Jacksonville – discussed program activities and goal to help Jacksonville schools reach a graduation rate of 80%. Requested additional funding to expand program.

Kyra Ray, Congenital Heart Walk – discussed awareness regarding childhood heart disease.

Charmaine Chiu, First Coast Child Protection Team – requesting the following legislative changes 1) correction of name to differentiate from other child services 2) sovereign immunity for providers 3) clarification of expert witness law 4) have increased involvement by director in employment process 5) certification of directors and medical directors 6) create way to evaluate child forensic interviews 7) all CPTs to child advocacy councils.

Diane Larson, Equal Rights Amendment – requesting ratification of equal rights amendment.

Maria Mark, Executive Director, Timucuan Trail Parks Foundation – requesting funding for Water and Land Conservation Initiative.

Lisa Rinaman, St Johns Riverkeeper – update on condition of St Johns River and emphasized balanced approach to development and the river, especially involving dredging.

Michelle Branham, Alzheimer's Association – discussed awareness regarding Alzheimer's disease.

Deirdre Conner, Jacksonville Public Education Fund – discussed school grading, transition to new standards and requested delayed posting of school grades for one year.

Gary Bevel, Jacksonville Ombudsman System of Care – discussed Jax2025 Vision.

Senator Gibson – Questioned Gary Bevel where System of Care falls in local government.

Gary Bevel – Explained where System of Care is in government.

Samantha Sexton/JD (Student in program), Associate Director of Government Affairs, Pace Center for Girls – Requesting help to 1) expand program and 2) secure transportation. JD, a beneficiary of the program, detailed how Pace Center helped her with school.

Dawn Lockhart, President, Family Foundations – discussed A Thousand and A Thousand program, moving a thousand people out of poverty in a thousand days.

Kay Ehas, Board of Riverside Avondale Preservation – discussed concerns regarding the way the FDOT builds roads in Riverside. Requesting the FDOT retrofits roads to be more pedestrian friendly.

Representative Fant – Requested Kay Ehas meet with his assistant Carolyn Tucker.

Bruce Ganger, Second Harvest North Florida – discussed program activities.

Dr. Christine Cauffield, LSF Health System – requested increased funding to base budget for treatment for those with behavioral health care issues.

Representative Ray – Recognized Council Member Bishop and visiting Boy Scout Pack 106 in the audience.

Dr. Jim Sylvester, Interim CEO, Jacksonville Regional Health Collaborative – discussed program activities.

Angela Demonbreun, League of Women Voters Jacksonville First Coast – discussed benefits of electronic poll books and online voter registration. Requested the group consider expansion of Medicaid benefits.

Linda Smith, CEO, Intervention Project for Nurses – discussed safety risks of IPN & PRN nurses. Requested support of Senate Bill 144 and house sponsorship of bill.

ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS NOT ON AGENDA

Matt Carlucci, Former City Council Member – expressed opposition to using a local option sales tax in order to pay down unfunded pension liability.

Carol Tucker, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network – requested funding for Mary Brogan Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection program and continued investment in biomedical research. Requested support in efforts to create bill which improves access to palliative care.

Laura Bailey, Florida Nurses Association – discussed prescriptive authority for nurse practitioners.

Bruce Fouraker – Requested the FDOT seek federal funding and not tolls for I295 and 23A.

Samuel Ludington, Children of Inmates – discussed program activities.

Charlie Latham, Mayor, Jacksonville Beach – discussed ongoing water drainage issues in Jacksonville Beach.

Frank Ormonde, COO, Farm Share – requesting funding for expansion.

Curtis Thomas – discussed alleged wrongful conviction and requested assistance for having his case researched.

The Chair requested Curtis Thomas to meet with her aide Carol Hayes.

Senator Gibson – stated there is a legal process to pursue for wrongful conviction, but that legislators are not allowed to get involved.

Curtis Thomas – stated the main problem in seeking legal help has been financial barriers.

German Vivas – requested help in seeking a claim for medical damages.

Eunice Barnum, NE Florida Accountability Forum Corporation – requesting reparations for grievances and support for legislative effort to mandate elected officials to meet quarterly in constituent districts.

Candida Williams – expressed various grievances regarding home foreclosure.

Representative Jones – requested Candida Williams meet with her staff.

Susan Reilly, Professor of Economics, Florida Council on Economic Education – requested support for the implementation of a mandatory standalone college course in financial literacy, through House Bill 29 and Senate Bill 92.

The Chair stated there will be a local bill public hearing tentatively scheduled for January 15, 2015.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

This is not a verbatim transcript but a summary of the proceedings. A recording is on file in the delegation office and posted online on the delegation website.