



City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey

Neighborhood Safety & Stability

MINUTES

OF

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY &

STABILITY

SUB-COMMITTEE

January 8, 2008

The Jacksonville Journey – Neighborhood Safety & Stability

Sub-Committee

January 8, 2008

2:30 p.m.

PROCEEDINGS before the Jacksonville Journey - Neighborhood Safety & Stability Sub-Committee taken on Tuesday, January 8, 2008, Edward Ball Building, 8th Floor - 214 N. Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida commencing at approximately 2:42 p.m.

Neighborhood Safety & Stability Committee

Tony Boselli, Chair
Oliver Barakat, Member
John Clark, Member
Charlie Commander, Member
Ronnie Ferguson, Member
Joni Foster, Member
Donald Foy, Member
Mark Griffin, Member
Tripp Gulliford, Member
Alberta Hipps, Member
Suzanne Jenkins, Member
Curtis Johnson, Member
Diane Kerr, Member
Tim Lawther, Member
Lisa Moore, Member
Devin Reed, Member
Jim Robinson, Member
Toney Sleiman, Member
Eric Smith, Member
Eddie Staton, Member

APPEARANCES

COMMITTEE CHAIRS & MEMBERS:

TONY BOSELLI, Chair
RONNIE FERGUSON, Member
ALBERTA HIPPS, Member
TONEY SLEIMAN, Member
SUZANNE JENKINS, Member
EDDIE STATON, Member
CURTIS JOHNSON, Member
DIANE KERR, Member
MARK GRIFFIN, Member
TIM LAWOTHER, Member
CHARLIE COMMANDER, Member
TRIPP GULLIFORD, Member
JONI FOSTER, Member
JIM ROBINSON, Member

PROFESSIONAL STAFF:

John Alderson, Office of General Counsel

STAFF:

KERRI STEWART
CHAD POPPELL
JENNIFER SAVAGE
STEPHANIE BARNETT
RACHELLE M. SUNDY

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Frank Brenden, Citizen
Candace Hodgkins, Gateway Community Service
Randy Jennings, Gateway Community Service
Mike Clark, Times-Union
Matt Galnov, Times-Union
Wight Gregor, Housing & Neighborhoods
Natasha Porter, Gateway Community Service
Michael Blaylock, Gateway Community Service
Wally Green, Gateway Community Service
Cleve Warren, Essential Capital
James Richardson, City of Jacksonville

PROCEEDINGS

January 8, 2008

Neighborhood Safety & Stability Chair/Committee 2:30 p.m.

Call to Order and Comments. Chair Boselli called the meeting to order at approximately 2:42 p.m.

Purpose of Meeting. Discuss the Mayor's crime initiative - The Jacksonville Journey - Take a Step - Neighborhood Safety & Stability Sub-Committee.

Chair Boselli welcomed the group and thanked them for their willingness to be in attendance; and proceeded to introduce Kerri Stewart from the Mayor's staff. Ms. Stewart introduced the support staff for the sub-committee and assured the group that if they had any questions or needs, the staff would be most willing to help. Ms. Stewart then asked the committee members to go around the room and introduce themselves.

Jim Robinson - Sr. Vice President of King Engineering, Associates and feels the primary reason he was asked to join this committee was due to his involvement with Blueprint for Prosperity, he is the co-chair of the infrastructure foundation team for a couple of years and looks forward to being involved with this group.

Diane Kerr - President of North Riverside Community Development Corporation, founding chair for Crime Stoppers in five counties and a number of other things, but the main reason she is involved is because she loves her community.

Tim Lawther - Works for the Health Department and looks forward to jumping in.

Curtis Johnson - President Sweet Water Concerned Citizen Community Association. He has been heavily involved in the same type community work Mr. Boselli has been involved in and is looking forward to working with the group.

Ronnie Ferguson - President of the Jacksonville Housing Authority - we house 10,000 families; roughly 3,200 of which are in public housing developments. Since 1995, we've gone from one of the worst to housing agencies in the country to one of the best with the help of people like Mr. Charlie Commander who is on this committee.

Joni Foster - Executive Director of LISC Jacksonville, a national non-profit who works with neighborhood non-profits to revitalize neighborhoods. In Jacksonville we've worked with the JEDC and their missions run from developing housing for home ownership to rental housing to commercial development and community safety is a very important piece of this work.

Mark Griffin - Pastor of Wayman Ministries, the Westside property happens to be directly across the street from Eureka Gardens, and spearheaded the gun buy-back program - took over 800 guns off the streets; involved with the JCCI study; and the Sherriff's Roundtable. I'm driven to help solve the crime problems in this community.

Alberta Hipps - Owns consulting group here in Jacksonville, and has agreed to be the Blueprint for Prosperity Quality of Life chair and am the chamber of commerce local government sub-committee chair. She notes she is very anxious to report back to those venues all of our achievements.

Charlie Commander - Attorney in the community, native of Jacksonville and served in the Housing Authority and is now chairman of the Jacksonville Housing Commission.

Devin Reed - Notes he is a native of Jacksonville, and is partly here because of that and notes he also works for the Mayor and cannot tell him no. He notes he has a passion for the community and for the word of God, and when you read it and do nothing about a problem of this magnitude is not biblical and that is why he is a part of this group.

Toney Sleiman - Notes he was raised in LaVilla and Brentwood and was honored to serve at the Mayor's request.

Oliver Barakat - Commercial Real Estate Broker with CB Richard Ellis, notes he is here to contribute as much as he can and notes he is involved with several non-profits in the community from JCCI to Hubbard House, feels very happy to be here and contribute.

Suzanne Jenkins - Notes she has been a citizen activist and was elected to the City Council, has family and raised them here in the community schools, served as Executive Director of Jax Pride, been very involved in Tipping Point Neighborhoods, championed the Town Centers under Mayor Delaney and when she received the call and was asked to be part of this endeavor, she eagerly accepted.

Tripp Gulliford - Notes he is a Principal with Midland Development Corporation, a retail developer, involved most recently with Housing Partnership NE Florida and served on the board of Jax Pride when Suzanne Jenkins was the Executive Director. As a native of Jacksonville, he feels a very serious commitment to making the community as safe as possible.

Eddie Staton - National President for Mad Dads and serving as the Vice President for the Jacksonville chapter of Mad Dads.

Ms. Stewart then turned the meeting over to John Alderson of the Office of General Counsel for an overview of the Sunshine Laws.

1a. Sunshine Law - Overview

Mr. Alderson provided an overview of the Sunshine Law as well as the Florida Public Records Law, and opened the floor to questions. There were several questions and Mr. Alderson's responses are listed below:

- 1) Since the Jacksonville Journey initiative is so big and covers many committee members, if a member wants to discuss topics within another committee, can a member discuss issues one-to-one with another sub-committee (from a different committee) member? **Answer, if you are under the umbrella of The Jacksonville Journey, then you must notice any meeting - no discussion can take place between members, you will be discussing public business.**
- 2) If someone makes, accidentally or happens to speak to someone without realizing they've stepped outside of Sunshine Laws, what will happen? What if you end up at a social engagement and find yourself getting caught up in the business of this commission? **Once you ascertain that you've stepped into this area and have begun discussing the commissions business, you must immediately stop and set up a meeting that should be noticed. You can engage in any discussion with anyone unless you are discussing public business with other committee**

members. Should you have any questions, please direct them to your staff support person.

- 3) If someone sends me an e-mail who is not on any of these committees, but publicly says "at first meeting, you said what???", and I respond, is that under Sunshine? **Answer, yes - any document that relates to the public business discussion is a public record. You should always err on the side of the Public Record law or the Sunshine laws.**
- 4) Because I do work with many community groups who have a direct interest in what we're doing, it would be on my agenda to keep them informed on what is happening in our committee. What do I do with their e-mail requests? Do I hold them in a pile for Public Records? **Answer, best approach is to be kept in an electronic folder that you can burn to CD or print a copy and keep in your file on this commission.**
- 5) Would it be acceptable for me and a committee colleague to decide to have coffee at a restaurant and we notice the meeting so we can discuss public business? **Answer, it really must be done so the public can access the venue, but Mr. Alderson will research your question further. Ms. Stewart noted that we would try to find venues that are accessible to both sides of town and would try and obtain further clarification from the Office of General Counsel on this question.**
- 6) A concern was raised about the inability to communicate with whomever we need to talk with in order to fix the problems

within our community. A further concern was raised that we are holding these meetings during the middle of the day, downtown where most (poor) people cannot get to the meetings and it provides a hardship when we need to get the community involved. The government restriction is so great; it hinders our ability to get the job done. This committee member predicts that he feels this committee won't succeed or come up with any real action plan that can be implemented on the streets due to the fact that all of our meetings and communication have to be done in this room. **Chair Boselli asked if he could speak to this issue - we will succeed, yes it is cumbersome to have to do everything in the Sunshine, but this is the process we must live within. We will do our best to meet the needs of this community and we will make progress with this initiative. I will personally promise that when action items come out of our work, I will make sure this City's government will be held responsible for putting our work into action. I don't believe this effort will be a waste of time, it will be a very worthwhile use of our time and there are many smart people present here today - I think we can make a difference. If we don't have that mindset, we need to just leave right now and give up. For the next 98 days, we're going to have to make the sacrifice to abide with the Law, after this process, we can go have coffee anytime we wish. Our job is to take action.**

Mr. Alderson also noted that there is more than just the Sunshine Law; there is a Public Records Law and a Gift Law. If you have any questions about what you should keep or when you should provide notice to the public, please don't hesitate to contact our office or speak with any of your staff members. Always be very careful about communication between board members. Do not engage in dialogue, whether written or spoken, with committee members, you will be in violation of the Sunshine Law.

Chair Boselli thanked Mr. Alderson for his overview and began the process of reviewing the agenda, and noted that going forward, we will be starting all meetings on time and, hopefully, end on time, but the reality is the meetings will probably last longer than the stated time. He notes, we only have 98 days and have much work to do. Chair Boselli then turned the meeting over to Kerri Stewart to discuss the some of the initiative that are currently underway. Ms. Stewart addressed the issue of Street Lighting in the various neighborhoods. She pointed to the handout of the Memorandum from the Director of Public Works. If the committee members have ideas or comments that would need to be addressed by a Subject Matter Expert (such as the noted memorandum), they should present that information to the committee staff member who will make sure the proper Subject Matter Expert is consulted and an answer received. Currently, an initiative is underway to look at what it would cost to replace light bulbs in every street light in Duval County. The goal is to "light up the night". Please read over these materials, these are the types of things we will see going

forward. You will come up with an actionable idea and by the next meeting we will put a dollar amount or an implementation timeline to it after consulting with Subject Matter Experts. Chair Boselli thanked Ms. Stewart and then noted that Mr. Cleve Warren was in attendance from the Steering Committee. Going forward, there will be issues we're going to talk about, street lighting, trash pick-up, etc. He noted that the first Steering Committee meeting that he has to prepare a report for is January 24th. He has charged the committee with look at three areas of concern - short range; mid-range and long-range plans. I believe there is low-hanging fruit that we can handle right away. Street lighting is one of them. Mid-range ideas could be community centers that have been closed. Currently, there are 13 closed, and with the largest Parks and Recreation Department in the State, I'd like to ask this Department to provide an overview as to what is being done in every building in this city. What are the resources, what is their budget? He then proposes that we re-direct the budget and resources to focus on maybe ten centers and then ask the community to become involved and have them participate in sponsoring or funding other centers so they can be opened as well. This will only work if we get the community involved. After-school programs are a valuable tool to help keep kids off the streets. I believe there are resources out there; the City is willing to give the buildings to private organizations as long as they partner with the community. The programs are out there, and individuals are out there who should step up and help with these areas.

Chair Boselli asked Kerri Stewart to provide, for the next meeting, the geography and budget for all centers in the community. He also noted that we must move in the direction of parenting issues. We must get the parents involved. Neighborhoods are about the people, we can't lose sight of that. We need the parents to become involved and take ownership of our recommendations. It was noted by a member of the committee, that one area the community is not willing to address is the absence of fathers in the family. It is a well-known fact, if families aren't intact; you're going to have problems in the community. We have to deal with the issue of absentee fathers. It was also noted that we need to talk to the kids - we need to hear their perspective. They have a vested interest and when they buy-into our process, some of the problems will stop.

At this point, Chair Boselli thanked the group for their attention and commitment to this process. He asked the group to e-mail Kerri Stewart with their recommendations, and note if there is a program associated with it. We need a benchmark, something we can tangibly see - we need to see a win.

2. Action Items

Bring current issues facing the community under the charge of the committee.

3. Discussion Items

None.

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.