

MINUTES

**Constituency and Community Outreach**

Mayor Donna Deegan Transition Committee

Date: Tuesday, July 25, 2023

Location: Jewish Family & Community Services, 8540 Baycenter Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32256

Chair: Ahmed, Parvez

In Person: Harris, Lee; Huto, Rebekah; McCoy, Rosemary; McKinnon, Joey; Meyer, Whitney; Newman, John; Nixon, Kiara; Patz, Melanie; Ticker, Susan; Becker, Suzie; Midyette, Jimmy; Velasquez, Manny; Gundy, R.L.; McBride, Kelly; Hodges, Lawsikia

ZOOM: Watson, Cindy; Davis, Wade; Dumont, Georgette; Jackson, Regina; Mann, Angela; Leon, Anny' Fleet, Janis, Allen, Omega; Hilt, Madison

Absent: Alawee, Basma; D'Amore, Erika; Dawkins, Janyce; Dean, Denise; Decunto, Mario; Hassell, Paul; Hicks, Paul; Singh, Sukhbir; Wright, Barry Rev.; Zhou, Wei

1. Meeting called to order at 6:04 pm by Parvez Ahmed

New Members: Suzie Becker and Manny Velasquez

- 2. Discussion on Interim Report:**

The interim Report was emailed, by the Chair, to the committee members. Please read through it carefully and forward comments to the Chair.

On pages 2 & 3 of the Interim Report, we have added data from the Jacksonville Census, which shows it is a rapidly growing city, a relatively younger city with deepening diversity.

Demographic trends for Jacksonville are: younger population, lower than median income, and Asian and Hispanics are the fastest growing populations. This seems to be the trend with most major, urban areas in the country.

The Chair requested data on religious diversity. Please forward via email.

The goal is to provide a data driven picture of what diversity in Jacksonville looks like.

Pages 6 & 7 of the Interim Report contains the recommendations of the subcommittees for Interfaith Relations and the Empowerment of Marginalized Communities. The subcommittee on Higher Ed and Nonprofits are still working on their recommendations.

The final report is due four weeks from now. The Chair recommends that each subcommittee have their members work on the recommendations for the next two weeks. The Chair also noted that the final report will not have recommendations broken down by subcommittees – there will be one report from the full committee.

- 3. Sub-Committee Updates:**

- a. Non-Profit and Higher Education Revitalization: Christian Harden and Angela Mann
  - i. Refining recommendations

- b. Interfaith Relations: John Newman and Rebekah Huto
- ii. Will be assigning subcommittee members who can work on issues
  - iii. Need to provide more detail for each recommendation:
    - i.e., more detailed dates for the calendar
    - note commemoration of different cultural events
    - last minute request: Thursday, July 26 is the Jewish National Tragic Date of Mourning – is it possible to get a statement from Mayor Deegan on the day?
    - Subcommittee will forward to the Chair, and he will put in the last-minute request for Mayor’s acknowledgement of the day.
  - iv. New Recommendations:
    - A community collective recognition of the “Holocaust” of all groups
    - A focus on the Indigenous Peoples of Florida
    - September is Hispanic Heritage Week – have Mayor Deegan make a social media statement or read a proclamation at an event
    - December 14<sup>th</sup> is International Human Rights Day
    - March 14<sup>th</sup> is International Women’s Day
    - Transgender Day of Remembrance
    - Develop a communications plan associated with the cultural calendar
    - Utilize the City Hall Atrium to display and install cultural artifacts
    - Develop a weekly podcast with the Mayor
    - Ensure proper staffing and funding for the Department of Diversity and Inclusion
    - Develop an Adult Citation Program for Misdemeanors
    - Create a Public Safety Apprenticeship Training Program
      - The last two points will be forwarded to the Public Safety Transition Committee for incorporation or consideration

The Chair requested the subcommittee to “fill-in the details,” because clear recommendations are easier to show impact and will be easier to make the case to Mayor Deegan for her support.

- c. Empowerment of Marginalized Communities: Whitney Meyer and Melanie Patz  
 The following subcommittee members have agreed to provide data on the initial recommendations:

Youth Government Engagement and Workforce Development

- Kiara Nixon: \*Relaunch Red Caps for high school students
- Rosemary McCoy: \*Blue Caps / public service internship program with COJ

Boards and Commissions

- Rosemary McCoy: \*Create a Board focused on Returning Citizens
- Madison Hilt: \*Create a Board focused on LGBT+ Citizens
- Jimmy Midyette: \*Review membership and ensure members are representative of Jacksonville’s demographics and include people to be served by the Board or Commission
  - \*Review meeting times to ensure accessibility for non-traditional Citizens to serve and attend
  - \*Review Charters and impact and adjust as needed

- \*Review application and recruitment process to remove unintended biases
- \*Publicly promote the board and Commission process, to add more transparency, a timeline, etc.
- \*Fully fund JHRC (Jacksonville Human Rights Commission)

Physical Infrastructure

- Omega Allen: \*Review COJ expenditures on infrastructure by zip code or census tract to ensure equity in investment
- Cindy Watson: \*Review time to respond to requests for repairs by zip code or census Tract to ensure equity of response
- Rev. Gundy: \*Enforce quarterly inspections of public housing; informing them of their rights
- Madison Hilt: \*Ensure all COJ facilities provide a family bathroom

Business Development

- Omega Allen: \*Ensure proper implementation of Section 3 regarding procurement
- \*Review JSEB (Jacksonville Small and Emerging Businesses) Disparity Study participants and recruit participants to ensure diversity
- \*Implement recommendations from the JSEB Disparity Study

Safety

- Madison Hilt: \*Move oversight of Gang Violence Intervention to COJ in accordance with best practices
- Rev. Gundy: \*Meeting with Garland Scott at JSO Head Quarters on August 8th

Community Engagement

- Andrea Reyes: \*Research COJ qualifying as a Welcoming City
- Basma Alawee: \*Implement a week of service volunteer activities throughout Jacksonville
- Melanie Patz: \*Organize a “Know Your Neighbor” Event
- Susan Ticker: \*Encourage Voter Registration across the country i.e., libraries, high schools, public housing; faith organizations
- Rev. Gundy: \*Tenants Bill of Rights

**4. Public Comments:**

- a. None.

**5. Next Meeting:**

Tuesday, August 1, 2023  
 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm  
 Jewish family & community Services – Alan J. Taffet Building  
 8540 Baycenter Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32256

### Final Comments from the Chair:

For each recommendation, detail in a brief statement, **Why** this recommendation is being made; which city department should do it. 2) **How** – start to articulate how each recommendation can be or should be accomplished. 3) **Budgetary Impact** – how much would implementation likely cost (ballpark figures are acceptable).

Mayor Deegan has set aside \$20 million for the seven Committees; and there are some \$65 million in COVID funds remaining.

These recommendations will serve as a road map to guide Mayor Deegan for the next few years.

Some of these recommendations will be handled by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and many may be shared with other departments.

Any additional recommendations are to be sent to the Co-chairs of the subcommittees for incorporation.

The U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris visited Jacksonville on Friday, July 21, 2023, and made some very strong remarks about Florida. Mayor Deegan “backed up” those comments and spoke on how hurtful the reflection is on our community.

The city’s posture is, Jacksonville is a welcoming city and will do everything in its power to make people feel welcome, safe and valued. The Deegan Administration will give it our best effort; we may make some mistakes along the way, but will ask for forgiveness, make adjustments and continue to move forward.

Mayor Deegan will be going out into the community and meeting with people. She wants to develop a more personal contact and focus on those hardest to reach. The city does a lot of things right, but people can’t take advantage of them if they don’t know about them.

We wish to give our host, Jewish Family & Community Services, our grateful appreciation for the use of this space.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

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Resource: University of North Florida – Florida Data Science for Social Good (FL-DSSG)  
2023 Big Revel Event – presentation on the results of the 2023 Florida Data Science for Social Good projects - [UNF DSSG](#)