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CITY OF JACKSONVILLE  
CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
MEETING

Proceedings held on Thursday, July 30,  
2009, commencing at 9:00 a.m., City Hall, Council  
Chambers, 1st Floor, Jacksonville, Florida, before  
Diane M. Tropa, a Notary Public in and for the State  
of Florida at Large.

PRESENT:

- WYMAN DUGGAN, Chair.
- MARY O'BRIEN, Vice Chair.
- ED AUSTIN, Commission Member.
- MARTHA BARRETT, Commission Member.
- JIM CATLETT, Commission Member.
- WILLIAM CATLIN, Commission Member.
- TERESA EICHNER, Commission Member.
- ROBERT FLOWERS, SR., Commission Member.
- MECHELLE HERRINGTON, Commission Member.
- ALI KORMAN, Commission Member.
- JEANNE MILLER, Commission Member.
- GARY OLIVERAS, Commission Member.
- CURTIS THOMPSON, Commission Member.
- GEOFF YOUNGBLOOD, Commission Member.

ALSO PRESENT:

- STEVE ROHAN, Office of General Counsel.
- JEFF CLEMENTS, Research Division.

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 July 30, 2009 9:00 a.m.

3 - - -

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. We will get started.

5 We'll call to order the Charter Revision  
6 Commission for July 30th, 2009.

7 We will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance  
8 and a moment of silence, and I know that during  
9 the moment of silence I will be thinking of the  
10 King family and of their loss at this time.

11 (Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.)

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

13 As a reminder, please turn your cell phones  
14 off or put them on vibrate as a courtesy to  
15 others.

16 Jeff, if you are ready, if you would just  
17 briefly take us through the materials that you  
18 have placed in front of each of us.

19 MR. CLEMENTS: You have a fairly short  
20 stack today.

21 Behind your agenda, you will find one  
22 comment received on the Charter Revision e-mail  
23 lines since your last meeting.

24 There is a letter to you from Joe Andrews  
25 with the Concerned Taxpayers of Duval County,

1 and Joe is in the audience today.

2 And you have the verbatim transcript of  
3 last month's meeting.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Jeff.

5 Would it be possible to post these  
6 transcripts on the Charter Revision web page?

7 MR. CLEMENTS: If we can get them  
8 electronically, yes, sir, I believe we can do  
9 that.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Great. I know that  
11 would be helpful for the public at large and for  
12 members as well.

13 Thank you very much.

14 Okay. I'll get right into the agenda. As  
15 I've said, we need to stay on schedule today,  
16 and so without further ado, it's my pleasure to  
17 welcome our sheriff, John Rutherford, to address  
18 us today.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning, Sheriff.

20 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Good morning,  
21 Mr. Chairman and Commission members.

22 I thank you for this opportunity to come  
23 over and share a few thoughts with you. And in  
24 light of your request, I will be brief. And I  
25 have prepared some remarks that I will pretty

1 much read to you other than a couple of  
2 anecdotal issues that I'd like to throw in.

3 In general, I'd like to start off by saying  
4 that I think the current charter's structure  
5 works well. Having the sheriff as a  
6 constitutionally-elected office allows the  
7 sheriff to exercise a great deal of independence  
8 in areas where it is important that the sheriff  
9 be able to act independently, without undue  
10 interference or political pressure being exerted  
11 by other City entities.

12 Also, the constitutionally-elected office  
13 of sheriff remains as it should be, directly  
14 accountable to the citizens of Jacksonville, a  
15 critical component of our system of elected  
16 government with an inherent separation of  
17 powers. The sheriff should always be answerable  
18 to the people, not to any political official or  
19 appointed administrator.

20 But even though independent in many ways,  
21 under the current charter, the sheriff must  
22 still work cooperatively with other City  
23 entities with regard to budgeting, human  
24 resources, procurement, and some legal  
25 services. This intermingling of authority and

1 structure works well in most cases and allows  
2 the sheriff's office to benefit from economies  
3 of scale and to take advantage of some  
4 professional expertise more economically than  
5 would otherwise be possible.

6 But, again, this separation of powers is  
7 critically important to public safety, and I'll  
8 give you two examples.

9 Number one, the city of New Orleans, as  
10 Katrina was bearing down. The city of  
11 New Orleans had an appointed police chief. The  
12 chief wanted to evacuate the Ninth Ward. The  
13 mayor and the governor, at that time, if you may  
14 remember, were at loggerheads about who was  
15 going to do what and be responsible for paying  
16 for what. The chief continued to push his  
17 position as much as he could, being appointed by  
18 the mayor. And in the end, we know what  
19 happened. Katrina struck, there was no  
20 evacuation, and it all kind of went to hell in a  
21 handbasket.

22 The only person in that entire situation  
23 that lost their job, by the way, was the  
24 appointed police chief, who was pushing for the  
25 protection of the people that he was responsible

1           for, but he didn't have the political power to  
2           force his position with his boss.

3           The separation of powers that we currently  
4           have with a constitutionally-elected sheriff  
5           gives me the authority to go to the people, push  
6           my position for public safety, maybe even  
7           contrary to what the mayor may want to do, but  
8           what that does is that forces the mayor and the  
9           sheriff to work very closely together.

10          And so I think that's one example, and I'll  
11          give you a current example that we're going  
12          through right now.

13          This budget situation. Now, under the  
14          structure that we have now -- and it's a -- and  
15          I think this is another plus for the current  
16          structure -- I submit my budget really in  
17          negotiations with the mayor's office and then  
18          they submit my budget to the City Council who  
19          passes my budget. The mayor has passed that  
20          budget to the council.

21          I believe there is still areas in there  
22          where we can cut. For example, in Internal  
23          Services they charge me 22 cents a gallon markup  
24          on gas. I think we can cut that, not all of it,  
25          but I think there's savings in there that we

1           should be going at -- going after and looking  
2           at.

3                     I'm making that case now to every member of  
4           the City Council.  If I was appointed or worked  
5           for the mayor, that would probably get me fired.

6                     Secondly, our preventative maintenance  
7           service on our vehicles.  I have a private  
8           provider who says, "Look, I can save you" --  
9           "guarantee you \$1.5 million in savings right  
10          now."  I think we should look at that.

11                    Now, I've approached the mayor's office  
12          with it.  They don't want to do that.  I'm going  
13          to approach the council with it and see if they  
14          think it's a good idea.

15                    But that's the kind of independence that  
16          you need in a sheriff's office so that public  
17          safety and the funding of public safety is  
18          protected.

19                    Going on, I will say, however, as I  
20          mentioned, no system is perfect.  There are some  
21          areas where I think the charter structure is not  
22          as effective as it should and could be.

23                    Number one is under legal services.  The  
24          role of the Office of General Counsel is  
25          moderated in mediating disputes between City

1 entities to avoid cost and unnecessary in-house  
2 litigation, and that is appropriate and  
3 generally functions very well even though there  
4 is an inherent conflict of interest involved in  
5 that role at some -- sometimes, and I can give  
6 you an example of that.

7 We had an unlawful death that occurred in  
8 the jail when I was the director of  
9 corrections. I was attempting to fire the  
10 correctional sergeant who made a bad decision  
11 that resulted in this death, and clearly the  
12 General Counsel's Office is at some point going  
13 to defend the City against a wrongful death  
14 suit.

15 I'm trying to fire a bad employee, and it's  
16 in their best interest to say that this officer  
17 did everything right, and I'm trying to fire  
18 him. So there was -- there's a conflict there,  
19 so it -- but I don't think that that's not a  
20 conflict that can't be worked through under the  
21 current structure. I just throw that out to  
22 show that there are some inherent issues with  
23 the OGC's office.

24 Likewise, the OGC's role in defending  
25 litigation arising out of the sheriff's

1 operations and providing advice and counsel in  
2 personnel and human resource-related matters is  
3 both appropriate and very functional. They do a  
4 fantastic job of representing us in our  
5 personnel issues other than that one time that I  
6 can tell you where there was clearly a conflict  
7 of interest.

8 However, because of the unique nature of  
9 the sheriff's office and it having almost 1,800  
10 sworn officers, there are other legal services  
11 and matters that properly need to be handled by  
12 in-house attorneys employed directly by the  
13 sheriff. The sheriff should be permitted by  
14 charter to hire and/or assign an individual to  
15 act as a police legal advisor and do other law  
16 enforcement-related legal work that would best  
17 be handled by attorneys working directly for the  
18 sheriff.

19 Examples of the legal work the in-house  
20 police legal advisors need to perform include  
21 providing timely and effective criminal/legal  
22 advice, counsel and train officers and staff  
23 regarding criminal law and related topics,  
24 litigating asset forfeitures, criminal/public  
25 nuisance abatement and injunctions, public

1 records issues, and certain administrative law  
2 and appellate issues. These are all matters  
3 distinctly unique to law enforcement and they  
4 should be handled by in-house attorneys who have  
5 law enforcement as their sole mission and the  
6 office of the sheriff as their sole client.

7 The in-house JSO attorneys would not engage  
8 in legal action against other City entities.  
9 Their role would be limited to the police legal  
10 advisors, which encompasses the duties just  
11 mentioned.

12 In-house JSO attorneys also would not  
13 handle any litigation defense or personnel/human  
14 resource issues. Those matters would continue  
15 to be handled by the Office of General Counsel.

16 I would also point out that pursuant to  
17 Article VIII, Section 1(d) of the Florida  
18 Constitution, and Section 30.53 of the Florida  
19 Statutes say a constitutional office of the  
20 sheriff -- there is already the authority to  
21 employ in-house attorneys, and I think the  
22 charter should be amended to reflect that  
23 authority and to ensure that the sheriff's  
24 office has these in-house police legal advisor  
25 attorneys. And, in fact, we have them, but they

1 are employees of the General Counsel's Office  
2 and I pay for them, but they should be people  
3 that I wish to hire, that are working in my  
4 office to give me the legal advice that I need.

5 Now, I have to tell you, that has been done  
6 with tremendous cooperation through the Office  
7 of General Counsel. They've tried to meet this  
8 need for the sheriff's office by allowing an  
9 individual to work in the sheriff's office who's  
10 really kind of a liaison from their office. And  
11 that's on the police legal advisor issues, not  
12 the -- not the others.

13 We have an appointed member of the OGC that  
14 handles the personnel and those things too,  
15 Mr. Howard Maltz, who does an incredible job for  
16 us as well.

17 Now, there are two areas that I would like  
18 to point to -- a second area that I would like  
19 to point to where I think improvements are  
20 possible, and that is the Central Services and  
21 procurement. I mentioned that earlier about the  
22 preventative maintenance, for example.

23 Also I would point to ITD, our Information  
24 Technology Division. I think when the charter  
25 was drafted, ITD was three-by-five cards in a

1 file somewhere.

2 ITD has changed significantly. ITD is the  
3 lifeblood of my organization. I'm an  
4 intelligence-led policing organization. We live  
5 and die by numbers and information. We have  
6 sensitive information through FBI's LEO, the  
7 LInX, through FLEX, through a lot of different  
8 systems that we gather information about  
9 criminal activity and terrorist activity in our  
10 community and around the United States. That  
11 very sensitive information can only be released  
12 to law enforcement personnel.

13 And I would say this as well -- because  
14 I've heard some talk about combining, you know,  
15 my IT with the City's IT. That's geography.  
16 You're not going to save a dime because I can  
17 tell you my IT people are working their fingers  
18 to a nub. I have a very high ratio of employees  
19 to ITD personnel. We have laptops in every  
20 police car now. That's the nature of our  
21 business. To move those individuals to the  
22 City's location would simply be geography. They  
23 would still have to do my work.

24 So I think all that does is take away my  
25 ability to control the priorities of the people

1           that will be working on my needs, my ITD needs.  
2           So I would oppose strenuously any move to take  
3           my IT and put it under City ITD.

4                     But having said that, I can give you  
5           numerous examples where we have worked very  
6           closely with IT when we were able to go out,  
7           through acquisition, for example, and buy things  
8           using economy of scale. We look for those  
9           opportunities. We try to capitalize on all of  
10          those opportunities.

11                    And, finally, I would say that that  
12          combination, combining them, again, would not  
13          save a single dollar. All you're talking about  
14          is geography and who's actually going to control  
15          their priorities. We're going to need just as  
16          many people doing that job.

17                    So to recap, for the most part, the  
18          consolidated government functions very well as  
19          presently structured, and I would -- you know,  
20          I'm sure you've heard, if it ain't broke, don't  
21          fix it, but it is vital to the safety and  
22          well-being of the citizens of Jacksonville that  
23          the office of the sheriff remain as an  
24          independent constitutional office.

25                    Further, the charter should recognize the

1           sheriff's constitutional authority to hire  
2           in-house attorneys to do what I have them doing  
3           now, but they should be my employee. And I  
4           would ask that the charter create that mechanism  
5           whereby that could happen.

6                     And provide a mechanism whereby purchasing  
7           decisions can be made outside the framework of  
8           Central Services when the sheriff feels it  
9           appropriate to do so and a clear savings of  
10          funds can be realized.

11                    With that, Mr. Chairman, again, I thank you  
12          and I thank all the commissioners for your  
13          service on this commission. This is truly  
14          important work to this community, and I salute  
15          you.

16                    THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Sheriff.

17                    Thank you for taking the time to come share  
18          your thoughts with us. It's been very  
19          beneficial.

20                    SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Thank you.

21                    THE CHAIRMAN: For the commissioners, a  
22          reminder, if you would like to -- stand by,  
23          Sheriff.

24                    If you would like to ask a question of the  
25          sheriff, please press the blue button in front

1 of you.

2 I have a question to lead off with respect  
3 to the in-house legal advisors. What I hear you  
4 saying is you want in-house legal advisors to do  
5 the same job they're doing now. What's -- but  
6 you want to have more control, I guess, over the  
7 hiring and firing; is that the issue? I'm  
8 unclear. What's not working now?

9 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Well, the issue is not  
10 being solely my employee, my attorney. You  
11 know, I'm concerned about issues that go back to  
12 the -- I don't get the individual that I may  
13 want. I don't control that individual. They  
14 give me who they want me to have.

15 Now, in this case, I have who I want.  
16 Don't get me wrong, they gave me who I wanted,  
17 but that's not by the structure of the charter.  
18 That's by -- you know, Rick Mullaney is a nice  
19 guy -- and I think it should be established  
20 within the charter.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: And then on the procurement  
22 issue, when you say the sheriff should have the  
23 ability to go outside Central Services for -- I  
24 think you said areas where you could effect a  
25 cost savings; is that how you phrased it?

1           SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Correct.

2           THE CHAIRMAN: What types of purchases  
3 would those -- do you have in mind?

4           SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Well, vehicle  
5 maintenance, for example. There's a  
6 situation -- I've got a provider out there who  
7 tells me right now he can save me \$1.5 million  
8 on my preventative maintenance. I think we  
9 should be able to do that if that is a --  
10 somebody's willing to actually sign a contract  
11 to say that.

12          THE CHAIRMAN: For the benefit of the  
13 commission who might not be familiar with City  
14 procurement procedures, why can't you do that  
15 now?

16          SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Well, because the  
17 mayor's office doesn't want to do that, and my  
18 procurement goes through Central Services for  
19 all of my equipment, which is -- which is not a  
20 bad thing, except in those areas when, you know,  
21 I can find something outside that process.

22          THE CHAIRMAN: And so the mayor's office  
23 has said to you, we're not going to approve this  
24 contract for this savings?

25          SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Well, they won't even

1 bid it.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Commissioner Barrett.

3 MS. BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Sheriff, you've been involved in how many  
5 campaigns since you've run?

6 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Two.

7 MS. BARRETT: Two.

8 Would you say that -- because you've had to  
9 run for office, that you would know the people  
10 better than if you were appointed?

11 In other words, in a campaign you have to  
12 go through people, you have to listen, you have  
13 to answer a lot of questions. Obviously, you  
14 have to go around the entire city to understand  
15 the African-American community, the Hispanic  
16 community, the rich, the poor, the school  
17 children. Would you say if you were appointed,  
18 would you have a better understanding of that  
19 kind of -- of the people in this city rather  
20 than the fact that you have to be involved in a  
21 campaign?

22 (Ms. Herrington enters the proceedings.)

23 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: I think you raise a  
24 great point, through the Chair to Commissioner  
25 Barrett. I do know this city. First of all,

1 I've been in law enforcement here for 34 years,  
2 so I've grown up in this business, in this  
3 city. I know this community intimately; they  
4 know me. I think that's incredibly important  
5 to --

6 And I can tell you, as -- I hold a unique  
7 position of being a member of the national -- or  
8 the Major County Sheriffs Association and the  
9 Major City Chiefs Association because I'm a --  
10 they recognize me as leading a city, so I'm also  
11 a member of the Major City Chiefs Association.

12 I go to those meetings and I constantly  
13 have to ask them, "Which city are you with this  
14 conference" because they move so quickly, and  
15 they -- I think the life of an appointed chief  
16 is about three-and-a-half years because they  
17 become political scapegoats. And as a result of  
18 that, I think you see the kind of policing in  
19 some cities where you see there's numerous  
20 federal oversights.

21 In a city where you have a sheriff who is  
22 elected by the people, responsive to the people,  
23 knows the community, I think that helps prevent  
24 some of that corruption that can creep into a  
25 law enforcement agency.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Austin.

2 MR. AUSTIN: Sheriff, I want to take you  
3 back a little bit, when we came up to this --  
4 sort of the founding -- the gentlemen of the  
5 consolidated charter. And when they started, it  
6 was my impression from reading and listening  
7 that it was the idea to have a strong mayor so  
8 that you could pinpoint accountability with --  
9 in one office, and then he would make or she  
10 would make the appointments to the other  
11 offices. And it was really accountability as  
12 much as anything else, but the idea was a strong  
13 mayor form of government.

14 And -- make it a little bit of a speech,  
15 but it seems to me that two major things that  
16 you have in a community, education and law  
17 enforcement, are outside of that mayor's direct  
18 supervision, and I -- that makes me wonder if  
19 the consolidated charter and a strong mayor form  
20 of government is really as strong as we say  
21 sometimes.

22 But having said that, you're -- how many  
23 chiefs of police in major cities in the  
24 United States are elected sheriff, do you know?

25 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: There are, I believe,

1 five major cities that are in the same situation  
2 as Jacksonville, where sheriffs are elected.

3 MR. AUSTIN: Do you know who they are?

4 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Las Vegas,  
5 Mecklenburg -- Charlotte-Mecklenburg -- I forget  
6 the others.

7 MR. AUSTIN: But the vast, vast, vast  
8 majority are appointed?

9 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Yes, they are.

10 MR. AUSTIN: The --

11 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: There's a -- I'm  
12 sorry.

13 MR. AUSTIN: Go ahead.

14 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Well, I was going to  
15 say, as I pointed out, the cities that have  
16 those federal oversights have appointed chiefs.

17 MR. AUSTIN: Okay. You're talking about  
18 the General Counsel's relationship to the  
19 sheriff. Why can't the General Counsel assign  
20 lawyers to you that are directly loyal and  
21 support you and assign lawyers to the mayor that  
22 are directly responsible to the mayor?

23 I think the -- the purpose of the General  
24 Counsel was to -- I think you will agree that  
25 prior to consolidation there was a proliferation

1 of lawsuits and some horrendous legal fees that  
2 went out to agencies squabbling with each other,  
3 and they -- do you see a problem with a strong  
4 General Counsel overseeing the lawyers and  
5 have -- like the Attorney General does in the  
6 state of Florida with all of the agencies?

7 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Through the Chair to  
8 Mayor Austin, absolutely not. I think a strong  
9 General Counsel's Office is, as I've heard used  
10 before, the glue that kind of holds  
11 consolidation together. I like that, and I  
12 think it works well. In fact, Howard Maltz is  
13 in exactly the kind of position that you  
14 mentioned, where he works with the sheriff's  
15 office on our issues, does a fantastic job, he's  
16 very loyal to us in how hard he works.

17 What I'm referring to is a police legal  
18 advisor, which in the past had actually been  
19 assigned by the State Attorney's Office to the  
20 Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. That's the  
21 position that I'm talking about, Mr. Mayor.

22 MR. AUSTIN: Oh, you are?

23 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: And that position  
24 clearly would have no responsibility for dealing  
25 with other City entities or -- it's a police

1           legal advisor position that I should be able to  
2           hire to help me with my criminal investigations  
3           and those things and work solely for the  
4           sheriff.

5           MR. AUSTIN: That's been coming to you  
6           through the State Attorney?

7           We started that with a federal grant many,  
8           many, years ago.

9           SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Correct. Correct.

10          Now, what's happen since then -- to  
11          clarify, what's happened since then is Larry  
12          Pritchard, the individual who's held that  
13          position for many years, retired. We wanted to  
14          retain him. And so, working with the General  
15          Counsel, Rick Mullaney, he agreed to allow us  
16          to -- that he would bring Larry on as an OGC  
17          staffer on -- to us, and so he's actually their  
18          person, but he -- but I pay for him and he's  
19          assigned to our office.

20          MR. AUSTIN: Thank you, Mr. Rutherford,  
21          Sheriff Rutherford.

22          You know, I have great respect for you. I  
23          have some question about whether you should be  
24          appointed or elected, as a matter of political  
25          science, but thank you for your answers.

1 I apologize for being late.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Korman.

3 MS. KORMAN: Quick question, Sheriff.

4 I think you said that when you do your  
5 budget, your budget goes to the mayor's office  
6 and they submit it to City Council.

7 In your experience, how many times has the  
8 mayor's office, you know, checked through your  
9 budget and basically said you need to cut this  
10 out, you need to do this, or is it kind of just  
11 a handover and -- goes right to City Council?

12 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Well, every year we go  
13 through a very extensive negotiation on our  
14 budget, which -- which is a good thing because  
15 then I have to justify those dollars to the  
16 mayor's office, which eventually I know I'm  
17 going to have to justify to the City Council  
18 when they look at it, so I think that's a --  
19 that's a very good process.

20 My point is, this year we have the unique  
21 situation where I want some additional cuts, and  
22 they are in Central Services. And if I was  
23 appointed, I would simply have to stand back and  
24 allow the budget to move forward as it does. I  
25 couldn't get involved in the politics of the

1 budget, and I think that's a terrible place to  
2 put a sheriff who's responsible for the safety  
3 of, you know, the 13th most populated city in  
4 the country.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Oliveras.

6 MR. OLIVERAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 Sheriff, I've got a question relating to a  
8 couple of the smaller police agencies in the  
9 county. I'm not referring to the beach  
10 communities because they're carved out by  
11 charter.

12 Specifically, the school district police  
13 department and the airport police department. I  
14 would appreciate your thoughts on -- do you  
15 think that if those efforts were consolidated  
16 into the sheriff's office -- keeping in mind  
17 that one of the hallmarks of consolidation is  
18 elimination of duplication of services, saving  
19 money by unnecessary taxing.

20 Could we do that better -- could you do  
21 that better taking over those efforts? Could we  
22 save money? Could we -- the continuity of  
23 services be better? I just appreciate your  
24 thoughts on that.

25 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Specifically to the

1           airport and to the school board police, I would  
2           be willing to -- if approached by those bodies,  
3           I would be willing to take over those  
4           responsibilities if -- if that's what they  
5           wanted, and I could show that we could somehow  
6           enhance public safety. And I think there is  
7           some enhancement to public safety.

8                     I have to tell you, as I travel around the  
9           country as a consolidated government  
10          representative, tremendous advantages,  
11          particularly in the world of public safety, come  
12          with that consolidation. So, yes, I think  
13          public safety can be enhanced by the  
14          consolidation of those -- some of those areas.

15                    Now, whether it will save dollars or not,  
16          that depends on what they're paying their people  
17          and what their costs -- operating costs might  
18          be, but if it was -- if there was an opportunity  
19          to consolidate and enhance public safety -- I  
20          know the mayor can tell you, back when we  
21          consolidated, we saved a tremendous amount of  
22          money by doing away with one entire agency,  
23          administration, and we've realized that savings  
24          every year for 40 years.

25                    And so I think it enhances public safety

1           when you have one intelligence stream, you have  
2           one accountable person, and I think that is  
3           important as well.

4           I don't think that the framers of  
5           consolidation intended to create a kingdom under  
6           the office of the mayor, but simply a strong  
7           mayor's office that would have some  
8           accountability as well, and -- and that's why I  
9           think they decided to keep the office -- a  
10          constitutional office of the sheriff.

11          MR. OLIVERAS: Thank you.

12          THE CHAIRMAN: Sheriff, would you say that  
13          public safety is endangered by the fact that we  
14          have an appointed fire chief?

15          SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: You know, I've often  
16          said that I think we could enhance fire by  
17          having an elected fire chief.

18          THE CHAIRMAN: I'm not quite sure if that's  
19          a yes or a no.

20          SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Could it be enhanced?  
21          I think yes.

22          THE CHAIRMAN: So our public safety is  
23          perhaps threatened by the fact that we do not  
24          have an elected fire chief?

25          SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Correct.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.  
2 Commissioner Youngblood.

3 MR. YOUNGBLOOD: Through the Chair, thank  
4 you so much, Sheriff, for coming. I appreciate  
5 you coming out. I appreciate all that you do  
6 for us in this city.

7 You got my attention when you said you  
8 found a \$1.5 million savings that you feel -- if  
9 you take it privately versus continuing to use  
10 Commonwealth, I believe, for procurement, repair  
11 and so forth.

12 Twofold question. Are you sure that that  
13 amount of money could be saved in the event, as  
14 an elected official, you had the ability to go  
15 to the office of the mayor and pull it separate  
16 from the budget versus as an appointed official  
17 you may not be afforded that? That would be the  
18 first question.

19 Secondly, with the independent agencies,  
20 such as JEA, doesn't JEA currently already go  
21 outside for private work?

22 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Through the Chair to  
23 Commissioner Youngblood, yes. In fact, they are  
24 using exactly the same provider that approached  
25 me and said, "Look, I can" -- "I will guarantee

1 to you in writing -- because here's the  
2 numbers -- \$1.5 million."

3 And JEA, as an independence authority, has  
4 already done that. Under the charter, I'm not  
5 allowed to do that.

6 MR. YOUNGBLOOD: So getting back to the  
7 question, if -- as an elected official, you  
8 would have the ability, then, to continue to  
9 make those changes within the budget for your  
10 department versus an appointment, you may not,  
11 is that what you're saying?

12 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: What I'm saying is as  
13 an elected official, I can come to this  
14 commission, I can go to the City Council, I can  
15 go to the public, and I can make my case. As an  
16 appointed chief, I cannot. I'd get fired.

17 MR. YOUNGBLOOD: I'll be looking forward to  
18 the savings, under the current circumstances.

19 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Hopefully we can work  
20 that out.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Thompson.

22 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 Sheriff, I'm so proud of the sheriff  
24 department in the fact that the 2009 crime  
25 reduction has been less than what was in 2008,

1 and I was glad to hear the good news.

2 The thing that I was wondering about --  
3 I've watched the news the last couple of days  
4 and they had an incident where an infant was  
5 left in an automobile and somebody come by and  
6 was able to get the infant out and saved their  
7 life.

8 I just want to know -- and during these  
9 times, the weather being what it is, is there an  
10 urgency or are they -- police force is very  
11 sensitized of observing these areas where cars  
12 are being parked where this could possibly  
13 happen?

14 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: You know, those are --  
15 those are tragedies that I think a result of the  
16 hectic pace that we all live in today. People  
17 are running so hard, so fast, they've got so  
18 many things on their minds, they're so  
19 connected -- we thought being connected would be  
20 a good thing -- you know, that you have these  
21 tragedies where an individual is left there.

22 We have a lot of crime prevention and  
23 community outreach that we do, trying to  
24 instruct parents, for example, how to deal with  
25 their children. So, yes, we take that very

1 seriously. And in those cases -- you have to  
2 know too, in those cases where it appears that  
3 there is criminal neglect, we will make an  
4 arrest, and have.

5 MR. THOMPSON: Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Flowers.

7 MR. FLOWERS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
8 Sheriff, thank you for being here.

9 I want to frame my question in a fashion  
10 that you can help me understand. The  
11 relationship as a bargaining unit with the union  
12 and the charter revision -- I mean, the citizens  
13 review commission that they would like to see  
14 you establish, how can the charter help make an  
15 effective process where the -- we can help deal  
16 with the relationship of the union and the  
17 citizen through some fashion so that if you  
18 should leave or when you change over, we'll have  
19 a process that will continue as opposed to each  
20 sheriff coming in with his idea of how things  
21 going to relate? That way the pension fund will  
22 not get out of hand and we got to draw that back  
23 in and all of that.

24 Just help me out, please, sir.

25 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Yes, sir.

1           Dealing with the FOP president, he is the  
2           head of a bargaining unit, a union. And, as  
3           such, I've been advised by the General Counsel's  
4           Office that I cannot say anything about his  
5           position. I can counter and oppose things that  
6           he says.

7           For example, the recent recommendation that  
8           there be a boycott of Gate Petroleum. I was  
9           furious about that and spoke out against that  
10          immediately, as soon as I heard about it, but  
11          I -- I cannot reprimand the president of the FOP  
12          because he is the head of a union, speaking as a  
13          union member, not a JSO representative.

14          And that really -- you know, I know a lot  
15          of people don't understand that. They think  
16          because he's an officer that he is under my  
17          control, so to speak. But I can tell you, I've  
18          been advised that that's not the case.

19          The issue on the police and fire pension,  
20          and I would also mention the general employees'  
21          pension fund, I have no charter responsibilities  
22          for that pension. That is negotiated between  
23          the pension fund and the mayor's office and the  
24          City Council. I can only use -- because I am  
25          elected, I can only use the bully pulpit of the

1 office of the sheriff to express what I believe  
2 is the situation dealing with the pension or any  
3 other issue.

4 MR. FLOWERS: Thank you, Sheriff.

5 How does this relate to being a public  
6 service position, public safety position as  
7 opposed to sheriff? Only thing you can't do  
8 now -- if it was an appointed sheriff, then we  
9 would have a department of public safety or  
10 public protection, however you frame it. How  
11 does that differ -- the authority you say you  
12 don't have in that type of relationship would --  
13 we would have?

14 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: No. No, sir. I would  
15 disagree, Commissioner. If I was appointed, I  
16 would have less authority than I have now, much  
17 less. This community would never have heard  
18 about 1.5 million.

19 MR. FLOWERS: Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,  
21 Sheriff. We appreciate your time today. We  
22 know you have a schedule conflict, so we thank  
23 you for working us in.

24 SHERIFF RUTHERFORD: Thank you very much,  
25 Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Commissioners.

1 Thank you.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mosley, would you like  
3 to address the commission?

4 (Mr. Mosley approaches the podium.)

5 MR. MOSLEY: Thank you for the privilege of  
6 addressing the board and the commission.

7 And I just want to -- I want to -- on the  
8 1.5 million, I want to make -- I want to just  
9 set the record very straight on that.

10 This government, one, we do not fire public  
11 sector employees for making efficiency  
12 recommendations; we embrace them.

13 Two, the idea of the \$1.5 million savings  
14 has been presented. It was presented by the  
15 sheriff's office about -- I don't know,  
16 12 months ago. It was vetted. The numbers that  
17 were used to reach those assumptions were  
18 flawed. The council auditor's office weighed in  
19 on that and agreed that they were flawed.

20 We are embarking presently -- we are not  
21 shy of managed competition or privatizing  
22 services. Right now most of the storm water  
23 management, the ditch cleaning, pavement, many  
24 City services are in the -- in the -- are  
25 conducted by the private sector.

1           We are presently scrubbing -- and we won't  
2           leave the public safety or the nonpublic units  
3           alone in this scrub -- scrubbing this government  
4           to determine where other savings can be made as  
5           far as where managed competition can be employed  
6           to -- to drive savings.

7           This government has a history of  
8           challenging the workforce to find savings.  
9           There's not a punitive response to  
10          recommendations from members of this workforce  
11          as it pertains to savings, and we've got a good,  
12          long history of employing private sector and  
13          managed competition in the -- in the execution  
14          of our responsibilities.

15          I just wanted to -- I needed to -- to say  
16          that.

17          Thank you.

18          THE CHAIRMAN: You're welcome.

19          Mr. Mullaney.

20          (Mr. Mullaney approaches the podium.)

21          MR. MULLANEY: Good morning.

22          THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning.

23          MR. MULLANEY: My name is Rick Mullaney,  
24          and I'm General Counsel for the City of  
25          Jacksonville. And, of course, I know many of

1           you. I've worked for some of you, I've worked  
2           with others of you, and it's great to be here  
3           today. Thank you for having me here.

4                     I know I speak for the General Counsel's  
5           Office and all the City when I say we're deeply  
6           appreciative of your time and service on this  
7           commission, being part of Jacksonville's  
8           history.

9                     I'd like to mention to you that one year  
10          ago, about this time, in this very chamber,  
11          sitting right here, I addressed a subcommittee  
12          of the Florida Legislature on our charter, and I  
13          addressed that subcommittee on the Florida  
14          Legislature regarding consolidated government  
15          becau- -- in a three-hour hearing, and their  
16          focus was primarily on ad valorem savings in  
17          Duval County.

18                    Given the fiscal crisis around the state of  
19          Florida and given the challenges around the  
20          state, they were primarily interested in the  
21          fact that Jacksonville had the lowest ad valorem  
22          rate of any large metropolitan area in the  
23          state, and rightfully attributed much of this to  
24          the charter you are reviewing, this consolidated  
25          government, and some of the efficiencies that

1           are possible.

2                   And while I discussed with the subcommittee  
3           of the Florida Legislature those savings and did  
4           not minimize it, I tried to stress to the  
5           legislature -- to the Florida Legislature and  
6           their subcommittee that while that was  
7           important, I hoped they wouldn't miss that there  
8           was much more to this charter and much more to  
9           this consolidated government than simply the  
10          ability to have lower ad valorem rates. And, in  
11          fact, I suggested to them that the  
12          transformation that has taken place in  
13          Jacksonville over the last 40 years, the  
14          foundation for that change was very much the  
15          charter that was adopted on October 1st of 1968  
16          and this consolidated government and that we  
17          here in Jacksonville enjoy a competitive  
18          structural advantage in the creation of public  
19          policy that other counties in the state of  
20          Florida do not, that the other 66 counties do  
21          not.

22                   And as your work on this commission and in  
23          reviewing this charter, it is my hope to help  
24          impart the best I can why I believe that is so;  
25          why, under this charter, under this form of

1 government, which is the only one of its kind in  
2 the state of Florida of the 67 counties, why we  
3 have the potential and opportunity under this  
4 structure to address issues like transportation,  
5 infrastructure, environmental, and now, quite  
6 frankly, financial matters in a way that is  
7 structurally advantageous over the rest of the  
8 state. And I hope in my discussion of this  
9 charter that I can help impart to you why I  
10 believe that is so and why your work is so  
11 important.

12 I will tell you that a couple months later,  
13 after testifying before the Florida Legislature,  
14 I flew to Escambia County and I did so with one  
15 of the members of this commission as well as  
16 Council President Michael Corrigan, and the  
17 reason we did was -- they had taken a look at  
18 our charter and they wanted something similar.  
19 They looked at where they were 40 years ago and  
20 what had happened. They took a look at us and  
21 said, what has happened in Jacksonville? Please  
22 explain this charter and this structure to us.  
23 And, in fact, they went to the legislature this  
24 spring to try to emulate what we have.

25 I would like to tell each and every one of

1           you that I get calls from all over the country,  
2           from Maine to California to Kentucky --  
3           Louisville recently consolidated -- regarding  
4           this form of government and the charter that  
5           you're currently reviewing. And the reason I  
6           believe I get those calls is because they see  
7           the remarkable change that has happened here and  
8           they see a structural form that they believe and  
9           they perceive to be better than theirs, and I  
10          think they're right. And they see what has  
11          happened over the last 40 years here.

12                 There's no question that 40 years ago, for  
13          those of us who were here and were observers and  
14          participants -- some participants -- that we  
15          were in a very different place under the prior  
16          charter. At that time, not just structurally,  
17          Jacksonville at that time was viewed by many as  
18          a slow-moving, backwards southern town with an  
19          inferiority complex.

20                 And one of your commission members once  
21          added the word "smelly" to that, that we were a  
22          smelly, backward southern town with an  
23          inferiority complex. That was the view of the  
24          state of Florida. And, unfortunately, I'd  
25          suggest to the commission, that that, at the

1           time, was the view of the many people who were  
2           here in Jacksonville.

3           Over the course of the last 40 years, after  
4           the restructuring, I would suggest -- and many  
5           in the state believe -- that we are in a very  
6           different place.

7           They marvel -- and I hope to give you the  
8           answer to this mystery during the next few  
9           minutes. They marvel at how the smallest market  
10          in the nation got an NFL team, and I hope to  
11          tell you how I think that happened because of  
12          this structure.

13          They marvel at a preservation project that  
14          acquired 53,000 acres to take it out of  
15          development. They marvel at River City  
16          Renaissance; they marvel that we brought a  
17          Super Bowl here; and they marvel, quite frankly,  
18          at this consolidated form of government.

19          Make no mistake, there are 67 counties in  
20          the state of Florida, we have the only one in  
21          the state. Sometimes people confuse  
22          Miami-Dade. Miami-Dade is the name of the  
23          county. They have a county government. They  
24          have 35 municipalities. They are not a  
25          consolidated form of government.

1           So around the state they look here and they  
2           marvel at it, they are envious of it. In fact,  
3           in the words of Hans Tanzler when he first  
4           became mayor in '68, "We've become the envy of  
5           the state of Florida." And to quote one of your  
6           commission members, Mayor Ed Austin, who said --  
7           he believes we have the best form of local  
8           government in the state and, quite frankly, the  
9           best in the country.

10           What I hope to do briefly -- it's tough for  
11           an Irishman to be brief, but I will try, very  
12           briefly, to outline the fundamentals of this  
13           charter, not in a specific recommendation on a  
14           change to a particular article of our 26  
15           articles in our local charter, but, instead, to  
16           try to impart as best I can an understanding of  
17           how this document has been given life over  
18           40 years, how it really works, and how public  
19           policy is created as a result of this charter  
20           that has allowed us in the past and will  
21           continue in the future to allow us to transform  
22           this community.

23           In trying to understand this charter and  
24           taking into account the principles you may want  
25           to consider in changing this charter for the

1           better, I begin this discussion in 1934, because  
2           in 1934 we had one of the most significant  
3           structural changes that would allow all of us to  
4           sit here today. And, that is, in 1934 there was  
5           an amendment to the Florida Constitution, the  
6           1885 Florida Constitution, that put in a  
7           specific provision that related just to  
8           Jacksonville. We call it the Jacksonville  
9           Constitutional Amendment. In the 19- -- in the  
10          1885 Florida Constitution, a specific provision  
11          that related just to us.

12                 Under that constitutional provision,  
13          Jacksonville was given this extraordinary  
14          opportunity and authority under the constitution  
15          to abolish its county government, to abolish its  
16          city government, and to put in its place, quite  
17          frankly, whatever we chose. And, most  
18          importantly, particularly in 1934 when there was  
19          such limited home rule around the state, it gave  
20          us the authority to have the most extensive home  
21          rule authority of any local government in the  
22          state of Florida.

23                 The technical definition of "home rule," of  
24          course, relates to the authority of local  
25          governments to do things. And the technical

1 definition is, does the constitution grant it to  
2 you or do you have all powers not given by the  
3 constitution?

4 Let me make it simpler. Home rule is our  
5 authority to govern ourselves. Home rule is our  
6 authority for self-determination. Home rule is  
7 our authority to make decisions that shape our  
8 future. And, I believe, home rule is the basis  
9 for the transformation that we've seen in  
10 Jacksonville, and that the transformational  
11 changes we have seen here have not come as a  
12 result of Tallahassee, have not come from  
13 Washington D.C., have not been imposed upon us,  
14 but because of this structure and this home rule  
15 authority which found its basis in the 1934  
16 amendment to the Florida Constitution,  
17 structural change, significant structural  
18 change -- which, by the way, as I'll talk about  
19 in a minute, was not effectuated until many  
20 years later, but the structure was critical for  
21 allowing it to happen.

22 You may say to yourself, why was it in  
23 1934, out of the clear blue, that this  
24 remarkable structural change took place? And  
25 I'll give you two answers to that.

1           One, in the 1930s, we had the first of what  
2           would be three waves of public corruption in  
3           Jacksonville, 75 indictments were issued. And,  
4           as a result of that corruption, as a result of  
5           grand juries meeting, civic-minded people went  
6           to the Florida Legislature and they got the  
7           Florida Constitution amended to provide this  
8           constitutional, structural opportunity for  
9           Jacksonville.

10           The other is that Jacksonville's  
11           governmental structure in 1934 was overlapping,  
12           duplicative, wasteful, and, once again, in the  
13           words of one of the members here, if you wanted  
14           to create a structure, a model for lack of  
15           accountability and responsibility, we were it.  
16           We had a Board of County Commissioners, we had a  
17           Budget Commission, we had constitutional  
18           officers, a City Commission, and a City  
19           Council.

20           And, by the way, the mayor sat on the  
21           City Commission. That is known, in part, as a  
22           weak mayor form of government. There was no  
23           real executive authority.

24           And, by the way, if you want to take a look  
25           at this governmental structure and say there's

1           this county government that was duplicative and  
2           you had the City government that was duplicative  
3           and they were often at odds and there was waste  
4           and lack of responsibility and lack of  
5           accountability, that describes many of the 66  
6           counties in the state of Florida today. That is  
7           the local government structure that you see.

8                     In Miami-Dade today there are 2.4 million  
9           people, 1.2- in the incorporated areas,  
10          35 municipalities. In Palm Beach, 38  
11          municipalities. In Broward, 35 municipalities.  
12          Orange County, 13.

13                    And I would suggest -- and I'll mention  
14          this later -- there's a big difference between  
15          the public debates we have here and disputes  
16          between coequal branches of government,  
17          democracy versus jurisdictional battles between  
18          competing entities with their own separate  
19          powers. And around the rest of the state we  
20          have seen this local government structure with a  
21          county government, multiple municipalities. In  
22          Miami-Dade, 35 police departments and a county  
23          police department, 35 Public Works Departments,  
24          35 City Councils, a number of different  
25          structures, very difficult, very challenging.

1           And in 1934, we were among them, among the  
2           67 counties. We had that county, city,  
3           overlapping, wasteful structure, and no  
4           accountability.

5           So you see that and you say, well, given  
6           that structure, given the waste, given the  
7           corruption, you assume, of course, that we  
8           consolidated in 1934, and the answer is we did  
9           not. And we did not for the same reasons, quite  
10          frankly, that it doesn't happen around the rest  
11          of the state.

12          The reason it's failed in Tampa, it's  
13          failed in Gainesville, the reason it's a  
14          challenge in Escambia County is because, quite  
15          frankly, absent crisis and statesmanship, it  
16          typically does not take place. There are vested  
17          interests who don't want to lose their jobs  
18          because consolidation requires that the county  
19          government goes out, the city government goes  
20          out, and you have a new one in its place. There  
21          are those who simply fear change, there are  
22          those with vested interests in the current  
23          system. So in 1934, it did not happen.

24          But the structural provision -- the Florida  
25          Constitution remained in place related to

1 Jacksonville. And 30 years later, in the 1960s,  
2 Jacksonville was gripped with its second wave of  
3 public corruption and, quite frankly, an even  
4 bigger crisis.

5 At that time, grand juries were meeting and  
6 state grand juries issued presentments. Four of  
7 nine City Council members were indicted. The  
8 property appraiser was indicted for low  
9 evaluations of ad valorem revenues. In fact, we  
10 had the lowest per capita spending for students  
11 of anywhere in the state of Florida and our  
12 schools became disaccredited.

13 I often tell a personal story as a little  
14 boy on the Westside going to Wesconnett  
15 Elementary School. The school had become  
16 disaccredited. My mother, the daughter of an  
17 immigrant who didn't learn to speak English till  
18 grade school, went to work to pull my brothers  
19 and I out of public schools in 1964 and put me  
20 at Sacred Heart over on the west side of  
21 Jacksonville.

22 Just an illustration of how it personally  
23 affected families because in the 1960s we were  
24 gripped with a serious crisis, raw sewage being  
25 dumped into the river, smelly town, indictments,

1 waste, fraud, inefficiency, services not being  
2 delivered to the rest of the county, racial  
3 tensions. And in the midst of this crisis,  
4 civic-minded people -- quite frankly, like all  
5 of you -- the business community, the  
6 Times-Union, Channel 4, the media, others all  
7 came together and said we have got to do  
8 something for reform, put together a package.

9 And in August of 1967, something very  
10 remarkable happened. We went to the polls here  
11 in Jacksonville -- and at the same time it  
12 failed in Tampa -- by a two-to-one margin we  
13 voted -- pretty remarkable -- to abolish the  
14 county government that existed at that time, to  
15 abolish the city government, and to adopt --  
16 what I carry with me and I'll talk about in just  
17 a second -- our charter, a very dramatic and  
18 revolutionary reform. And on October 1st of  
19 1968, this charter went into effect.

20 I talked to a few members at the early  
21 meeting and we started to talk about the charter  
22 and one of the members asked me, what is the  
23 charter? October 1st, 1968, what is it? Is it  
24 an agreement? Is it a contract? Is it a  
25 mission statement? And I said, really it's a

1 local constitution. This is the constitution  
2 that we live by here in Jacksonville.

3 And I know there are a number of lawyers  
4 here on the commission, and in law school we  
5 know we spend a year studying constitutional  
6 law. We do, of course, federal constitutional  
7 law because it's the supreme law of the land.  
8 And for 220 years this structure has been, I  
9 believe, the most successful in the -- in  
10 history, and that that constitution sets up the  
11 framework for our government, the supreme law of  
12 the land, the distribution of powers, and  
13 something very fundamental, an executive branch,  
14 a legislative branch, a judicial branch,  
15 separation of powers and checks and balances,  
16 this Madisonlike government.

17 Now, I don't know if they still have civics  
18 class anymore, my children haven't told me, but  
19 we know this from ninth grade civics. I will  
20 tell you this -- and this is remarkable and  
21 actually important for this commission.

22 As much as that structure has made sense  
23 for over 200 years -- executive, legislative,  
24 judicial, separation of powers, checks and  
25 balances -- that is not the structure of local

1 governments around the country and that was not  
2 the structure of Jacksonville pre1968. It is  
3 not the structure of county governments in the  
4 state of Florida today. It is not the structure  
5 of local governments in the state of Florida  
6 today. But on October 1st, 1968, remarkably,  
7 through genius and luck, it became ours. We  
8 adopted, in effect, a Madisonlike approach to  
9 this local government. We adopted a  
10 federal-like approach to this local government.  
11 And on October 1st, 1968, an executive branch  
12 was created and a strong mayor form of  
13 government.

14 By "strong mayor," I'm referring to the  
15 fact that administrative and executive authority  
16 is vested in the mayor. The mayor is not a  
17 member of the City Council, as the mayor is in  
18 over 90 percent of the municipal governments  
19 around the state of Florida. Of the 67 counties  
20 in the state of Florida, only one has a strong  
21 mayor form of government besides us. That's  
22 Miami-Dade. The other 65, Board of County  
23 Commissioners with a chief administrative  
24 officer.

25 So when you take a look at the structure,

1           it was very unique and it was different from  
2           what you've seen around the state. And on  
3           October 1st of '68, the strong mayor form of  
4           government was formed.

5           Article 6 contains the provision in our  
6           charter in the creation of the mayor's office.  
7           And when you go to the charter, it invests that  
8           authority in the mayor's office and in the  
9           executive branch to propose a budget, to veto,  
10          to appoint department heads, all part of a  
11          strong mayor form of government, and the  
12          creation -- as I'll talk about in a moment -- of  
13          accountability and responsibility in the running  
14          of a government.

15          It also created a legislative branch, which  
16          does what legislative branches do -- does,  
17          appropriates money and passes laws, but,  
18          significantly, also receives the budgets of  
19          constitutional officers and independent  
20          authorities, which is absolutely critical to the  
21          overall operation of this consolidated  
22          government enterprise -- enterprise. So an  
23          executive branch, a legislative branch -- the  
24          legislative branch contained in Article 5 of the  
25          charter.

1           In Articles 8 through 12 we have the five  
2           constitutional officers. And, historically, I  
3           will tell you that the constitutional officers  
4           have resisted being a part of consolidated  
5           government. They, understandably, are very  
6           enthusiastic about their mission; they often  
7           view budgetary review as a restraint on carrying  
8           out their mission; and, historically, we've even  
9           had litigation, as we did with the clerk in the  
10          early 1970s, regarding their desire not to be a  
11          part of consolidated government.

12           But in putting these structures together,  
13          the executive branch, legislative branch, five  
14          constitutional officers -- you know who they  
15          are -- eight independent authorities -- those  
16          eight independent authorities -- I know  
17          Mr. Rinaman addressed this with you last week --  
18          include the JEA, which is the largest public  
19          utility in the state of -- largest public  
20          utility in the state of Florida, the eighth  
21          largest in the country, about a \$1.5 billion a  
22          year operation.

23           The school district, 19th largest in the  
24          country with 120- to 125,000 students. The  
25          seaport, one of 14 seaports in the state of

1 Florida. The airport, with four different  
2 airports. The Housing Authority, the police and  
3 fire pension fund and trustees, the water/sewer  
4 expansion authority, eight independent  
5 authorities and over 50 boards and commissions.

6 If you take these five categories -- and  
7 I'll talk about one more category in a second.  
8 If you take these five categories -- the  
9 executive branch, legislative branch,  
10 constitutional officers, independent  
11 authorities, and boards and commissions -- that  
12 enterprise is about a 4.5- to \$5 billion a year  
13 operating budget a year, which is different from  
14 the billion dollar operating budget that we hear  
15 about in the press.

16 Our budget as a consolidated government is  
17 significant and larger than six states, and the  
18 enterprise is that significant.

19 And so on October 1st of '68, this  
20 structure was created, and with one other that I  
21 will mention, that I won't go -- unless you have  
22 a lot of questions.

23 It also created the Office of General  
24 Counsel. And in the charter -- three  
25 significant things. One, it had one little old

1 sentence that said the General Counsel's Office  
2 shall provide legal services to the City and its  
3 independent agencies, all parts of the  
4 consolidated government.

5 That sentence in the charter was a  
6 significant reform of the pre'68 model. The  
7 pre'68 model, as Judge Durden, who we honored a  
8 few weeks ago with a lunch, liked to say  
9 included 68 different bodies and individuals and  
10 entities, all with their own lawyer, driving up  
11 costs, slowing down the process, and, quite  
12 frankly, bringing government to a halt.

13 One of the fundamental reforms of  
14 consolidated government was to create  
15 centralized legal services where all parts of  
16 the consolidated government had the same  
17 lawyer.

18 A second part of the charter is that the  
19 General Counsel is the chief legal officer for  
20 the entire consolidated government.

21 One of the subtle things -- I hope I can  
22 express it well enough in a moment -- that we  
23 have as a consolidated government, unlike other  
24 local governments around the state, is the  
25 structural ability to speak with one voice --

1           and I'll talk about that in a second -- the  
2           ability, after debate, to speak with one voice  
3           and to leverage our assets to accomplish  
4           missions, such as bringing the NFL to town. And  
5           having the chief legal officer is a piece of  
6           that speaking with one voice and speaking as an  
7           enterprise, and I'll talk about that in just a  
8           second in terms of what I think that means.

9           In addition, the charter provided one other  
10          provision, that the General Counsel would have  
11          the authority to issue what are known as binding  
12          legal opinions in the event there was legal  
13          disputes within the consolidated government, and  
14          there have been over 370 of those since  
15          consolidation.

16          As General Counsel, during my term, I have  
17          issued ten binding legal opinions, most of  
18          those -- and I'll talk to you about this briefly  
19          in a moment -- most of those involve the placing  
20          of limitations of sovereignty, limiting the  
21          sovereignty of various parts of this  
22          consolidated government. A legal opinion, for  
23          example, that told the mayor's office they could  
24          not transfer money from one department to  
25          another without council appropriations --

1 approval. A legal opinion that told City  
2 Council they couldn't pass special relief  
3 legislation. A legal opinion that told the  
4 property appraiser they were subject to audit.  
5 And, as one of you may remember, a legal opinion  
6 that told the school district that they had to  
7 competitively bid school bus contracts.

8 So the General Counsel, in the words of  
9 former General Counsel John Delaney, acts as  
10 sort of a Supreme Court for the consolidated  
11 government, providing legal services to all  
12 parts of it and acting as a Supreme Court for  
13 legal disputes.

14 I know I'm speaking very quickly. I wanted  
15 to give you a highlight of these 26 articles in  
16 our charter, one dealing with the legislative,  
17 one dealing with the executive, one in  
18 chapter -- in Article 7 dealing with the  
19 General Counsel, another dealing with  
20 independent authorities and constitutional  
21 officers. All this provides sort of an overview  
22 of the structure.

23 And then you ask yourself, how do we give  
24 this meaning? And in testifying before the  
25 subcommittee of the Florida Legislature a year

1           ago, over the last 40 years, how has this worked  
2           and what have we gained and -- and in  
3           considering the principles for your work, what  
4           has our experience been? And let me expl- --  
5           let me talk about a few, if I could.

6           One -- and I'll start with the one that the  
7           Florida Legislature wanted to talk about -- is  
8           ad valorem. We clearly do enjoy an ad valorem  
9           dividend, so to speak, as a result of  
10          consolidated government. That's in part because  
11          of the greater efficiency and economies of scale  
12          that we can have as a result of this countywide  
13          jurisdiction. We don't have 35 Public Works  
14          Departments. We don't have 35 City attorneys  
15          and one county attorney. We have one. That may  
16          be a flaw. But, regardless, I would suggest  
17          that it's duplicative in other counties around  
18          the state and there is an ad valorem dividend.  
19          And even if we have the increase that the mayor  
20          is proposing now, even if we had had that, we  
21          would still be, by far, the lowest in any large  
22          metropolitan area in the state for many reasons,  
23          but one of them is our structure.

24          Let me mention a second. Because of this  
25          structure and setting this up, we are less

1 regulatory and less bureaucratic than the other  
2 juris- -- the other 66 counties, in particular  
3 I'm talking about trying to develop, in terms of  
4 economic development and policy initiatives, the  
5 ability to be streamlined here in Duval County.

6 I once asked the chief of staff for Miami,  
7 for the City there, how do you get anything done  
8 with 35 municipalities and a county government?  
9 Sergio Gonzalez I asked. He said, Rick, we  
10 don't. We don't.

11 We had a health care symposium out at UNF  
12 recently and Marshall Criser, who is from Palm  
13 Beach, spoke. And he talked about Scripps and  
14 economic development and how they hope to  
15 develop all these technology companies as a  
16 result of what Governor Bush had done, and then  
17 he described how Palm Beach drove them all away  
18 with their 38 municipalities in what he called  
19 Afghani tribal warfare, in which the county  
20 itself beat up itself and drove everybody out.

21 Imagine trying to do economic development  
22 in a community where you have 30 layers of  
23 cities and regulations to deal with and a county  
24 overlay -- and a county overlay.

25 In Miami-Dade, they have an appointed

1           sheriff, the only one in the state that I'm  
2           aware of, and then they have 35 police  
3           departments. So when I say it's less regulatory  
4           and less bureaucratic, I'm not suggesting it's  
5           perfect here, but I am suggesting that the  
6           structure allows us to be more streamlined, it  
7           allows us to be friendly towards economic  
8           development, it gives us the opportunity for  
9           greatness, and whether we accomplish that or not  
10          is a separate matter, but we don't want  
11          structure to prevent us from getting there, and  
12          structure is what this commission is looking  
13          at.

14                 So that's number two. These aren't in  
15          order.

16                 Number three, intragovernmental  
17          litigation. I had a bond lawyer from  
18          Tallahassee once say to me -- Mark Mustain, he's  
19          on the -- a bond lawyer. He said to me, Rick,  
20          how has Jacksonville managed to avoid the kind  
21          of litigation -- intragovernmental litigation  
22          that exists around the state?

23                 Around the state, counties sue  
24          municipalities, municipalities sue counties,  
25          they all sue various subdivisions, the

1 authorities -- they're all in litigation. How  
2 has Jacksonville managed to avoid that? And I  
3 said, Mark, it's very simple. We gave them all  
4 the same lawyer. Got a little chuckle out of  
5 that. I said, that may be good for public  
6 policy, kind of hard on the lawyer, but there  
7 was some truth in it.

8 I want you to imagine Microsoft, for  
9 example, or GE -- I used to use General Motors,  
10 but I don't use them anymore. Use GE or  
11 Microsoft and picture one of the various  
12 subdivisions of those entities having a  
13 disagreement in the browser group versus the  
14 operating group, suing each other. Imagine it.  
15 Do you think Microsoft or GE is going to speak  
16 with multiple voices to the public? Internally,  
17 they can have whatever debate they want, and it  
18 can be loud and vigorous. Externally, they  
19 speak with one voice.

20 You look at local governments around the  
21 state, they have external debates in which they  
22 disagree. Here in Jacksonville we are fortunate  
23 to have a structure in which we can debate  
24 vigorously internally, loudly, as much as we  
25 want. But hopefully with this structure, we can

1 speak with one voice to Tallahassee, we can  
2 speak with one voice to Washington D.C., and we  
3 can speak with one voice to a prospect for  
4 economic development. And a piece of that is,  
5 we don't create silos in which we sue each  
6 other, we don't create silos of autonomy in  
7 which we work at cross-purposes.

8 We tried to create a structure in which  
9 there can be debate, there can be disagreement,  
10 but there's also the opportunity to shake public  
11 policy to address big issues that we reach a  
12 consensus on to move forward, and that's why we  
13 have such a structural advantage.

14 So the third thing is we, fortunately,  
15 under this system, don't sue each other.

16 Number four -- and some people would put  
17 this number one. When we were in Pensacola, the  
18 people there in Escambia County turned to  
19 Ed Austin and said, would you name the three  
20 biggest advantage -- advantages of consolidated  
21 government? He said, let me list the top three  
22 for you: accountability, accountability, and  
23 accountability. Because what this structure  
24 created was a strong CEO form of government and  
25 pinpointed responsibility, executive and

1           legislatively, where it didn't exist before.

2           And the example was given -- if you look at  
3           football teams, if you look at presidencies, if  
4           you look at governments, if you look at private  
5           enterprise, they have a CEO. It's true  
6           everywhere, except in local governments around  
7           the state. And we were fortunate, through  
8           genius and luck, to get one here, and we have  
9           that accountability.

10           Number five -- and this is the one I  
11           stressed very much to the legislature -- public  
12           policy creation that transforms your community.

13           We have a structure -- and whatever  
14           improvements -- whatever changes you make I hope  
15           will improve the structure to put us in position  
16           for those kinds of policies that give us the  
17           ability to develop public policies countywide  
18           and potentially regionally in terms of  
19           infrastructure, transportation, environment, and  
20           now municipal finance. We enjoy an inherent  
21           public policy advantage.

22           Let me give you, finally, and a very  
23           related one and some might argue the most  
24           important -- it's somewhat subtle, but I'd like  
25           you to think about it. I simply call it -- and

1 I'm stealing the word from a commission  
2 member -- clout, a seat at the table.

3 Because of this structure, we have the  
4 opportunity to leverage a \$4.5 billion  
5 enterprise and our civic and community assets to  
6 achieve public policy goals that are  
7 transformational and it gives us a seat at the  
8 table and it gives us the ability to carry it  
9 out.

10 If somebody is wondering how the smallest  
11 market in the history of the country got a  
12 franchise in the NFL -- lay aside the historical  
13 anomaly of Green Bay. That was due to cold  
14 weather and history and not due to this.

15 But if you're wondering how in 1993 the  
16 greatest upset in sports history took place, I'm  
17 telling you, in part, it's because we had a seat  
18 at the table and we had the clout and the  
19 ability to speak with one voice and to leverage  
20 a \$4.5 billion enterprise, along with civic and  
21 community assets and a common purpose. These  
22 principles, this leverage, this streamlined  
23 approach are the principles that carried us with  
24 the NFL, the Super Bowl, River City Renaissance,  
25 the Preservation Project, Jacksonville Journey,

1 and has literally transformed us over the last  
2 40 years, in my opinion.

3 And, by the way, that structural advantage  
4 continues this moment as I address you and as we  
5 speak.

6 Around the state and around the country  
7 everybody is struggling with pension reform,  
8 privately and publically. I read in the  
9 Wall Street Journal about -- last week, about  
10 \$6.2 billion being spent for an auto supplier  
11 subsidiary of GM to help bolster up the pension  
12 fund for that private pension fund because of  
13 the economics of it. This challenge, largest  
14 since United Airlines.

15 Public pension funds around the country and  
16 around the state are all struggling with  
17 public -- with pension reform. In the near  
18 term, the next few weeks, the mayor's office  
19 will be presenting a comprehensive package of  
20 pension reform at the collective bargaining  
21 table.

22 However, unlike other counties and  
23 municipalities around the state in which the  
24 county government for public safety is a part of  
25 FRS and multiple municipalities have multiple

1 pension reform packages with municipal pension  
2 funds and varying pension funds throughout those  
3 counties, we have the structural opportunity to  
4 address this comprehensively for comprehensive  
5 reform.

6 Trying to accomplish that with 38  
7 Interlocal Agreements in Palm Beach or 13  
8 Interlocal Agreements in Orange County, plus an  
9 additional one for the county is very, very  
10 challenging, but we have an opportunity --  
11 because the whole state is facing an economic  
12 crisis. We are not alone in this. We do have  
13 the opportunity, however, to restructure.

14 This also applies, by the way, to  
15 progressive policies moving forward in our  
16 restructuring as it relates to procurement and  
17 purchasing. We have the opportunity with this  
18 structure to leverage our size and entities in  
19 terms of purchasing and procurement for savings  
20 for this consolidated government and the  
21 taxpayers, and that is going on and we're  
22 working on it now -- such as in commodities. If  
23 you purchase fuel, it works the same at the  
24 school district as it does at the airport, as it  
25 does with the Sheriff's Department, and

1           certainly you could leverage that size in terms  
2           of commodities and in other areas.

3           And I would suggest that when the stimulus  
4           package first came out in the winter, the  
5           competition is fierce and structurally [sic].  
6           We had the opportunity and have put together our  
7           chance to try to bring this, to speak with one  
8           voice, for that stimulus package that is  
9           appropriate for this community so the structural  
10          advantage continues.

11          In your work, you may look at what are the  
12          defining characteristics -- and I'll conclude on  
13          this because I know I've gone a little bit  
14          long -- but the defining characteristics of this  
15          consolidated government to make it work.

16          And let me quote the words of someone  
17          else. A few weeks ago, we had a lunch honoring  
18          Judge Bill Durden for his service as the first  
19          General Counsel. He was very articulate and  
20          very smart, and we honored his service. He  
21          issued over 200 binding legal opinions. And he  
22          talked about the two key characteristics, in his  
23          view -- and I want to add a couple -- that  
24          centralized financial authority, meaning the  
25          legislative branch, review of all the money --

1 constitutional officers, independent  
2 authorities, the City's budgets -- and  
3 centralized legal services were a linchpin to  
4 this community speaking with one voice and to  
5 consolidated government working. Those are the  
6 words of Judge Durden, and I agree.

7 Let me add -- in addition to centralized  
8 financial authority and legal services, let me  
9 add the critical notion of separation of powers,  
10 checks and balances, and a strong mayor form of  
11 government because there is a big difference  
12 between the jurisdictional battles that occur  
13 around the rest of the state and the public  
14 policy debates we have among our branches of  
15 government.

16 Sometimes looking at us make public policy  
17 may appear messy, slow, inefficient, for some  
18 disappointing. As Winston Churchill once said,  
19 you know, democracy is the worst form of  
20 government ever created in the history of  
21 mankind, except for all the rest. And I suggest  
22 that this process of debate is actually a very  
23 healthy one and that the checks and balances we  
24 see, whether it's a council vote and a veto,  
25 whether it's an appointment and the failure to

1 confirm, that the checks and balances and  
2 separation of powers is unique with us and is a  
3 part of our success.

4 And let me -- one final one. And I say  
5 this with no disrespect to the sheriff, no  
6 disrespect to the other independent authorities  
7 that may be speaking, is that one of the  
8 hallmarks of this consolidated government and  
9 one its -- is also one of the most difficult  
10 things for its participants, and that is letting  
11 go of some sovereignty, the idea that you are  
12 autonomous. You have to give up some of that  
13 authority to be a part of this consolidated  
14 government. That is true of the constitutional  
15 officers, it's true of the independent  
16 authorities, it's true of the mayor's office,  
17 and of the legislative branch.

18 And I will tell you, historically, that has  
19 been one of our chances -- challenges because  
20 the pressure is to develop greater independence,  
21 greater autonomy, all in the name of fulfilling  
22 a mission in which we need to come back and ask,  
23 what truly is the mission?

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Mullaney.

25 We appreciate this presentation on the

1 background and overview of consolidation. I  
2 think it's been very beneficial for all of us.

3 I don't have any questions in the queue --

4 MR. MULLANEY: That was good, actually.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: I know that you are  
6 available to us at any time as a resource, and  
7 I'm sure we'll take advantage of that.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. MULLANEY: Okay.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, sorry. Now we have  
11 questions.

12 MS. KORMAN: Just a quick question.

13 Are we going to have another opportunity to  
14 talk to Mr. Mullaney about the General Counsel's  
15 Office?

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, we are.

17 This was designed -- I should have  
18 mentioned this before he spoke. I apologize.  
19 This was designed to be an overview about  
20 consolidation in general, not about the  
21 General Counsel's Office as a stakeholder in  
22 government.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Austin.

24 MR. AUSTIN: (Off microphone.)

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure. I didn't see anybody

1 in the queue.

2 MR. AUSTIN: (Off microphone.)

3 MR. MULLANEY: Let me give you a short  
4 answer --

5 MR. AUSTIN: We've had testimony here,  
6 Mr. Mullaney, about the advantage of being  
7 elected, being closer to the people, hearing the  
8 people during campaigns, being responsive and so  
9 forth. Do you think the General Counsel should  
10 be elected?

11 MR. MULLANEY: No, sir, I do not.

12 MR. AUSTIN: Huh?

13 MR. MULLANEY: No, sir.

14 MR. AUSTIN: How about the director of  
15 Public Works, the director of JEA, the Airport  
16 Authority, roads, parks and playgrounds, should  
17 any of those be elected?

18 MR. MULLANEY: The short answer is no.

19 You commingled different groups -- the  
20 executive departments, Public Works, Human  
21 Resources, I would not elect the department  
22 heads of the executive branch of government. I  
23 would not elect the executive authorities or the  
24 independent authorities, no, sir, I would not  
25 recommend that.

1           MR. AUSTIN:  What you've told us here was  
2           that the philosophy of the people who put this  
3           charter together, to have a strong mayor who  
4           would -- who would do -- make policy and handle  
5           all of the executive functions with a -- with a  
6           council that balanced it with the balance of  
7           power that we have at the federal system?

8           MR. MULLANEY:  Yes, sir.

9           MR. AUSTIN:  At the federal level, if I'm  
10          correct, you have an elected president and an  
11          elected congress, and nothing else elected,  
12          right?

13          MR. MULLANEY:  Yes, sir.

14          MR. AUSTIN:  And at the state level, for  
15          the whole state apparatus, you have a governor,  
16          legislature, and maybe -- I don't know, do we  
17          still elect some cabinet officers?  Not many.

18          MR. MULLANEY:  Not many.

19          MR. AUSTIN:  Not many.

20          But basically you have a governor and a  
21          legislature for the entire 20 million people in  
22          the state of Florida?

23          MR. MULLANEY:  Yes, sir.

24          MR. AUSTIN:  And one president and the  
25          council.

1           What we have at the local level, we have an  
2           elected sheriff, tax collector, property  
3           appraiser, Clerk of the Court, sheriff I think I  
4           said.

5           Do you have any comment on that, or does it  
6           suggest comment, or do you want to -- do you  
7           think these people should all be elected?

8           MR. MULLANEY: I want to be careful as to  
9           which groups we talk about, which ones we're  
10          not.

11          Clearly, I do not think you should be --  
12          the departments of the executive branch should  
13          be elected. I also do not think the independent  
14          authorities should either.

15          I believe, if you extend the elections,  
16          like you're just talking about, you will create  
17          the very anticonsolidation problem that -- I  
18          don't know how well I communicated -- which is  
19          interfering with our ability to speak with one  
20          voice; interfering with the public policy  
21          debate; and, quite frankly, interfering with a  
22          strong mayor form of government, who, in the  
23          end, as the mayor goes at consolidated  
24          government, so goes consolidated government.

25          So my short answer to you is -- is that --

1 to the extent you create silos of authority and  
2 independence and fragmentation, I believe you  
3 undermine consolidated government.

4 MR. AUSTIN: The charter originally  
5 recommended an appointed sheriff, right?

6 MR. MULLANEY: Yes, sir, it did.

7 MR. AUSTIN: And appointed a non- --  
8 recommended a nonsalaried school board?

9 MR. MULLANEY: Yes, sir.

10 MR. AUSTIN: Thank you.

11 Thank you, Mr. Mullaney.

12 If I might say, I've been listening to  
13 these presentations on consolidated government  
14 for 40-plus years, and that's the best I've ever  
15 heard.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. MULLANEY: Thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: I have no other speakers in  
19 the queue.

20 Thank you, Mr. Mullaney. We appreciate  
21 that.

22 Again, my apologies to the Commission. I  
23 should have articulated that better beforehand.  
24 But, again, to the extent that we want to  
25 address any issues related to the General

1 Counsel as a stakeholder, we can ask  
2 Mr. Mullaney to come back and speak on those  
3 issues.

4 Our next item on the agenda is to hear from  
5 the Duval County public schools. I know we have  
6 several representatives in the back. I don't  
7 know who --

8 (Mr. Hazouri approaches the podium.)

9 MR. HAZOURI: Hello.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hazouri, welcome.

11 MR. HAZOURI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 (Inaudible) at 11:30. We're -- thank you.  
13 I just want to remind you.

14 I do have my vice chairperson, Ms. Brenda  
15 Priestly Jackson, here. Ms. Betty Burney is  
16 here in attendance too, as a member, as -- and  
17 former chairperson. Of course, our  
18 superintendent.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of this  
20 illustrious commission.

21 I haven't had the opportunity -- I have had  
22 the opportunity of reading some of the minutes  
23 that have taken place thus far.

24 Mayor, good to see you, sir.

25 My name is Tommy Hazouri. I'm the --

1           currently the chairman of the Duval County  
2           School Board, have been a member of the school  
3           board now going into my sixth year, a former  
4           state legislator for 12 years, former mayor, and  
5           now chairman of the Duval County School Board.

6           So I hope today and this morning that I can  
7           bring some experience and perspective from that  
8           background in your deliberations, as well as to  
9           say to all of you, as these elected officials  
10          come up here, that it really isn't going to be  
11          about turf, it's about making observations and  
12          then letting you decide whether we are intact or  
13          not and whether or not you need to consider some  
14          tweaks and changes in -- in the structure of our  
15          charter.

16          Our consolidated government, as  
17          Mr. Mullaney was just saying, has come a long  
18          way since 1968. As a former mayor, I often said  
19          that I would not trade any other form of  
20          government for our consolidated government. I  
21          hold that true today, yet there are tweaks to be  
22          made and experience and experiments that will  
23          help us become even stronger.

24          But also as a former mayor and as chairman  
25          of the Duval County School Board, I can say

1 without equivocation that it's much easier to be  
2 mayor than it is to be a member of the Duval  
3 County School Board. As mayor, you can make  
4 instant decisions. As a school board member,  
5 beyond our local property taxes, we depend on  
6 the state and federal governments for the  
7 majority of our funding and many of our  
8 programs.

9 The school board respects its role as  
10 policy-makers and doesn't cross over, very often  
11 at least, into management. Our only employees  
12 are the superintendent and now our new internal  
13 board auditor.

14 With all due respect to General [sic]  
15 Rinaman, the Tuesday night fights of school  
16 board meetings that the public had to endure for  
17 years no longer holds true today. Unlike the  
18 boards of yesteryear, our board is aligned with  
19 a single purpose, student achievement.

20 When I read in the study mayoral-appointed  
21 boards and superintendents, I look at the whole  
22 body of work, as you must do if you decide that  
23 the suggestion is a viable consideration.

24 Do not take a single city whose boards and  
25 superintendent is appointed by the mayor as

1           being a panacea, a cure-all for this country's  
2           public education woes. I think the  
3           superintendent will address the research and the  
4           misconceptions of any major successes you may  
5           have read or heard about. All of us agree,  
6           however, all of us, that the public expects and  
7           deserves education success from pre-K through  
8           high school.

9                     I think as you hear from our superintendent  
10           and board vice chairperson, you'll see the great  
11           progress that's been made by our students and  
12           teachers over the past several years and the  
13           successes, too, of the privatization of many of  
14           our big ticket items, such as transportation,  
15           food service, and custodial service where it  
16           makes good dollars and cents.

17                    Divide the district into smaller districts,  
18           as Mr. Rinaman and some others have said, then I  
19           can ensure you the road to educational  
20           disaster. Our role is not to geographically --  
21           to divide our city into haves and have-nots as  
22           it surely will do, but to exercise our  
23           constitutional responsibility and obligation by  
24           having educational equity in all of our  
25           schools.

1           Some expect Duval County to be like some of  
2           our neighboring counties, but there's a very big  
3           difference. We're an urban/suburban, rural  
4           county with nearly 125,000 students who come  
5           from every walk of life. Our goal is to walk  
6           side by side, leaving no student or parent  
7           behind.

8           While the concept of mayoral-appointed  
9           boards and smaller districts may sound sensical  
10          and some mayors perhaps would want the power, I  
11          don't think any mayor would want the  
12          responsibility of governing the city and the  
13          school system and expect great success.

14          Less we be reminded after Tuesday night's  
15          City Council budget hearing, a mayor has all he  
16          or she can handle, dealing with their own  
17          billion-dollar budget and the many priorities  
18          that must and should be funded.

19          What I believe you can do as a commission  
20          is review how the City and the school district,  
21          on common ground, can help make consolidation  
22          work to the benefit of the taxpayers and our  
23          children.

24          A review of the relationship or lack  
25          thereof between the school district and the JEA

1 is but one important area to look at. The  
2 superintendent will delve further into this  
3 issue, but it's clear that the school district  
4 gets no contribution from the JEA, yet we  
5 receive half of the property taxes, and the City  
6 gets nearly \$100 million a year and the school  
7 district gets the shaft.

8 I believe there are ways that we can get  
9 funds from the JEA without the threat of raising  
10 rates if there's language that is written in the  
11 charter to allow any additional revenue  
12 contributions from the JTA -- JEA to the City to  
13 be shared equally and continued indefinitely.

14 Equally important, I believe there's a --  
15 beginning to be a better and stronger  
16 partnership with the City and the business  
17 community. The Jacksonville Journey can be a  
18 major partner. The Children's Commission,  
19 business leaders, the State Attorney's Office,  
20 United Way, the sheriff, and other  
21 not-for-profit organizations are all working  
22 together to be a part of the solution for the  
23 shared concerns we have for our kids.

24 I believe too where you can review some  
25 cost savings with the General Counsel's Office,

1           technology and other areas of common interest,  
2           then they too should be reviewed.

3           Multiple-use facilities, such as our  
4           clinics, libraries, swimming pools, parks and  
5           playgrounds can all address economic,  
6           educational, recreational, and wellness concerns  
7           of the city, adding to the community's overall  
8           well-being and the overall quality of life.  
9           Interlocal Agreements have already made some of  
10          these opportunities happen.

11          Our school board and school district  
12          recognizes that the education process is a  
13          never-ending story. It's a never-ending  
14          journey. Transparency of our work, outreach to  
15          the community, listening and learning have all  
16          made for a more proactive and productive  
17          relationship with our parents and business and  
18          community leaders.

19          Do we have miles to go? Indeed we do, but  
20          we have made significant progress, indeed we  
21          have. Notwithstanding our appointed  
22          authorities, there's no substitute for an  
23          elected school board when it comes to  
24          accountability. They represent the people; they  
25          have relationships with those constituents; they

1           have a fiduciary responsibility to the taxpayer  
2           and they all have one common denominator,  
3           student achievement, graduating our students and  
4           preparing them for college and the workforce.

5           I thank you all for the opportunity to  
6           speak to you today, Mr. Chairman, and members of  
7           this commission.

8           Next I would like to ask our superintendent  
9           to share his thoughts, followed by our board  
10          vice chairperson, Ms. Brenda Priestly Jackson.  
11          And then if you have questions, we'll be glad to  
12          take them.

13          Thank you, sir.

14          THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Hazouri.

15          (Mr. Pratt-Dannals approaches the podium.)

16          THE CHAIRMAN: Welcome, Superintendent.

17          MR. PRATT-DANNALS: Thank you,  
18          Mr. Hazouri. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and  
19          members of the Commission.

20          We appreciate the kind of work that you-all  
21          are going to put in over the next months to  
22          serve our community.

23          I'd like to talk about four topics very  
24          briefly. First of all, some successes that the  
25          Duval County public schools has had over the

1 last -- particularly over the last decade.  
2 Secondly, touch briefly on the issue of elected  
3 versus appointed board members. Third, again,  
4 briefly, on breaking up the district into  
5 smaller units. And then, finally, a couple of  
6 comments about the funding coming from JEA to  
7 the City.

8 First of all, while we are nowhere where we  
9 want to be in terms of student achievement -- so  
10 don't take this as we have arrived or we are the  
11 best in the country yet. We plan to be the best  
12 urban school district in the country, and I  
13 believe we're on our way to doing that, but  
14 often we are not given credit for the  
15 significant improvement and increases in student  
16 achievement that have happened, so just a couple  
17 of bullet points.

18 Since the FCAT came in over the last seven  
19 years, dramatic improvement in reading, math,  
20 science, and writing scores across the board.  
21 We still have concerns about some of our high  
22 schools. We still have work to do in terms of  
23 some of our challenged schools, and that is our  
24 focus now. But if you look at that in terms of  
25 significant double-digit increases, in some

1 cases triple, if you're looking at percent  
2 increases in student performance --

3 One of the kind of catch things that  
4 Florida does is grade schools. I'm not a huge  
5 fan of it, but it is kind of an easy script on  
6 how schools are doing. So if you look at --  
7 back in 1999, when we first started grading  
8 schools, we had 17 schools that were A or B. We  
9 currently have 102. Seventeen to 102.

10 During that time, the criteria became  
11 tougher. And so, again, dramatic improvement  
12 over time in some of these core academic areas.  
13 Graduation rates over the last several years, up  
14 7.2 percent. Dropout rate, down almost  
15 2 percent.

16 We just went through an extensive  
17 accreditation process. If you recall, in the  
18 past we had individual schools accredited by the  
19 Southern Association, now called Advanced Ed.

20 We, for the first time, went through  
21 district accreditation. And the thing that's  
22 key about that is the focus of district  
23 accreditation is to look at the alignment of  
24 vision, goals of the board, and to see how does  
25 that get transferred into achievement and real

1 outcomes at the school level and to see if there  
2 is that alignment, so they'll talk to the school  
3 board members, superintendent, and then they'll  
4 go out and talk with teachers and principals and  
5 find out, is there a strong alignment in terms  
6 of things happening.

7 And it was really key for us to have  
8 completed, about six months before that, our  
9 strategic plan that outlined that and made it  
10 very clear what our expectations are, what our  
11 goals are, how we're going to measure those, and  
12 to be very transparent with the public on that.

13 Another area where we've done a lot of work  
14 is using the expertise of the business community  
15 to improve a number of areas, in the whole  
16 financial area of investment, of how we do  
17 payables, and -- and our whole financial area.  
18 We've had significant input in our -- and are in  
19 the process of implementing that plan.

20 We also had business folks help us with the  
21 whole area of accountability with all of our  
22 district staff and going -- moving to a  
23 performance management system as opposed to  
24 what we had before, which was kind of a  
25 bureaucratic -- you've been here a number of

1           years and as long as you don't make waves, you  
2           probably keep your job.

3                   Now you have specific targets aligned to  
4           the strategic plan that are the focus of the  
5           district. And if you don't perform, we help you  
6           get better. And if you don't get better, you're  
7           not going to have a job. And so that kind of  
8           business expectation and accountability we have  
9           put in with a lot of help.

10                   As Mr. Hazouri said, we are the most  
11           privatized district in the state of Florida with  
12           huge areas of transportation in particular,  
13           custodial, food service, some of our major  
14           operations.

15                   Now, we don't privatize just to privatize.  
16           When we first started doing this, our  
17           maintenance staff said -- kind of saw the  
18           handwriting on the wall. They put in their own  
19           quality assurance program and have monitored  
20           that, and so we still have most of our  
21           maintenance in-house.

22                   And, in fact, we have a score card for all  
23           of our departments, and our maintenance staff  
24           usually gets one of the highest scores because  
25           they are responsive to schools, they're

1 responsive to principals, and they're  
2 accountable for the kind of results they get  
3 from the school level.

4 So all this is service to schools, schools  
5 tell us how we're doing, schools tell us how to  
6 get better.

7 Finally, we've had, as Mr. Hazouri has  
8 said, significant involvement and improvement in  
9 terms of our connection not only with the  
10 business community but with the nonprofits and  
11 the other authorities. An example, we partnered  
12 with a number of mentor organizations to  
13 increase our mentors, which we almost doubled  
14 this year.

15 Only one staff member on our team to do  
16 this, and yet because we partnered with other  
17 agencies, we went from 2,500 to 4,000, and we  
18 have a goal of each year to increase by 1,500  
19 mentors a year until we get 20,000 by the year  
20 2020. We can't do that by ourselves. We're not  
21 going to staff up and have 20 people out  
22 recruiting mentors. We'd have to do that if we  
23 did it by ourselves, but because we've  
24 partnered, we think we can reach that goal  
25 through collaboratively working with others.

1           Second issue, elected versus appointed  
2 school board. The most important thing with  
3 school boards is not how they get there, it's  
4 what they do. As part of my research for my  
5 doctoral program -- which I'm still in the midst  
6 of. Hopefully one day this decade I'll finish.

7           Here's the things that school districts --  
8 that large urban districts do in order to  
9 improve student performance. None of these  
10 relate to governance. They build civic capacity  
11 and trust. They create a vision and belief that  
12 all students can perform at high levels. They  
13 have a strong superintendent and senior staff.  
14 They have an aligned instructional system that  
15 makes very clear what students are expected to  
16 know, institutional paths, professional develop  
17 [sic] times in that, assessments that are  
18 common.

19           Now, this may seem like in the oh, duh  
20 column, of course you would do this. There are  
21 a number of districts where schools are all over  
22 the map, doing a hundred different things and  
23 there's no consistency from school to school  
24 within the same district. We have made that  
25 more consistent so that we can support it,

1 monitor it, and have accountability.

2 There's a strong accountability plan, and I  
3 mentioned that. I'd encourage you to go online  
4 to look at our strategic plan,  
5 DuvalSchools.org. It's very aggressive. If you  
6 look at the student achievement targets overall,  
7 not just overall, but if you look at the  
8 disaggregated achievement where we're expecting  
9 to eliminate the achievement gap, there are very  
10 rigorous kinds of targets that we have over the  
11 next several years.

12 You allocate resources based on need; you  
13 focus on your low-performing schools; and you  
14 have as much school-based decision making as  
15 possible in the areas of budget and staffing.

16 We have probably the longest tradition of  
17 urban school districts in the state of Florida  
18 of giving principals authority over their budget  
19 and staffing, much more so than many districts  
20 who do a unit allocation system and tell schools  
21 what their budgets are going to be.

22 When we look at appointed versus mayoral  
23 control -- there is a prize that's called  
24 The Broad Prize. It was named after Eli Broad,  
25 who was the "B" in K&B Homes, and also started

1 SunTrust Insurance Company, and is a very  
2 wealthy man, and has focused on improving urban  
3 school boards and improving urban districts, and  
4 there's a prize each year. There are five  
5 finalists and then there's a winner. Over the  
6 last five years -- so that would be 25  
7 finalists. Of those, three of them had  
8 appointed boards, three out of 25.

9 And so I think that says that there are  
10 districts around this country who are doing an  
11 excellent job. Again, we hope to be a part of  
12 that five and eventually the one, and we're  
13 working towards that.

14 Our board has made some tough decisions.  
15 Sometimes advocating for an appointed board says  
16 elected boards have a lot of trouble making  
17 tough decisions, particularly tough financial  
18 decisions.

19 This year our board has changed our high  
20 school/middle school schedules, very difficult,  
21 gut-wrenching kind of decision. Closed some  
22 schools, very difficult decision for elected  
23 boards to do. Changed our transportation  
24 system. All this to reduce cost in this  
25 difficult financial environment, and our board

1           has taken on some very difficult and challenging  
2           decisions and been able to do that.

3                     There is a sense in terms of those  
4           districts that currently have appointed boards,  
5           a lack of connection with the public. And, in  
6           fact, I can give you an example. Chicago public  
7           schools closed a number of schools, didn't have  
8           significant public input, and now had to come  
9           back and change their whole process. It's  
10          yearlong and really mirrors similarly what we go  
11          through with our ACE process in terms of  
12          extensive community meetings, input, hearing  
13          people, what's the impact, how can we make this  
14          work for as many people as possible.

15                    So regardless of whether you have appointed  
16          or elected school boards, you still have to have  
17          accountability and have input and listen to the  
18          public. So somehow this -- it's -- you know,  
19          this is kind of a silver bullet, that this is  
20          going to insulate the school district from  
21          politics. The reverse of that is it insulates  
22          them from input, or has the potential to if they  
23          aren't very careful in terms of the kind of  
24          input they have.

25                    Next thing is that this is in the state

1 constitution, so this is not something that the  
2 commission would have authority in and of  
3 itself. It would take a constitutional change  
4 in order to have an appointed board versus  
5 elected, and I will tell you that school  
6 districts throughout the state would not support  
7 a move in that direction.

8 We are different from the authorities. Our  
9 focus is on young human beings and their  
10 future. We are not an entity that helps create  
11 power, that manages airplanes, that manages port  
12 traffic, that manages buses and transportation.  
13 We are in a very different business, where  
14 people's children are involved, they are more  
15 concerned.

16 And I have many friends who work with JEA,  
17 so this is not anything about JEA. But as long  
18 as the power is on and I'm not too concerned  
19 about my bill, I don't think about that too  
20 much. But every single day my child is in  
21 school, I'm thinking about my child and what's  
22 happening to my child. So I think it's a very  
23 different environment than perhaps some of our  
24 authorities.

25 Finally, this issue in terms of

1           concentrating this under the mayor.  As  
2           Mr. Hazouri said, we are -- our budget --  
3           operating budget is about the same as the City.  
4           Ballpark, a billion, a little under that.  We  
5           have about 4,000 more employees than the City,  
6           so you'd be more than doubling the  
7           responsibility of the mayor.

8                     And as a mayor ran -- the mayor would be  
9           running as much on what they were going to do  
10          for the school district as what they were going  
11          to do for the City.  And I will tell you, as I  
12          came into this role a year and a half  
13          ago -- many of you know I've been working for  
14          the district for 33 years and had all kinds of  
15          roles, but as I came into this role a year and a  
16          half ago and met with each of -- the mayor, the  
17          sheriff, the community college president, the  
18          president of the University of North Florida,  
19          all whom I knew and had worked with before, each  
20          and every single one of them said, I wouldn't  
21          have your job for a million bucks.  And they  
22          have plenty of responsibility and challenge of  
23          their own.

24                     I don't know if I'd trade with them either,  
25          but I think it says that it -- to combine these

1 two functions under our mayoral control really  
2 is a huge seat change in terms of the kind of  
3 responsibility and how they would run because  
4 they would ultimately be accountable, if  
5 they appoint the board or appoint the  
6 superintendent -- there's various ways in which  
7 the communities that -- that do this implement  
8 it -- it would be a huge seat change in terms of  
9 how our city is structured and organized around  
10 that mayoral issue.

11 So, with that, I will turn it over to  
12 Ms. Priestly Jackson, and then we'd be glad to  
13 take any questions.

14 Thank you, again, very much for your time.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Superintendent.

16 (Ms. Priestly Jackson approaches the  
17 podium.)

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Welcome, Ms. Priestly  
19 Jackson.

20 MS. PRIESTLY JACKSON: Good morning.

21 Thank you for an opportunity to come share  
22 with you. I am currently the vice chairman of  
23 the school board and had the honor of serving as  
24 chair for the '05/'06 school year.

25 I'm going to build upon what our

1 Chairman Hazouri said and our Superintendent  
2 Ed Pratt-Dannals and talk about -- we've made  
3 progress and yet we acknowledge fully we have a  
4 long way to go.

5 I want to start by basically saying I think  
6 Florida is unique, and Jacksonville in  
7 particular because unlike many other states  
8 around the country, we have a paramount duty in  
9 Florida to educate all young people.

10 There are four classifications of  
11 constitutional amendments as it relates to  
12 public education, and Florida has the highest,  
13 which is the fourth level.

14 The first basically imposes a minimal  
15 standard that just merely mandates education.  
16 The second imposes a minimal standard, but also  
17 indicates some language relative to the quality  
18 of education. The third provision strengthens  
19 the standard by adding some specific mandates,  
20 like all means, but Florida -- and I'm going to  
21 read that you -- has a Category 4 provision  
22 which governs us here in Duval County, which  
23 makes education a very important duty of the  
24 state and imposes the highest mandate of  
25 support.

1 Under the Category 4 state constitutional  
2 provision, education is designated a priority in  
3 the state, and our language reads  
4 thusly: "Florida State Constitution,  
5 Article 10. 1, Public Education.

6 "The education of children is a fundamental  
7 value of the people of the state of Florida. It  
8 is therefore a paramount duty of the state to  
9 make adequate provision for the education of all  
10 children residing within its borders. Adequate  
11 provision shall be made by law for a uniform,  
12 efficient, safe, secure, and high-quality system  
13 of free public schools that allow students to  
14 obtain a high-quality education for the  
15 establishment, maintenance, operation of its  
16 institutions of higher learning and other public  
17 educational programs that needs the public" --  
18 "and needs the public may require."

19 Why did I start out there? Because in  
20 Florida we have 67 counties and 67 elected  
21 school boards. I believe if you look at the  
22 historical foundation of school boards in this  
23 country, they started out being elected in  
24 Massachusetts.

25 There is no position to me closer to the

1           people or more -- a position more important to  
2           the overall quality of life than an elected  
3           school board, and I think what you have  
4           representative -- represented right now in the  
5           present constitution of the school board is an  
6           evolution of Jacksonville, how far we've come  
7           and yet how far we have to go.

8                     Many of you mentioned that the original  
9           consolidated charter started in 1968. What I  
10          would share, that back in 1968 Jacksonville  
11          didn't have a history of inclusiveness at that  
12          time. It was working towards it, but if you  
13          look at the present constitution of the members  
14          of the school board, it is one that is  
15          inclusive.

16                    For the first time in the history of the  
17          board, we have six members that are graduates of  
18          Duval County public schools, ranging from  
19          graduating in 1955 to when I graduated in 1984.

20                    And what does that mean? I think we've had  
21          an opportunity to look at the evolution of what  
22          has happened in public education in Jacksonville  
23          and bring best practices to that end.

24                    How have we done that? This is a board  
25          that has been committed to engaging in

1 professional development and meaningfully  
2 looking at and researching issues. We have done  
3 that through our participation in the Broad  
4 Foundation, the Council of Urban Boards of  
5 Education, the Florida School Boards  
6 Association, and National School Boards  
7 Association.

8 And why is that important? Oftentimes  
9 people make a direct link to the overall quality  
10 of life and the lack of education or the quality  
11 of education in a particular city. I think  
12 these -- the particular members of the school  
13 board at present have real-time information in  
14 terms of what does a quality of life look like.

15 You know, we are the individuals that are  
16 in the grocery stores every day when folk get to  
17 say, my kid is not in this particular class and  
18 my child had a bus problem or my child wasn't  
19 able to get a job; or the teacher that says, I'm  
20 challenged because I'm spending too much money  
21 out of pocket; or the business entity that says,  
22 I want to have an opportunity to bid on  
23 contracts locally in the city.

24 We hear this all of the time, and so it  
25 helps infuse our decisions and that helps

1           make -- help us -- helps us make -- maintain a  
2           positive relationship with the citizens in  
3           Jacksonville.

4           I think there was -- it was alluded to  
5           earlier that, if you look at the overall budget  
6           of the school district and the -- and the  
7           reality that our budget comes from tax dollars  
8           of the citizens, they need to have direct  
9           accountability and resp- -- from the school  
10          board members in terms of how those funds are  
11          allocated and they're used.

12          There is nothing more efficient in that  
13          than voting folk in and voting folk out. There  
14          can absolutely be nothing that is more powerful  
15          than saying that. And believe you me, as an  
16          elected school board, we hear them.

17          Appointed school boards, in my estimation,  
18          are oftentimes disengaged, which was mentioned  
19          earlier by the other two speakers, from the --  
20          from the community. And let me be real clear, I  
21          believe an elected school board and an education  
22          is the pillar of our democracy. To me, there is  
23          nothing more fundamentally important when our  
24          great country and our state in particular  
25          undertook this massive undertaking to educate

1           our citizens.

2                    You need to have real-time information in  
3           what the citizens in a particular community  
4           values.  And, in my estimation, an elected  
5           school board supports that.

6                    It is very good to sit back and think  
7           theoretically individuals who are appointed  
8           would be in a position to make those same type  
9           of decisions.  I would beg to differ with that.  
10          I would -- I would tell you that, you know,  
11          we're not in the business of providing quality  
12          education to widgets.  We're providing quality  
13          education to young people, and that looks  
14          radically different from certain other public --  
15          or certain other educational environments that  
16          have a level of parental engagement or  
17          involvement.

18                   We are required to educate all young people  
19          that come to us, whether their parents are --  
20          parents and guardians are engaged, whether they  
21          are rich or poor, whether they are black, white,  
22          Latino or other.  That is our obligation, and --  
23          and I think that our present constitution of the  
24          school board and it -- and its mission, with the  
25          level of diversity, shows what Jacksonville can

1           be in the future in terms of its level of  
2           engagement with its citizens.

3           A few other points I'd like to mention.

4           Quite often when you think about the school  
5           board, you often think about, well, what can we  
6           do in its direct relationship to crime? I will  
7           share with you that the sole purpose and focus  
8           of the elected members of the school board is  
9           the focus on student achievement. And I  
10          genuinely believe that if we focus on student  
11          achievement and we're able to move all young  
12          people to high levels of performance, then we  
13          will see positive impact on our overall quality  
14          of life which directly relates to crime.

15          In my estimation, an enlightened person  
16          makes the best decisions, and so the school  
17          board is working towards that end to make  
18          certain that our young people graduate with the  
19          reading, math, science, social studies, and art  
20          skills they need to go on and actualize their --  
21          theirs dreams in society.

22          We're also responsible for making certain  
23          that we have stakeholder input. We -- the  
24          stakeholders that we have actively sought to  
25          include are not only PTA and the SAC, School

1       Advisory Councils, but neighborhood  
2       associations, nonprofits, the Chamber of  
3       Commerce, and other elect officials.

4               We don't make our decisions in a vacuum.  
5       And since I have been on the board, we have had  
6       an opportunity to engage various stakeholders  
7       all over to help us make the best decisions in  
8       terms of what we want to do with our young  
9       people.

10              Again, I stated earlier that there's a  
11       direct link between the overall quality of life  
12       and the education in the city. I think that I  
13       can share with you during my almost eight years  
14       on the school board that I have watched a  
15       radical increase in the level of achievement for  
16       previously disengaged populations, and that  
17       relates largely to the African-American  
18       community.

19              We're not where we need to go, and I will  
20       tell you, I'm often the dissenting vote and  
21       voice in terms of not moving fast enough or  
22       aggressive enough. But I believe that because  
23       of our constitution of the board and because we  
24       have individuals that have real-time perspective  
25       and a real connection with the community and

1 various walks of life, we come to the table to  
2 make the best decisions and we're able to share  
3 different perspectives of individuals, but at  
4 the same time hold all young people to the same  
5 high standard. We don't sit back and say, if  
6 you live in this particular community or you  
7 live in that particular community or if you look  
8 a certain way, then we have lower expectations  
9 for you.

10 I will close in basically saying that, to  
11 me, the election of our -- the election of our  
12 school board members and our diversity,  
13 geographic diversity in Jacksonville is our  
14 greatest asset. And what I mean by that --  
15 someone mentioned earlier that we are rural,  
16 suburban, urban, and I also call it beach people  
17 as well. There is nothing any richer than  
18 that. We have the opportunity in Jacksonville  
19 to be a model for the rest of the country  
20 because you will find no other geographic area  
21 that touches on all the populations that we  
22 have.

23 It is very powerful and positive that those  
24 various communities are represented by elected  
25 constituencies because as much as there are some

1 differences, there is so much that we have in  
2 common and all of us want a better and brighter  
3 Jacksonville.

4 Thank you.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Ms. Priestly  
6 Jackson.

7 MR. HAZOURI: Any questions from anyone?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. I have nobody in the  
9 queue, but I have some questions, so yes. I'm  
10 starting to get some others as well.

11 I will lead off. I have spoken with  
12 several people in preparation for this role  
13 about education issues, and an issue that I keep  
14 hearing from -- from the community, from people  
15 who care about education is the issue of an  
16 unpaid school board, not so much elected versus  
17 appointed, but paid versus unpaid. So I'd like  
18 your comments on that dynamic and whether you  
19 think it's a relevant factor in educational  
20 outcomes.

21 Secondly -- well, actually, go ahead and  
22 answer that first.

23 MR. HAZOURI: Well, I don't know that it's  
24 a relative factor in education outcome, but I  
25 think it's a -- it's a -- you know, we're all

1           elected with whatever the salary was. And, you  
2           know, we've taken a reduction this year, around  
3           38,000, whatever. And no different than the  
4           City Council --

5                     I will say this however: Not related to  
6           the salary, but to the work product that's  
7           being -- that takes place or the work that's --  
8           takes place.

9                     And I hear from time to time -- and I'm the  
10          husband of a teacher of 42 years and a  
11          husband -- a son of -- a father of a son who's  
12          been teaching for four years, and having chaired  
13          the Education Committee, I do understand when  
14          people come up and say, well, you know, y'all  
15          should -- you shouldn't be paid, that you -- you  
16          know, that this should be voluntary.

17                    But the truth is, we don't just come on  
18          Tuesday night and vote on policy issues. We're  
19          there 24 hours a day. Quite literally, we're  
20          there 24 hours a day. We're at schools, we're  
21          in the neighborhood meetings with our ACE  
22          programs, we're in neighborhoods meeting with --  
23          as Ms. Priestly Jackson indicated, trying to  
24          listen and to learn, and traveling to different  
25          schools at no pay. I mean, we don't charge for

1 all the schools. It's 162-plus schools in this  
2 county, 850 square miles or so of coverage, but  
3 we -- you know, the board -- and I'm not going  
4 to speak for me. I would do it either way. It  
5 doesn't matter to me.

6 But what it is important to me is that --  
7 the work product or the work that is being done  
8 by board members, and I've seen it, to the  
9 person [sic].

10 Mr. Gentry, when he got on the board, "I  
11 had no idea that all this was involved." Maybe  
12 he thought that -- and he's great, but maybe he  
13 thought that he was going to come up there, you  
14 know, do his thing on Tuesday night and would go  
15 home and come back next Tuesday next month and  
16 that's it, but it's every day.

17 We have workshops that do the work product  
18 before it gets to the board. We have  
19 subcommittees. We have audit committees. We  
20 have all kinds of things that go on literally  
21 24 hours a day. I mean, we meet, meet, and  
22 meet, and in a productive way, not just to meet  
23 for the sake of meeting. And it takes time away  
24 from those who have opportun- -- who have jobs,  
25 those who have retired.

1           So, to me, if the question was, should they  
2           be paid? Probably yes, just as much as a  
3           part-time City Councilman should be paid.  
4           They're that way all over the state. If they  
5           did away with it, personally, it wouldn't matter  
6           to me. I mean, I'm not rich by any means, but  
7           I'm saying I do it and I think all of us do it  
8           because of the work and because of the end  
9           product, and that's educating our kids.

10           THE CHAIRMAN: Well, as a -- to follow on  
11           your answer, and all the work that you do, I've  
12           also heard people articulate a viewpoint -- more  
13           of a different philosophical approach to the  
14           role of the school board, which is that it  
15           should be more of a policy review body and not a  
16           constituency, service body, that it should not  
17           be the role of the school board to take calls  
18           from parents who say, my child didn't get into  
19           this class or this school, or I have this issue  
20           with that teacher.

21           MR. HAZOURI: And we don't. We have a  
22           great constituency.

23           We get those calls every day. I mean, I  
24           get them in the elevators, at Publix. Maybe  
25           because of my persona from other offices I've

1 had, but -- recognition, but all of us get them  
2 from all over the county.

3 I don't think that -- and we have what we  
4 call our constituent services. It goes through  
5 the secretary, then it's delegated to the  
6 various -- management team and transportation  
7 and academic services, whatever it might be.

8 So we're not there. We're policymakers,  
9 not policy reviewers. We review policy, but we  
10 also make policy, and that's the job of not  
11 crossing over into management. We let  
12 management -- I told you, we only have the  
13 superintendent. All these years, that's all the  
14 school boards around the state has had. And now  
15 we can have our own internal auditor, which we  
16 have. So they're our only employees. So we  
17 don't get into that.

18 I get calls, especially before school  
19 starts, my child needs to go to Mandarin, mine  
20 needs to go here. They've been illegally there  
21 for two years or they've been someplace else.  
22 That's not our call. We send them to the right  
23 person, they address them, and it's done.

24 We tell them, and they know -- maybe  
25 districts -- again, we're not living in

1           yesterday's school border era, we are not. This  
2           is a different school board and has been since  
3           I've been on that board, and that was one of my  
4           missions, but it was already beginning. And we  
5           have the cohesiveness and we understand our role  
6           in reformed governance, and that is we don't  
7           respond to those questions. We listen, because  
8           we're elected, and they expect it.

9           They don't know who you are. When I was in  
10          the legislature, somebody called me, when we  
11          were representing multimember districts, from a  
12          phone booth on the west side of Jacksonville,  
13          had one quarter -- that's when we had telephone  
14          booths -- one quarter on Blanding Boulevard,  
15          some dogs was chasing him. And they called  
16          him -- and he don't know anybody else to call.  
17          He just recognized my name, called, what can you  
18          do?

19          They don't know what your job is. They  
20          just know you're an elected official many times  
21          and they need help. And that's the difference,  
22          I think, in having been in every capacity.  
23          That's the difference than serving on an  
24          authority.

25          I could not imagine -- and I respect our

1 business community. I could not imagine them  
2 getting a call, them going out to the schools  
3 and doing the legwork that has to be done and  
4 that's required of a school board member.

5 It's not enough -- you're not going to --  
6 and I'm not going to be an elitist, and I don't  
7 think anyone else is, and this is a portrayal  
8 that we would have, that would be the profile we  
9 would have in the community, that we're elected,  
10 but we don't listen.

11 And one of the biggest difference [sic]  
12 I've seen on our board is our transparency, that  
13 we are out in the community, that we are  
14 listening. And by listening, we're making a  
15 difference in our educational successes.

16 Ms. Priestly Jackson, any others?

17 MS. PRIESTLY JACKSON: I think that the  
18 only thing I would add to what Mr. Hazouri said  
19 was in terms of -- it sounds very nice and  
20 theoretical to say you just make policy, but  
21 they have an everyday practical application.

22 And I will tell you what has benefitted  
23 me -- I'm the only board member currently that  
24 still has children in the Duval County public  
25 school system, and I will tell you -- and it has

1           been more than -- on one occasion we have  
2           implemented what we thought was a great policy.  
3           And when you see it filter down, folk can get in  
4           your ear and say, it did not work out the way  
5           you thought; i.e., early release days. That  
6           sounds good, but if you have working-class  
7           people, they can't get off of work at that time  
8           without a reasonable accommodation made by the  
9           district to care for their kids, and so we need  
10          that to make the best decisions because it does  
11          not matter how enlightened as elected officials  
12          we may think that we are. We have to meet folk  
13          where they are and form a shared vision of where  
14          we need to go, and that's how communicating with  
15          us kind of infuses that for us.

16                 MR. PRATT-DANNALS: I would echo what they  
17                 said. There are school districts where --  
18                 particularly in the area of, help me with this  
19                 particular thing that's outside of the policy  
20                 arena, help me get a work-around, get my child  
21                 to a particular school.

22                 Secondary -- where often you see is in  
23                 purchasing, particularly major purchasing.  
24                 There are some school districts where that's a  
25                 problem, where board members try to inject --

1           you know, I know a friend and this friend is a  
2           contractor for this particular service or  
3           function, you need to give the contract to  
4           them. Obviously, that's illegal and -- and  
5           unethical, but there are some places where  
6           that's happened.

7           A third area is appointments. You need to  
8           appoint the following person because I think  
9           they'd be a good person.

10           I think what we have is a -- good checks  
11           and balances, and that is the board will give me  
12           feedback from what they are hearing, and I take  
13           that as counsel. But it's very clear -- in  
14           purchasing we follow a specific process. It's  
15           fair, open, in most cases bid or RFP, all by  
16           statute and by regulation. We play it straight.

17           When it comes to personnel appointments,  
18           while I listen to the board, it's very clear  
19           that I have that authority and responsibility.  
20           And if I'm going to be held accountable for the  
21           results in this district, I have to be able to  
22           do that based on my best judgment.

23           I'm not perfect in that. Occasionally I  
24           make a mistake. But if I don't have that  
25           authority, then you can't hold the

1 superintendent accountable, and all of our board  
2 understands that.

3 In terms of the other issues, I've helped  
4 us do a work-around. I've made it very clear,  
5 and our board understands that, is that once we  
6 start doing work-arounds, then that's expected  
7 for everybody. So it's all straight, whether  
8 it's magnet assignments or any other kind of  
9 functionality, it's by the policy and  
10 procedure. If we're going to change something,  
11 we change the policy of the procedure so it  
12 changes for everybody.

13 But I think there is that positive thing in  
14 terms of, I can't be everywhere in this  
15 community, as large as it is. And so the  
16 feedback that board members hear in terms of the  
17 impact of our policies and whether or not that's  
18 working from their perspective is very valuable,  
19 helpful feedback that we take and use it as we  
20 modify what we're doing.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Catlett.

22 MR. CATLIN: Thank you all for coming and  
23 speaking to us. Mr. Mayor --

24 I thought you said "Catlin." Sorry.

25 MR. CATLETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1           I had the privilege of being in that class  
2           that was disaccredited in 1965, so  
3           congratulations --

4           MR. HAZOURI: You've come a long way.

5           MR. CATLETT: Yes. Thank you.

6           And I certainly appreciate the good work  
7           that you folks are doing, whether the -- I mean,  
8           I know all the members of our school board. If  
9           they were appointed or elected or free or they  
10          paid us, they couldn't be more passionate or  
11          hard working about it.

12          And, Ed, also, you've done a wonderful job.

13          The question is this: What is it that this  
14          commission can look at that would help you hit  
15          your goals and work within this consolidated  
16          government? What is it that you would like for  
17          us to look at?

18          MR. HAZOURI: Thank you, Mr. Catlett.

19          I've touched on it in my -- in my brief  
20          remarks, but we're already doing Interlocal  
21          Agreements, which helps a lot.

22          I think the partnership is what the key  
23          is. Mr. Austin -- Mayor Austin knows exactly  
24          what I'm referring to, and we're doing that.

25          The Jacksonville Journey -- for the first

1 time we're meeting, you know, with the --  
2 with -- not the first time, but in any  
3 substantive way with the mayor and the  
4 Jacksonville Journey in how we can address  
5 truancy, how can we address out-of-school  
6 suspension centers, other things of that  
7 nature.

8 The same way with the State Attorney's  
9 Office. We met with Angela and discussed what  
10 we can do to keep our kids in school, to keep  
11 them from just being, you know, behind bars or  
12 being arrested, how can we improve in these  
13 areas. The same way with the sheriff and  
14 others.

15 What I think -- again, I mentioned certain  
16 items.

17 The JEA is an important issue. It's been  
18 around since I've been -- well, it wasn't so  
19 much so when I was mayor, but neither was I on  
20 the school board then and realizing what they  
21 didn't get.

22 But when you're collecting about as much of  
23 the taxes as the City is and you get nothing in  
24 return for it -- and, yeah, we get 10 percent  
25 off, as Mr. Rinaman would say, and that doesn't

1 mean anything today because of the rate  
2 increases and -- in our electric bills and water  
3 and sewer bills, which I understand that too,  
4 having come from another side.

5 But I think if we can start looking at the  
6 extra income that comes in and they get on top  
7 of the -- next year it will be 99.some-odd  
8 million dollars on top of that, that we could  
9 share that on an indefinite -- for an indefinite  
10 period, that will help.

11 Where we can find -- where we can do -- and  
12 this is probably not part that you can write  
13 into the charter, but what we can have --  
14 multiuse facilities, as some of us have done in  
15 the past with parks and playgrounds and swimming  
16 pools and clinics, wellness clinics, when we  
17 were dealing with the obesity programs, and  
18 other things of that nature. And so I think in  
19 that -- and then to review technology, can we  
20 combine it?

21 You know, the -- one of the problems -- and  
22 I've heard Mr. Gentry say it already, and -- and  
23 we've all -- you know, either we're a part of  
24 consolidation or we're not. We can't be in  
25 between. Unlike the other bodies, the tax

1 collector, the property appraiser -- not even  
2 the clerk really because they're having to deal  
3 with their own thing with the State, as you  
4 know.

5 But we can't be part of consolidation and  
6 we get the good and the bad and then we get  
7 nothing on the other side of -- either we're  
8 part of it or we can go and do our own thing  
9 separately, as a duly-elected constitutional  
10 body.

11 I think -- and maybe it's my background. I  
12 want to be a part of consolidation because  
13 that's why we succeed. So goes our education  
14 system, so goes the economy. I get that. And  
15 that's why I made it my number one priority when  
16 I was mayor, education first, and that's what it  
17 is. If you don't have a quality education  
18 system, you're not going to bring businesses  
19 here, you're not going to keep the kids here.

20 So therein lies the issues. Maybe  
21 technology, maybe in purchasing. I don't know,  
22 you know, what y'all want to review and look at,  
23 but, you know, what I keep seeing every year at  
24 the -- the thing hanging over -- you hear about  
25 an elected school board, appointed school board,

1 divide the districts.

2 Look at the districts today -- and I'm -- I  
3 know I'm taking you off to another district  
4 again, but look at the districts. Could you  
5 imagine -- we get X number of dollars. We try  
6 to carve up the districts as we can, but we're  
7 not doing any more for Mandarin than we do for  
8 Ribault and Raines and Forrest. And each of  
9 them have needs, just like the City Council and  
10 the mayor has to deal with the community as a  
11 whole. Whether it's potholes or pupils, we have  
12 the same issues. I don't care if you're a  
13 Democrat or Republican, they need a job to get  
14 done, and that's what we try to do.

15 But in those areas that I cite, JEA --  
16 funding is important to us. We depend on  
17 the State. They've come down way below what we  
18 used to get from the State and what we get back  
19 here. We don't have the opportunity to create  
20 new income for the school board budget. We got  
21 that little carrot this year of the quarter mill  
22 that we adopted tentatively already, producing  
23 maybe \$36 million. But when you see your budget  
24 go into this year with 150-, \$160 million  
25 shortfall and you get it down to 40-something

1 million, you think you won. But you know who  
2 doesn't win? And that's the kids because we  
3 have to cut back programs.

4 We made a commitment to art and music, PE,  
5 those kinds of things, to keep them in place  
6 because that's part of the educational success  
7 for our kids, and -- but as far as the other  
8 things -- some of the things I mentioned to you,  
9 Mr. Catlett, are the things I think that we  
10 could be looking at as a part of the -- the body  
11 of consolidation.

12 The lawyer services. I can envision one  
13 day where we have a different opinion than the  
14 General Counsel's Office, and what do we do?  
15 The General Counsel serves us, so we're not  
16 going to ask the General Counsel to give us an  
17 opinion when they're representing the City and  
18 we need to get another type of an answer or a  
19 more objective answer.

20 I think we have a great relationship with  
21 them, but some days you're not going to have  
22 that kind of a situation, that you do want to  
23 challenge something that they've interpreted,  
24 and so I think we need to look at that somewhat  
25 and to keep it as tight as we can and with some

1 flexibility.

2 But as far as -- and the elected thing and  
3 all, y'all can study it, but please, please --  
4 you heard Ed, I think Nancy Broner could tell  
5 you, who's on our school board. If you're going  
6 to look at it, then look at the whole body.  
7 Don't just appoint a committee among yourselves  
8 or somebody in Jacksonville to decide. Do it  
9 with a broad scope of looking at how successful  
10 or lack of success that they've experienced in  
11 Chicago, in New York, where Ms. Burney's brother  
12 is on -- used to be on the assembly, on the  
13 City Council. He gets \$1 million a year besides  
14 the regular budget to go out into the district  
15 and do what little things he can do in Harlem,  
16 and that's not easy. And, believe me, the mayor  
17 does not want -- and I've been there. I'd love  
18 to be the education czar of everything. You  
19 know, everybody would like to do that.

20 Everybody knows about education. I chaired  
21 the Retired Personnel and Collective Bargaining  
22 Committee in the legislature, dealt with  
23 billions of dollars of pension funds. Nobody  
24 ever asked a question.

25 I chaired the Education Committee,

1           everybody's hands go up because they've all been  
2           to school, they all have questions, they all  
3           know what year you're talking -- you're going to  
4           start kindergarten, what year you're going to do  
5           this. So everybody has an interest in that. I  
6           just wish that that interest would come back  
7           into parental support, and we're starting to get  
8           that.

9           So some of the things are very intangible  
10          that you can't deal with in the charter, but  
11          that's what we have to do. And I don't think  
12          anybody would want to -- and to the appointed  
13          body, again, notwithstanding the authority --

14          THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hazouri, we have several  
15          questions --

16          (Simultaneous speaking.)

17          MR. HAZOURI: -- (inaudible) we would not  
18          want to get into that --

19          THE CHAIRMAN: -- I'd like to be able to  
20          get to them.

21          MR. HAZOURI: Go ahead.

22          THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Catlin.

23          MR. CATLIN: Thank you.

24          It sounds like, to me, that you didn't  
25          agree with many things that Mr. Rinaman said at

1           our last meeting.

2                   One of the things the Mr. Rinaman brought  
3           up was that the school district is,  
4           quote-unquote, too big, too many students right  
5           now, and his philosophy was that we should break  
6           it into two to three districts.  When the  
7           charter was written, it said we'll have seven  
8           school board members.

9                   Would it be to your opinion to add more  
10          school board members that can handle more -- it  
11          sounds like to me, like you're saying,  
12          Mayor Hazouri, that you are working pretty hard  
13          out there to see the people you can see.

14                   Is it getting too big?  And what's your  
15          rebuttal to his philosophy to break it into two  
16          to three districts?

17                   MR. HAZOURI:  I think Ms. Priestly Jackson  
18          has the same opinion that I do.  It's about --  
19          (off microphone).

20                   (Mr. Priestly Jackson approaches the  
21          podium.)

22                   MS. PRIESTLY JACKSON:  I'm going to share  
23          with you -- I think that one of our greatest  
24          strengths is that we -- the seven of us can work  
25          together.  We're not such a large governing body

1           that we're unwieldy, and so we're -- we're able  
2           to reach a consensus.

3           I will tell you what we've been able to do  
4           here in Duval County -- and be real clear, we  
5           have declining enrollment in Duval County. We  
6           don't have escalating enrollment, and so, you  
7           know, the argument made right now that our  
8           numbers are going down makes it more manageable,  
9           in my estimation.

10           But what we have been able to do because of  
11           the size of our district and because we have two  
12           schools that are in the top ten, we have been  
13           able to model what's going on in those schools  
14           and the programs to offer to our most challenged  
15           schools. So, for example, we have put some  
16           acceleration programs in some of our most  
17           challenged schools that have a high percentage  
18           of citizens that are minority and low income.  
19           You cannot do that if you split the district  
20           up.

21           We have created access to -- to the best  
22           schools in the district for all schools, no  
23           matter where you live. Outside of our magnet  
24           program, even to the point that if a school  
25           comes back graded failing by the State, we have

1 open access up to Stanton, Paxon, DA, Mandarin,  
2 Fletcher, to -- to the students all over the  
3 district.

4 And why is that important? Because that is  
5 what we're able to do because we're so large and  
6 because we have some of the best programs that  
7 are acknowledged in the world. We have a  
8 state-of-the-art art school.

9 If you split us up, who would get what?  
10 For the very notions that you-all have  
11 articulated, the values of the consolidated  
12 government, to split the district up will go  
13 counter to that. You would have seven  
14 individual board members working against each  
15 other or -- or however you decide, at five or  
16 four, would not have a common interest or a  
17 common purpose.

18 We have been able to take our greatest  
19 strengths and see how we can replicate them  
20 throughout the district, and we have done that,  
21 and that's been an evolution within the last  
22 eight years.

23 We don't have competing interests. We  
24 don't, as a board, sit and say, "I'm not going  
25 to allow this to happen in your district because

1 I can't have it in mine," because it's all of  
2 ours, because we've created open lines of  
3 access.

4 So I think if a city is striving for a  
5 unified vision -- because in consolidated  
6 government you've got to have a unified school  
7 district to support that unified vision.

8 MR. PRATT-DANNALS: I think as much as  
9 possible we should always look at what the  
10 research says, and the research says that size  
11 of school district basically doesn't matter.  
12 What matters is the things I said earlier in  
13 terms of what the district does, but the -- the  
14 limiting factors have to do with the quality of  
15 teachers you're able to find, how you assign  
16 them, and particularly the degree of poverty  
17 that schools or school districts have.

18 Unfortunately, so far those are the best  
19 predictors, and we are rapidly trying to change  
20 that as a predictor of success in our district,  
21 but that is a -- that is the biggest predictor.  
22 So if you are to want to say, how can we,  
23 tomorrow, improve the Duval County public school  
24 system -- and that is to have every -- every  
25 family suddenly become middle class and have a

1 job, because that would be the best predictor,  
2 and have a good education before their kids go  
3 to school.

4 Obviously, that can't happen with a magic  
5 wand, but that's what we're hoping to create  
6 over time. But the research -- and I can give  
7 you significant ones. Three in the last four  
8 years have looked at this issue again throughout  
9 the nation, and there really is no correlation  
10 with school district size and performance.  
11 These other factors are more important.

12 The other issue is -- just some questions.  
13 Who would be on this commission? This was  
14 proposed in the legislature, so we've had to  
15 look at this issue. How would they split up the  
16 assets? Where would they draw the boundaries?

17 I guess -- you've heard a passionate  
18 defense and a very strong history as to what the  
19 advantages were of consolidation of city  
20 government. If we believe that the  
21 consolidation of city government was good in  
22 terms of efficiencies, accountability, then I'm  
23 a little confused as to why smaller units within  
24 school districts are more beneficial but larger  
25 units within the city are beneficial. It seems

1           you'd argue one or the other.

2           Maybe you split the city into three or four  
3           districts and the school board -- or the school  
4           district into three or four, or you think  
5           consolidation is good in terms of efficiencies.  
6           You'd have three or four superintendents, three  
7           or four school boards, three or four business  
8           managers. You really have huge duplication, and  
9           the kind of advantages I have now over my peers  
10          in dealing with one mayor -- Broward County has  
11          13 municipalities. So when the Broward County  
12          superintendent tries to deal with the City, he's  
13          not dealing with one person, he's dealing with  
14          13 people.

15          By the same token, if the mayor wants to  
16          talk to me, he picks up the phone and talks to  
17          me. If you've got three or four, he's got to  
18          talk to three or four. So the same kind of  
19          pluses that we heard earlier in terms of  
20          consolidation, I believe, are the same -- same  
21          hold true for the school district.

22          Now, do we have to work at making sure we  
23          are in touch with the community, that we are  
24          regularly getting out there and hearing what  
25          people are saying because of our size? Yes, we

1 absolutely have to do that, so that -- that is a  
2 challenge, but we are focused on that and are  
3 committed to that.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

5 Commissioners, we have just over 45 minutes  
6 left in this session. We have another agency to  
7 hear from, and I would like to provide an  
8 opportunity for public comment to the extent  
9 that there is anybody.

10 I do have several questioners in the  
11 queue. To the extent that any of you are  
12 willing to forego questioning at this time, if  
13 we continue to look at the school board,  
14 obviously -- or the school district or any  
15 school-related issues once we come up with our  
16 issues list, obviously we will hear from these  
17 individuals again and we'll have the opportunity  
18 to get into as much detail as you would like in  
19 a dedicated session.

20 So, with that said, I know that  
21 Commissioner Barrett would still like to speak.

22 MS. BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

23 And I'll be brief.

24 I was elected to the Duval County School  
25 Board in 2000 and again in 2004. I served

1 proudly with the three folks here today, and I  
2 will tell you that no group has ever worked  
3 harder, and I know I never worked harder than I  
4 did on the school board.

5 Was I paid? Yes. Did I need to be paid?  
6 Maybe not. But I will tell you the hours that I  
7 spent at the school board was more than  
8 Bank of America, and I will tell you that these  
9 are dedicated people who care about the schools  
10 and the school system.

11 Mr. Rinaman even said in his quote that we  
12 have a wonderful -- Ed Pratt-Dannals, and I  
13 believe that we should never split up this  
14 district. It is absolutely wrong. They are  
15 doing a fabulous job. We were always  
16 policymakers. We are policymakers. I'm sorry,  
17 we were -- I was, excuse me. You are.

18 And I will tell you that I never -- and I  
19 don't believe any of the other folks here or any  
20 school board member that I know ever called the  
21 superintendent to ask him to hire or fire a  
22 principal. We were not doing that. We were  
23 always policymakers.

24 So I just want to say to this board and to  
25 this body that it was a very proud eight years

1           that I spent on the Duval County School Board.  
2           I was proud of the accomplishments, I am very  
3           proud of you now, and it was really, really a  
4           marvelous experience that I had.

5                     And I thank you very much.

6                     THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Oliveras.

7                     MR. OLIVERAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8                     I'll just ask one of my four questions.  
9           I'll be brief.

10                    Ms. Priestly Jackson, you mentioned that we  
11           have declining enrollment. Do we know where  
12           these students are going? Are they going to  
13           private school or are they leaving Jacksonville?

14                    MS. PRIESTLY JACKSON: Well, yeah. I -- we  
15           have one of the largest home school populations  
16           in the state and we have burgeoning private  
17           schools in the -- in Jacksonville as well, and  
18           so I do believe, you know, the current recession  
19           creates a wonderful opportunity because we've  
20           also had, more recently, more interest back in  
21           the public school system. So it -- in essence,  
22           to me, it's a chance to get a better product.

23                    We have thoroughly reviewed that. We have  
24           more students to take advantage of the McKay  
25           Scholarships and some other things in this area.

1           I think we have more informed parents here  
2           than the rest of the state. So if there's a  
3           benefit provided by the State to let you exit  
4           public schools, our parents are very  
5           knowledgable of it.

6           I would not read that as an indicator of  
7           what -- the overall quality of public schools  
8           because, again, we have top rate schools, not  
9           just the top ten but the top 1,000, so we -- we  
10          studied it. We tried to track it and sent  
11          more --

12          I would personally be inclined to believe  
13          one of our advantages is telling parents that  
14          they can be involved and engaged in this -- in  
15          their child's education and trying to encourage  
16          more parents that have been successful, that are  
17          more knowledgeable, to come back. I've had some  
18          conversations along those lines, and so we are  
19          definitely trying to do that, but I don't  
20          think -- marginalizing their voices, we'll be  
21          further disengaging them from the process in  
22          terms of it might result in an appointed board.  
23          We bring more of them back in. I don't -- I  
24          don't think they necessarily have that voice.

25                 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Austin.

1 MR. AUSTIN: Thank you.

2 I have a brief question, short question, I  
3 hope, on your flexibility, discretion in dealing  
4 with the public and with your teachers that are  
5 members of the -- of the union.

6 Are you able to promote those people in  
7 your discretion? Are you able to give merit  
8 raises or you're able -- I'm talking about  
9 teachers. Are you able to move them from school  
10 to school in your discretion, or are you -- I  
11 think that's the question.

12 MR. PRATT-DANNALS: We are. We have to  
13 work collaboratively with them in terms of a  
14 process in place, but an example would be for  
15 some of our lower performing schools, we just  
16 completed a reconstitution where we had to look  
17 at how far those teachers were moving students  
18 in terms of their performance.

19 We have a very good working relationship.  
20 It doesn't mean we always agree, particularly  
21 when we're in contract negotiations. But other  
22 than that time, we probably have as much  
23 agreement -- and particularly agreement in  
24 terms -- some things that have been  
25 traditionally -- if you look at some of the

1 large northeastern unions, we have a lot more  
2 flexibility than they do and a lot more  
3 collaboration with our local union in terms of  
4 improving performance.

5 MR. AUSTIN: Can you give a particular  
6 teacher merit pay if you want to?

7 MR. PRATT-DANNALS: Well, it's not  
8 discretionary in terms of just the principal can  
9 do it based on their judgment. It's a series of  
10 factors that we agree on in terms of a process,  
11 but, yes, we do have performance pay. We're one  
12 of only six districts --

13 MR. AUSTIN: But it's a part of the  
14 contract?

15 MR. PRATT-DANNALS: Pardon me? Yes, it's  
16 part of the contract, so we have to negotiate  
17 it. But, again, there's a willingness on the  
18 part of our union leadership currently to do  
19 that.

20 In fact, a decade ago, when we first had  
21 our first five F schools, I was Region 1  
22 superintendent and four of the five were in my  
23 region. And Mr. Brady, who was then currently  
24 also DTU president, went out and raised funds in  
25 order to help attract and retain high-quality

1 teachers to those schools. And all of the  
2 money -- this is very unusual. All of the money  
3 was solely based on student learning gains.  
4 That was very unusual to have that level of  
5 participation. That was very unusual to have it  
6 based on learning gains as opposed to you come  
7 to the school and we'll give you money.

8 We are poised to submit a grant to [sic]  
9 federal government for part of the ARA funds  
10 that come directly to school districts. In  
11 fact, we're meeting Monday and having an  
12 extensive discussion, and DTU is -- is very much  
13 a part of that, and I think that kind of  
14 relationship is positive and -- we can't do  
15 everything we'd like to do if they weren't here,  
16 but I think given other situations it is far  
17 better than most, and I think we're -- we are  
18 heading in the same direction. Occasionally we  
19 disagree over the details, but it -- it's not a  
20 recalcitrant, dig into heels, we're not going to  
21 change anything.

22 And there are definitely examples of unions  
23 throughout this country that are like that, no  
24 change at all, no change in seniority. If  
25 there's a vacancy at a school, the most senior

1 teacher gets to decide if they get the  
2 position. The principal doesn't even get to  
3 interview them. We've never had that level.  
4 Our principal gets to interview those people and  
5 decide who they want for the transfer.

6 And particularly in our lowest performing  
7 schools, huge flexibility to move out  
8 administratively those people who shouldn't be  
9 there. Again, with collaboration. We discuss  
10 it, but an openness that you don't see in many  
11 other communities.

12 MR. AUSTIN: Do you have -- in addition to  
13 collective bargaining, do you have civil service  
14 too?

15 MR. PRATT-DANNALS: Yes, we do, and we're  
16 one of the few school districts -- I think two  
17 or three still in the state are still under  
18 civil service. Yes, sir.

19 MR. AUSTIN: Thank you very much.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks to you all. We  
21 appreciate the time and effort to come down here  
22 today and share your opinions with us --

23 (Simultaneous speaking.)

24 MR. HAZOURI: -- (inaudible) chairperson  
25 and the members, thank you for -- and we're open

1 for any other questions. If you want to submit  
2 something to us to help move time along later  
3 on, we'll be glad to do that too the next  
4 go-round.

5 Thank you very much.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

7 Now we'll hear from the representatives of  
8 the JTA.

9 (Mr. Blaylock approaches the podium.)

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Welcome, Mr. Blaylock.

11 MR. BLAYLOCK: Good morning.

12 My name is Michael Blaylock, and I serve as  
13 the executive director and chief executive  
14 officer of the Jacksonville Transportation  
15 Authority.

16 It is indeed my pleasure to be -- to stand  
17 before you and to make a very brief  
18 presentation. I'm going to accelerate my  
19 presentation to kind of help you out a little  
20 bit.

21 One of the things that I'm really excited  
22 about is being a part of an agency that has what  
23 I consider a very rich history and a legacy of  
24 projects that all of us are enjoying today.

25 We began in 1955 as the Jacksonville

1 Expressway Authority. We were formed by the  
2 state legislature as a State agency. Our charge  
3 at that time was to construct, maintain and  
4 operate the expressway system in Jacksonville,  
5 Florida.

6 In 1971, we were asked by the local  
7 government to take on the responsibility of the  
8 public transport system.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Blaylock, let me just  
10 interrupt you for one second.

11 Commissioners, if you would move the mouse  
12 on your mouse pad, you should be able to see  
13 this PowerPoint on your computer screen.

14 Continue.

15 MR. BLAYLOCK: Okay. Thank you.

16 Let me just back up a little bit in terms  
17 of the creation of the agency in 1955.

18 The board of directors for the Expressway  
19 Authority in 1955 were basically comprised of  
20 five persons. Three were appointed by the  
21 governor. We had one member representing the  
22 chairman of the County Commission. And what was  
23 considered, I guess, the local presence of the  
24 State road board, we had a member representing  
25 that entity. So that basically comprised of the

1 board of directors for the Expressway  
2 Authority.

3 In 1971, we had the -- we were asked by  
4 local government to assume responsibility for  
5 the public transport system. What was occurring  
6 at that time across America, a lot of these  
7 public transportation systems were owned and  
8 operated by the private sector. And in that  
9 regard, with respect to the proliferation of the  
10 automobiles and expansion of our highway  
11 network, the operation of those transit systems  
12 began to take a tremendous fall and make --  
13 create a real burden on those communities and on  
14 those private sectors, so a lot of the local  
15 cities assumed the responsibility, purchased the  
16 assets of those companies, and those operations  
17 became a part of the City operation.

18 As a part of our statute -- our statutes  
19 were changed and updated to reflect the new  
20 responsibility for the public transport system.  
21 To that end, our board of directors, the  
22 composition of our board was changed from five  
23 members to seven members, three appointed by the  
24 governor, three appointed by the mayor, and the  
25 standing member was the district secretary.

1           In addition to the update of those  
2           statutes, basically we were asked to assume the  
3           responsibility for the public transport with the  
4           understanding that the City will provide local  
5           subsidies because the only revenues that we were  
6           receiving at that time was toll revenues.

7           The current board that we have is -- our  
8           chairman is Ms. Ava Parker, who is a local  
9           attorney of Lawrence & Parker. She's a  
10          principal. She also serves as a member of the  
11          Board of Governors for the university system.  
12          From left to right, Don Hinson, who is a local  
13          developer and entrepreneur. Mr. Cleve Warren,  
14          our former chairman and entrepreneur, as well as  
15          the CEO of Essential Capital. Mr. Charles  
16          Baldwin, with the red tie, is our district  
17          secretary. Next to him, Michael Cavendish is  
18          the vice chairman of our board, also a principal  
19          in the firm of Gunster Yoakley & Stewart. A.J.  
20          Johns, prominent business owner of A.J. Johns  
21          utilities. And our treasurer of our board is  
22          Mr. Ed Burr.

23          In 1987/'88, Mayor Hazouri came to the  
24          board and asked the JTA to consider supporting a  
25          measure to remove toll facilities from our

1 bridge structures. The board concurred with  
2 that. That resulted in a public referendum. It  
3 was passed. Toll facilities were removed from  
4 those facilities, and our funding was replaced  
5 with a half cent sales tax.

6 In 2001, the City, again, asked the JTA to  
7 consider assuming the responsibility for the --  
8 transportation for the disabled. It was a  
9 tremendous problem we had in the community with  
10 respect to transportation services for the  
11 disabled. The board agreed to assume that  
12 responsibility provided that the City will  
13 provide an operating subsidy for that  
14 operation. Today, the only funds that we  
15 receive from the City with respect to our  
16 operation is \$1.1 million for the services to  
17 the disabled.

18 In 2009, this current past legislative  
19 session, our statutes were updated and basically  
20 modernized and clarified, which gave us  
21 additional powers to conduct what we consider  
22 public and private initiatives.

23 One of the challenges that we do have, and  
24 we clearly understand, is that this entire model  
25 for public financing has to change. We can no

1 longer live off of a gas tax or sales tax or  
2 we're going to have to find ways to build a lot  
3 of the infrastructures that are so desperately  
4 needed in this area. So we basically modernized  
5 the tools available to us to make that happen.

6 We compared what was occurring in other  
7 transportation entities in the state and took  
8 advantage of some of the language and some of  
9 the tools that they have, and that was also  
10 added to that legislation.

11 We're also required now to report under the  
12 umbrella of the Florida Transportation  
13 Commission. In the state of Florida, all of the  
14 Expressway Authorities are managed or over- --  
15 basically have to report -- there's some  
16 supervision provided by way of the  
17 Transportation Commission.

18 One of the things that I hope that one can  
19 appreciate in Jacksonville -- and every time I  
20 read about the history of the Jacksonville  
21 Transportation Authority, I'm just amazed of the  
22 uniqueness of this -- of this entity. We are  
23 one of six entities in the country that has the  
24 responsibility for multimodal transportation.  
25 So not only public transport, we have the

1 latitude to look at rail systems, people mover  
2 system, road networks, the entire -- the entire  
3 deal, and I think that's very, very important  
4 for our area. In this history, in this 54  
5 history -- 54-year history of this agency, we  
6 have built over 400 miles of roads, 15 major  
7 bridges and flyover facilities.

8 One of the things that I hope that this  
9 body will also appreciate, the fact that none of  
10 these projects we've constructed happened  
11 without some level of controversy, some more  
12 intense than others, and I think maybe that's  
13 why -- the reason why the agency was formed.

14 The other thing I want you to think about,  
15 in -- during 1955, it was incredible because  
16 what was occurring in the state -- and I think  
17 that's why we were declared a State agency at  
18 that time, because if you will recall, the only  
19 major north -- one of the major north-south  
20 roadways into Jacksonville was US-1. And  
21 although the St. Johns River is a very beautiful  
22 river, it does pose some barriers and challenges  
23 for us with respect to transportation. And so  
24 as persons entered into the state, that created  
25 a great deal -- a chokehold in terms of river

1 crossing, and then, of course, US-1, all the  
2 lights that stop in those various communities.  
3 So the charge of that agency in '55 was to look  
4 at the entire expressway network.

5 We operate 264 vehicles that comprise of  
6 the fleet, including the small vans for the  
7 paratransit service. During this 54-year  
8 history, we have provided over half a billion  
9 transit trips in this community.

10 We have another unique tool available to us  
11 where we're able to access other contracts from  
12 other transit systems, other Expressway  
13 Authorities, the City procurement process. We  
14 have all those tools available to us. As a  
15 matter of fact, we purchase our buses off a  
16 statewide contract, so it does give us a lot of  
17 latitude in terms of being able to utilize the  
18 different tools provided to us.

19 The other unique tool for us that's  
20 contained in our statute is what we call an  
21 Interlocal Agreement. We do provide some  
22 limited service to Clay County and St. Johns  
23 County, and we do that through an Interlocal  
24 Agreement between Jacksonville and the county.

25 We cannot use Duval County funds to

1           underwrite any expense in those counties, but if  
2           those counties choose to elect our services,  
3           whether it's transit or engineering support,  
4           grant writing skills or any of the services that  
5           we have, we can negotiate and enter into an  
6           Interlocal Agreement with those counties. It's  
7           a great tool to have.

8           We have 734 union and nonunion employees.

9           Our funding -- with the removal of the toll  
10          facilities, we basically live off a half cent  
11          sales tax. Most recently, in the negotiations  
12          with the City as it relates to the Better  
13          Jacksonville program, what has essentially  
14          happened was -- about 2000, Mayor Delaney came  
15          in and asked if we can combine our resources to  
16          create what you know now as the Better  
17          Jacksonville program, \$2.2 billion  
18          infrastructure initiative.

19          Essentially, what is occurring with that is  
20          there is a plan to (inaudible) those funds. Our  
21          operating expenses are basically being made up  
22          through a local option gas tax and, in part,  
23          sales tax. So the idea was to maximize as much  
24          as possible the use of the sales tax for bonding  
25          purposes, but our operation is basically being

1 funded through the local option gas tax and some  
2 portion of the sales tax.

3 Once that agreement and those projects are  
4 done and completed, that agreement basically  
5 sunsets. The second half cent of that one penny  
6 basically sunsets as well. But our primary  
7 funding source, the half cent sales tax,  
8 continues on.

9 We also have the luxury of being able to  
10 access federal and state grants. As a matter of  
11 fact, when the City asked us to transfer some of  
12 the Better Jacksonville program dollars to the  
13 local road programs, which was another challenge  
14 that they had in that program -- tremendous  
15 shortfalls and a lot of the local roads, they  
16 needed additional funds.

17 So in 2006, the board agreed, out of the  
18 \$750 million that was pledged to us under that  
19 program for most of the road construction that  
20 you see now, we agreed to transfer those monies,  
21 but I was able to make up a considerable amount  
22 of those monies through state and federal  
23 grants. So that -- that worked out pretty  
24 well.

25 One of the things that I am fascinated

1           about -- and I'm not going to go through all of  
2           this, but I think as you look at the screen, you  
3           have a litany of projects that you are now  
4           enjoying. And if you ever get the time, if you  
5           ever do some research and look at some of the  
6           earlier articles of when the Mathews Bridge was  
7           constructed, when the Dames Point was discussed  
8           and constructed, you will see a tremendous  
9           amount of pushback in opposition to those  
10          projects. And you have an agency that has been  
11          able to effectively work with the communities,  
12          with whatever mayor or commission or whomever is  
13          in place, we've been able to effectively work in  
14          those relationships and partnership with the  
15          State to get these projects underway.

16                 I often tell people that we're the largest  
17          landowners in Jacksonville because if you look  
18          at what has occurred on Butler Boulevard, a  
19          massive multibillion-dollar development  
20          corridor, if you will, after the result of that  
21          facility being constructed. And now every major  
22          facility that we have constructed provide a  
23          tremendous link in terms of the overall mobility  
24          of this community.

25                 And I won't go through them, but one of the

1 other things I want to point out is what's very,  
2 very important to me, that regardless of what  
3 challenges we may have, this agency has always  
4 ceded dollars for future planning. As a matter  
5 of fact, most recently we ceded dollars to the  
6 port area in recognition of the Asian shipping  
7 expansion opportunity when we met with the  
8 Port Authority to discuss with them about the  
9 expansion of Heckscher Drive, which was one of  
10 our projects also included in Better  
11 Jacksonville program. We realized very quickly  
12 that that was going to be a tremendous impact on  
13 that road network and we needed to start  
14 planning for some other things.

15 The State had already looked at -- we're  
16 doing some work on the planning on the 9A  
17 interchange, but when we start to look at the  
18 impact of the local road network from Eastport  
19 and New Berlin and Alta Drive, we started our  
20 planning initiative. And what happened in the  
21 end, that we were able to qualify at least one  
22 of those projects, Alta Road projects, to the  
23 recent stimulus program at the tune of  
24 \$7.5 million, and that program is pretty much in  
25 procurement now, but we'll be able to support

1           that.

2                   So one of the great assets of this agency  
3           is our ability to look out 50 years. And so  
4           when you think about what has hap- -- the  
5           Dames Point Bridge actually was on the table  
6           some 40 years before it came to fruition.  
7           Wonderwood, all of those projects, this agency  
8           basically ceded dollars to try to either acquire  
9           land, get the permits done, get the plans  
10          designed and on the shelves so one day we can be  
11          in a position to fund them.

12                   With respect to the Better Jacksonville  
13          program, when we add all of the local projects  
14          that we had beyond our \$750 million, you will  
15          see we had about 8- or \$9 million of projects.  
16          Seventeen of those projects are complete, nine  
17          are in construction, five are in design. And  
18          basically we're working with the City in terms  
19          of what we do by way of the next generation of  
20          the projects.

21                   What is very important to us and one thing  
22          that I clearly recognize, that even after  
23          completion of all of the Better Jacksonville  
24          program, if you look on a map, it's only a drop  
25          in the bucket in terms of what they provide in

1 capacity improvements. And so there has to be  
2 thought given in terms of what are the major  
3 corridors we need to look at, how are we going  
4 to build out the public transport system, what  
5 is the viability of a commuter rail into our  
6 region, and all the other things that we're  
7 planning to look at in the future.

8 And talking about the future, one of the  
9 key ingredients that we've added -- we've kind  
10 of changed our business model in terms of how we  
11 look at transportation.

12 When I first started with the agency back  
13 in 1982, we basically operated in a silo. The  
14 Engineering Department basically managed itself  
15 and then the Transit Division managed itself.  
16 The model that we've changed over the past  
17 several years, now we've combined those  
18 resources. So we look at transportation as the  
19 problem. How do we solve this problem? So is  
20 it a highway solution, is it an intelligent  
21 transportation solution, is it a public  
22 transport solution, or is it all of the above?

23 And before we make the decision that it's a  
24 highway solution or a bridge solution, we go  
25 through this equation, very similar to the

1 process -- we call it alternative analysis, and  
2 that's -- that's pretty much how we approach it  
3 now.

4 So, going forward, one of the things  
5 that -- I'll kind of wrap this up a little.

6 Going forward, basically what we're trying  
7 to do is, again, change this model. We're now  
8 looking at streetcars as ultimate replacement  
9 for the trolley system you're seeing on the  
10 system now. We designed the entire downtown  
11 network in terms of the number of buses that  
12 come into downtown. The idea is to reduce the  
13 number of buses that come in, take greater  
14 advantage of the Skyway, and use as much as  
15 possible, whether or not -- make a determination  
16 as to whether or not a streetcar is a viable  
17 solution for the area.

18 Then, of course, going ahead and looking at  
19 commuter rail, commuter rail basically, we see  
20 that as a regional system. One of the  
21 advantages that I say that we do have in the  
22 consolidated government is that we got a very  
23 strong mayor and we have basically a one-stop  
24 shop, if you will. Unlike in Atlanta where you  
25 have a thousand municipalities that you're

1           trying to coordinate with and you're trying to  
2           expand a regional mobility network, it's near  
3           impossible.

4           So the advantage that we do have is that we  
5           have very good relationships with all of the  
6           counties. And in doing so, what we're trying to  
7           do is to introduce them to the idea of a  
8           regional commuter rail system. So that's pretty  
9           much on study now, but at the end of the day  
10          we're talking about being in position where we  
11          can provide service from Fernandina all the way  
12          down to Palm Coast and making that a viable --  
13          again, another mode of transport, giving some  
14          relief to our highway network.

15          We also did a study, in looking at that  
16          map, in terms of our water system as another  
17          viable opportunity to make use of the St. Johns  
18          River. If you know, the St. Johns River travels  
19          as far south as Orlando or Sanford. And so, you  
20          know, in my little mind I'm thinking that maybe  
21          it  
22          is -- it could be a viable alternative to I-4  
23          and persons in Jacksonville and in our region  
24          can travel directly down to the Orlando/Sanford  
25          area by way of that transport system.

1           But, again, that's what makes the agency  
2           such a profound agency in its 54-year history is  
3           that we have no constraints in terms of what we  
4           think about the future. Money there is, but in  
5           terms of our vision and what we think will be  
6           important for the region, we have a pretty good  
7           idea to make that work.

8           The other project I want to just mention in  
9           passing is the plan for -- the anchor for our  
10          regional system is, of course, what happens in  
11          LaVilla by way of a regional transportation  
12          center. The idea there is we will bring back  
13          Amtrak to downtown Jacksonville, we will make  
14          use of part of the convention center, and then  
15          we will redo the current Skyway system,  
16          complement with parking, the presence of  
17          Greyhound being relocated from its current  
18          location -- Greyhound, the Skyway, Amtrak  
19          commuter rail, and some parking so persons that  
20          are coming into our area will have a regional  
21          network.

22          And one of the things that I really want to  
23          push forward is maybe the creation of a visitor  
24          center at the convention center so you can come  
25          in, you can access information, not only make

1 use of a regional system but get some idea  
2 exactly where you are and what's going on into  
3 our area. That's kind of what my vision is.

4 But the short of it is, is that when you  
5 look at the overall profile of the agency, you  
6 will really be astound [sic], again, in terms of  
7 the level of activities being produced by this  
8 agency.

9 Our funding today -- as I mentioned to you  
10 earlier -- I need to go back and make this  
11 point.

12 The City, at -- up until about 1990, when  
13 Mayor Austin was in office, we were living off  
14 the -- we were basically receiving subsidy from  
15 the City and the sales tax. And it was proposed  
16 to us by the -- by that administration that we  
17 need to live off the sales tax, and that's what  
18 we did.

19 So late '90s, I think it was, we were  
20 getting about \$10 million from the City for the  
21 subsidy of the bus system. And I think the  
22 first year we were reduced to 5 million, next  
23 year I think we just kind of wind down. So we  
24 do not receive any operating subsidy for the bus  
25 system. All of our, basically, income is coming

1 out of the sales tax structure, and then  
2 whatever else we make up by way of the federal  
3 and state grants is how we're able to live.

4 And going forward and one of reasons why  
5 I -- we try to update our statute is to give us  
6 more latitude to do private-sector financing  
7 because we really believe strongly that in order  
8 for us to do the kind of public infrastructure  
9 that would be needed for the region, we're going  
10 to have to change that whole financing model.

11 So if you will permit, I will -- I did not  
12 introduce the staff. I want to make sure --  
13 just kind of acknowledge a few folks.

14 Michael Miller is our director of external  
15 affairs. Seated next to him is Ms. Jacquie  
16 Gibbs, is director of administration and chief  
17 of staff. Our new incoming chief financial  
18 officer, Mr. Blair Fishburn. John Davis, seated  
19 next to him, is our chief engineer. And David  
20 Cohen is our legal counsel.

21 So, again, I think that what you have --  
22 and one of the things that I often hear about --  
23 and I have to -- and I do a lot of speeches on  
24 this. A lot of the different entities across  
25 the country are really interested on how in the

1 world you can operate that way because you have  
2 the beauty -- you have the beauty today of  
3 recognizing over 400 miles of roads and 15 major  
4 bridges, including the Dames Point and Mathews,  
5 and you don't have the responsibility for having  
6 to maintain those facilities. We build those  
7 facilities and we pledge them back to the  
8 State. So the painting of the Mathews Bridge  
9 and the Hart Expressway and the lights go out  
10 and all those sorts of things are being managed  
11 and maintained by the State.

12 I used to make an argument to the State --  
13 and I could go either way on this. I can make  
14 an argument to the State that I don't get enough  
15 money, but on the other flipside of that, I have  
16 to be quiet on how much I say because if we had  
17 to own the -- the maintenance requirements for  
18 those facilities, we'd be up the creek in a  
19 heartbeat. So it's a lot easier to capture  
20 capital dollars to build the infrastructure that  
21 we want than having to do that and then at the  
22 same time try to maintain.

23 So I think that sort of concludes my  
24 presenta- -- I kind of jumped over the map a  
25 little bit. But when we say we're part of your

1           day, part of your community, and part of your  
2           life, I mean, it's a real reality.

3                   Some of you may use the public transport  
4           system or the Skyway, but we know pretty well  
5           that 90 percent of you have enjoyed the  
6           facilities of Butler Boulevard, Mathews Bridge,  
7           Hart Expressway, Dames Point, and the like. And  
8           there's no way, no way in the world that we  
9           could build those projects in the times that we  
10          built them had we been elected officials. I  
11          just -- to me, I just don't see it happening. I  
12          think that was the vision of our forefathers in  
13          putting such an entity together because at the  
14          end of the day someone is always going to  
15          oppose, but --

16                   And I'm always marveled when -- the last  
17          big fight that I was a part of was the  
18          Dames Point and the flyover at Mayport, and now  
19          everybody has nothing to say but, my God, what  
20          would we do if we didn't have those facilities?

21                   So I think that's -- I think that's kind of  
22          what we have. We have a very unique entity in  
23          this community that has all kinds of ties -- as  
24          a State agency, you have direct ties with all  
25          kind of resources available, local and even in

1 the county level. So I think you have a pretty  
2 unique organization that I think we all could be  
3 proud of. And, quite frankly, the proof is in  
4 the pudding. You could see it, it's all there.

5 Any questions?

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Blaylock.

7 I have a question. As you know, the JTA is  
8 referenced in the charter, although it predates  
9 consolidation and its antecedent organization.

10 What is your understanding of the ability  
11 of the consolidated City of Jacksonville to  
12 exercise control or review over the JTA based on  
13 the provisions of the charter? How do you see  
14 the JTA as fitting into the consolidated City of  
15 Jacksonville?

16 MR. BLAYLOCK: Well, as it stands right  
17 now, that's -- any kind of oversight by the City  
18 is not reflected in our statutes, up to a point  
19 of this.

20 Basically, anybody that provides money to  
21 us has the right to access any records or  
22 anything that we do, and that is true -- we  
23 have -- we just completed a federal review audit  
24 process. The City has the right to come in and  
25 look at all the dollars that's being provided

1           for Better Jacksonville, of which -- because  
2           we're basically -- the City of Jacksonville is  
3           basically our clients. Okay? They are our  
4           clients, and that Interlocal Agreement was  
5           designed based on what the City asked for, what  
6           we agreed to, and we're living by that  
7           particular contract. We also provide all of our  
8           quarterly financials to the City.

9           So my point is that it's not reflected in  
10          our statute, but the mere nature of that monies  
11          are being provided for whatever programs, any  
12          entity or agency that is doing that has the  
13          right to access whatever records we have, and  
14          that's really not an issue for us.

15          THE CHAIRMAN: Do you feel that JTA is  
16          obligated to utilize central services?

17          MR. BLAYLOCK: Oh, we do that now.

18          I mean -- and I mentioned that kind of  
19          earlier. We don't -- not just on a local basis,  
20          but we do it statewide. You know, we -- anybody  
21          that's providing the best price, that contract  
22          is live and active and we can take advantage of  
23          it. We have that within our purview to do.

24          THE CHAIRMAN: And so you do not -- is it  
25          correct to say that you don't feel that the new

1 statute releases you from the obligation to  
2 utilize central services pursuant to the  
3 charter's provisions?

4 MR. BLAYLOCK: No, sir. No, sir.

5 We have -- all the new statutes, all the  
6 updated statutes basically just improves the  
7 tools we have to work with.

8 If we find -- in fact, we buy our cars and  
9 so forth off the City fleet bid, so we have --  
10 our procurement staff keeps a running tab of all  
11 open bids to the City in terms of equipment or  
12 whatever. And if we find that it's useful and  
13 clearly if the price is more competitive, we can  
14 take advantage of it right now in the current  
15 statutes that we have now.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: And with respect to becoming  
17 a regional transportation authority down the  
18 road, which I -- which the recent legislation  
19 lays the groundwork for doing, is JTA -- does  
20 it -- do you think JTA envisions getting into  
21 local land use planning decisions pursuant to  
22 your acting as a regional transportation  
23 authority?

24 MR. BLAYLOCK: No, I don't see that.

25 Now, let me tell you what -- give you a

1 short version of what I see.

2 First of all, I think it's absolutely  
3 critical to this community that we take on  
4 transportation as a regional objective, and  
5 particularly when you look at other cities, and  
6 I mentioned Atlanta in particular.

7 When you recognize what is occurring and  
8 will continue to occur at the port in terms of  
9 its expansion and its impact on our  
10 infrastructure, when you consider the ultimate  
11 buildout -- Cecil Field, and then all of the  
12 other projects that are on the list in terms of  
13 future developments, regional transportation is  
14 absolutely critical in my view.

15 So the vision that I have is being in a  
16 position where we can create what I consider a  
17 master regional mobility plan where each of the  
18 counties have the ability to decide on what is  
19 important to them and what they want to be when  
20 they grow up. That plan gets adopted to a  
21 master plan and then somebody manages that  
22 plan. And the only time it's changed, unless  
23 it's an update -- but just because a mayor comes  
24 in or a commissioner comes in, if we decide that  
25 this is the master plan -- this is the road map

1 for building what I call balanced mobility  
2 options for the entire region. I think that's  
3 the way we should go.

4 In those different counties, they have  
5 different rules of -- what Clay County wants,  
6 Flagler County may not want, so I don't know  
7 that I want to -- I think there has to be some  
8 general understanding in terms of land use and  
9 what makes transportation work. I think there  
10 has to be some agreement with the -- in that  
11 regard. But to own that process, I don't -- I  
12 don't see that being a part of a regional  
13 entity.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

15 Commissioner Miller.

16 MS. MILLER: Through the Chair -- thank  
17 you, Mr. Blaylock. It's a pleasure to see you  
18 and your staff here.

19 I just had a question -- and this may be  
20 more appropriate for your lawyer or for General  
21 Counsel, but it's my understanding that JTA, by  
22 statute, is authorized to hire separate outside  
23 counsel; is that right?

24 MR. BLAYLOCK: That's correct.

25 MS. MILLER: Do you utilize the services of

1 the Office of General Counsel --

2 MR. BLAYLOCK: Yes, I do.

3 MS. MILLER: You do.

4 For what purposes?

5 MR. BLAYLOCK: Right now they basically  
6 manage all of the claims. Any incidents or  
7 accidents that I have on the bus fleet, they  
8 manage all of those claims.

9 MS. MILLER: And so generally litigation  
10 services --

11 MR. BLAYLOCK: Yes.

12 MS. MILLER: -- would you say?

13 MR. BLAYLOCK: Yes.

14 MS. MILLER: And what do you use your  
15 outside attorney for?

16 MR. BLAYLOCK: A lot of -- for eminent  
17 domain, and we basically use our legal counsel  
18 more as an -- in-house, because we've got so  
19 many activities going on. A lot of our  
20 decisions have to be made and research has to be  
21 done. And it's been a model that has worked  
22 pretty effectively.

23 And, again, because of the flexibility that  
24 I can access the legal counsel -- not only do I  
25 use him for that, but I often call upon Cindy

1           Laquidara on a host of issues that involves the  
2           agency.  So it's -- I have that access now.  It  
3           seems to be working, that model seems to be  
4           functioning, and I don't really see an issue  
5           with it.

6           MS. MILLER:  And you have that authority by  
7           virtue of the statute you referenced --

8           MR. BLAYLOCK:  That is in our statutes,  
9           that's correct.

10          MS. MILLER:  Would you mind distributing or  
11          making available a copy of your presentation to  
12          the commission?

13          MR. BLAYLOCK:  Yes.

14          MS. MILLER:  And the final question I had  
15          for you, when you referenced the central  
16          services, were you referencing -- I believe the  
17          chairman -- correct me if I'm wrong,  
18          Mr. Chairman -- was referring to the City's  
19          central procurement services, but you referenced  
20          a statute, and -- as far as accessing central  
21          services.  So there --

22                 Would you please clarify, do you utilize  
23          the City's central procurement services when  
24          procuring items or any part of the City's  
25          central services or do you have a procurement

1 department at JTA? And, if so, what procurement  
2 rules do you follow?

3 MR. BLAYLOCK: Okay. Well, everybody --  
4 let me explain.

5 Prior to my -- at one time we were using  
6 the City procurement service until they had a --  
7 I guess a streamlining, and a lot of the  
8 independent authorities started creating their  
9 own procurement services. And because we deal  
10 with a lot of -- anywhere from just major  
11 capital equipment, it's bus parts, it's a whole  
12 lot of things, so we created -- as a part of our  
13 statutes, we created a procurement department.  
14 As the City wind down, we created our system.

15 Now, we do access the City in terms of your  
16 purchase agreements. You know, I don't -- we  
17 have our own purchasing department. But if you  
18 have an open contract -- the City has an open  
19 contract, whether it's a car or whatever it may  
20 be, if we find the prices to be more  
21 competitive, we would just buy off that  
22 contract. But we utilize our own procurement  
23 department to handle our procurements.

24 MS. MILLER: Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Catlett.

1 MR. CATLETT: Who maintains your fleet?

2 MR. BLAYLOCK: We have a maintenance crew  
3 that maintains our fleet.

4 MR. CATLETT: Okay. And in terms of what  
5 the sheriff was talking about, do you have  
6 efficiencies because you main [sic] your own  
7 fleet or would you save money by using City  
8 motor pool?

9 MR. BLAYLOCK: No. Actually, it -- we --  
10 no. The system that we have now, we've got a  
11 whole series of costs evaluation that we go  
12 through for -- we can tell you exactly how many  
13 hours it takes to rebuild a transmission.

14 It's been our experience at this point that  
15 we have the most efficient use of the workforce  
16 and return on our investment in terms of  
17 maintaining our fleet. That model seems to be  
18 working as well. But, again, if I see we can  
19 buy parts -- I mean, we can get that off  
20 somebody's contract.

21 The turnaround time is also critical for us  
22 as well. We can't keep a fleet down long. We  
23 have a lot more maintenance requirement. All of  
24 our buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts, it  
25 has to be immediate repairs on those systems,

1           the electronic systems. So it's more of a time  
2           demand for us that we can't afford -- we don't  
3           have a very large fleet; therefore, we can't have  
4           a large fleet of vehicles sitting in the yard to  
5           be repaired. So we maintain various shifts on  
6           our system, and it seems -- that model seems to  
7           be working.

8           MR. CATLETT: Thank you.

9           THE CHAIRMAN: I have no other speakers in  
10          the queue.

11          All right. Thank you very much,  
12          Mr. Blaylock. We appreciate it, and your staff  
13          as well. We appreciate this information.

14          And Commissioner Miller requested a copy of  
15          your presentation, but I -- can we -- can you  
16          just leave the CD that you brought with  
17          Mr. Clements?

18          MR. MILLER: Yes.

19          THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

20          Okay. Commissioners, we have five minutes  
21          left in our scheduled session.

22          Is there anybody here, else, from the  
23          public who would like to speak?

24          AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (No response.)

25          THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I just want to make

1           sure.

2           As we talked about at our last meeting, the  
3           end of our last meeting, I envision this being  
4           the last of our meetings in which we hear from  
5           stakeholders in the consolidated government, and  
6           from here forward I think it's important that we  
7           start -- yes.

8           MR. FLOWERS: (Off microphone.)

9           I mentioned the City HUD as it relates to  
10          the charter because they handle a big part of  
11          finance (inaudible), and I'd like to know before  
12          we start hearing how that relates to each other,  
13          where is it on the flow chart in accountability  
14          that we are supposed to have.

15          THE CHAIRMAN: We can certainly invite them  
16          to come to our next meeting if you would like.

17          MR. FLOWERS: Yes.

18          THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. The City HUD  
19          department, is that what -- who you would like  
20          to hear from?

21          MR. FLOWERS: Yes.

22          THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Mr. Clements, can you  
23          arrange for us to send a letter, an invitation  
24          to them?

25          MR. CLEMENTS: Yes.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

2 So we will hear from them, hopefully, if  
3 they're available, on our August 13th meeting.

4 Between now and then -- Mr. Catlin.

5 MR. CATLIN: Actually, this is a question  
6 for Mr. Rohan.

7 In the charter -- is HUD mentioned anywhere  
8 in the charter, that we could even change  
9 anything? Just out of curiosity.

10 MR. ROHAN: HUD is a very interesting  
11 organization. They're a lot like the JTA in the  
12 sense that they were created by Florida  
13 Statutes, by a very specific Florida Statute.

14 Instead of the council simply approving  
15 that organization, which is what they  
16 technically should have done, instead, the City  
17 enacted them into the ordinance code, but they  
18 are an independent agency. They're only  
19 identified in the ordinance code as opposed to  
20 the charter, and -- similar to the JTA, which  
21 isn't even referenced, for the most part, in the  
22 charter but is created by a special independent  
23 statute.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Is there anything further?

25 MR. CATLIN: No.

1           THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Well, we will  
2           invite them to come to our next meeting.

3           At that time, though, I would like for us  
4           to have a discussion about what issues we want  
5           to delve into in more detail going forward. And  
6           between now and then, I would appreciate if you  
7           would provide to Mr. Clements a list of issues.  
8           I will not set a cap on the number that you can  
9           provide to him, but obviously we have a limited  
10          time frame in which to work. And I would  
11          appreciate it if you could provide that list to  
12          him within the next -- within the next week so  
13          that I can review them between that time and the  
14          meeting.

15          And after we hear from the City HUD  
16          department, at that meeting, it's my intention  
17          that we'll begin discussion of that list, and  
18          it's my intention that I will have Mr. Clements  
19          disseminate the master list to all of you as  
20          well so that you can be thinking about it before  
21          we get here so that we can start with meaningful  
22          discussion rather than familiarization.

23          Are there any issues -- other comments on  
24          that approach or procedure?

25          COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other issues that  
2 anybody would like to bring up?

3 Mr. Catlin.

4 MR. CATLIN: Mr. Chairman, are we planning  
5 on bringing Mr. Mullaney back to talk about the  
6 General Counsel's Office or are we just going to  
7 bring him back when we have questions for him?  
8 That's the first part of my question if you want  
9 to answer that.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm happy to bring him back  
11 to have him talk as a stakeholder. That's fine  
12 with me.

13 MR. CATLIN: Okay.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: If that's the sense of the  
15 commission, I'm happy to do that.

16 MR. CATLIN: And the second part -- again,  
17 this is for Mr. Rohan. What it sounded like to  
18 me -- correct me if I'm wrong -- the JTA is now  
19 a State agency. We can't change anything -- I  
20 mean, it looks like we just give them  
21 \$1.1 million as a City. We can't make any  
22 change with the charter now that the state  
23 legislature has made them a State agency; is  
24 that correct?

25 MR. ROHAN: Well, they've been a State

1 agency all along. They just had some things  
2 clarified in their State act.

3 But basically, no, you could pursue, make a  
4 recommendation that somebody pursue a general  
5 law to change their charter. We've also had  
6 them referenced in the charter, even though  
7 they're a State agency by the legislature --  
8 it's not inconsistent -- that requires them to  
9 be part of the ethics thing and for auditing by  
10 the council auditor.

11 But, generally speaking, you would be  
12 asking the State to -- and your City Council and  
13 the Duval Delegation to consider a general law  
14 change more than a charter change.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: And just to follow up on  
16 that thought, I don't know that we should feel  
17 constrained in the ideas that we want to  
18 recommend. Our report goes to the City Council  
19 and to the Duval Legislative Delegation by  
20 ordinance, and I would rather err on the side of  
21 thinking big and perhaps proposing a reform that  
22 might be incredibly complicated to achieve if we  
23 feel like it's important to the community rather  
24 than feeling like all we can attempt is  
25 something that can be done locally by

1 ordinance.

2 That's my two cents on that issue.

3 Commissioner O'Brien.

4 MS. O'BRIEN: I would ask as a discussion  
5 item that we discuss Article 16 in the charter.  
6 It's retirement and pension benefits.

7 As mentioned by one of our presenters  
8 today, I understand that the mayor will be  
9 coming forth with some proposals to be  
10 discussed, obviously, from his administration,  
11 but as a -- as a commission, I would like a  
12 better understanding of who is entitled to the  
13 benefit and pension benefits, how independent  
14 authorities are associated with this, if they're  
15 civil servants versus independent authority  
16 employees so that we have an idea of the impact  
17 of the current retirement and pension system  
18 going forward as well as the financial impacts  
19 that has on the City's budget.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

21 Commissioner Youngblood.

22 MR. YOUNGBLOOD: Have we asked for a  
23 statement from Jerry Holland as one of the  
24 constitutional officers to see where he stands  
25 on appointment over election?

1           He was here today and I thought we may have  
2           been able to get a quick ear, but weren't able  
3           to.

4           THE CHAIRMAN: I noticed him as well.

5           I'm going to call him to follow up and ask  
6           him that question.

7           MR. YOUNGBLOOD: I don't know that he needs  
8           to come unless he would like to, but I believe  
9           just a good statement from the office --

10          THE CHAIRMAN: I will follow up on that.  
11          That's a good idea.

12          Commissioner Oliveras.

13          MR. OLIVERAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14          I know we're up against the clock. When we  
15          get to the point where we begin as a panel  
16          discussing specific issues, are we going to have  
17          those stakeholders? For example, when we -- if  
18          we take up the issue of pensions, the separate  
19          entities that represent the pensions, it would  
20          be helpful to have them here, I think, while  
21          we're discussing those issues, regardless of  
22          what the issue is.

23          THE CHAIRMAN: Yes. It's my intention that  
24          once we identify a list of issues that we want  
25          to get into that we'll have resource speakers

1 for that issue, along the whole spectrum of  
2 opinion or fact as it may be relevant, so yes.

3 Any other items?

4 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Would you add Mr. Mullaney  
6 to our invitation list, Mr. Clements, for the  
7 next meeting?

8 MR. CLEMENTS: Yes.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

10 Mr. Rohan.

11 MR. ROHAN: May I respond quickly -- very  
12 quickly to something that was said today?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure.

14 MR. ROHAN: Thank you.

15 The power of cross-examination is a  
16 wonderful thing, especially when you start  
17 talking about the General Counsel's Office. And  
18 I can remember a couple of years ago a City  
19 Councilmember came in and said, You know,  
20 there's an inherent conflict between the mayor  
21 and the council, and we can't trust our  
22 lawyers. And then the cross-examination was,  
23 Well, how about over the last eight years,  
24 Cheryl Peek, Jeanne Miller, Steve Rohan,  
25 Peggy Sidman? Oh, no. They've been wonderful.

1           They've been absolutely terrific, very loyal to  
2           us, very diligent.

3           A constitutional officer came in and said,  
4           you know what? The General Counsel didn't  
5           consult me with regard to the attorney that was  
6           appointed for me. Cross examination: Well, how  
7           is that attorney? Oh, Loree French, best lawyer  
8           in the office, absolutely wonderful, no  
9           complaints at all, couldn't live without.

10          And again today you saw a constitutional  
11          officer coming in and saying, Well, the  
12          structure is -- there's a problem with the  
13          structure because I can't appoint the attorney  
14          that I need.

15          Cross examination: Well, what attorney do  
16          you have? Oh, the attorney I want. The  
17          attorney I've used for the last 20 years is  
18          absolutely wonderful.

19          So I think, through the cross-examination  
20          process, we've seen that maybe some things that  
21          appear to be problems may not, in fact, be  
22          problems.

23          Thank you.

24          THE CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Miller.

25          MS. MILLER: With all due respect to my

1           colleague, Mr. Rohan, I did, in fact, represent  
2           City Council and enjoyed a good relationship  
3           with my client, but I, for one, strongly believe  
4           that we have a lot of work to do as this  
5           commission on the processes within the General  
6           Counsel's Office that allow lawyers to make  
7           their case on behalf of their client to the  
8           person who makes binding legal opinions.

9           My clients did not have full faith and  
10          confidence that the decisions coming out of that  
11          office at that time were -- were fair and  
12          balanced, for lack of a better term.

13          So while I enjoyed a great relationship  
14          with my clients, unfortunately, that  
15          relationship broke down when I was told directly  
16          that there were certain things that I could not  
17          advise on, and that compromised my ability to  
18          fully perform my obligations as a lawyer, so I  
19          think -- I have a very strong opinion on that,  
20          and I think we have a lot of work to do. And I  
21          believe the constitutional officers have hit the  
22          nail on the head, and I think it's only really  
23          the tip of the iceberg or the tip of the nail.

24                 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner  
25                 Miller.

1 Any other items?

2 Commissioner Catlett.

3 MR. CATLETT: Well, my concern is -- you  
4 know, of course, in your situation, Jeanne,  
5 you've served in all these capacities, you have  
6 broad experience, and most of us have not.  
7 Wyman, of course, and Mayor Austin are lawyers  
8 also. But most of us have not, so hopefully  
9 when we get to that part y'all will have some  
10 constructive suggestions because what I'm  
11 concerned about and have been from the beginning  
12 about this commission -- and it's been conducted  
13 extremely properly and very positively, but I  
14 have noticed that most of these folks are  
15 puckered up. They have got it in their minds  
16 that this is, you know, the McCarthy questioning  
17 of the '50s. And, I mean, it's just --

18 I've known most of these people for years  
19 under several different type of arrangements,  
20 and it's just absolutely mind-boggling as to  
21 how -- I don't want to say "scared," but that's  
22 the right word. They are puckered up.

23 And we can discuss -- we should be able to  
24 discuss issues of government and how we can  
25 improve it without them believing that this is

1 going to be some kind of witch-hunt because  
2 we're discussing issues, not witches. And I  
3 guess I'm more concerned about that, that we get  
4 to where we need to go by making sure that at  
5 least -- don't feel persecuted when they go up  
6 there to the podium.

7 And we're not doing that. They're the ones  
8 doing that, but I think that anything we can do  
9 to make them feel a little more comfortable that  
10 we're working on issues and not the individuals  
11 I think probably would be helpful.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commissioner.  
13 Those are wise words.

14 Anything else?

15 COMMISSION MEMBERS: (No response.)

16 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you very  
17 much.

18 Oh, I'm sorry. Mr. Clements.

19 MR. CLEMENTS: Just wanted to let you know  
20 that -- for those of you who left right at the  
21 end of the last meeting and I didn't get to hand  
22 you a packet that was provided by the  
23 Jacksonville Port Authority, I have those down  
24 here. And from two meetings ago, we handed out  
25 copies of the recent JCCI report on City

1 long-term financial health. And if you didn't  
2 get one of those, I have a couple of those  
3 available as well.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: And, Mr. Clements, what's  
5 the status of the parking passes?

6 MR. CLEMENTS: They will be coming.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

8 MR. AUSTIN: (Off microphone.)

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Clements, Commissioner  
10 Austin has reminded me that we requested a copy  
11 of the JEA's mission statement at the end of  
12 their presentation, and -- following up to see  
13 if we've received it. And, if not, if you could  
14 remind Mr. Dickinson.

15 MR. CLEMENTS: We have not, but I will  
16 remind Mr. Dickinson.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

18 You're doing all the heavy lifting, and I  
19 appreciate it.

20 All right. Thank you, everybody.

21 (The above proceedings were adjourned at  
22 12:10 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF FLORIDA:

COUNTY OF DUVAL :

I, Diane M. Tropa, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 11th day of August, 2009.

Diane M. Tropa