



**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
RESEARCH DIVISION**

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CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Meeting Minutes

**June 13, 2024
10:00 a.m.**

Location: City Council Chamber, 1st floor, City Hall

In attendance: Council President Ron Salem, Vice President Randy White, Council Members Rory Diamond, Joe Carlucci, Rahman Johnson, Mike Gay, Raul Arias, Ken Amaro, Michael Boylan, Nick Howland, Chris Miller, Kevin Carrico, Ju’Coby Pittman, Will Lahnen, Matt Carlucci, Reggie Gaffney, Jr., Jimmy Peluso, Tyrona Clark-Murray

Also: Kim Taylor, Brian Parks, Heather Reber, Phillip Peterson, Trista Carraher – Council Auditor’s Office; Darnell Smith, Mike Weinstein, Scott Wilson, Bill Delaney, Joe Inderhees – Mayor’s Office; Mary Staffopoulos – Office of General Counsel; Merriane Lahmeur, Sharonda Davis, Rebecca Bolton, Steven Libby – Legislative Services Division; Steve Cassada – Public Information Division; Mark Lamping, Megha Parekh, Paul Harden – Jacksonville Jaguars; Michael Huyghue – City Council consultant; Aundra Wallace – JAX Chamber

Meeting Convened: 10:00 a.m.

Council President Salem noted that 2024-0904 has been read for the second time and re-referred. He stated that there could be an amendment to the bill on Monday to address Council Members’ conflicts of interest.

Council President Salem stated that there would be a Special Council meeting on 6/17 at 5:00 PM for Public Hearing on the bill. He stated that Council Members should have any amendments to the bill submitted by 12:00 PM on 6/19 and that amendments would be taken up in the order in which they were received at a Special Committee of the Whole meeting at 9:00 AM on 6/20. He stated that anyone who wishes to participate in Public Comment on the bill at the 6/25 Council meeting must have comment cards submitted by 4:00 PM at that meeting.

Follow-Up Questions from 6/5/24 Meeting

Kim Taylor, Council Auditor, provided answers to follow-up questions from the 6/5/24 Council Workshop.

She clarified questions about the City's total contribution of \$775 million to the deal. She explained that a third of the 6% bed tax would pay debt service on stadium renovations. She stated that this 2% bed tax would likely raise about \$8 million in revenue for the stadium. She added that the Auditor's Office felt confident that there would be minimal hit to the General Fund when debt payments are required to be paid.

She stated that the Auditor's Office had worked with the Office of the General Counsel to confirm that there were \$600 million in projects in the CIP to make the "swap" work. She noted that it should not affect the timeline of any of these projects, as it simply "swapped" these projects away from using debt funding by allowing the Better Jacksonville Plan ("BJP") surtax to stay in place.

Council Member Diamond asked for how long the bill would allow the BJP surtax to stay in place and roughly how much money is raised through the BJP surtax annually. Ms. Taylor answered that it would allow the surtax to stay in place through 2030 and that the surtax brings in roughly \$130 million in revenue annually. Council Member Diamond stated that there is an opportunity cost to allowing the BJP surtax to stay in place through 2030, as the half-cent sales tax for pension debt would not go into effect until after the BJP surtax was no longer in effect. He stated that this would also preclude the City from investing these funds into the markets. Ms. Taylor stated that the cost of debt, which had gone up since the City had considered phasing out the BJP surtax early, was something to consider in the City's analysis of allowing the BJP surtax to stay in place. Council President Salem confirmed with Ms. Taylor that this "swap" should not change the completion timeline of any CIP projects.

Council Member Peluso asked whether anyone in the administration had discussed the matter with any representatives from the Police & Fire Pension Fund, and Ms. Taylor answered that the Police & Fire Pension Fund's actuarial tables had never included revenue from the half-cent sales tax for pension debt until 2031. Council Member Lahnen asked when the City expects the pensions to be fully funded, and Ms. Taylor answered that this would likely occur in the early 2050s. Council Member Lahnen noted that the entire deal would be roughly debt-neutral for the City, as the \$600 million through BJP surtax and remaining \$175 million covered by bed tax revenue should not add any budget capacity for the City. Council Member Clark-Murray noted that the market fluctuates and that investing these funds in the market would carry risk.

Council Member Howland stated that whether or not the Police & Fire Pension Fund expected receipt of tax revenue earlier than 2031 based off the proposed early phase-out of the BJP surtax was more complicated than looking at their actuarial tables, as the City Council, through 2022-416-E, had taken initial steps to phase out the BJP surtax through providing additional CIP funding for existing BJP projects. Council Member Matt Carlucci stated that he believed that there had been plenty of discussion on the BJP surtax and half-cent sales tax for pension debt to this point; he explained that it is common for funding sources and mechanisms to get rearranged when new opportunities present themselves and that the stadium deal provided a sufficient justification for this arrangement.

Council Member Diamond asked when the City would stop collecting revenue through the pension half-cent sales tax; Ms. Taylor answered that there was a maximum of 30 years for this tax and that it would go out of effect either at the end of the 30-year timeline or when the pensions were fully funded. Council Member Diamond pointed out that allowing the BJP surtax to stay in place through 2030 could extend the time period that these two taxes collectively would be on the books and that this was essentially taxing the next generation. Ms. Taylor stated that it could be extending the timeline for these two taxes by four years.

Council Member Gay noted that many BJP projects had not been completed on their originally-promised timelines and asked whether this swap would affect any of the completion timelines. Ms. Taylor explained that there were 9 BJP projects that had not yet been completed and that nothing in this bill would change the completion timelines of these projects. Council Member Gay noted that many projects had been taken out of the work plan and that the BJP fell short of expectations in many respects.

Council Member Joe Carlucci noted that a CIP project involved a sidewalk improvement for a school that was currently planned to close and consolidate; he stated that the administration could re-examine the CIP in light of school closures and consolidations to eliminate projects that were no longer necessary.

Council Member Amaro asked whether 2022-0416-E committed the Council in any way to phasing out the BJP surtax early, and Ms. Taylor answered that it did not, as it provided a funding mechanism for those projects to move forward, and therefore could be seen as an indicator that the Council could move in that direction, but did not say anything explicitly about phasing out the BJP surtax. Council Member Amaro asked whether not phasing the BJP surtax could be considered a breach of faith to the Police & Fire Pension Fund, and Ms. Taylor stated that she did not think it would be, as it followed the language in the referendum passed by voters. Council Member Amaro asked whether allowing the BJP surtax to stay in place would change the City's obligation to the Pension Fund. Ms. Taylor stated that it did not; it could require that the half-cent sales tax stay in effect two to four years longer than it otherwise would, but this extension did not violate the timeline outlined in the original referendum.

Council Vice President White clarified that there was no "heartburn" among Police and Fire leadership over the proposal to allow the BJP surtax to stay in place.

Presentation on Community Benefit Agreement

Mike Weinstein delivered a presentation on the Community Benefit Agreement ("CBA").

He explained that this agreement had been in the works for 8 to 10 months. He stated that a major interest of the Jaguars was Shad Khan's desire to see that the City was sufficiently invested in Downtown Jacksonville, as Shad Khan's investment into the 4 Seasons Hotel had been the largest private investment into Downtown in Jacksonville's history. He stated that a major priority of the agreement was to complete construction of Downtown parks, including Riverfront Plaza, Shipyards West Park, Metro Park, and Flex Field. The funding for the parks in the CBA is the gap between existing funding for the construction of these parks in the CIP and their likely final cost.

He explained that the countywide investment focused on affordable housing, workforce development, and homelessness initiatives. He stated that the City has moved forward initiatives in these three areas and that these funds would move these initiatives forward. He explained that the CBA would create an

Advisory Commission, consisting of 7 community members, who would make recommendations to the administration on specific community initiatives that should be funded, and then the administration would pitch these initiatives to the City Council, who would have final say on the appropriation of these funds. The City would initially put \$50 million into these initiatives, at which point the Jaguars would provide \$75 million over 30 years to provide continuous funding.

Mr. Weinstein explained the investment into the Historic Eastside. He stated that the CBA would provide \$30 million up front to this neighborhood specifically for workforce development, homelessness initiatives, and affordable housing programs. He explained that the Jaguars had selected this neighborhood specifically for two reasons: that the Jaguars and stadium had affected this neighborhood specifically, not necessarily positively, and that this area's proximity to the river and to Downtown gave it potential as an economic driver for the rest of the County with sufficient investment. He stated that there would also be an Advisory Commission to oversee these dollars, with final approval power still held by the Council. He explained that the CBA would create this neighborhood as a Tax Increment Financing ("TIF") zone; this means that tax revenue gained through increases in property values in the area would be captured and re-invested in the neighborhood.

He concluded that passing the CBA with the stadium deal would lock in this community investment for the future instead of pitting it against other interests in the annual budget process; he reiterated that Downtown must be the economic driver for the rest of the county and that this plan was a return to being "bold."

Mark Lamping, President of the Jaguars, stated that it had appeared that most questions had been answered regarding the stadium portion of the deal. He stated that the joint partnership of the stadium deal presented both sides a unique opportunity to invest in the community through the CBA. He noted that the proposed investment would be the largest CBA in NFL history. He added that he understood that there was likely some desire among the Council to separate the stadium deal from the CBA and that the Jaguars would defer to the will of the Council on this matter; he clarified that the Jaguars would not want the Council to delay the stadium deal because the Council desired to have longer conversations about the CBA.

Michael Huyghue, Council Consultant, stated that the Council Auditor's report was accurate. He stated that he agrees with the assertion that the CBA was the largest in NFL history. He went into detail about stadium development agreements and community benefit agreements in other NFL cities. Other NFL cities do have Community Oversight Committees similar to the ones proposed in the CBA, but these can present difficulties by adding another layer of approval required to implement projects. Buffalo received state funding for the development of its stadium, so its city investment was significantly smaller than the amount proposed by this deal. He stated that the City should ensure that small business inclusion requirements are explicitly outlined in the deal. He added that the Jaguars' contribution to the CBA was significantly greater than other franchises' contributions to CBAs; the Jaguars proposed to invest \$150 million in the CBA. The Buffalo Bills recently invested \$90 million into a CBA, and the Tennessee Titans recently invested \$40 million.

Kim Taylor, Council Auditor, referred to a handout titled "Community Benefits Agreement – Comments, Concerns, and Recommendations." She explained that the "CRA-like" structure should be revised to be a formal CRA if the Council decided to proceed with this policy idea. She stated that creating a CRA at the request of the Jaguars may set bad precedent for the City, as it would erode General Fund revenue and

could further erode General Fund revenue if more CRAs were formed elsewhere in the City. She stated that consideration should be given to the duration, property base, the percentage of incremental revenue dedicated to the area, and whether this is appropriate to include in the contract with the Jaguars since this would mean that any change to the process would require future approval from the Jaguars. She added that there should be an amendment to clarify technical amendment authority and to require Council approval for substantive and/or financial amendments.

Aundra Wallace of JAX Chamber described the importance of workforce development efforts to give all citizens a real opportunity to achieve meaningful gainful employment. He stated that he supports concurrent passage of the CBA with the stadium deal.

Council Member Diamond noted that the major debate regarding this deal was over whether to pass the CBA along with the stadium deal or to separate them. He noted that the Jaguars were committed to investing \$100 million into the community even if the Council did not approve the CBA alongside the stadium deal.

Council Member Peluso asked for clarification regarding the Jaguars' position on potentially separating the bill; Mr. Lamping stated that the Jaguars had no position on splitting the bill but that the Council would need to decide on whether to approve the CBA before the end of September. Council Member Peluso asked how many CRAs had been formed in the last decade; Ms. Taylor answered that 1 had been. Council Member Peluso argued that the fact that only 1 had been created in the past decade and that the Council had recently disbanded the JIA CRA demonstrated that creating a CRA for the Eastside would not be "opening Pandora's box." He noted that the Council had passed a resolution committing itself to redressing redlining and that investing heavily in the Eastside would show commitment to this goal, especially as the LaVilla and Brooklyn neighborhoods had historically suffered as a result of urban renewal. He noted that the CBA would allow the Jaguars and City flexibility on how to spend the funds but that the CBA would lock in these funds to the neighborhood, which would show commitment to this neighborhood.

Council Member Howland stated that he had fiscal concerns regarding the CBA. He invoked Milton Friedman, noting that he had suggested that investing in the community so that all had equal opportunity could be economically justified as long as the intervention was limited. Council Member Howland stated that the Council should be responsible with taxpayer dollars and not limit the ability of future Councils in managing City funds. He noted that the CBA could have been brought forward during the previous budget cycle instead of with the stadium deal. He added that 43% of the appropriated funds in the CIP were designated to projects within District 7 and questioned the notion that these neighborhoods were currently being left behind.

Council Member Johnson expressed concern about the CBA's being "mandated" to the Council. He asked Mr. Weinstein to further explain the specific focus on the Eastside neighborhood; Mr. Weinstein explained that the Jaguars historical presence in the neighborhood justified action and that this area could be the economic driver for Downtown. Council Member Johnson stated that he believed that if the TIF proposal were to go forward that the body should be structured as an official CRA and not "CRA-like." He concluded that consolidation's benefits have vastly outweighed its drawbacks.

Council Member Lahnen noted that the \$40 million expended through this project in the next fiscal year and the \$42 million marked for completion grants already exceeded the \$75 million projected increase in

property tax revenue. He asked Mr. Huyghue whether he could provide further details about CBAs in other cities; Mr. Huyghue explained that there has typically not been a community match for other CBAs and that this CBA would be the largest in NFL history. Council Member Lahnen asked whether the City could spread out its investment into CBA projects over multiple years; Mr. Weinstein stated that the parks funding should be kept intact, as these funds were meant to push up the completion timeline of Downtown parks, but that the City could be flexible with the other funds.

Council Member Gay asked whether the state was still allowing the creation of new CRAs. Mary Staffopoulos of the Office of the General Counsel explained that recent state action required that CRAs created before 2019 be extended or sunsetted but that new CRAs could still be created.

Council Member Arias expressed concerns about fiscal responsibility and about the extent to which City investment was being put into Downtown. He asked whether the Buffalo or Tennessee CBAs mandated how their funds be spent, and Mr. Lamping stated that these other CBAs were not as specific in how they require the funds be spent. Mr. Huyghue stated that these other CBAs did also have oversight committees that had approval authority for how these funds be spent. Council Member Arias asked why this CBA was more specific about how the funds be spent than others; Mr. Lamping stated that the Jaguars and Shad Khan were committed to Downtown's development and wanted to see sufficient City investment in Downtown as well. Council Member Arias opined that the City's investing \$150 million for the Jaguars to invest \$50 million was not a good deal and stated that he would be in support of voting on the stadium deal and CBA separately.

Council Member Boylan noted that voting on the stadium deal and CBA as a package would make the budget process easier. He asked the Jaguars whether they had any input regarding the Auditor concerns; Mr. Weinstein stated that he would have to review the Auditor concerns but that he trusted that they were reasonable. Mr. Weinstein stated that the Jaguars were open to conversations about the technical language in the agreement. Council Member Boylan stated that he believes that the oversight or advisory committees created by this bill should report back to the Council with updates. He asked whether CIP projects would be limited by this bill, and Mr. Weinstein answered that no existing CIP project would be affected. Council Member Boylan expressed concern that the bill could limit future Councils. He noted that the CBA would contractually obligate both sides in their financial commitments, so future Councils would not be able to re-authorize the spending annually as is done in the budget process; Mr. Weinstein confirmed that this was the difference between structuring the deal as a CBA or passing an appropriation through the budget process. Council Member Boylan asked Ms. Taylor to clarify the Auditor's concern regarding the CRA-like structure eroding General Fund dollars, and Ms. Taylor explained that this structure would lock in revenue created in the district into the district rather than placing it in the General Fund.

Council Member Joe Carlucci stated that he would not want to normalize a "CRA-like" structure and that this action would be poor precedent. Ms. Taylor noted that the deal, as currently structured, would not require Council approval for how these TIF funds would be allocated by the CRA-like body, and Mr. Weinstein stated that it was not the intent of the Jaguars to avoid Council oversight. Council Member Joe Carlucci stated that he would be interested in broadening the scope of how the countywide funds can be spent.

Council Member Amaro explained that he would not want the deal to be watered down by the Council to the point that it is less effective. He asked Ms. Taylor to clarify the concern about the deal eroding

General Fund dollars; Ms. Taylor stated that the TIF funds would be required to stay in the Eastside neighborhood and would not be placed in the General Fund. Council Member Amaro stated that he understood why others had questions about why these funds would be invested in one neighborhood specifically but also understood Shad Khan's desire to see City investment Downtown and the connection between the Jaguars and the Eastside neighborhood. Mr. Lamping reiterated the reasons why the Jaguars wanted to see investment into the Eastside.

Council Member Matt Carlucci was complimentary of the administration and of the Jaguars for getting this deal completed. He noted that the Eastside got the least amount of money from the Better Jacksonville Plan of all Jacksonville neighborhoods. He stated that Council Members should work in the interests of the entire city rather than in the interests of their individual districts and referenced polling that showed that constituents wanted Council Members to represent the interests of the entire city. He stated that it should be the goal of the City to score a "touchdown" rather than a "field goal" and that the proposed CBA presented the opportunity for a "touchdown." He asked Darnell Smith, Mayor's Chief of Staff, whether or not there could be any consequences to delaying approval of the CBA, and Mr. Smith answered that it could delay grant applications.

Council Member White noted that the focus on the CBA showed that the Council was generally in consensus regarding the stadium deal.

Council Member Miller complimented the Jaguars on their ability to be flexible and the Auditor's Office for their work in reviewing the deal. He stated that he understands the desire to invest in the Eastside but that he would not support an effort to circumvent the annual budget process. He stated that limiting the ability of future Councils showed implicit distrust in the Council.

Council President Salem noted the amount of money that had already been invested into Downtown parks. He agreed with the concern about CRAs and CRA-like structures and stated that other neighborhoods would want their own CRAs as well if the Eastside were given a CRA and that this would endanger the fiscal stability of the City, noting that City revenue was projected to be about \$100 million less for the upcoming fiscal year than the previous. He noted various projects that would require City investment in the near future, including Pension commitments, DIA commitments, UF Health, the UF graduate school campus, and the Laura Street Trio and Gateway projects. He voiced for support for the CBA's going through the budget process, as this would allow the City to respond to new needs annually rather than locking in a commitment.

Council Member Peluso noted that more money was being invested elsewhere in the City through state and federal grants, so the statistic that 43% of CIP investment was going into District 7 may be misrepresenting how much public assistance each neighborhood receives. He expressed disappointment that others were voicing concern about the proportion of City funds being invested in District 7, as members of the Council frequently state that they understand the importance of building up Downtown but do not always demonstrate this understanding. He stated that he trusts that Mr. Weinstein and the administration considered future financial obligations in putting together the CBA and that the stadium should not be an "empty shell" in its neighborhood.

Council Member Joe Carlucci stated that he was not intending to "pick on" District 7 and that these were honest questions about City investment. He noted that the Council should not be legislating based on polls. He asked about the timeline on which the countywide funds (\$14 million for each district) must be

spent; Mr. Weinstein explained that these funds would be expended between 2025 and 2028. Council Member Joe Carlucci stated that he would like to see greater flexibility in when these funds can be spent.

Council Member Diamond stated that he was in complete agreement with Council President Salem's desire to be fiscally responsible and to separate the stadium deal and CBA so that the CBA can go through the annual budget process. He noted that it was standard practice for the Council to structure bills so that potential conflicts can be avoided so that as many Council Members as possible can vote on a given bill, and Ms. Staffopoulos confirmed that this was standard practice. Council Member Diamond noted that several Council Members would have conflicts in the CBA portion and that it would be best practice to separate the stadium deal and CBA so that as many Council Members as possible could vote on the stadium deal. Council President Salem affirmed that he would be discussing the matter with the Office of the General Counsel to ensure that as many Council Members as possible could vote.

Council Member Arias asked whether the CBA would be eligible to receive matching grants only on the City's \$150 million or on the full \$300 million. Joe Inderhees, Mayor's Deputy Chief of Staff, answered that all funds would be eligible for matching grants, as matching grants are connected to programs. He explained that separating the stadium deal and CBA would delay the submission of grant applications, as the building of these programs will take time. Council Member Arias noted that the current CBA did not include any specific programs, and Mr. Inderhees explained that the 2024-25 budget year would be dedicated to standing up programs so that they could be eligible for matching grants.

Council Member Matt Carlucci stated that Council President Salem's questions were good and that many similar fiscal concerns also existed when the City debated having an NFL franchise in the first place. He stated that he trusts that the administration has considered these fiscal concerns. He added that individual appropriations will have to be approved by the Council and opined that the City should move forward so as to not leave \$50 million on the table.

Council Member Gay agreed with Council President Salem's concerns and stated that he found this demonstration of fiscal responsibility refreshing. Council President Salem noted that he had left out in his list of potential fiscal obligations the Sheriff's request of an increased budget. He stated that separating the stadium deal and CBA to require the CBA go through the budget process would only create a 3-week delay. He stated that government must pay for police, fire, and waste services and that the City must be in a fiscal position to provide these services. He stated that he also trusted the administration but invoked the phrase "trust but verify."

The Committee of the Whole recessed at this point for lunch from 12:37 PM until 1:15 PM.

Presentation on Stadium Security Agreement

Council President Salem clarified his comment about a decrease in City revenue; he stated that City revenue was projected to increase by \$80 million from Fiscal Year 2023-2024 to 2024-2025 but that this increase was \$100 million less than the increase from Fiscal Year 2022-2023 to 2023-2024.

Mr. Weinstein explained the Stadium Security Agreement. The City and Jaguars will now be splitting the cost of public safety and emergency response services provided inside the stadium for NFL and third-party events. Previously, these costs had been fully covered by the City. Mr. Huyghue explained that this deal was favorable compared to other markets, as many cities fully cover their security expenses. Ms.

Taylor explained that these cost savings could result in annual savings of around \$500,000 but that they would not be realized until 2028.

Council Member Boylan asked for an estimate of gameday costs; Mr. Lamping stated that these costs were about \$2 million annually. Mr. Lamping added that the Jaguars had agreed to splitting security costs because this would allow them greater control over the gameday experience and would help them provide a better experience to customers. Council Member Arias asked who would directly be paying for security, and Ms. Taylor noted that these details were still being worked out. Council Member Arias requested for future consideration the specifics of who would be working security.

Council President Salem asked how the agreement defined “gameday.” Megha Parekh, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer for the Jaguars, noted that this definition would be stated in the lease. Ms. Taylor answered that these details were still in discussion, and Ms. Parekh added that “gameday” usually begins when parking lots open. Council President Salem asked who could keep him updated on this discussion, and Mr. Weinstein stated that Council President Salem could keep in contact with the mayor’s office and that this definition would be provided in the final lease. Council President Salem stated that he would also support an amendment to clarify that all technical amendments be noticed to the Council Auditor’s Office.

Council President Salem asked whether the City would be responsible for security costs in Gainesville (or any other possible temporary site). Mr. Lamping clarified that this was not the expectation. Council Member Peluso asked whether this agreement applied to the University of Florida vs. University of Georgia football game, and Ms. Parekh stated that it did not, as the City was responsible for security costs at this game and at the Gator Bowl.

Presentation on Sports Performance Center Lease Agreement

Mr. Weinstein explained the Sports Performance Center Lease Agreement. He explained that, unlike the other elements of the deal, this agreement begins upon execution of the agreement. He noted that this was not part of the Guaranty or Non-Relocation Agreements and that it did not change any financial responsibilities to the City or to the Jaguars. The Jaguars have total responsibility for the facility, but the City does have ability to hold events at the facility if it wishes. Mr. Huyghue noted that this agreement required NFL approval, which is likely why it is being incorporated under the agreement. Ms. Taylor confirmed that it did not change any financial obligations to the City.

Council President Salem stated that he would also like to see an amendment for this agreement to require notice of technical amendments to the Council Auditor’s Office.

Council Member Boylan noted that the agreement required that the Jaguars go through the Council for major improvements to the facility and asked whether the City would be responsible for any of these costs. Ms. Taylor stated that the City would not be responsible for these costs. Ms. Taylor explained that maintenance costs were the responsibility of the Jaguars and that significant capital improvements to the facility required at minimum notice to the Council if not Council approval, with the rationale behind this requirement being that the facility is the City’s asset even if the Jaguars are the primary tenant of the facility. Council Member Boylan noted that the language in the agreement should be clarified to make clear whether significant capital improvements require Council approval.

Presentation on Amphitheater Lease Agreement

Mr. Weinstein explained the Amphitheater Lease Agreement. He stated that this agreement was with Bold Events, LLC., a subsidiary of the Jaguars. Surcharges with tenant match pay renovation costs. He stated that the lease was intended to take effect upon the new Stadium Lease Agreement and will line up the termination of the lease to the termination of the Stadium Lease Agreement. He explained that there was a complication with Flex Field, as the Amphitheater shares a wall with Flex Field and that the Flex Field will be renovated for Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department use. Mr. Huyghue reiterated that this deal was intended to align the lease timeline with other lease timelines and that sharing facilities with Flex Field was the one “tricky” part of the deal. Ms. Taylor explained two recommended technical amendments to the lease agreement. She noted that the new lease agreement specified that the tenant would be responsible for security costs, a change from the previous agreement, and that security costs on gamedays would be split 50/50 between the City and tenant.

Council President Salem asked whether the Jaguars have control over Flex Field, and Mr. Lamping stated that the Jaguars had control over Flex Field only on gamedays, a condition which had not changed from the previous lease. Ms. Taylor clarified that per the existing agreement, the Jaguars had control over the Flex Field the day before, the day of, and the day after gameday, including preseason and postseason games, which totaled 36 days.

Council Member Gay asked who was responsible for maintenance of Flex Field, and Mr. Weinstein answered that the City was responsible. Mr. Weinstein added that improvements to Flex Field were included in the CBA as park improvements. Council Member Gay asked whether the Jaguars had built the facility, and Mr. Lamping confirmed that they had. Council Member Gay expressed concern that the City was solely paying for improvements on a facility that was built by the Jaguars. Council President Salem stated that the Jaguars no longer use the facility and that any decision to improve the facility would be the City’s.

Council Member Boylan noted that cost for improvements to the Amphitheater would be split 50/50 between the City and the tenant. Ms. Taylor clarified that Council Member Gay’s concern was regarding the Flex Field. Phillip Peterson of the Council Auditor’s Office explained that the previous agreement for capital maintenance of the Flex Field specified that the Jaguars cover 75% and the City cover 25% above what the surcharges cover.

Council Member Lahnen confirmed with Mr. Lamping that the Jaguars use the Flex Field about 36 days a year. He asked whether the Jaguars would contribute to improvements to the Flex Field; Mr. Lamping stated that the Jaguars were not interested in the improvements to the Flex Field. Rather, it was the City’s desire to install a hard floor and restrooms to allow for additional uses of the facility, so the Jaguars would not be involved in these improvements. Council Member Gaffney asked about specific uses of the proposed improved Flex Field, and Mr. Weinstein noted that in addition to sports tournaments, the Flex Field could be used for exhibit space and a variety of other uses. Council Member Gaffney noted that the new Flex Field could be a source of revenue for the City.

Council President Salem explained the schedule for next week: Public Hearing on Monday, 6/24, and meetings on Thursday and Friday, 6/20 and 6/21. He noted that Council Members could bring forward amendments at the Thursday and Friday meetings.

Public Comment

Daniel Nunn, pro-bono counsel to the Eastside Coalition and Lift Jax, noted that there would be legislation before the Council to designate the Eastside neighborhood as an “urban infill and redevelopment area.” He explained that this designation would provide flexibility for the “CRA-like” structure but that Council approval and Council Auditor oversight would still be required. He explained that a main reason for targeting the Eastside neighborhood in the CBA was to prevent resident displacement as a result of the stadium renovation.

Ariane Randolph explained that she was an “intentional resident” of the Historic Eastside, with deep family ties to the neighborhood. She explained that the community has been a part of the process and has bought into the community benefits agreement but that the work would happen regardless of the Council’s decision to approve it. She noted the importance of the Historic Eastside geographically.

David Garfunkel, CEO of Lift Jax, explained why Lift Jax decided to work in the Historic Eastside. He explained that the neighborhood had strong community leadership and that it is the largest intact historically black neighborhood in Florida. He invited Council Members to visit the Eastside.

Meeting adjourned: 2:17 p.m.

Minutes:

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Posted: 6/20/2024, 5:00 PM