



117 W. Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202
Council Chamber, 1st Floor, City Hall

**Special Committee on
Duval DOGE
October 21, 2025
Meeting Minutes**

Attendance: Committee Members Salem (Chair), Arias, Diamond, Miller and Gay; Council Members Peluso and Johnson

Also: Brian Parks and Kim Taylor, Auditor's Office; Mary Staffopoulos, OGC; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Meeting convened: 11:01 am

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Salem convened the meeting and called for introductions. He said that there would not be an update on the Group Health Fund at this meeting due to awaiting a report on claim history from Florida Blue.

Public Comment

John Nooney

2% Lapse for Departments

Ms. Taylor said thus far the Auditor's Office received one submission for the return of the 2% lapsed funds, from the Inspector General's Office. She said it can be discussed at the next meeting after the Auditor's analysis.

JTA Ultimate Urban Circulator (U2C)

Nat Ford, JTA CEO, spoke about the questions submitted by CM Diamond and the NAVI and U2C project. Mr. Ford talked about the U2C as a significant mobility innovation program, built from scratch after years of research and development. He talked about the NAVI phase 1, activated this summer, and the planning coordination with downtown development projects. Mr. Ford talked about funding sources, including state and federal grants. He spoke about Jacksonville becoming a national hub for autonomous vehicle manufacturing, and he said the U2C is the reason that German autonomous vehicle manufacturer Holon has agreed to build a vehicle plant in Jacksonville and move its headquarters to the city from Michigan.

CM Salem asked about ridership numbers. Mr. Ford indicated that ridership would increase over time, especially as projects downtown get completed (UF campus, new MOSH, Four Seasons). CM Salem asked about the Skyway conversion and Mr. Ford said that a study to that effect will be completed in the first quarter of 2026. When asked about a recent software issue pertaining to the autonomous function, Mr. Ford said that it should be rectified without service interruption.

CM Diamond said that the program is a gamble, and that the focus should be on personal self-driving cars. He suggested redirecting the local option gas tax funding reserved for the second phase of the project to other projects, like road resurfacing. Mr. Ford said that the U2C benefits all city residents, particularly those without cars or those who cannot drive. CM Arias asked about previous legislation to approve the U2C program, and he said the project is visionary and he suggested keeping the program free for riders.

CM Gay asked about the impact of pausing the program and how that would affect grant requirements. Mr. Ford indicated that pausing the program could put JTA in default with federal and state grants. CM Miller asked about timing for this project and the transition from buses to autonomous vehicles, and he asked about the obligation to repay the federal government as related to the Skyway.

There was discussion about funding, density and public transit in other cities, from light rail to street cars. CM Peluso advocated for light rail to connect the city, and for a dedicated route to the airport. CM Salem encouraged the JTA board to ask more questions about new projects. CM Diamond expressed his view that the program should be eliminated. CM Arias talked about the input from the public on the project and the need to sometimes take risks with future facing decisions. CM Johnson spoke about the potential Skyway conversion and connections to the outer edges of the city. Mr. Inderhees, Mayor's Office, expressed the Mayor's support for this innovative project's ripple effect, and the positioning of Jacksonville as a leader in the industry. CM Diamond asked for more follow-up at a future meeting.

Chair Salem adjourned the meeting at 12:23 pm.

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
CHampsey@coj.net 904.255.5151
Posted: 11.10.25 5:00 pm