



**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
RESEARCH DIVISION**

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**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
HURRICANE DORIAN DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY
City Council Chamber, 1st floor, City Hall**

**September 2, 2019
11:00 a.m.**

Location: City Council Chamber, City Hall – St. James Building; 117 West Duval Street

In attendance: Council Members Scott Wilson (President), Aaron Bowman, Matt Carlucci, LeAnna Cumber, Randy DeFoor, Garrett Dennis, Al Ferraro, Terrance Freeman, Reginald Gaffney, Tommy Hazouri, Sam Newby, Ju’Coby Pittman, Brenda Priestly Jackson, Ron Salem, Randy White
Excused: Council Members Danny Becton, Michael Boylan, Rory Diamond, Joyce Morgan

Also: Mayor Curry, Brian Hughes, Stephanie Burch, Jordan Elsbury – Mayor’s Office; Paige Johnston and Shannon Eller – Office of General Counsel; Cheryl Brown – Council Director/Secretary; Kyle Billy and Kim Taylor – Council Auditor’s Office; Jessica Matthews and Crystal Shemwell – Legislative Services Division; Steve Cassada – Council Staff Services; John Pappas – Public Works Department; Keith Powers and Steve Woodard – Fire and Rescue Department; Aaron Zahn – JEA; Brian Mosier – Neighborhoods Department; Daryl Joseph – Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department; Sheriff Mike Williams; School Superintendent Diana Greene

Meeting Convened: 11:00 a.m.

President Wilson called the meeting to order and Council Member Freeman gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor’s declaration of emergency for Hurricane Dorian was distributed to the council members along with a revised schedule for City Council committee meetings to be held on Thursday and Friday of this week, weather permitting. The legislation filing deadline was moved to Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

Mayor Lenny Curry recognized the local and state emergency preparedness officials who have been preparing for the storm and discussed his emergency declaration. Tropical storm force winds and coastal and low-lying area flooding are expected in the area as the storm passes. City offices will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday, as will Duval County public schools, with the possibility that the closures may be extended depending on the track and timing of the storm’s approach. The Mayor announced that he

had directed mandatory evacuations for persons living in evacuation zones A and B and that evacuation shelters are open and receiving evacuees.

Council members posed questions about the evacuation shelters, the availability of heavy equipment to clear roads after the storm passes, about transporting and sheltering the homeless, pre-clearance of drainage ditches and stormwater inlets and outfalls, bridge closure standards, sheltering for registered sex offenders, curfews, animals as evacuation shelters, transportation of evacuees to shelters, etc. Council Auditor Kyle Billy reported that the City has very healthy reserve funds, both operating and emergency reserves, to deal with immediate expenses in anticipation of the FEMA reimbursement process after the storm. JEA CEO Aaron Zahn distributed and discussed handouts outlining JEA's pre-storm preparations and the procedures for reporting outages during and after the storm.

Council Member Priestly Jackson thanked the numerous members of the City administration who attended an event in the Ken Knight neighborhood on Saturday to explain the City's emergency preparedness steps and to build trust with the neighborhood. She noted that the Mayor's office had responded to the neighborhood's request for assistance with sandbags by connecting them with a private agency that was going to provide that assistance before the neighborhood residents self-organized and produced their own sandbags.

In response to a question from Council Member Carlucci about availability of hurricane assistance relief funds, CAO Brian Hughes said that the City coordinates with the United Way and area non-profits and said the City still has some small funding available in the assistance fund set up for previous storms. Additional information will be circulated to council members after the degree of storm damage is determined. Mr. Carlucci, an insurance agent, said that he is available to his council colleagues to answer insurance-related questions after the storm so that they can advise their constituents on how to handle different unusual circumstances. He also urged council members to caution their constituents to be very wary of signing "assignment of benefits" agreements with contractors to perform repair work on their homes and businesses because they can be very problematic if the contractor is less than honorable. In response to a question from Council Member Gaffney, Public Works Director John Pappas explained the process for identifying, mapping and prioritizing areas for storm debris cleanup.

Mr. Hughes cautioned that the storm track is still somewhat uncertain and a slight variation one way or another could have major consequences for Jacksonville. He urged continued vigilance and attention to the City's instructions and announcements. Mr. Pappas described the 1-day delay in the garbage and recycling pickup schedule beginning on Wednesday (Wednesday collections moved to Thursday, Thursday collections moved to Friday, Friday collections moved to Saturday). Council members posed questions about the sufficiency and supplies for evacuation shelters and about their ability to visit the shelters. Mr. Hughes asked council members to speak to his office in advance to arrange those visits. In response to a statement by Council Member Newby, Sheriff Williams said that his office will be giving consideration to housing sexual predators/offenders in a separate location from the Legends Center in future storm events.

The council discussed the possibility of holding committee meetings on Saturday or next Monday if storm conditions prevent meetings from being held on Thursday and Friday as now anticipated. President Wilson said that he would coordinate with the administration and the Council staff about scheduling possibilities should a change be necessary.

In response to a question from Council Member Dennis, Stephanie Burch of the Mayor's Office described the Housing Division's disaster assistance fund use after hurricanes Irma and Matthew, which consisted of leftover SHIP and CGBG funds from previous years' grant allocations. She cautioned that there is no guarantee that there will be unallocated funds available this year to finance a similar assistance fund, but

the administration will be looking for funds that might be put to that use. Council Member Dennis also noted that the City rebated reroofing and electrical permit fees after a previous hurricane.

Mr. Pappas described the Public Works Department's process for dealing with debris after the storm passes.

Mr. Hughes described the process for council members getting twice-daily briefing on the storm's progress and City preparations via phone teleconference.

Meeting adjourned: 12:15 p.m.

Minutes: Jeff Clements, Council Research Division

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9.5.19 Posted 12:00 p.m.