



Taxation, Revenue, and Utilization of Expenditures (TRUE) Commission

Marc El Hassan, Chair

Mike McCollum Vice Chair

Joe Andrews, Secretary

TRUE Commission Meeting Minutes

September 1, 2011
4:00 p.m.

Attendance: Marc El Hassan (Chair), Marcella Lowe, Joe Andrews, Diane Brown, Ernest McDuffie, Greg Radlinski, Ted Wendler, Thomas Martin, Gamal Lyons, David Lane, Jason Fischer, Hiron Peck

Excused: Ryan Jones Mike McCollum

Absent: Mark Cowart

The meeting convened at 4:07 p.m. with a quorum present.

Minutes

The minutes of the August 4, 2011 commission meetings were approved as distributed at the meeting, which included a minor amendment from the original draft distributed by e-mail.

Committee Reports

Legislative Tracking Committee – Commissioner Andrews distributed a legislative tracking matrix and reported on the status of several bills the committee has been tracking. Eight of the 12 twelve bills being tracked have been either passed or withdrawn by the Council, 4 are still pending. Mr. Andrews expressed his disagreement with 2011-521 which would deposit the proceeds of the sales of parcels of land cleaned up from ash contamination into the Contamination Assessment Fund rather than using the proceeds to pay off the Banking Fund for the borrowing used to fund the cleanup. He stated that he is still looking into 2011-541 that would appropriate funds from the Handicapped Parking Fines Fund to a variety of uses, some of which he believes do not comply with the uses for the fund authorized in the Ordinance Code. Chairman El Hassan suggested that it might be worthwhile to re-send the commission's Banking Fund report to the City Council for their information. The report suggested that the Banking Fund borrowing cap could be reduced by de-authorizing projects after are completed.

Motion (Radlinski): that the commission recommend to the City Council via resolution that the Council conform 2011-541 to uses of handicapped parking fines to those specifically authorized for the Handicapped Parking Fines Trust Fund by the Ordinance Code – **approved unanimously.**

Performance Committee – Commissioner Wendler reported that he had attended the August 8, 2011 City Council pension workshop and will be writing a report for the commission's benefit

summarizing the presentations by General Counsel Cindy Laquidara, City Chief Financial Officer Mickey Miller and Police and Fire Pension Fund Executive Director John Keane and Deputy Director Dick Cohee.

The committee's meeting earlier today crafted a response to Council Member Robin Lumb's questionnaire to the TRUE Commission. Marcella Lowe summarized the discussion of the answers to the questionnaire. Main points included: the commission feels that it would be helpful if the City Council would appoint a council member as the liaison to TRUE Commission to be the official point of contact for commission reports and to convey those reports to the full Council. A notable success of the commission is the report on cash management policies which led to an Executive Order being promulgated on the subject. Ms. Lowe will invite Council Member Lumb to a future TRUE meeting to meet the commissioners and find out about the commission's activities. Chairman El Hassan noted that the Council has appointed an Audit Committee that should be the TRUE Commission's venue for contact. He suggested giving the Audit Committee a list of the commission's recent resolutions and recommendations and ask that they consider them for action. Now is the time to get some attention for the commission's work.

Auditor's Report

Tommy Carter of the Auditor's Office reported that the Auditor's Office has released one report since the last meeting, #703 – Third Quarter Budget Summary. The report shows the General Fund projecting a \$10.8 million negative variance because of \$10.5 million in revenue shortfalls in ad valorem taxes and telecommunications tax collections. The Auditor's Office is almost exclusively involved in the budget process wrap-up through the end of September.

Chair's Comments

None.

Old Business

Chairman El Hassan called on Commissioner Lowe to discuss the audit evaluation form. She stated that all commissioners should be reading the Auditor's Office reports and evaluating whether there's anything that needs further evaluation. At the next commission meeting the group will discuss the reports and take one of several actions: approve with no comments, approve with comments, or recommend further action or the appointment of a committee to undertake further study. Ms. Lowe stated that Council Auditor's and Inspector General's reports are available on the City web site and suggested that reports issued in the last year should be reviewed for the commission to take whatever action might be necessary.

New Business

Motion (Andrews): that the TRUE Commission opposes passage of Ordinance 2011-521 that would deposit the proceeds from the sale of ash site remediated lots into the Contamination Assessment Fund, recommending instead that the proceeds be returned to the Banking Fund to pay down the debt service on the bonds issued to pay for the ash site remediation – **approved 9-2** (Radlinski and El Hassan opposed).

Motion (Radlinski): moved that the TRUE Commission resolves that the Council restrict the FY 2011-2012 City budget (File # 2011-405) by adding language to the effect that no funds appropriate by the budget ordinance shall be expended implementing an Office of Education Commissioner pursuant to Executive Order 2011-07 or similar order. – **approved 11-0**.

Commissioner Andrews stated that Council Member Bishop had objected during a budget hearing that the creation of a new office could be construed as a matter of administrative reorganization which is prohibited in the budget ordinance. Chairman El Hassan asked Commissioner Radlinski to follow up with the Mayor's office on

how he intends to implement the Executive Order and what powers he intends for the Education Commissioner to have.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Martin noted that the Mayor's transition team on boards and commissions mentioned the TRUE Commission's suggestions on performance measurement as a useful product of a citizen commission.

Public Comments

None

Next meeting

The commission's next meeting will be on Thursday, October 6th at 4:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Posted 10.10.11

5:00 p.m.

c.c. cityc@coj.net
City Council electronic files
Media box