



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

**John Palombi, Chair**  
**Ron Mallett, Vice Chair**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**February 1, 2007**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Attendance:** John Palombi (Chair), Mike Meroney, John Jolly, Ron Mallett, Greg Anderson, Lee Martin, Bob Lee, Gary Looney, Elaine Burnett, Charles Magee, Mark Cowart

**Excused:** Mark Roesser, Marcella Lowe, Charles Curley, Randy Deen

**Absent:** Louvenia Tippins, Lou Myers

The meeting convened at 4:05 p.m. with a quorum present.

### Minutes

The minutes of the January 4, 2007 meeting had been previously distributed.

◆ The minutes were **approved**

Chairman Palombi noted that the wife of former commissioner Arnold Whisenant had recently had surgery and requested that the commissioners keep the Whisenants in their thoughts and prayers.

### Committee Reports

Public Parking Committee: In the absence of Commissioner Roesser the report was deferred to the next meeting.

Funding Control and Effectiveness Committee: In the absence of Commissioner Myers, Chairman Palombi noted that Council Member Kevin Hyde had drafted and circulated an ordinance making major revisions to Ordinance Code Chapter 118 – Miscellaneous Appropriations. The draft had been circulated electronically to all commissioners, who were encouraged to review it and make any further comments or suggestions to Council Member Hyde. Mr. Palombi expressed his feeling that the draft generally covered the list of suggestions made by the TRUE Commission.

Performance Committee: Commissioner Meroney reported that the committee had met last week with attorneys Neill McArthur and Bill Crowe of the General Counsel's Office and had gotten good input on the committee's latest draft report. The committee wants to be precise in its wording and be able to justify all its findings and recommendations because some are very substantive. He urged all

commissioners to review the draft that has been circulated and make any additional suggestions or comments before the committee finalizes the report, which they plan to report at the March meeting.

Chairman Palombi reported that he had had subsequent conversations with Mr. McArthur and with Council Auditor Kirk Sherman about the report and expected to receive further feedback later this week. The Auditor's Office will be providing an attachment and had compiled and calculated some specific figures for the committee that were not readily available, so thanks were due to Mr. Sherman and staff. Mr. Meroney noted that the scope of funding to procurement is approximately \$3 billion per year, so every 1 percent improvement in processes and controls could net \$30 million in savings – a very worthwhile endeavor.

TRUE Commission effectiveness: Commissioner Martin suggested that it is only fair for the commission to look at its own operations and performance in the same way that it examines the performance of city departments and divisions. He requested several volunteers from among the commission membership to assist him in beginning the review. Commissioner Burnett volunteered to assist, and hoped the group could help generate ideas for how better to disseminate reports of the commission's work to the general public.

Chapter 118 Revisions – Public Service Grants: see report of Funding Control and Effectiveness Committee above.

#### Auditor's Report

Council Auditor Kirk Sherman reported that his office has finished work with the City's external auditor for this year's independent audit. Last week he brought in a trainer from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a 4-day audit training seminar for all his staff. They are currently working on the quarterly financial report for the first quarter of FY06-07, which covers some departments reorganized in the previous fiscal year and new budget. The administration's mid-year budget report on the current fiscal year should be upcoming in March.

The Auditor's Office has 3 reports pending: a review of citywide overtime usage; an audit of the Special Events Division; and a review of the Medical Examiner's Office. The office is also in the process of updating its Audit Risk Assessment, a 6-factor weighted scale used to determine the best candidates for future audits. That update should be completed in the next couple of months.

Chair's Report: None.

#### Old Business

- Commissioner Burnett presented a sample of a TRUE Commission business card. Someone will need to clarify with the City the rules regarding use of the City Seal. Chairman Palombi will make inquiries. Ms. Burnett has talked to a printer about costs, and got a price of \$50 for 500 or \$85 for 1,000 cards. Commissioner Meroney suggested a less expensive on-line printing site. There was discussion about putting all 18 commissioners' names on the card, and about listing the meeting time and location as a means to encourage public participation and input.
- Auditor's Report #624 – FY06-07 Budget Summary: with Commissioner Deen's absence the report was deferred.
- Auditor's Report #625 – JPA Dredging Contracts: Commissioner Magee reported that he has several questions that will require additional research; he will pursue them further. He finds that many of the issues raised dovetail with the work of the Performance Committee and its work on contract management policies and processes.

### New Business

None

### Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Mallett asked what City functions were self-funded. Council Auditor Kirk Sherman replied that the Building Inspection Division and the Fire Marshal are about the only two functions that are entirely self-sufficient. Most of the SMG-managed public assembly facilities (Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts, Prime Osborn Convention Center, Equestrian Center) are close to self-sustaining, except for Alltel Stadium. Mr. Mallett also asked if the Ed Ball Building purchase/renovation was part of the Better Jacksonville Plan. Mr. Sherman reported that it was not, but rather was a piece of the so-called “Autumn Bond” issue of 2005.

### Public Comments

None

### Next meeting

The commission’s next meeting will be on Thursday, March 1st at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

### Items pending further follow-up

- Report #624, FY2006/07 quarterly budget summary – Commissioner Deen
- Audit #625, JPA Dredging Contract Review – Commissioner Magee
- Public Parking Committee report – Commissioner Roesser
- Performance Committee report – Commissioner Meroney
- Funding Control and Effectiveness Committee – Commissioner Myers
- Chapter 118 Revisions Committee – Commissioner Lowe
- Definition and scope of a “lazy assets” review – Commissioner Mallett
- TRUE Commission performance review – Commissioner Martin
- JEA “green building” policies – Commissioner Burnett