

Mayor's African American Advisory Board

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

9:30 a.m.

Meeting Location: Ed Ball Building, 214 N. Hogan Street, 32202 – First Floor Hearing Room #1002

Meeting Attendance: MAAAB Chair Dr. Barbara Darby; MAAAB Vice Chair Ronetta Wards; MAAAB Secretary Kelly Frazier; Latrina Dowdell; Kiara Nixon; Errol White; Conrad Jennings; Audrieanna Burgin.

Excused: Menelik Vereen; Dawn Curling. **Absent:** Lee Brown, III.

Staff and Elected Officials: Patricia McCollough; Lynn Sherman; Edwina Henry; Schnell Chin.

Guests: Greg Corcoran, JEA Community Outreach; Lisa Jennings, JEA Project Outreach; Mike Williams, JEA Program Manager; Ernest Smith, UC CPAC; Dana Maule.

Meeting Summary

1. **Call to Order and Verify Quorum** - Chair Darby called the meeting to order at 9:31 am and verified that a quorum was present.
2. **A Moment of Centering** – Chair Darby asked for a moment of silence in observance of 9-11 victims. She then read a quote which noted that Human Rights are things to fight for and protect, not just enjoy.
3. **Approval of Agenda** – The September 10, 2025, **Agenda was amended as** follows: The Presentation was made by JEA Staff, Lisa Jennings, Project Outreach; Greg Corcoran, Community Outreach and Mike Williams, Program Manager. Mr. Phil Perry, City of Jacksonville, Chief Communications Officer/Public Affairs, will present at a future meeting. Change also the Next Meeting Date to Wednesday, October 8, 2025.

The Meeting Agenda was approved as amended.
4. **Approval of the Previous Meeting Summary** – The August 13, 2025, meeting summary was approved.
5. **Presentation: JEA Staff** – Lisa Jennings, Project Outreach; Greg Corcoran, Community Outreach and Mike Williams, Program Manager provided an update of the Riverview Community Septic Tank Phase Out (STOP) Program progress and distributed STPO informational materials:
 - **Project Objectives** – The City of Jacksonville, working in partnership with JEA, initiated a program designed to eliminate failing septic systems. The program involves the installation of new sewer and water infrastructure where none currently exist in the city's opened and maintained rights-of-way. It will also include proper abandonment of existing septic tanks, and the installation of individual sewer and water lines on private property and connection to the new JEA sewer and water systems. Utilities installed under this program will include payment of all associated permits and fees associated with sewer and water connection at no cost to the property owner. JEA will manage the

outreach, engineering and construction of the project and operate and maintain the sewer and water systems once they are installed.

- **Property Owner Participation** – The City of Jacksonville Ordinance requires the consent of at least 70 percent of the legal property owners identified within the Riverview property boundary. After that threshold has been met, the city and JEA will move forward with the project’s design, engineering and construction. If the project does not achieve the required 70 percent minimum approval, the neighborhood will not be eligible for program funds for at least five years.
- JEA’s Project Outreach Team (904) 665-7500 or projectoutreach@jea.com
Appointments are also available at the Bradham-Brooks Public Library – COJ/JEA Septic Tank Phase Out Field Office, 1755 Edgewood Avenue W.

6. Mayor’s Staff Updates – Pat McCollough, Special Assistant to the Mayor on Civic Engagement and Youth Participation:

- Ms. McCollough thanked the Board for the work they are doing and for how well they represent the city and Mayor Deegan. She encouraged them to continue their efforts.
- She discussed the Mayor’s upcoming Budget Town Hall Meetings and encouraged board members to attend.
- Ms. McCollough noted that the announcement regarding the Civil Rights Trail designations will come at the end of October 2025.
- She is continuing with the Legacy Project remaining markers process and invited members of the MAAAB to participate.
- The Mayor’s Young Leaders Advisory Council had more than 200 applicants to fill 50 seats. They identified their top three priorities: Mental Health, Employment and Homelessness.
 - Chair Darby will recommend either the Program Committee or the Arts & Culture Committee to participate on the Legacy Trail Project. An invitation will be extended to the Youth to attend the November 12, 2025, MAAAB Board Meeting at the Legends Center, at 6 pm.

7. Public Comments & Announcements (three-minute limit)

- Dr. Lynn Sherman, Director of Health Programs expressed an interest in making a presentation to the Board. She will coordinate with Ms. Henry to schedule.
- Ms. Dana Maule announced an exhibit at the Ritz Museum on September 21, 2025, at 2 pm: Seven Local legends Through Arts. She also announced an event on September 27, 2025, at 9 am, to be held in Durkeeville.

8. Chair’s Report – Dr. Darby attended the following meetings:

- August 21, 2025 – Mayor’s Budget Town Hall Meeting
- September 3, 2025 – City Council Budget Hearing
- Chair Darby also indicated that, as a private citizen, she wrote a letter expressing her views on the budget and she encouraged other board members to do likewise, if so inclined.
- Lastly, she encouraged board members to attend the budget town hall meetings.

9. Committee Reports:

- **Arts & Culture** - Committee Chair Dawn Curling – Excused absence.
- **Economy & Infrastructure** – Next Meeting: September 16, 2025.
- **Health & Public Safety** – Next Meeting: September 9, 2025.
- **Military & Veterans Affairs** – Met on August 25, 2025, and discussed the following with Harrison Conyers, Director of Military and Veterans Affairs; Tiffany Morales, Veterans Outreach Manager and Clarence Harper, Veterans Outreach Coordinator:
 - Homeless and At-Risk Veterans – The Military and Veterans Affairs (MAVD) Department has partnered with JFRD to identify and provide services for local homeless individuals. The MAVD placed 72 homeless veterans in short term housing in 2024 and is currently providing the same services in 2025.
 - The Veterans Resource Portal - The MAVD is currently in talks with the COJ Technology Support Office to create a Resource Portal which will house service organizations and resources for public view and service organizations will be able to support and tract veterans via the portal.
 - Community Center – The MAVD has received funding for the planning of the COJ Veterans Center which will be located on Hogan Street in the Cathedral district. The projected start date for construction of the center is 2027.
 - Veterans' Memorial Wall Upgrade – The upgrade is estimated at \$6 million, with a digital overhand, new lighting and speaker system and fans.
 - The Jacksonville Urban League (JUL) Veterans and Community Empowerment Center (CVEC) – The Jacksonville City Council Finance Committee removed the CVEC from the Mayor's 2026 projected budget, and the JUL pivoted the center to a Community Empowerment Center.
 - On September 18, 2025, the MAAAB Military & Veterans Committee will attend the Veterans Council of Duval County and will continue to engage with community partners and veterans organizations.
 - Pat McCollough will forward information on the 250 Anniversary of the Military Event
 - Revised recommendations to the MAAAB were submitted for review and discussion/approval.
 - The next MAAAB MVA Committee Meeting will be held on November 18, 2025, at 6 pm at the Main Public Library.
- **Program Committee** – Met on August 13, 2025, and submitted three recommendations to the Board:
 - Expand support for minority-owned businesses navigating the JSEB Process.
 - Advocate for increased funding for Youth Workforce Initiatives through corporate collaboration.
 - Partner with civic organizations to conduct an African American Quality of Life Study in Jacksonville.
 - The next Program Committee is scheduled for October 13, 2025. (NOTE: meeting has been rescheduled for October 27, 2025).

10. Unfinished Business:

- **Attendance at Community Meetings:** Board Members were asked to list meetings:
 - Frazier – Northside Coalition General Meetings; NAACP General Meetings; Various City Council Meetings

- Errol White – the monthly Veterans Council of Duval County Meetings
- Latrina Dowdell – Grand Park Association Meetings; will be hosting a community engagement meeting at Cutz Linez and Trimz Barbership on September 20, 2025;
- Audieanna Burgin – 904Ward Day Breakfast; Community and Policing Event held a Dollar General at Kings Road and Memorial Park.
- **Survey Questions:** Each board member was asked to submit questions to be considered for inclusion on the Survey. The top five questions were selected, and Ms. Henry was asked to draft a survey for the board’s review and discussion.
- **CPAC Meeting Schedules:** Ms. Henry circulated a list of the remaining 2025 CPAC Meeting Schedules. Board members were asked to attend at least one CPAC Meeting.
- **Status of Recommendations:** Ms. Henry was asked to compile a list of recommendations from the MAAAB Committees for review.

11. New Business – Chair Darby would like to draft a letter stating apposition on the City Council Budget Statement and support of fully funding the Mayor’s proposed 2026 Budget, maintaining affinity boards, opposing the tax decrease and fully supporting the Jacksonville Journey board and Budget. Chair Darby would also like to draft a Press Statement and forward it to Phil Perry, COJ Public Affairs Office for review.

- It was properly moved and seconded that the board will pursue a Press Statement to outline its position on the information noted above relative to the 2026 budget.
- The board welcomed Conrad Jennings as its new board member. His date of appointment is August 15, 2025. He works for the CSX Corp and is from Texas.

12. Next Steps/Board’s Open Forum:

- Vice Chair Wards inquired as to whether it would be possible to have a unified event with other affinity boards.
- Chair Darby thanked the board for their hard work and feels as though the board is in the performing phase of organizational dynamics.

13. The Meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.