

**MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
JACKSONVILLE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021 – 3:30 P.M.**

The Special Board meeting of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) was held on Thursday, April 1, 2021.

BOARD MEMBERS

Arezou Jolly, Chair
Nicole Padgett, Treasurer
Kevin J. Holzendorf, Past Chairman
Abel Harding

JTA EXECUTIVE STAFF

Nathaniel P. Ford Sr., Chief Executive Officer
Cleveland Ferguson III, SVP Administration
Bonnie Todd, SVP Transit Operations
Greg Hayes, VP Finance & Technology
Greer Gillis, VP System Development
Bernard Schmidt, VP Automation

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Deborah Buckland, Vice Chair
G. Ray Driver, Treasurer
Greg Evans, FDOT

OTHERS PRESENT

Richard Milian, General Counsel
Katie Smith, Board Liaison
Larry Parks, FDOT

- A. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Jolly called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. Chair Jolly provided the safety message for the month of April, “SEC_RITY is not complete without U!”
- B. **COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISON** - None
- C. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – None
- D. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT** – Mr. Ford stated he wanted to share a video that highlights the JTA MobilityWorks Program, which was created with the last extension of the Local Option Gas Tax (LOGT) when JTA agreed to complete several projects that were under the Better Jacksonville Plan (BJP).

A video was shown highlighting the progress of the JTA MobilityWorks Program.

Mr. Ford stated the MobilityWorks Program has been very successful and staff continues to work to complete all the projects. He stated today we will seek the Board’s approval to move forward with our partnership with the City of Jacksonville (City) on the expansion of the six cents LOGT. The Jobs for Jax Program will allow this Authority to continue its robust road building work and continue to make improvements to transportation infrastructure in Duval County. Those elements speak to our mission of enhancing mobility and advancing the quality of life for our community. Mr. Ford stated the proposal will help us put Jacksonville at the forefront of innovation and technology. It will contribute to the economic growth by creating jobs and help support small and minority owned firms by investing in all areas of Duval County.

Mr. Ford stated he understands some do not share this vision, and while we respect those opinions we will continue to work very hard to earn their trust. He stated he feels it's our duty to address the needs of the present and build for the future. Mr. Ford stated when he joined the JTA eight years ago; one of the first questions he repeatedly received was related to the Skyway and its future. He stated since that time, the JTA staff and Board of Directors have spent years working to answer that question. Mr. Ford stated the Board approved the staff to undertake a Skyway Technology Assessment, which was the first step. That assessment reviewed the condition of the existing infrastructure, its useful life, the operating system, the vehicles, and charged staff with getting industry feedback. We held a number of industry feedback sessions. The JTA Board directed the staff to undertake skyway cost estimates, which would help identify a capital improvement plan and a lifecycle cost analysis. That activity concluded in September of 2015. Based on the information provided to the Board, the Skyway Advisory Group was formed, which was comprised of stakeholders from the community, transportation experts and civic leaders. The Advisory Group reviewed all of the technical and financial assessments and information was shared with them and the public to solicit their input over a series of public meetings and a public hearing. Mr. Ford stated the Skyway Advisory Group worked with the Skyway Advisory Committee, during that time Director Holzendorf, Rumlin and Jolly and the 15 member committee endorsed a plan that the Board would and I quote, "keep, modernize and expand the Skyway." The task for the JTA staff at that time was how do you keep, modernize, and expand the Skyway, which at the time had technology was about 30 to 40 years old. Mr. Ford stated we knew that expanding the Skyway in its current form was really not the right way to go. We had to recognize technology going into the future. He stated in 2017 the Board announced the formation of the Ultimate Urban Circulator (U²C) Program. The Board endorsed this program because it connected the neighborhood neighboring communities in downtown using what we proposed as a most innovative and environmentally friendly technology that would be nimble and be able to deploy to new origins and destinations and could grow with the City's growing population. Mr. Ford stated on that day, JTA opened its first Test and Learn Track. Since that time, Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Technology has been socialized with thousands of residents, including the disabled community and children throughout Duval County Public School System. JTA formed the First Responders Council that meets monthly, which includes members of Law Enforcement, Fire Rescue and other First Responders who are helping identify the safety measures that need to be in place so that they can also learn from this technology before it hits the street.

Mr. Ford stated with the help of the Mayor's Disability Council and the JTAC Group, our Automation and Innovation Division tested the first ADA shuttle in the nation and helped us learn more about the Autonomous EV Star Paratransit van that we now own today. As a staff, we thank the Board for giving us authorization to purchase the vehicle.

Mr. Ford stated in 2018, the Board approved the pursuit of the Better Utilizing Infrastructure to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant, which resulted in Jacksonville winning this award over multiple cities and projects around the country.

Mr. Ford stated in 2019, the Bay Street Innovation Corridor (BSIC) Council was formed, which comprised of various stakeholders throughout Jacksonville. This was the first phase of the U²C and BSIC, which is funded by that BUILD Grant. In 2019, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Elaine Chao hand delivered a \$12.5 million check, saying that the U²C Program is a model for the future which will improve safety and quality of life not only for Jacksonville, but also for the nation. The reason being, leveraging aging technology and repurposing it with AV Technology was a novel concept. A concept the USDOT believed provides greater transportation opportunities and learnings for the rest of the nation. In addition to consistent one-on-one briefings related to JTA activities in 2019, JTA held its fourth Lunch and Learn with the City Council on the U²C Program. We also met with the Mayor's Administration and updated both on the progress to date. Mr. Ford stated in 2020, JTA completed the first real positive destination related to the U²C Program, and that is the building we are sitting in today, the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center (JRTC) at LaVilla. The Skyway actually enters this structure to allow passengers to take any number of local and regional express bus services and intercity bus services right across the walkway connecting us with Megabus, Greyhound and Red Coach Services. In 2020, JTA moved its Test and Learn Operations to the Armsdale Park-n-Ride Test Facility. The program has been expanded to test not only AVs, but all other smart technologies and sensors that are emerging, which make up the AV Echo EcoSystem. As of today, JTA has tested a total of seven AVs across four platforms and this past December, took possession of the first all-electric FM VSS by America an ADA compliant vehicle that was retrofitted with an Autonomous Driving System. Mr. Ford stated JTA is clearly a national leader that is recognized in the advancement AV particularly in Public Transportation.

Mr. Ford stated the JRTC at LaVilla clearly is the inner-modal hub for Northeast Florida and U²C is an integral part serving the mobility needs for our region. The U²C Program was nimble enough to be re-routed this time last year to serve the Mayo Clinic and was featured as first in the nation transportation support system for testing during the height of the pandemic. Mr. Ford

advised the AVs were used to transfer COVID-19 test samples from the drive through parking lot, one mile in Level 4 autonomy without an attendant onboard, in mixed traffic and we were able to support the Mayo Clinic during the pandemic. He stated over 30,000 samples were transported via the AV.

Mr. Ford shared in 2021, JTA is in the final stage of the procurement for the first phase of the U²C Program, the BSIC. JTA is developing an expansion into the Brooklyn Community with the Brooklyn Station, the first Skyway station to be constructed in 20 years. Mr. Ford thanked the Board for their support in approving the contract to build the station. He shared that he has been asked several times, why wasn't Brooklyn Station constructed sooner.

Mr. Ford stated the Skyway is getting in the way of the future of mobility in terms of the community and today would like to find a way to retire the name Skyway and look at exercising and using the phrase U²C. He stated unfortunately, the past is getting in the way of where we need to go in the future. First, it will go to the JRTC at LaVilla, which is our regional hub in Northeast Florida. All fixed routes serve this facility and fixed routes provide connectivity to medical opportunities, employment opportunities and educational opportunities in our community. Second, with the completion of Phase 1, it will support the Smart Innovation Corridor, which Bay Street has been designated for the City, JEA, and Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). We are working together in this community to implement technologies that will improve the quality of life. Mr. Ford stated with the implementation of these technologies we will be a smarter City, more efficient and more equitable because we can leverage these technologies to serve some of the underserved communities. Finally, when fully built out, it will increase the two and a half mile network footprint to ten and a half miles in time for all of the growth and expansion that is already underway.

Mr. Ford stated we are six years into the design construction of this project. During this time frame, since we began talking about this project, over \$1 billion worth of construction has taken place within a quarter mile of the existing system with another \$1 billion proposed. We are receiving here in Jacksonville, the second highest migration from other cities around the country. Enterprise Florida expects Jacksonville to continue to grow year over year through 2045. The best transportation planning doesn't happen after you have a problem. The best transportation planning plans in advance and implements way in advance. That's what we have heard from citizens and stakeholders back in 2015 who were on the Advisory Committee and saw the growth that was occurring. If it was not going to be the Skyway then it needs to be something and we developed the U²C Program.

Mr. Ford stated the Jobs for Jax Program presents opportunities to create jobs and opportunities for local businesses. A recent study authorized by the UNF Director of Economics, shows that the Mayor's initiative will have a huge financial impact and would create more than 7,600 jobs. The U²C alone will be responsible for over \$650 million of positive economic impact and 50 percent of the jobs. Half of the 7,600 jobs will be attributable to U²C and those jobs will actually be on the cutting edge of technology as it relates to Artificial Intelligence, AV and robotics. This does not take into account other benefits that we have identified, like positioning Jacksonville as a hub for expanding a multibillion dollar AV Innovation industry. These benefits will be reaped by other businesses that are considering Jacksonville for their new offices and headquarters, the growth in developing the workforce of the future. The partnership we have with Florida State College of Jacksonville (FSCJ) where we are helping to develop curriculum for the workforce of the future and work we are doing with our First Responders Council. Mr. Ford stated it is not a question of if, it is a question of when with AV, and we are preparing this community to be able to accept that outcome.

Mr. Ford stated the U²C and other projects on the list will have an impact that will be felt immediately through the first five years as the City is advancing its Capital Investment Program. We have shown through the last LOGT extension that when we are trusted with assets and trusted with these projects, the JTA delivers. We inherited some old designed projects from the BJP Projects but the JTA Board, said, regardless of any cost increase, we are committed to completing the project list and I commend you as a Board. Mr. Ford stated our credibility was at stake.

Mr. Ford stated five years later, we are 70 percent complete on these projects with 20 miles of new sidewalks, accessible multi-use paths, upgraded infrastructure to improve safe interactions between pedestrians and motorists, and enhancing roadways and bridges.

Director Buckland stated she was a member of the 2015 U²C Advisory Committee. She is happy to see that we are actually utilizing the work and not just putting it on the shelf to collect dust. Director Buckland stated she is not able to be in person and not able to vote but wanted to share her support of the project. She stated it is important to her as a community leader and taxpayer in Jacksonville, that we model partnership and working together. Director Buckland stated she thinks this is a great example of a strong partnership built on trust over many years between JTA and the City. She stated if we make downtown and the City a great place to live, then people will continue to come here. One thing she loves about this project is that is allowing us to think of our downtown as Jacksonville's next great neighborhood. She stated this is intentional and she's seen the power of intention and forward momentum that happens in spite of and right in

the midst of the pandemic. Director Buckland stated we undertook the JRTC, fully executed and opened. The introduction of the BSIC and what it was going to accomplish for the City and now bringing the Brooklyn Station online. Director Buckland stated she is confident we are doing the right thing. She stated we need to move from planning, to executing. Director Buckland stated JTA has modeled its ability to do that over the years, and she is pleased to lend her support.

Director Holzendorf stated he sits on the Transit Board Members (TBM) of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Committee as well as the APTA Board of Directors, along with Chair Jolly, and he sees that all eyes are on the City of Jacksonville and JTA. He stated in a meeting yesterday the TBMs talked about the administration, how it's moving very fast and that they are looking for successes. It is very important from JTA's standpoint that we continue down the path we set for ourselves. Considering we have had three different Federal Transportation Administrators (FTA) including Carolyn Flowers, Jane Williams and Nuria Fernandez that have all been here in Jacksonville and witnessed accomplishments by JTA and being recognized as a mobility integrator, we have the ears and eyes of the USDOT. Director Holzendorf stated the USDOT has invested in this community and that is important to our growth. It shows a lot about the leadership that you have shown, as well as the leadership of this Board and with the BUILD Grant, which I had the privilege to join you, Mr. Ford, in welcoming Secretary Chao for the official announcement on the steps of City as the Chair of the Authority at that time. USDOT has said, this is the way we expect cities and transit agencies to partner together to drive innovation forward, which will only improve safety and mobility for our citizens. Director Holzendorf stated when you look at it from here in the United States and internationally, the type of positive notoriety that we have received at JTA along with the attention the U²C program has garnered in the transportation industry is unprecedented. He agrees that we are leading the way to increase mobility re-purposing existing infrastructure by returning it to its original fit, form and function and implementing the plans made some 30 years ago when this transportation network was conceived. Director Holzendorf stated he supports moving forward. He agrees that we do not need to look at the past but look at the future.

Chair Jolly stated she was a member of the Skyway Advisory Group and as a Board Member she was on the Skyway Committee. She stated then and now as chair it is not time to reverse course. We are too far into implementation of the U²C program, and while work has already been completed and is ongoing, is more than enough justification. The reality is that this is the right path for the future of mobility in downtown and surrounding areas of Jacksonville. Chair Jolly stated to Mr. Ford, you said it well, when the hurricane is coming at you up the coastline is

not the time to start getting ready for it. As you suggested, growth is coming and it is coming fast and our transportation infrastructure must be prepared to address that.

Chair Jolly stated that when Secretary Chao was here in person and endorsed this approach and the current USDOT Secretary is telling the nation to invest in what we have in terms of infrastructure, we are going in the correct direction. This Administration just rolled out a plan that calls for the nation to modernize existing public transportation and for transit expansion. Chair Jolly stated, to reverse course now is to turn our backs on the progress and innovation for this City for generations to come. She stated Secretary Pete Buttigieg of USDOT stressed the ways transit workers have stepped up to help during the pandemic, including citing the JTA Wellness on Wheels Vaccination Program. I applaud you all over again, last week and this morning for your vision and for the hard work of everybody in this room and the Maintenance Department to retrofit surplus buses for this initiative.

Chair Jolly stated we do not want to be the first agency and the first city in the history of the United States to tear down a federally funded project, not simply because it breaks our contractual commitment, but it goes against the promise that was made to this community and puts our word in doubt locally and nationally. We have been such a source of pride for the City in terms of sticking to our commitments, doing what we said we were going to do and being transparent. We have consistently been recognized through the nationally competitive Federal grant process, and recognized because we keep our word and success breeds success.

Chair Jolly stated the Mayor has championed Jacksonville as the City on the rise. She thinks that consistently successful implementation and completion of projects under Mr. Ford and his team is part of fulfilling the Mayor's vision for the City.

E. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (Driver, Committee Chair)

ACTION ITEMS

1. RESOLUTION 2021-05: APPROVAL OF PROPOSED LOCAL OPTION GAS TAX SPLIT, PROJECT LIST AND AUTHORIZATION TO NEGOTIATE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT – Mr. Ford presented staff's recommendations that the Board adopt Resolution 2021-05 Approval of Proposed Local Option Gas Tax Split, Project List and Authorization to Negotiate Interlocal Agreement. He stated this resolution by the JTA is expressing support and collaboration for the City, the Mayor's Jobs for Jax Initiative, supporting the extension and expansion of the LOGT. It also supports the splitting of the LOGT, committing to see that the proceeds are for the fulfillment of the projects listed under the purview of the JTA,

and working with the City to advance transformational infrastructure projects that advance mobility, improve quality of life and economic growth in Duval County. Mr. Ford provided the Board with Resolved Clauses of the Resolution.

Mr. Milian stated when and if the Board approves, that the Board supports the extension of the LOGT that the City is endeavoring to extend. The project list that is at least preliminarily, attached to Resolution 2021-05 you reviewed and support. Mr. Milian stated if approved, the Board supports and authorize the CEO to negotiate a new Interlocal Agreement. He stated what this does not do, is in the event this project list is changed and meaningfully changed through negotiations with the City, then that change would have be brought back before the Board.

Director Holzendorf stated he would like to commend the hard work that has been done by the Mayor's office, City Leaders, JTA staff, Board and Committee. He looks at this as an opportunity and this is one of those catalysts for opportunities by us approving this. Director Holzendorf stated he thinks it supports growth of the City and is honored to endorse it. He knows this agency believes in heavily communicating and effectively communicating, we always believe in transparency, and then we always dedicate ourselves and get the job done. Director Holzendorf wanted to go on record that he supports the project.

Director Harding stated he wanted to thank Mayor Curry for the opportunity to serve here and for Mr. Ford and the entire team for the crash course that he received over the last couple weeks. Obviously, this is the big vote for your first vote to walk in to this decision and it is not something that I take lightly. It is very important that we demonstrate that we have learned from the past and when we do something we are not timid about it, we don't do it halfway. Director Harding stated he thinks the project list presented is comprehensive and it has a chance to really impact our local economy, in the sense that we can really boost what we are doing here from our quality of life to incredible construction jobs and then the chance for the future development that will feed off of this. He thinks it a wonderful project and is happy to support it.

Director Padgett stated she agrees with her fellow Board Members. She has had the pleasure of being the contractor on a lot the new developments in downtown. Director Padgett understands the importance of this and fully supports it.

MOTION (Padgett/Holzendorf) Adoption of Resolution 2021-05: Approval of Proposed Local Option Gas Tax Split, Project List and Authorization to Negotiate Interlocal Agreement. Motion Approved (4-0).

A video clip was shown of Secretary Buttigieg comments on the JTA Wellness on Wheels.

F. OLD BUSINESS - None

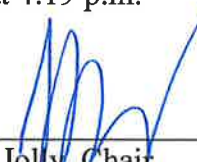
G. NEW BUSINESS - None

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

SEAL



G. Ray Driver, Secretary



Ari Jolly, Chair