

CITY OF JACKSONVILLE
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
MEETING

Proceedings held on Thursday, January 8, 2026, commencing at 2:02 p.m., at the Jacksonville Public Library, 303 North Main Street, Multipurpose Room, Jacksonville, Florida, before Diane M. Tropa, FPR, a Notary Public in and for the State of Florida at Large.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

LINZEE OTT, Chair.
MATT BROCKELMAN, Board Member
KEVIN CRAIG, Board Member.
PETER DEIULIIS, Board Member.
FREDERICK JONES, Board Member.

ALSO PRESENT:

VAN CHRISTIANSEN, DIA, Redevelopment Coordinator.
CHERRY POLLOCK, Office of General Counsel.
CHRIS MILLER, City Council Member/Liaison.
BILL DELANEY, Mayor's Administration.
AVA HILL, DIA, Administrative Assistant.

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1 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Chris Miller, City
2 Council.
3 MR. DELANEY: Bill Delaney, mayor's
4 office.
5 MS. POLLOCK: Happy New Year.
6 Cherry Pollock, Office of General Counsel.
7 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Terrific. Okay. Thank
8 you so much.
9 We are going to visit our action items
10 first. Today, we have minutes from the
11 February meeting that, for a variety of
12 reasons, did not get approved back then, so we
13 will take care of that now.
14 So is there any comment, questions, or
15 perhaps a motion on the February minutes?
16 BOARD MEMBER BROCKELMAN: Move approval.
17 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Second.
18 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. All those in favor
19 of -- questions, edits?
20 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)
21 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. All those in favor
22 of approval of the February 13, 2025, DDRB
23 minutes signify by saying aye.
24 BOARD MEMBERS: Aye.
25 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Any opposed?

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S
2 January 8, 2026 2:02 p.m.
3 - - -
4 THE CHAIRWOMAN: All right. While Fred
5 Jones is getting situated -- we're so excited
6 we have a quorum -- I'll just go ahead and
7 remind everybody in attendance that there are
8 blue, probably, speaker cards up at the front,
9 if you do wish to make public comment on any
10 item.
11 With that, at 2:02, we will call the
12 January 8, 2026, meeting to order.
13 We'll start with introductions. New year,
14 but not really any new faces, I don't think.
15 We'll start to my right.
16 Ms. Hill.
17 MS. HILL: Ava Hill, DIA staff.
18 MS. CHRISTIANSEN: Van Christiansen, DIA
19 staff.
20 BOARD MEMBER CRAIG: Kevin Craig, DDRB.
21 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Peter Deiuliis,
22 DDRB.
23 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Linzee Ott, DDRB chair.
24 BOARD MEMBER BROCKELMAN: Matt Brockelman,
25 DDRB.
26 BOARD MEMBER JONES: Fred Jones, DDRB.

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1 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)
2 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. February 2025
3 minutes are approved.
4 Now we will move to the December meeting
5 minutes, if everybody has had a chance to
6 review those. Are there any questions or edits
7 or motions?
8 BOARD MEMBER JONES: Motion to approve.
9 BOARD MEMBER BROCKELMAN: Second.
10 THE CHAIRWOMAN: All right. Motion by
11 Mr. Jones, second by Mr. Brockelman.
12 Any discussion?
13 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)
14 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Any -- all those
15 in favor of approval of the December 11, 2025,
16 DDRB minutes signify by saying aye.
17 BOARD MEMBERS: Aye.
18 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Any opposed?
19 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)
20 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. December
21 meeting's -- meeting minutes are approved.
22 Next, I'll just throw it out, I don't
23 think we will, but any Form 8B voting conflict
24 disclosures? Please make sure you've got that
25 filed.

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1 I'm seeing head nods. Nothing to declare.
2 Okay.

3 Our action item of the day is 2025-007.
4 This is the Independent Drive sign exception.
5 So I will go ahead and open the public hearing
6 on that one.

7 If there is any ex parte discussion to
8 declare, you can do it now or when we get to
9 the discussion part of the item; otherwise, I
10 will kick it off to Ms. Christiansen for a
11 report.

12 MS. CHRISTIANSEN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 So for DDRB 2025-007, the Independent
14 Drive special sign exception application, we
15 are reviewing the 1 Independent Drive subject
16 site. This application seeks approval for a
17 sign plan for eight signs total, four for the
18 Bay Street frontage and four for the Laura
19 Street frontage.

20 As you see here on your screens, you see
21 the proposed locations for both frontages, and
22 it kind of shows the slots that will eventually
23 be filled.

24 Now, at this current time, you know, the
25 sign package is designed as a flexible system,

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1 you know, staff determined that, while this
2 could have been processed at the staff level,
3 you know, it's just being brought forward for
4 review in order to formally memorialize the
5 approval of the multi-tenant sign package.
6 This is just to make sure that, in the future
7 for any tenant sign permits, the project is not
8 delayed during the permitting process due to
9 any interpretation or fragmentation of
10 approvals.

11 Please note that this sign plan does not
12 include the anchor signage for the top of the
13 building.

14 So just based on this, the Downtown
15 Development Review Board staff does recommend
16 approval for application 2025-007 allowing for
17 four multi-tenant wall signs facing the
18 northeast frontage, Bay Street, and then four
19 multi-tenant wall signs facing the southwest
20 frontage for Laura Street.

21 The applicant is here and available for
22 questions, as is the property owner's agent.

23 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Great.

24 This is the time we would usually throw it
25 to an applicant presentation if there is one,

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1 so it's allowing for multiple tenants over --
2 over time without requiring individual sign
3 exception requests for each tenant.

4 So per Part 13, Subpart B of the Ordinance
5 Code, which is the Downtown Sign Overlay Zone,
6 sign applications for multiple signs do require
7 DDRB approval and review. And also, just per
8 staff determination, this was brought to you
9 all because, as you may have noticed, you know,
10 the sign is very much within the square footage
11 allowable in the Code and it does meet all of
12 the special sign exception criterion that we
13 have available, as well as the overlay zone
14 criterion as well.

15 So, you know, staff does find that the
16 proposed sign package meets the applicable
17 requirements for allowable sign area materials
18 and illumination standards. You may find here
19 in front of you an example of what the
20 illumination would be for the proposed signage.

21 The applicant is proposing, again, four of
22 these at the Bay Street frontage and four at
23 the Laura Street frontage.

24 So while this does not, you know, strictly
25 go to the Code for a special sign exception,

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1 but if y'all just prefer to stay for questions
2 only, we can do that too. Not going to make
3 anybody present that doesn't want to, but
4 you're welcome to if you would like to.

5 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

6 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Please state your name
7 and address for the record.

8 (Audio malfunction.)

9 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'll try that again.

10 I'm Nelson Robinette, Brown Enterprises,
11 at 8841 Corporate Square Court, Jacksonville
12 32216.

13 We are the applicant. And I just wanted
14 to share briefly some design considerations,
15 because along the way, some folks asked
16 questions, why aren't you just putting
17 individual letters on the wall?

18 We wanted a consistent design. They will
19 all be the same font, which is the font you see
20 when you go into the building over the doors,
21 and we wanted to limit it so that it would be
22 tasteful. And the halo lighting is subtle, and
23 it serves to identify the clients without being
24 too visually intrusive. So that was the design
25 intent.

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1 And they will be put up as the owner works
2 out with the tenants. We don't want to put up
3 a bunch of blank signs, because that sends a
4 different kind of message.

5 But it's going to be limited to four signs
6 on the same corner at Bay and Laura. So just
7 wanted to share that.

8 If you have any questions?

9 THE CHAIRWOMAN: That is helpful
10 information. Thank you.

11 Board members, do we have any questions
12 for -- yes, sir, Mr. Deiuliis.

13 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Thank you, Madam
14 Chair.

15 Just a quick question for you. As the
16 signs fill up the multiple panels, will they
17 all remain the same size letter? I mean, I
18 imagine it's difficult if you have longer names
19 and -- how do you keep it uniform across the
20 panels? And then also, how will you handle
21 logos or colors?

22 MR. ROBINETTE: No logos. All the same
23 colors you see here.

24 And you present an excellent question, and
25 that will be a slight challenge for the tenant.

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1 little too in your face.

2 MR. DELANEY: Understood. Thank you.

3 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Great. Thank you so
4 much.

5 Any other questions for staff or the
6 applicant?

7 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)

8 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you very
9 much.

10 MR. ROBINETTE: Thank you.

11 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Ms. Hill, are there
12 any -- sorry. As you're getting back to your
13 seat, are there any public comment cards for
14 this item?

15 MS. HILL: There are no public comment
16 cards for this item.

17 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. I'll close the
18 public hearing on that one, and if we could --
19 I'm without my secretary today, but if somebody
20 could get us in the posture to discuss the
21 item, please.

22 BOARD MEMBER BROCKELMAN: Madam Chair,
23 I'll move approval of DDRB application
24 2025-007.

25 THE CHAIRWOMAN: With staff

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1 The plan is for them to all be the same size as
2 you see here, the Pajcic & Pajcic letters. So
3 if someone comes in with a really long name,
4 they may have to get creative in how they
5 abbreviate it, because there are physical
6 limitations to lighting it. It can only be so
7 small to get the lights in there.

8 So we're going for consistency.

9 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Thank you.

10 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Members or esteemed
11 attendees, any questions?

12 Yes, Mr. Delaney.

13 MR. DELANEY: Through the Chair, what was
14 the impetus for keeping the overall so small?
15 Was that just the regulations that are on the
16 books or -- that decision on y'all's part?

17 MR. ROBINETTE: The -- the Florida
18 Times-Union sign was the model for this, and
19 so -- that has served that tenant well, and so
20 the owner wanted to be consistent with that
21 design. We looked at several designs, some
22 larger, and they started to get a little
23 obtrusive. So we're trying to reach a balance
24 where they could be easily read by traffic
25 moving slowly and pedestrians without being a

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1 recommendation?

2 MS. POLLOCK: With the condition?

3 BOARD MEMBER BROCKELMAN: With the staff
4 recommendations.

5 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Wonderful. Thank you,
6 Mr. Brockelman.

7 Is there a second?

8 MR. DEIULIIS: Second.

9 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Deiuliis seconds.

10 Okay. With that, Board Members, we'll
11 move to discussion. I'll start on my left with
12 Mr. Jones.

13 BOARD MEMBER JONES: I concur with the
14 staff recommendations and I don't have any
15 further comments on this item.

16 BOARD MEMBER BROCKELMAN: I'll just very
17 briefly thank the applicant. Oftentimes when
18 we see these sign exceptions, the applicants
19 will just try to basically get as big of a sign
20 as possible. I really do appreciate,
21 personally, that you guys were tasteful about
22 it and thought, what is right for us and what's
23 right for the building, not just let's get
24 everything we can since we have to go through
25 the process anyway.

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1 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: No further
2 discussion.
3 BOARD MEMBER CRAIG: Just appreciate the
4 staff and the applicant's work on this. It
5 looks like a great project.
6 Thank you.
7 THE CHAIRWOMAN: I will echo the word
8 "tasteful." Well done.
9 Councilman Miller or Mr. Delaney, any
10 comments?
11 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: (Indicating.)
12 MR. DELANEY: (Indicating.)
13 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.
14 All right. Board Members, all those in
15 favor of approval of DDRB 2025-007, signify by
16 saying aye.
17 BOARD MEMBERS: Aye.
18 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Any opposed?
19 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)
20 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. That is
21 unanimously approved.
22 We will move next on our agenda to an
23 informational presentation on the Southbank
24 Riverwalk extension.
25 And just a reminder for presenters, if

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1 MS. ENZ: Oh. Thanks.
2 So here's kind of a master plan that we've
3 developed for the Southbank. So this is to
4 start kind of making a larger loop along the
5 Southbank. As you're aware, on the east side
6 is the RiversEdge property. That's been
7 opened. So we're looking at the area of the
8 shared-use path.
9 The areas that are not completed yet are
10 dashed, so it's a dashed orange line in front
11 of Baptist Hospital. We do not own any
12 property there and cannot get an easement in
13 front of Baptist. They have got a really
14 small, narrow bulkhead and about a 3-foot-wide
15 path in front of their building, which won't do
16 for a Riverwalk, so we are going to create a
17 Riverwalk over the water, similar to the other
18 parts of the Southbank Riverwalk.
19 We've been working with Baptist Hospital
20 for the past few years to get an agreement for
21 submerged lands in front of the building. The
22 Riverwalk is going to be offset so they can
23 still maintain their property on the other side
24 of the Riverwalk.
25 But this will start allowing the

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1 you'll just state your name and address if
2 you're not City of Jacksonville.
3 Thank you so much.
4 (Ms. Enz approaches the podium.)
5 MS. ENZ: I guess I'll just state my name,
6 then.
7 THE CHAIRWOMAN: We would love to hear it.
8 MS. ENZ: Jill Enz with the City of
9 Jacksonville Parks and Rec Department.
10 So I wanted to inform this group about a
11 new Southbank Riverwalk connection. So it's
12 been a long time since we've added to the
13 Southbank, maybe a month since we added
14 RiversEdge. So we're looking at the other
15 direction, and kind of want to carry some
16 momentum from the shared-use path that was
17 opened a few years ago over the Fuller Warren
18 Bridge. So this is going to start connecting
19 the Fuller Warren Bridge to other parts of the
20 Riverwalk.
21 So -- although, I have to -- who has to
22 move the slides?
23 MS. CHRISTIANSEN: (Indicating.)
24 MS. ENZ: Okay. Van. Next slide.
25 MS. CHRISTIANSEN: (Complies.)

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1 connection along -- between the Acosta Bridge
2 and the Fuller Warren Bridge.
3 Next slide.
4 So here's a concept sketch, kind of, of
5 the overall area. We're going to land the
6 Riverwalk at the Baptist Hospital on the north
7 side -- or the east side, on the top part of
8 the page, so their employees will have access
9 to gain on the Riverwalk as well. And then it
10 will continue on the One Call property, and
11 then it's going to land underneath the Fuller
12 Warren Bridge and connect to the existing
13 shared-use path.
14 The materials and colors and railing are
15 all similar to the existing Riverwalk and meet
16 the Riverwalk standards; however, we have had a
17 lot of lessons learned from the existing
18 Riverwalk. So it's going to be a much wider
19 Riverwalk, so 15 foot minimum clearance in
20 front. There's some areas -- so the benches
21 will have enough room to sit on the Riverwalk.
22 Next slide.
23 So we really looked at shade in this part
24 of the Riverwalk, too. So how do we kind of
25 create special moments and shaded areas? Well,

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1 we work over the river again. So we've got the
2 same kind of piling structure. There's two
3 moments, really, on this new version of the
4 Riverwalk that are going to have, like, a large
5 shade structure and have planting material and
6 large planters adjacent to the shade structure
7 and across from it.

8 So these are the, like, kind of bump-out
9 areas on the Riverwalk. There will be places
10 for people to sit. And those will be the main
11 shade areas. We will have shade structures in
12 another phase of the project that will match
13 the existing shade structures on the
14 Riverwalk -- the existing Southbank Riverwalk,
15 and those will be dotted along the -- along the
16 walkway.

17 We've been working with the Haskell team
18 on this, who did the original Riverwalk and
19 have designed this one as well. So we're
20 working through the shade structure, kind of
21 intricate design of it now, so that's moving
22 forward.

23 Next slide.

24 And then here's an example of, kind of,
25 the connecting points. So on the left side is

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1 looking at really small trees, so palm trees
2 and crape myrtles, just to get some vegetation
3 in there, some smaller grasses, and vining
4 plants.

5 Next slide.

6 And here's just an image of, kind of, the
7 collage of hardscape and softscape.

8 Next slide.

9 And then here's some images of shade in
10 the areas in the summertime, kind of what that
11 will do. This part of the Riverwalk will face
12 west, so the afternoon sun is going to be
13 brutal, but it's our -- it's our connection,
14 and if we were to shade the west side, you
15 wouldn't be able to see the river, so ...

16 Next slide.

17 And then the wintertime, this -- the shade
18 of Baptist Hospital will -- creates a lot of
19 immediate shade for that -- that area.

20 Next slide.

21 Here's just a summary of shade.

22 Next slide.

23 So the project -- we are in permitting
24 right now. We've been going through 10-Set, as
25 well as meeting with DEP and FDOT. So, FDOT

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1 the small, narrow walkway in front of Baptist
2 Hospital that exists. As it expands out,
3 that's where the connection to the Riverwalk
4 will be. And then on the right side of this
5 slide is the shared-use path. Hopefully,
6 everyone has taken it and seen kind of the
7 gravel area that's under there currently.

8 So we're going to connect in where kind of
9 the -- the other walkway goes to -- or goes in
10 front of St. Vincent's hospital. So that will
11 be like a little intersection for pedestrians
12 and bikes.

13 Next slide.

14 Here's a, kind of, blowup of the design of
15 that area for the shade structure and planters,
16 so you can see that in more detail. So we've
17 got planters adjacent to the water side, and
18 then the shade structures closest to Baptist
19 Hospital side, and then smaller bump-outs
20 there.

21 Next slide.

22 And then here's just another image of the
23 plant material that could be used in that
24 location. The planters are 12 feet wide at
25 the -- kind of the widest point, so we're

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1 kind of gave us the blessing. They have looked
2 at scour analysis reports for the in-the-water
3 structures and how it interfaces with existing
4 bridge piers and that connection to land, so --
5 but we have to go through the FDOT formal
6 permit process for this project because it is
7 on their property, so -- along with lease
8 agreements coming forward, et cetera,
9 et cetera, for the FDOT process.

10 So things are moving permit-wise, and this
11 is part of the permit step, and then the
12 project will go out to bid, and it's an
13 approximate 18-month construction timeline.

14 Next slide.

15 That about wraps it up. If anyone has any
16 questions --

17 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Any questions --

18 MS. ENZ: -- or comments?

19 THE CHAIRWOMAN: -- from anyone?

20 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)

21 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Or comments, discussion?

22 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: (Indicating.)

23 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Please. Yeah, please.

24 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Madam Chair.

25 So thank you very much. Very informative

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1 and looks, you know, super exciting.
 2 Just for clarification, it looks like
 3 it's -- it's offset the same distance from the
 4 bulkhead for the entire length of it, correct?
 5 MS. ENZ: Correct.
 6 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: And how far is
 7 that, about 5, 10 feet, 15 feet?
 8 MS. ENZ: I -- from what I recall, it's
 9 15 foot.
 10 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: It is? So it's --
 11 MS. ENZ: Yeah. So they're able -- so
 12 sometime in the future, when they need to
 13 replace their bulkhead or do any maintenance on
 14 the building, they can still barge adjacent to
 15 it and swing over and it won't affect the
 16 integrity of the structure.
 17 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Gotcha. Okay.
 18 It looks like it's a pretty long distance,
 19 and so I was just wondering -- one, I'm sure
 20 there's some grade change from one end to the
 21 other; is it -- it's sloping? Is -- are there
 22 sections that are sloping and sections that are
 23 level or --
 24 MS. ENZ: It's fairly level. It's 8 foot
 25 across -- 8 foot the entire area until it

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1 I just want to take this minute to brag on
 2 our excellent park department and other City
 3 staff. You killed it with the last segment,
 4 and to be moving on immediately with this one
 5 is incredibly exciting. Especially coming from
 6 a period of years of inertia and stagnation
 7 downtown, to now be seeing all of these things
 8 not only moving, but wrapping up, and then new
 9 things pop up, is pretty incredible. So just
 10 wanted to say for the record, well done.
 11 MS. ENZ: Thank you.
 12 THE CHAIRWOMAN: And I'll go ahead and
 13 echo that on behalf of the entire DDRB. We're
 14 excited to see this connection.
 15 Any other questions or discussion?
 16 BOARD MEMBERS: (No response.)
 17 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay.
 18 Yeah, connection -- connection is key.
 19 And personally, as somebody who just spent time
 20 at Baptist over the holidays with a family
 21 member, I'm really excited to see this
 22 connection. I think that will serve patients
 23 and visitors of the hospital extremely well.
 24 Well done.
 25 MS. ENZ: Thank you.

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1 slopes down to meet the existing walkway at
 2 about 3-and-a-half feet.
 3 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Okay. So not that
 4 bad.
 5 And was there -- as you -- as this was in
 6 design, were there any discussions about
 7 intermediate points where you would reconnect
 8 to the bulkhead or -- you know, because some of
 9 the -- once somebody gets out here on the
 10 pathway, they're basically stuck on the pathway
 11 until they get all the way to the end. I'm
 12 just thinking more of, like, elderly folks or
 13 things like that.
 14 MS. ENZ: No. That was a -- a discussion
 15 with Baptist. They didn't want any additional
 16 connections to their property.
 17 BOARD MEMBER DEIULIIS: Okay. Thank you.
 18 Looks -- it looks -- you know, once again,
 19 a really cool use of this space and connecting
 20 the rest of the walk, so thank you.
 21 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Any additional
 22 discussion?
 23 MR. DELANEY: (Indicating.)
 24 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Mr. Delaney.
 25 MR. DELANEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

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1 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. That was -- that
 2 was an exciting presentation. Next, we have an
 3 even more exciting presentation. We have an
 4 ethics refresher.
 5 I believe --
 6 (Ms. Myers approaches the podium.)
 7 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. I didn't know who
 8 was going to do this. Wonderful.
 9 MS. MYERS: Hopefully, this is not an
 10 exciting presentation. Usually it's better
 11 when ethics is uneventful, if you will.
 12 I think they have a presentation that
 13 maybe they are pulling up.
 14 (Brief pause in the proceedings.)
 15 MS. MYERS: No worries.
 16 And while -- while we're doing that, I
 17 just want to echo -- I have a house in
 18 Springfield, and so I also just really
 19 appreciate all the work that this committee
 20 does and all the development that's going on
 21 downtown. It's really exciting to be --
 22 MS. HILL: Excuse me. Can you speak into
 23 the microphone?
 24 MS. MYERS: Yeah.
 25 It's really exciting to be in Jacksonville

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1 right now, so thanks for all of your work on
2 all of this.

3 So, like I said, my name is Andrea. I'm
4 with the City's Ethics office. I'm the
5 training and program manager, and have been
6 with the City for almost eight years. And one
7 of our primary functions in the Ethics office
8 is to do a lot of training, and there's over
9 80 boards and commissions that do the work of
10 the City of Jacksonville, so y'all are one of
11 them. And we do a lot of training for all
12 those boards, just to make sure we're in the
13 right posture, and so we were invited to come
14 speak today about just a couple of quick
15 things.

16 So this is not the full-blown ethics
17 training that other boards and commissions --
18 that you sit through as a boards and
19 commissions member -- actually, hang on.

20 Van, how do you advance the slide? Okay.
21 Do you have to do it?

22 MS. CHRISTIANSEN: (Indicating.)

23 MS. MYERS: Oh, no. Okay.

24 Okay. So -- so here's -- the thing is,
25 this is a shortened version. This is just on

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1 these dates work for you, because we know
2 you're all really busy, just reach out to our
3 office and we'll work with you on making sure
4 you can get something within that time frame.

5 Okay. So the things that we were asked to
6 come talk about specifically is just
7 conflict -- voting conflicts and prohibitive
8 conflicts of interest. And when I was
9 preparing for this, I was just thinking about
10 how, like, this board is unique and special in
11 that you all have either strong ties to
12 downtown or -- either professionally or
13 personally, so you all are in each other's
14 circles probably a lot in your day-to-day
15 activities.

16 You don't have to admit that right now,
17 but I see some smiling, so I'm just, like, you
18 all probably run into each other out in the
19 real world, as we would say. So that can
20 sometimes cause some special problems for
21 boards that, like, already have a lot of
22 interaction with each other, and so I think
23 that's why we're focusing on this today.

24 The other thing is -- that makes you
25 special is, like, you're chosen because of the

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1 very specific topics that your OGC
2 representative asked us to come talk about
3 today, and so you also -- if you haven't
4 already attended the one-hour training course
5 that the Ethics office provides every year --
6 you can go ahead, Van, to the slide about
7 training -- then there is a one-hour class. We
8 offer it six times a year. You have to do it
9 within six months of when you join a board, and
10 then also once every four years after you start
11 on that board.

12 Again, forwarding it.

13 It covers -- it covers Sunshine, public
14 records, a lot of ethics topics, and then some
15 other just, like, basic things that boards and
16 commissions need to know.

17 Okay. Next.

18 So just to get that out of the way, this
19 is not that.

20 Here are the dates if you need it. It's
21 Thursdays, every other month: January 15,
22 March 12, May 14, July 16, September 17, and
23 November 19. And we alternate between
24 in person over in City Hall and on Zoom, if
25 that's more convenient for you. And if none of

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1 contacts that you have. You're chosen because
2 of the work that you're already doing downtown,
3 right? And so you might have issues that are
4 going to come up before this board to which you
5 are personally connected, and that is just the
6 nature of -- you were chosen to be here because
7 you are personally connected to the work.

8 And so that's why we're just going to talk
9 about this really quick. And then if you have
10 any questions or concerns about any of this,
11 we're free any time.

12 So, Van.

13 Okay. So this is also always an
14 interactive training, so -- it's fun. So sorry
15 to make you speak up.

16 Okay. So I have a scenario for you all.
17 A member of the DDRB owns a piece of property
18 downtown, and you're about to vote on an
19 exemption involving the property, like maybe a
20 sign exemption as we just heard. Would it be a
21 voting conflict for you all to vote on a sign
22 exemption for a property that you personally
23 owned? What do you think?

24 MEETING ATTENDEES: (Indicating.)

25 MS. MYERS: Yes. Okay.

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1 Go ahead.
2 Okay. So here's -- here's what the rules
3 are about voting conflicts. And we're going to
4 talk about voting conflicts. They are separate
5 from prohibitive conflicts. And voting
6 conflicts are smaller and easier to spot, and
7 that's why we're starting here.

8 So voting conflicts occur any time you,
9 your relative, your employer, a client, or a
10 business associate could have a special
11 economic gain or loss from a vote that you all
12 take.

13 So a sign issue is -- I think that's
14 probably an economic issue. I would argue for
15 that. I'm going to look at Cherry -- she's
16 like, yes, OGC would agree, that's an
17 economic -- it could be an economic gain or
18 loss that you're getting extra business coming
19 in, and so yes, that would potentially be a
20 voting conflict. And so if something like that
21 was going to come up, that would be worth a
22 phone call to our office or to OGC.

23 Okay.

24 Here's the danger area, is you vote on any
25 matter that might economically impact you.

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1 to, like, raise your hand and -- and declare
2 that. Okay?

3 But -- so for yourself, it's automatic.
4 It's still -- the State ethics commission would
5 tell you it's still better to try to fix things
6 after the fact than, like, bury your head in
7 the sand about it, but that's automatic, and
8 then everything else is you've got to know
9 about it first.

10 Van.

11 Okay. There are also some exemptions and
12 exceptions to voting conflicts. So if you --
13 and I'll tell you what they are. So that's --
14 if there's a big group of people that are being
15 affected by a vote that you're taking and
16 you're just one of a large group of people that
17 are going to benefit or lose, then there's an
18 exemption there.

19 The other thing is if it's remote and
20 speculative. So that would be like if your
21 employer is going to be the sub on some project
22 that you're voting on, but you could be the sub
23 but you don't know if you are or not yet, that
24 would be remote and speculative.

25 And the last thing is procedural.

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1 This is an automatic voting conflict. So if
2 it's a personal gain or loss for yourself, you
3 don't have to know about it ahead of the vote.
4 So if it's an economic gain or loss to
5 yourself, and you just weren't paying
6 attention, you missed -- like, oh, no, I
7 shouldn't have voted on that, it was an
8 automatic voting conflict when the vote
9 happened. So that's when you're -- for
10 yourself.

11 So, Van, next.

12 That's different from the other types of
13 voting conflicts which are for your family and
14 your employer and your clients and your
15 business associates. Those, you have to know
16 about in order for it to be a voting conflict.
17 Okay?

18 So if your client or your business
19 associate pops up today and is like, oh, I'm
20 part of this project, but they weren't listed
21 on, like, the paperwork, that is when you know
22 that you have a voting conflict is when your
23 client or your employer or someone is standing
24 before you and they're announcing, like, oh,
25 I'm part of this, that is when you would want

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1 So if you ever think you have a voting
2 conflict -- I heard you at the beginning of
3 this meeting ask for the forms, which was
4 great. But also, it's like, oh, you see
5 something on the agenda that's coming up, you
6 think you might have a conflict, it's always
7 worth a phone call to your OGC person or the
8 Ethics office just to run through if there
9 might be an exemption for you.

10 Next.

11 Okay. So how about this situation: So a
12 member of the DDRB is -- has a voting conflict;
13 is it enough for them to simply just let the
14 Chair know ahead of time that they're not going
15 to be voting or to just announce it in the
16 microphone? What do you think?

17 MEETING ATTENDEES: (Indicating.)

18 MS. MYERS: No. Okay. No, you have to do
19 the form.

20 And if you don't find out until you're in
21 the meeting -- I heard you ask for them ahead
22 of time, but if you don't find out until you're
23 in the meeting, then you still have to declare
24 that you have a conflict and you still have to
25 do the form after the fact and get it turned

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1 in. Okay?

2 Next.

3 I think I already said this. Oh, this

4 is -- so the -- part of this process is, like,

5 you have to do the form, and then you also have

6 to make a public service announcement where you

7 talk about the nature of the conflict, and then

8 you abstain from voting for sure, and you get

9 that form turned in, it's within 15 days, and

10 it's to whoever -- it says Legislative --

11 that's not right. It's to whoever is doing

12 your minutes. That would be Van.

13 Van is raising her hand.

14 Okay. Next.

15 Okay. Here's a copy of the form if you

16 need it.

17 Go ahead.

18 And then you also get to declare your

19 voting conflict. So we have this sample

20 statement. It's really, under Florida law, not

21 enough to say things like, out of an abundance

22 of caution I don't think I should vote on this.

23 Really, if you have a -- if you don't have a

24 voting conflict, you have to vote under Florida

25 law. If you do have a voting conflict, you

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1 Okay. So here's the last -- I think this

2 is the last one -- situation. So what do you

3 think about this: So you're getting ready to

4 vote on an issue that could benefit or harm

5 your client. What would you do?

6 MEETING ATTENDEES: (Indicating.)

7 MS. MYERS: Yeah. This is an abstaining

8 situation. Perfect. Okay.

9 That's -- you'd fill out your form, you

10 announce it, and then you -- you have your

11 little -- your little statement that you read

12 off that says this is a client of mine and so

13 I'm not going to be voting on this issue. But

14 then during the -- during the discussion that's

15 happening about it, you can still participate.

16 Okay?

17 Okay.

18 All right. Last one. So the DDRB is

19 getting ready to vote on an issue that would

20 financially benefit hundreds of property owners

21 in the city, including you all. Are you

22 allowed to vote on that?

23 MEETING ATTENDEES: (Indicating.)

24 MS. MYERS: This one is a maybe. Maybe is

25 always a good answer in ethics.

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1 have to say, I have a voting conflict, not that

2 I'm just being cautious.

3 So we have this template that we can make

4 sure that you all have on file if you -- but

5 you have to declare to everybody that you have

6 it and you have to use the right language when

7 you do that.

8 Next.

9 Okay. And then, typically, even after

10 you -- so, typically, after you've declared

11 that you have a voting conflict, you can still

12 participate in the conversation. That's the

13 question people always ask, do I have to step

14 out of the room or can I just step out of the

15 room? That's the other thing; you can't -- you

16 can't just leave the room and abstain from

17 voting. That doesn't absolve you of your

18 voting conflict, just, like, scooting out and

19 avoiding the whole thing together. You still

20 have to declare that you had that conflict and

21 that that's why you didn't vote on it. Okay?

22 And that's the only way to sort of get yourself

23 out of a potential issue that could arise from

24 that.

25 All right.

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1 Yeah. So, it's one percent. So I was,

2 like, you do the math -- and so is that a

3 thousand people have to -- okay. A few people

4 are better at math than me.

5 Yeah. So in that case, I would say that's

6 worth a phone call, because even if you've done

7 the math and you're better at it than we are,

8 we like to put in writing for you that we've

9 also done the math and we concur with your math

10 and you don't have a voting conflict because

11 you're one of a big group of people that are

12 going to be impacted by that decision. Okay?

13 And so if you're one of a small group of

14 people, then that would be a voting conflict,

15 but if the group is big enough, then you can --

16 you can still vote on those things. Make

17 sense? All right.

18 All right. Next.

19 Okay. And then here is just our practical

20 tips for voting conflicts. It's, like, looking

21 at agendas, seeing who is going to be impacted,

22 and then if it's anybody that you're doing

23 business with or you're related to or your

24 business is doing business with, that's worth a

25 phone call to either the General -- your lawyer

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1 from the OGC or to the Ethics office to just
2 have a deeper conversation about that.

3 Because of the exemptions and because this
4 law is really complicated, it's sometimes okay
5 and it's sometimes not, and it's just always
6 better to get that in writing ahead of time and
7 just save yourselves any, like, heartache or,
8 you know, loss of sleep over it.

9 It's -- it would be like -- a lot of time,
10 it's -- it's very easy to prevent problems.
11 It's harder to, like, get out of them after
12 they have taken place when -- when it's a
13 voting conflict.

14 Okay. Next.

15 So, then, prohibitive conflicts are
16 different from voting conflicts. Like I said
17 before, voting conflicts are, like, the easiest
18 ones, I think, for us to identify. We're like,
19 oh, we get that, we can't vote on stuff where I
20 might economically benefit, right? Easy peasy.

21 Prohibitive conflicts are bigger and more
22 intense scrutiny goes into them, and they also
23 have bigger consequences. So, like, a voting
24 conflict, if you accidentally vote when you
25 weren't supposed to, well, you could have a

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1 contractual relationship with a company that's
2 doing business with your board or has business
3 before your board.

4 The first one is really big. So if any
5 time your company is doing business with the
6 City, that -- that needs to get looked at and
7 you need to -- because it's a technical
8 conflict under the state of Florida law, but
9 there's a lot of exemptions for that. So if
10 you're doing -- if your company -- if you
11 personally are doing business with the City,
12 then that has to get looked at.

13 If your company and your business
14 associates have business before your board,
15 that's a -- that's something that needs to get
16 looked at. Sometimes it's okay and sometimes
17 it's not.

18 And the last thing for a board like this
19 is, I could totally imagine that your neighbors
20 or your coworkers or your -- you know, like,
21 your friends that you've now worked with in the
22 professional world might need to come before
23 this board, and you're just friends, you know,
24 they need -- they need to come before this
25 board and ask for some kind of waiver, they

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1 complaint filed against you, you could have a
2 fine, like, maybe -- maybe that vote has to be
3 redone. Okay.

4 But a prohibitive conflict is, like, you
5 can't serve in both of those positions at the
6 same time. So you can't be in your private
7 capacity and on the DDRB, so you would have to,
8 like, get out of one or the other, which is --
9 we try to avoid that as much as we can.

10 The other thing is that if there's
11 contracts and there was a prohibitive conflict
12 that you voted on, the contracts can get
13 canceled. And typically what happens is people
14 who were also in the running for those things
15 complain about them, and then it can kind of,
16 like, mess up the whole process, if that makes
17 sense. So it's a really painful, cumbersome
18 thing that can happen.

19 All right. Let's move on.

20 Okay. We talked about conflicts of
21 interest. This is, like, any time there's an
22 overlap between your personal interests and
23 your government duties. So, legally, you and
24 your family cannot do business with the City,
25 and you may not have an employment or

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1 might call you up and be like, hey, can you
2 help me out with that, you know about this
3 process. Right? Just because they know you
4 sit here.

5 You don't have any formal business
6 relationship, you're not, you know, legally,
7 like, related in any way, so you don't have
8 that conflict of interest, but you can't stand
9 up here and advocate for someone who has
10 business before your own board if you're --
11 even if you're friends with them. Does that
12 make sense?

13 Okay.

14 That comes up because people do that.
15 It's, like, human nature. Like, oh, I know --
16 I know you, Linzee, can you help me out with
17 this? You know? You're like, I'm sorry,
18 Ethics says I cannot; as much as I would love
19 to, we're not allowed to do that.

20 This story is just in here because our
21 director likes to say, like, what are the
22 actual consequences. There was actually a
23 U.S. prosecutor, they were -- it was a Florida
24 U.S. prosecutor last year that was signing off
25 on contracts to their husband's business, and

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1 it was, like, really big contracts, and so they
2 actually had a criminal case filed against them
3 and are serving probation for doing that. So
4 conflicts of interest are taken very seriously
5 in the state of Florida, so we just want to
6 make sure that they get looked at ahead of time
7 and that you're protected and covered from
8 ending up in the newspaper or on the Internet
9 for forever.

10 Okay.

11 So here are the common connections: If
12 you are employed or contract with a business or
13 a not-for-profit; you have your own business or
14 you -- or you own more than 5 percent of a
15 business; you, your spouse, or child are an
16 officer or a partner in a business or a
17 not-for-profit; your spouse or child owns a
18 business and you, your spouse, or child serve
19 on a board of directors. If that is like, oh,
20 that's me, you just want to keep that in mind,
21 is, you know, like, all the nonprofits and all
22 the organizations and businesses that your
23 spouse and your children are a part of too. If
24 they come up here, even if it's not your child
25 or your spouse, that still could be a conflict

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1 electronic ethics manual, and it looks like
2 this on the first page (indicating). It's
3 usually printed double-sided. It's not
4 actually this thick.

5 Okay.

6 And on Page 17 and 18, there are
7 self-assessments for you to take on voting
8 conflicts and prohibitive conflicts. And it's
9 just a series of five questions on one, four
10 questions on the other, and if you answer yes
11 to any of the questions on these pages, it's
12 just worth a phone call to OGC or the Ethics
13 office, and we'll talk to you about whether or
14 not it's actually a problem.

15 Okay. So just Page 17.

16 Okay. I think that's it.

17 I did have -- I know you just heard from
18 Dylan. I just -- this was on here, just about
19 Sunshine meetings. Again, just because you all
20 work together so much in your -- your real
21 lives, your professional lives, there was just
22 a scenario about a board like this, and
23 everybody on the board was invited to come
24 speak on a panel together about a topic that
25 their board was discussing, and so -- it

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1 for you, so you just want to have a -- call
2 someone and have it looked, OGC or Ethics.

3 Okay.

4 And then there are a bunch of exemptions,
5 so that's why we always say just call us and --
6 because if there's an exemption that applies,
7 we will help you find it and we will give
8 you documentation that says that it does apply
9 in your case.

10 Next.

11 Okay. And we have this whole process.
12 It's super detailed. So if you end up in this
13 situation, we will ask you a bunch of
14 questions, and then we will go do a bunch of
15 fact checking and researching and talking to
16 the State ethics commission, and you will
17 eventually, at the end of that process, get a
18 piece of paper from us that says you're okay
19 to -- to keep serving on the DDRB and in your
20 private capacity.

21 Okay.

22 So just in summary, conflicts, voting
23 conflicts, prohibitive conflicts, it's all
24 really complicated. There is -- you are going
25 to get, if you don't have already, an

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1 actually ended up being okay, but there did
2 have to be a Sunshine meeting.

3 So just because you all are really active
4 in downtown development and you're doing so
5 many great projects, if you're all invited to
6 speak together at a panel conversation, just
7 call one of us. We'll just make sure that it
8 gets handled in the right way so that you're
9 all good on the Sunshine law as well, because
10 that's very public, so everybody will see you
11 violating the Sunshine Law if you're talking
12 about downtown stuff together in a public
13 space, so just -- so just be aware of that and
14 call us if you ever need anything.

15 That is it, unless you all have any
16 questions. You can also always call us or
17 email us. I think there's a slide with our
18 contact information, but it's Ethics at COJ dot
19 net. And we have an anonymous help line;
20 that's 630-1015. If you ever have any
21 questions or need anything, we're happy to
22 help. That's what we're here for.

23 So, thanks again.

24 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Thank you.

25 Members, guests, any questions?

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1 MEETING ATTENDEES: (No response.)

2 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. That was -- that

3 was -- actually, that was very entertaining,

4 and I learned some things and that was helpful,

5 so thank you for being here and taking time to

6 do that for us. Appreciate it.

7 So we don't have old or new business items

8 to discuss.

9 So, Ms. Hill, public comment cards, online

10 or in person?

11 MS. HILL: We do have Nancy Powell.

12 (Audience member approaches the podium.)

13 MS. HILL: Please state your name and your

14 address for the record.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. Nancy Powell. I am

16 with Scenic Jacksonville, 1848 Challen Avenue,

17 Jacksonville, 32205.

18 And our friends from Haskell and the Parks

19 Department have left, but I will email them,

20 and I told them what I was going to talk about.

21 You know, I think that it's important for

22 this board as -- in the future, if you have an

23 opportunity, when you have an opportunity to

24 take a little bit more of a strategic role,

25 which I would encourage you to do, around

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1 pretty big concrete wall right there, at least

2 at Baptist.

3 So -- anyway, so those are kinds of some

4 things.

5 One of the things that strikes me about

6 this is that -- this little segment is nice,

7 it's a nice to-do, but there's a real -- I

8 think it's an incomplete project, and I'm going

9 to talk to the Parks Department, but it -- this

10 kind of falls in between different departments

11 because this ends at the Acosta Bridge, and the

12 Friendship Fountain segment of the Riverwalk,

13 you cannot get there from here. Okay? Because

14 it's the railroad tracks, and so you have to go

15 down San Marco Boulevard, all the way to

16 Prudential Drive, across, and back again down

17 to the Riverwalk. If you're at the Fuller

18 Warren sub path, you have to go down Palm

19 Avenue.

20 There are six major intersections. From a

21 pedestrian standpoint, it's a mess. And so I

22 really think that this part -- those

23 connectivity things should be a project so that

24 that Riverwalk can be connected and so people

25 know, how do you get from here to there.

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1 things like the design of the Riverwalk.

2 First of all, as far as the Southbank

3 goes, you know, I appreciate that the City has

4 listened to the public in a few things. The

5 width of the Riverwalk is -- you know,

6 especially on the Southbank -- so it's -- at

7 least going to 15 feet is a lot better than the

8 8 feet that's in other sections.

9 They have also listened about shade. The

10 solutions in this case, because it's not on

11 land, are limited.

12 And also, just the need for connectivity.

13 I think what this demonstrates is the

14 importance of retaining sufficient public land

15 when you have the opportunity, when it's City

16 land. You know, Baptist is there right now.

17 You're not moving anything. But in the future,

18 you know, to have sufficient room for real

19 trees to be planted, for -- it makes it less

20 expensive to do a Riverwalk. You could have

21 space for activities.

22 And also, you know, the importance of how

23 the built environment interacts with that

24 public space. So right now, if you walk

25 that -- I've walked that. You know, it's a

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1 I don't think people are going to go to

2 this little segment -- maybe they will to -- to

3 see the sunset. That will be a nice place to

4 see the sunset, but it's -- it's -- it doesn't

5 really go anywhere.

6 MS. HILL: Thank you. Your time is up.

7 MS. POWELL: And so those are my comments.

8 Thank you.

9 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Ms. Powell, if there were

10 additional comments, you're welcome to email

11 them to one of us and we'll make sure it gets

12 to the full board.

13 Thank you.

14 Any other public comments?

15 MS. HILL: That is it.

16 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you, members

17 and guests, for attending today, and we will

18 see you all, hopefully, in February, if there

19 are no other -- no other items to discuss.

20 MEETING ATTENDEES: (No response.)

21 THE CHAIRWOMAN: Okay. Thank you.

22 (The proceedings were concluded at

23 2:47 p.m.)

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25

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