JSEB Monitoring Committee Meeting

Thursday, June 18, 2026, at 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Don Davis Room, 1ST Floor, City Hall, 117 West Duval St

JSEB MONITORING COMMITTEE
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

June 18, 2026
2:30 p.m.
Don Davis Room, 1st floor, City Hall

Committee Members:
Mike Zaffaroni, Trade Association Member, Chair: Present
Kimano Edwards, Vice Chair: Present
Roderick Myrick, JSEB Contractor Member: Excused
Monique Thompson, Citizen Member: Excused
Leslie Campbell, JSEB Contractor Member: Excused
Vacant, Non-JSEB Contractor Member: Vacant
The Honorable Council Member Terrance Freeman, Designated Member: Excused

Advisors:
Gregory Grant - JSEB Administrator, GGrant@coj.net: Present
Shannon MacGillis - Office of General Counsel, SMacGillis@coj.net: Present

Staff:
Ivana Gavric, EBO Office, IGavric@coj.net: Present
Greg Pease, EBO Office, gpease@coj.net: Present

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Zaffaroni convened the meeting at 2:33 p.m.

2. **Roll Call and Verification of Quorum** (4 members): Conducted by Chair; quorum not satisfied

3. **Approval of Minutes from prior meeting(s)**: Pending next meeting.

4. **Call for Public Speakers**:

John Nooney focused on new trust funds for parks, movie production, and veterans' programs while stressing waterway access issues and regional collaboration. He raised concerns about city processes and referenced several pieces of council legislation tied to capital projects.

Ernest Smith briefly introduced himself as a realtor and small-business owner seeking to fill the vacant non-JSEB subcontractor seat. He highlighted his experience with the Jax Chamber and Citibank and expressed interest in contributing to JSEB oversight, noting he plans to contact the Mayor's Office through Councilmember Garrett Dennis.

5. **Reports:**

A. JSEB Administrator: Q1 & Q2 Score Card

Gregory Grant presented a condensed scorecard review for Q1 and Q2. Grant explained that previously reported figures (around 20% in Q1, about 15% in Q2, averaging roughly 17%) were drawn only from formal contracts that pass through his office for a JSEB set-aside or participation recommendation. However, after improvements in the data-collection process and expanding the scope of what counts as "total city contracts," the numbers had changed drastically. Under the ordinance, the city's small-business participation goal is at least 20 percent of all city contracts, but most contracts do not pass through the JSEB office for evaluation. Measured that way, the numbers drop dramatically: total city contract spend across the two periods was about $371,605,053 (roughly $371 million), against which JSEB prime and subcontract payments totaled about $30,000 on average, yielding a JSEB spend goal achievement of 7.53% and an overall goal achievement of about 10% — well below the 20% target. Grant emphasized that although this figure falls short of the 20 percent policy goal, it is a more accurate representation than previous data because it reflects all city contracts rather than only those processed by the JSEB office. Grant flagged for possible future new business a re-examination of whether the measure should be based on JSEB-eligible contracts rather than all total city contracts, arguing the current wording puts the program at a disadvantage. On the JSEB CIP goal (a 20% target for the capital improvement program), Grant reported this requirement had essentially never been implemented in his tenure and is only now being built into the budget cycle; current CIP performance stands at 18.6% of general-fund COJ CIP going to JSEB primes and contractors — close to but not meeting 20%.

Looking into 2027, the office's focus is shifting from attracting participants to ensuring real opportunities exist for them, including a mandatory citywide training program for department leaders who interact with JSEB contracts, expected to launch around July 2nd. He credited staff members Amin and Jay, present at the meeting. On access to capital, Grant reported roughly $566,000 still outstanding to be collected on loans, and — after some confusion over the phrasing of a "40% paid" figure — clarified with the chair that $566,000 is what remains outstanding, not what has been repaid. He also mentioned pending legislative language changes discussed at the prior meeting.

Gregory Grant continued to talk about program activity and growth: heavy marketing investment over three years has drawn many new participants, the program is growing; about 30 nonprofits are now enrolled and growing 5–7% monthly, more than 75 outreach events have been held servicing over 1,000 small businesses across the centers, and average event attendance is about 15.

Mike Zaffaroni discussed the implications of this major recalculation. He observed that although the percentage dropped significantly, improved accuracy is beneficial, even necessary, for establishing a reliable baseline. He also noted that consistently shifting calculation methods has made past reports unreliable, and that now the committee must decide whether 7.5 percent is acceptable or whether the city should adjust ordinances or operational processes to improve participation. JSEB staff explained that part of the recalibration included removal of duplicate data, amounting to about $2.3 million in payments that counted more than once because of overlapping purchase orders, repeated invoice numbers, and master PO structures. The committee asked whether these kinds of corrections would continue to appear.

Greg Pease explained that while data-scrubbing will always be needed, enhancements to reporting tools should reduce the magnitude of duplication. Pease explained an approximately $2.3 million reduction for duplicate data — the result of scrubbing multiple payments carrying the same PO, invoice, or solicitation numbers when data is extracted from 1Cloud and processed through the Form 3 pay-request system for primes and subs. This scrubbing remains a partly manual process even as IT works toward a recurring automated report, and the $2.3 million was lumped together rather than split between prime and subcontractor because of time and bandwidth limits. A second footnote concerned JSEB prime payments made via POs where no Form 3 was submitted (for instance, one-time payments with no contractual requirement to file a Form 3); such payments are hard to capture, though staff believe the amount is small enough not to materially affect totals. In response to Edwards's question about the size of this gap, Pease noted the procurement dashboard showed roughly $380 million in total spend versus the $371 million captured in their reporting — an approximately $8 million variance, only a portion of which would be JSEB-related. The chair and Pease agreed that footnoting these discrepancies transparently is preferable to presenting clean but misleading numbers, and Pease articulated a personal goal of leaving behind a report with consistent, trusted data as a lasting legacy.

Chair Zaffaroni asked whether stadium construction dollars were included; staff clarified that stadium spending had not yet been added but could be. They debated whether external projects, incentives, or rev-grant-supported private developments should also be reflected in JSEB tracking. Members discussed the challenge of gathering data from external agencies and debated whether those dollars fall under "total city contracts" or should be reported separately. They agreed that any use of city money—even portions of stadium financing—should be included to maintain transparency and offer clearer explanations to City Council, but they also agreed that private projects receiving incentives might warrant separate reporting categories rather than inclusion under CIP. The committee reiterated that the city must avoid creating confusing figures that rely on lengthy caveats and footnotes, and ideally work toward a single, trusted reporting standard.

The reported CIP figure (8.1 of $43.6 million on the general CIP) deliberately excludes the stadium. The group debated whether to fold in the city's stadium contribution — variously described as close to $775 million or near a billion dollars once deferred maintenance is added — and concluded that only the city's portion of funds, not the total project cost, would belong in a CIP number, and that much of the stadium (notably the proprietary roof) is simply not JSEB-eligible. A related debate concerned Gateway Jacksonville, a DIA-managed development that receives city incentives (such as rev grants of future dollars) rather than direct city construction funds, yet still carries a JSEB participation goal and reports its numbers to DIA. Grant argued that JSEB work counted by such projects could be reflected in the committee's numbers even if the city's direct spend is small, since council's objective was 20% participation regardless of whose money it is; others countered that the ordinance's "total city contracts" language really refers to the council-approved operating and CIP budgets, and that Gateway-type incentive deals, while noteworthy, are a different category. The consensus leaned toward reporting such external-project JSEB participation in a separate section of the report rather than folding it into the core CIP spend, and toward not singling out individual organizations for criticism. Throughout, participants acknowledged that pulling and reconciling data from external organizations is expansive, imperfect, and footnote-heavy work, and that despite being far closer than three or seven or eight years ago, the committee still does not truly know how much money reaches JSEBs out of how large a pot.

Discussion also touched on the political framing of the numbers. The chair repeatedly argued that a lower, defensible number actually helps the committee draw council attention and could prompt either a lowering of the 20% threshold or a more serious debate about increasing participation. He cautioned, however, against burying numbers under so many caveats that each caveat discredits the figure, suggesting instead that "the number is what the number is" — even a low 2% — might be better than repeatedly backing out fuel, insurance, and other JSEB-ineligible costs to inflate percentages (an exercise the office had done years ago). Zaffaroni probed whether council's intent behind an unmet goal is punitive (to eventually eliminate the program) or supportive (to direct more resources toward it). Grant replied that, from his experience with council and the administration, he sees no intent to end the program for missing goals; what matters is

demonstrating progressive, good-faith improvement, and consistent reliable data showing a gap below the ordinance target would more likely generate constructive action.
Vice Chair Edwards drawing on his experience staffing JSEB special committees, added that accurate, mathematically defendable numbers will serve the program well in upcoming budget seasons, particularly given council members' focus (he named council member Lane) on return on investment and the goal of making the access-to-capital program eventually self-funding.

On access to capital, the chair pressed for clarity: of roughly $980,000 loaned, $566,000 remains outstanding to collect. He asked about bad debt and write-offs, and staff explained that delinquent files beyond a roughly three-month period are turned over to the Office of General Counsel, which then takes over collection; the debt is not written off until OGC declares it so, and it remains in the collections process until then. Current written-off bad debt is $0.0, which the chair welcomed, while stressing that this write-off figure is exactly what a skeptical council member would ask about, and that he would like to see the fund grow toward $5 million in lending capacity to make a real case to politicians who champion small business on the campaign trail.

B. Equal Business Opportunity Office: status of continuing education, training and mentoring programs, and program marketing and community outreach, including recommended goals, methods to measure goals, and the achievement or otherwise or previously set goals, as to each topic.

6. **Presentations:**

A guest presenter, Elizabeth Torry, a Duval County resident and 38-year small business owner running a lower-tier-enterprise construction company, offered pointed frontline testimony. She praised Mr. Grant as the only JSEB leader in her long experience who has genuinely worked the program and been responsive, contrasting him with predecessors who she said had no time for participants. She described losing at least 30 prime contractors she had worked with as a subcontractor — smaller but established general contractors who left the program, saying the attitude and hassle were not worth it and that they could make more money in the private sector. She recounted a concrete frustration from the day before: a general contractor (she referenced Burson, and an Alden White contract, involving Duval County Schools) called her seeking JSEB participation because her name was on the list, but could not tell her the qualifications, certifications, or scope of work required to bid — only that they "just want you to show up." She used this to illustrate her broader complaint that large companies feel forced to hire JSEBs, do so grudgingly, and that money nominally distributed to JSEBs flows disproportionately to bigger firms while smaller ones are left behind, prompting many to drop out. She did credit the program for requiring real, qualified businesses rather than pitting participants against illegitimate bidders

7. **Unfinished Business (If Any)**:

The committee reviewed draft legislation, discussable but not votable without quorum. Gregory Grant explained the first change, already drafted for the MBRC (mayor's) track, would let JSEBs with revenues under $2 million submit an IRS-acceptable tax return in place of the CPA requirement, and would strike the mandatory education, training, or mentoring requirement. Shannon MacGillis pointed out procedural gaps at the top of the draft's first page: legislation can be introduced either by a specific council member or by the council president at the request of (here) the mayor, and the two "whereas" clauses at the bottom of page one must be worded and approved accordingly. Since staff had already established the bill would go the MBRC/mayor route, MacGillis recommended that Grant supply the substantive "why" language while the administration — not OGC — ultimately approves the document for introduction. The committee agreed the next step is Grant getting draft language to OGC to finish.

A second, unresolved item concerned business-size definitions. Grant had provided the SBA size-standards table the chair requested but recommended leaving the current standard as is, noting that beyond the $36 million threshold JSEBs can leverage the city's Chapter 7 (Part 7) local business participation legislation. The chair said he prefers the SBA definitions because "small" varies enormously across industries, but agreed to treat it as a "not now" matter. Grant cautioned about unintended consequences: as the office has successfully evangelized JSEB participation beyond its historically heavy base of engineering, lawn maintenance, and janitorial firms into many more industries, adopting SBA definitions could balloon the number of industry categories and size definitions the office must manage. The conversation extended to coding systems — the city and most local programs use NIGP codes, while state and federal certifications use NAICS (referred to phonetically as "NACE"/"NACS") codes. The chair sees the lack of NAICS codes as a real obstacle absent a reliable converter (with a passing suggestion that AI could help), and Grant, drawing on his SBDC and PTAC background, agreed NAICS codes matter greatly for small businesses (recommending they use naics.com when opening business accounts for loan purposes) but stressed that converting the city from NIGP to NAICS would be an enormous feat likely to draw the wrath of the procurement and finance departments. The chair joked that since he printed the document, he intends to carry it around and keep raising the issue.

8. **New Business:** *None*

9. **Announcements:**

Upcoming events (All events with additional details are available on our website JSEB.Jacksonville.gov)

Next committee meeting August 20th at 2:30pm

10. **Adjournment:** Conducted by Chair

Meeting adjourned 3:35 p.m.