

Beaches Watch

2023 Jacksonville Mayor Candidate Questions

Candidate Name: Audrey Gibson

Campaign web site: teamaudreygibson.com

Email address: campaign@teamaudreygibson.com

Phone Number: (904)502-8991

1. **Priorities:** What are your priorities as Mayor over the first 4 years of your term? And how would those priorities impact the beaches, either positively, negatively or neutral?
My priorities include increasing tourism so that Jacksonville becomes more than a pass thru city; assembling infrastructure rehabilitation and beautification and incentivizing small business development in marginalized communities, strategic plan for septic tank removal, starting with those most at risk for failure, well defined plan for various aspects of resiliency. Building a a fundig plan including budget forecasting of income streams and expenditure costs to address the issues. There is some positive impact for the beaches and no negative impact that I see at this writing.

2. **Interlocal Agreements:** At the beaches, the 1982 primary Interlocal Agreement was revised, only after the beaches sued for parity and the agreement was updated in 1996. Today, 27 years later, each beach municipality gets just pennies back on every Jacksonville tax dollar they pay. Will you commit to reviewing and amending the interlocal agreement, without penalty, as provided for in a 1996 amendment to the agreement, to assure we get our fair share at the beaches? Please explain your answer.

As years pass, circumstances may or may not remain the same. A timeline should be established for review of agreements to reflect the changes in circumstances.

3. **Crime:** Crime in Jacksonville directly impacts the beaches because 80% of all arrests at the beaches are not residents of the beaches. Will you pledge to make the consistently high homicide rate in Jacksonville a top priority? While we can't police our way out of this, what will you do as Mayor to promote prevention and intervention and to address the root causes of gun violence in Jacksonville?
As Mayor, I will work with the Sheriff on crime trends and data to determine resources needed based on the outcome of the data. Prevention and intervention funds and programs may sit in various areas of the budget that can be used in other programs that may not necessarily tied to the Office of the Sheriff while decreasing the occurrence of criminal behavior. I have a degree in Criminology that allows me to look full scope, and I have been a prevention proponent my entire career since starting college and graduating from FSU.

4. **Resiliency and Sea Level Rise:** How would you support the beaches communities in their efforts to address resiliency and sea level rise? Most of the funds particularly related to the dunes, comes

from the state. Other resiliency plans should rise from the local governing body and as Mayor I would work with that entity in developing what the locals believe and plan should look like, including costs and finding consensus on funding a plan.

5. **Sanitation:** Hauling garbage from the Beaches to the landfill is the greatest hauling distance in the county with the Beaches being in the extreme east of the county and the landfill on the extreme west. Many large urban counties have established transfer stations to lower the cost of such hauling. Would you at least initiate a study to see if a transfer station located on the east side of the county would be feasible and would lower the costs for the entire east side of the county including the Beaches?

Studies and data should be utilized particularly when costs escalate throughout a system. The results can point adjustments that could be cost effective overall, determine upfronts costs and how to potentially mitigate for the costs in the long term. Therefore, the answer is yes to looking into a study.

6. **Funding:** The City of Jacksonville as a county, receives funding from federal and state sources, such as the Covid relief funding. Where the rules allow for pass through to municipalities, would you agree to using the same formula in determining the amount, as the population formula for CDBG funds found in the Interlocal Agreements with the Beaches? If you would not, please explain why not?

I'm not real clear on the question. The federal dollars from the COVID and other federal assistance by federal rule included funds going directly to cities/counties over a certain population. If the Interlocal agreement is population driven then the funds should follow the agreement.

7. Are there any other issues you would like to address that would impact the beaches? I helped secure funding for the Jax Beach flooding and drainage issue about two years ago (time is fleeting but I believe that is the correct number of years).

Thank you.