

First Coast **Tiger Bay Tracks**



February 2019 The First Coast Tiger Bay Club, Inc. P.O. Box 2608, Jacksonville, FL 32203

Race for Mayor of Jacksonville February 15, 2019

The paramount contest in the next Jacksonville election is the Mayor's race. As such, the **First Coast Tiger Bay Club** February program was designed to feature a debate between the two leading contenders: incumbent **Mayor Lenny Curry** and City **Councilwoman Anna Brosche**. We still hope to present this program but as of the time this Newsletter goes out we have only been able to confirm Brosche's participation despite multiple e-mail and phone attempted contacts to the Curry organization for more than a week. The Mayor is more than welcome to participate in the debate but either way the **Mayor's Race** will be the focus of our **February 15th** program.

Jacksonville has a "strong mayor council" type of city government. This means the mayor has relatively broad powers with regard to proposing the budget, signing legislation, appointing department directors and commissions as well as day to day oversight of operations. The incumbent, Mayor Lenny Curry, has not been shy about exercising this power. He initiated comprehensive reform of children's programs with the Kids Hope Alliance, pension reform including reduction of defined benefits for new public safety hires as well as major changes in the composition of boards and commissions to promote his vision. While much of this was done with broad support of the City Council there have often been grumblings about backroom deals, steam-rolling tactics and bullying.

Among those making these charges is City Councilwoman Anna Brosche who was City Council President last year. It is common for leaders of the two elected branches of government to frequently disagree as they represent different constituencies: legislators see themselves as the people's representatives and jealously resist encroachment on their authority by "power hungry" executives while mayors tend to prefer unilateral action unfettered by "narrow minded and politically driven" council members. While these are normal proclivities between mayors and city council presidents, this relationship seemed particularly acrimonious. These differences culminated when the Mayor proposed to bring the possible sale of the Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA)—the city's publicly owned utility—to the City Council. The then Council President Brosche felt more time was needed to digest the idea before it would be considered and refused to schedule a meeting. The Mayor then called a meeting

but the Council President, as the presiding officer, refused to recognize him to speak. The Mayor and his staff then marched out of the meeting to hold a press conference on the issue. Their relationship had already been testy after the mayor supported her opponent in the election for city council president as well as their heated public disagreement over city financing of a Southbank development backed by Peter Rummell, one of the mayor's major political donors.



The two leading contenders for mayor have many similarities: not only are both Florida natives educated here (Curry a *summa sum laude* graduate of the University of Florida and Brosche getting her Business Administration and Master of Accountancy from the University of North Florida) but also are members of the accounting profession.

Curry was the Senior Manager in the PricewaterhouseCoopers Jacksonville office before co-founding ICX Group, Inc., a professional financial services firm. Prior to being elected Jacksonville's mayor in 2015 he was Chair of the Republican Party of Florida. He is a South Jacksonville Rotarian and served as a Jacksonville Symphony Association Board member, a Southside United Methodist Church Finance Committee member as well as the Junior Achievement and the Jacksonville Housing Commission Boards.



Anna Brosche began her career at Ernst and Young LLP before becoming managing shareholder of Ennis Pellum & Associates CPAs. She served on the Boards of Directors for United Way of Northeast Florida (Chair), JAX Chamber, JAX Chamber Foundation, University of North Florida Foundation, University of North Florida Coggin College of Business Alumni Chapter, Ritz Chamber Music Society, and the Women's Giving Alliance. She is the first Asian American elected to the Jacksonville City Council and first Filipina American City Council member in Florida. As City Council President she also is remembered for raising the issue about the future of Confederate monuments in the city.

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2019 Tiger Bay Officers

George Mackoul, President
Dr. Stephen Baker, Vice President
Henry Cordes, Secretary
Marcia Turner, Treasurer

FIRST COAST TIGER BAY CLUB meets for lunch every month, except June, July and December, on the 3rd Friday at 11:30 at The River Club, 1 Independent Drive, 35th Floor. Cost for the event, which includes the wonderful buffet and parking, is \$28. 00

Reservations are required: Call (904) 571-5337 or E-Mail: fcTigerbay@gmail.com

Both of the leading candidates are Republicans; on the ballot as well are fellow Republican Jimmy Hill and Independent Omega Allen who also ran in 2015. Two more write-in candidates qualified: Brian Griffin and Johnny Sparks.

This will certainly be a contentious election. The challenger, Anna Brosche, suggests there is a lack of transparency in government and too many backroom deals plus a stronger emphasis on fighting crime is needed. The Mayor takes exception to those

claims and points to his support among much of the City Council. He also has a considerable fundraising advantage: in addition to the nearly half million dollar campaign account is his Jacksonville on the Rise political action committee that brought in over \$3 million dollars by the end of 2018 and still counting. Get ready for plenty of nasty political campaign commercials!

We hope you can join us on **February 15th** for a robust political dialogue about this crucial election.

For an up-to-date list of all 2019 Jacksonville election candidates:
(including campaign contributions but not candidate PACs)

https://www.voterfocus.com/CampaignFinance/candidate_pr.php?c=Duval

JANUARY 2019 STRAW POLL RESULTS

Were you surprised by the Florida midterm elections?

24% - Not at all

50% - A little

26% - Yes

Do you think money has become almost the only determinant of who wins an election?

24% - No

47% - Somewhat

29% - Yes

Would you support campaign finance reform?

82% - Yes

15% - It depends

3% - No.

How badly do you think gerrymandering distorts the will of Florida voters?

3% - Not at all

18% - little

38% - A fair amount

41% - A great deal

2019 Meeting Changes for The First Coast Tiger Bay Club

This year the number of meetings per year will change from eleven to nine. The months we will not meet will be **June, July and December**. This change is being made to accommodate the vacation and holiday plans of the members. All other meetings will continue to be held on the 3rd Friday of each month.

Dues will be reduced to **\$75.00** for the year. Due to an increase in the cost of the meal, lunch will be **\$28.00**.

The First Coast Tiger Bay Club is a multi-partisan political forum that promotes free and open debate but does not support any candidates or issues.

Dr. Stephen Baker, Newsletter Editor

Henry Cordes, Publisher

**Reservations are REQUIRED. Please RSVP by
Tuesday February 12, 2019
E-mail: fctigerbay@gmail.com or 904-404-5471**

The First Coast Tiger Bay Club is a multi-partisan political and civic forum designed to explore crucial issues of the day by interacting with outstanding speakers in an open format. The club is non-partisan, never supports particular candidates, nor take sides on issues.