

First Coast Tiger Bay Tracks



May 2021 The First Coast Tiger Bay Club, Inc. P.O. Box 2608, Jacksonville, FL 32203

State Attorney Melissa Nelson Comes to Tiger Bay May 21, 2021



The **First Coast Tiger Bay Club** speaker for the May meeting is State Attorney **Melissa Nelson**. As chief criminal prosecutor for the Fourth Judicial Circuit (Clay, Duval and Nassau counties), she is uniquely qualified to answer your legal questions about police reforms, drug prosecutions, murder rate and public safety generally. While she faces many challenges, one of the most perplexing is implementing HB 1: Combating Public Disorder (more commonly known as the Anti-riot bill). It was signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis in April and similar to others passed this year in states where both houses of the legislature and the governorship are in Republican hands. Proponents claim it provides necessary tools to contain disorder seen in many other communities over the past year; opponents say it is a heavy-handed attempt to stifle and criminalize free speech, particularly limiting Black Lives Matter protests. How will the state attorney navigate these contentious waters?

Melissa Nelson took office in January 2017 where she leads 300-plus attorneys, staff, and investigators in their pursuit of justice. In 1997, Nelson started her career as an Assistant State Attorney and for the next 12 years prosecuted cases ranging from misdemeanors to capital homicides. From 2009 to 2016, she worked at the international law firm of McGuireWoods, specializing in rights of individuals and businesses. Since being elected to this position, Nelson has implemented many smart justice initiatives and spearheaded modern criminal justice reforms. She established Florida's first Conviction Integrity Review unit, developed a driver's license restoration program, convened

the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee aimed at reducing juvenile recidivism, and engaged the office in academic research studies focused on making data-driven decisions. One of her major goals was transparency in how the State Attorney's office functions and introduced a data dashboard (<https://sao4thdatadashboard.com/>) for citizens to track prosecutorial performance indicators.

Nelson sits on various boards, both nationally and locally, including Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) National Crime Gun Intelligence Governing Board, Florida's Cold Case Advisory Commission, Columbia University's Executive Session on the Future of Justice Policy, the Florida Supreme Court's Steering Committee on Problem-Solving Courts, the national Council on Criminal Justice, Florida's Criminal Punishment Code Task Force as well as Taskforce on Opioid Abuse, and Jacksonville's Sulzbacher Center. She is also a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. Nelson earned both her undergraduate and law degrees with honors from the University of Florida. This native Floridian is the wife of Jason and mother to Emory, Clem and Boyd.

We hope you can join us on **May 21st** for a dialogue with State Attorney Melissa Nelson to address your concerns about all issues related to justice in Northeast Florida. Please make your reservations by **May 17th**.

**2021
Tiger Bay
Officers**

Bill Bishop, President
Dr. Stephen Baker, Vice President
Henry Cordes, Secretary
Hazel Gillis, Treasurer

FIRST COAST TIGER BAY CLUB meets for lunch every month, except 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 cash or check & \$29 for credit card.

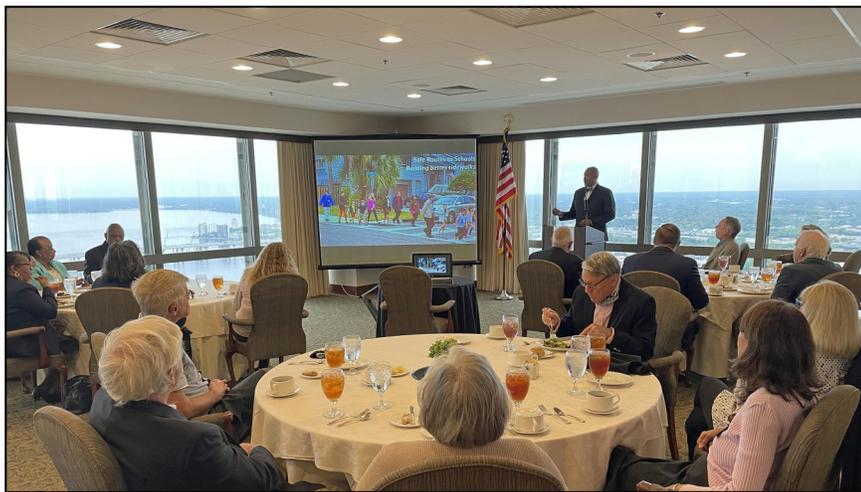
Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Tiger Bay Club Programs

June 18 - Former Florida Lieutenant Governor **Jennifer Carroll**

July 16 - New JEA CEO **Jay Stowe**

August 20 - JU Marine Science Research Institute Director **Dr. Quentin White**



April 2021 Meeting at The River Club



Nathaniel P. Ford, Chief Executive Officer of the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA).
April 16, 2021 First Coast Tiger Bay

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
Monday May 17, 2020
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.