



The Florida Times-Union

Friday, April 20, 2018

jacksonville.com | @jaxdotcom | facebook.com/FLTimesUnion | \$2

Council panel puts JEA head on notice

'Cloud of mistrust' lingers over hiring process, council member says

By Nate Monroe
nate.monroe@jacksonville.com

Barely two days on the job, Aaron Zahn, JEA's interim CEO, faced a series of at-times awkward and contentious

questions from a City Council panel Thursday that was interested in probing his priorities, his past and his views on privatizing the city-owned utility.

The message from several council members was clear: Zahn is on a short leash when it comes to questions about whether City Hall should sell the electric and water utility

— the topic that has been at the center of months-long controversy in city government.

Zahn has said repeatedly that he would like city officials to pause the public discussion on a potential sale so JEA can return to normal business and give him breathing room to create a strategic plan for JEA. The utility, Zahn said, was "wholly unprepared" for a

discussion about privatization.

But council members were concerned that a pause in the public debate doesn't necessarily mean there would be a pause in behind-the-scenes talks over privatization, something several of them believe took place in recent months without their knowledge.

Zahn would "very quickly destroy" any goodwill with

the council if there are any quiet talks to sell JEA, City Councilman John Crescimbeni told the interim CEO. Crescimbeni chairs the committee that is studying JEA privatization.

Zahn's presence at Thursday's meeting was the result of an unusual hiring

See JEA, A5

NEW VISION, NEW LOOK



Jacksonville Jaguars President Mark Lamping shows plans for development around EverBank Field during Thursday's State of the Franchise event. [BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION]

Jags unveil 'no-nonsense' uniforms

By Matt Soergel
msoergel@jacksonville.com

Mark Lamping, president of the Jaguars, liked what he heard on sports radio while heading to EverBank Field on Thursday morning to officially unveil the team's new uniforms. They look, the host said, like something that would be worn by a team that wants to establish the run and then play tough defense: A team just like the current Jaguars.

"They're pretty simple," Lamping said after the team's State of the Franchise presentation. "Straightforward. No-nonsense."

The surprises of the new look were spoiled by the early display of the uniforms in an advertisement at Jacksonville International Airport the night before, pictures of which went around the world at the speed of the internet.

Of course, no one is surprised that the team's notorious shiny-gold and flat-black helmet is gone, replaced by a shiny black helmet, just like the original, with the familiar Jaguar head logo, updated in 2013, on its sides. Still it might take some time for fans to process just how straightforward and no-nonsense these new uniforms are.

Start with the jerseys: Black for the primary home uniform, white for away, teal for an alternate.

There's a slight contrasting cuff on the sleeves, and the black and white jerseys have a small contrasting stripe near

See UNIFORMS, A9

Khan & Co. roll out plan for Shipyards, Lot J development

By David Bauerlein & Steve Patterson
The Times-Union

The Jacksonville Jaguars will team up with The Cordish Companies, a nationally known firm specializing in downtown turnaround development, to carry out the construction of a brand-new, skyline-defining neighborhood with a \$2.5 billion pricetag and 4.25 million

square feet of space, officials announced Thursday at the team's State of the Franchise event.

The planned development would start in Lot J near the football stadium and eventually stretch all the way to the St. Johns River with clusters of high-rise buildings that would have hotel, office, residential and convention space in them.

The Cordish Companies, founded in 1910, is a family-owned enterprise with 1,000 employees. Cordish has made its mark in developments around the world, including in

cities with major sports franchises where the firm has used stadiums as anchors.

"It's one thing for a local football team to invest in downtown Jacksonville," Jaguars President Mark Lamping said. "It's a totally different thing for an internationally known, nationally recognized developer to take a look at Jacksonville and also say, 'You know what, I think you do have potential.'"

The development would require financial support from

See VISION, A8

Full coverage inside

Khan says city selling JEA would be "terrible idea." **Page A8**
Dog park among planned additions at stadium. **Page A8**
Look back at previous iterations of Jaguars uniforms. **Page A9**
2 primetime games, early season Pats tilt highlight schedule. **Page C1**
Jags on-field success boosts business. **Page C1**
Skynyrd, Kid Rock, Aldean to play stadium concert. **Page D1**

Volume 153, No. 110
4 sections, 40 pages
© 2018 GateHouse Media

Classified C8
Crosswords C9, D4
Money B6

Obituaries B5
Opinion A7
Weather B10

TODAY
Cooler winds
60° / 66°

SATURDAY
Some sun
56° / 70°

SUNDAY
Rain increase
62° / 72°





OWN YOUR OWN BUSINESS!

APRIL 28 & 29 - PRIME F. OSBORN III CONVENTION CENTER

Jacksonville's Largest Business Ownership Event!

Meet Face-to-Face with the Hottest Franchises and Part-Time Opportunities. Plus, FREE Seminars!

2 DAYS ONLY!

Presented by:



Saturday: 11 am - 5 pm
Sunday 11 am - 4 pm
\$8 at the door - 2 for 1 online

The Franchise Show

GET YOUR TICKETS!

JacksonvilleFranchiseExpo.com

JV4000302888401

Turkey's weak opposition scrambles to challenge Erdogan

By Suzan Fraser
The Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — One party leader is in jail. Another doesn't have a candidate. A third might face eligibility issues for her party. Turkey's weak opposition is scrambling to mount a meaningful challenge against strongman President Recep Tayyip Erdogan with just nine weeks to prepare for snap elections.

Erdogan set the presidential and parliamentary elections for June 24, in a move that will usher in a new system cementing the president's grip on power more than a year ahead of schedule. Turkey is switching from a parliamentary system to an executive presidential system after a narrowly approved referendum last year, in the wake of a failed 2016 coup attempt. The changes take effect with the next election, which had originally been set for November 2019.

The snap elections caught Turkey off guard and come as the opposition is in disarray. Recent changes to the electoral law pushed through by Erdogan's governing AKP party with the help of the nationalist party make the playing field even more uneven for the opposition, analysts say.

Still, the opposition parties sounded upbeat with the main opposition party's leader, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, promising that the June elections would bring "democracy" and "calm," and Meral Aksener, seen as the strongest candidate against Erdogan, vowing to send him home to rest after 15 years in power.

Observers say the early elections were called to capitalize on nationalist sentiment running high following a successful military campaign in Syria that ousted Syrian Kurdish militia from a border region, in a decision fueled by fears of an economic downturn ahead.

"The fact that President Erdogan called early elections, which is the first time he had voluntarily done so



A Turkish police officer uses binoculars to scan the area from a platform, backdropped by posters of Turkish Republic founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, left, and Turkey's current President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, right, during a political rally May 17, 2015, in Istanbul. Turkey's weak opposition is scrambling to try and mount a strong challenge against Turkey's strongman President Erdogan with just nine weeks to prepare for snap elections, scheduled for June 24. Turkey is switching from a parliamentary system to an executive presidential system that will concentrate increased powers in the hands of the president, following a narrowly approved referendum last year.

[LEFTERIS PITRAKIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

since he assumed office ... is an indication of panic and worry," said Fadi Hakura, of the Chatham House think tank.

The changes, which include ballot boxes being supervised by government-appointed civil servants and being relocated at will on security grounds, "make it improbable for the opposition to win any general election in Turkey," Hakura said. "These really serious changes to the election law will, I think, make any serious challenge by the opposition highly improbable."

The call for an early vote also follows the sale of Turkey's largest media group, Dogan Holding, to a group close to Erdogan, further strengthening his grip on the country's media.

A day after the snap election was called, the pro-Erdogan press seemed confident of the vote's outcome. "Checkmate" headlined the pro-Erdogan newspaper Yeni Safak on Thursday, suggesting an early victory for Erdogan.

Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdag compared the opposition to people "caught in a downpour

in August, without an umbrella." Marhir Unal, a senior member of Erdogan's ruling party, said the latest opinion polls give Erdogan 55.6 percent support — which would allow him to win the presidential election in the first round. But Unal didn't provide further details about the polls.

The main opposition party, the pro-secular Republican People's Party has yet to announce its candidate. Its leader, Kilicdaroglu, on Thursday didn't rule out an alliance with parties "that support democracy and oppose a one-man regime."

The party denied it has been caught by surprise, saying it has several strong candidates and will nominate one in the next two weeks.

But the person considered the most serious contender against Erdogan so far is Aksener, a popular former interior minister who defected from Turkey's main nationalists and formed her own party.

She has already announced her candidacy for the presidential race. However, questions surround the eligibility of her

newly-founded İyi (Good) Party for the parliamentary vote, as the party is legally required to have completed its general congress six months before the elections — something made impossible by Erdogan calling the elections for June.

"No one is strong enough to keep us out of the elections," Aksener said during a rally in the southern Turkish town of Fethiye on Thursday.

The party in the most precarious situation is the country's pro-Kurdish party, whose 45-year-old popular and charismatic former leader, Selahattin Demirtas, is in prison accused of links to outlawed Kurdish rebels. He faces a 142-year sentence on charges of leading a terror organization, engaging in terror propaganda and other crimes.

Giuliani joining Trump's legal team

By Robert Costa
and Josh Dawsey
The Washington Post

Former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani, a combative former prosecutor and long-time ally of President Donald Trump, told The Washington Post on Thursday that he has joined the president's legal team dealing with the ongoing special counsel probe.

"I'm doing it because I hope we can negotiate an end to this for the good of the country and because I have high regard for the president and for Bob Mueller," Giuliani said in an interview.

Giuliani, who joins a legal team that has struggled to recruit new members to its ranks, said he has been speaking with Trump for weeks about joining the group of legal advisers. He said he would work alongside Trump's current attorneys, Jay Sekulow and Ty Cobb, who focus on the federal investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. He also said he will soon take a leave from his law firm, Greenberg Traurig.

Giuliani said he formalized his decision in recent days, including over dinner last week at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida.

Giuliani and Trump spoke on Thursday about legal strategy moving forward, along with Sekulow, who Giuliani described as a "good friend." He added that he and Cobb spoke on Wednesday.

Giuliani declined to say whether Trump has made a final decision

on whether to sit for an interview with Mueller and his investigators. Trump has been mulling for weeks whether to do so, veering between wanting to meet with Mueller to moving away from the idea, especially after the home and offices of his personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, were raided this month.

"It's too early for me to say that," Giuliani said of whether a Mueller interview is unlikely to happen.

Giuliani also declined to discuss whether Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who has been under fire from conservatives and oversees the Russia probe, could be fired by the president in the coming weeks.

"I'm not involved in anything about those issues. My advice on Mueller has been this: He should be allowed to do his job, he's entitled to do his job."

The Daily Beast reported earlier Thursday that Giuliani was in talks with Trump about joining the legal team.

Giuliani said he would spend a "great deal of time" in Washington working with Trump, but would continue to live in New York.

Trump considered Giuliani to be attorney general and has said in recent weeks he needs a New York-based attorney. Many leading white-collar lawyers, such as Theodore Olson, have declined Trump's entreaties.

Trump is known to be a difficult client who does not listen to his lawyers' advice, according to lawyers who are familiar with his conduct.

JEA

From Page A1

process that was also a subject of discussion among council members.

Until Friday, Zahn was a member of JEA's board of directors. He resigned and met with board members over the weekend for a series of informal interviews before being named interim CEO on Tuesday, replacing Melissa Dykes, the utility's finance chief.

The board members had few questions or comments before declining Dykes' bid to remain the interim CEO and naming Zahn to the post instead. It's also unclear how much — if any — due diligence the board completed before making the hire.

Councilman Garrett Dennis asked Zahn to respond to a Times-Union article that detailed controversy in Zahn's previous role as chairman and chief executive officer of BCR NuTerra. The company operated a solid waste recycling facility in a small Central Florida city for less than a year. The city suspended BCR NuTerra's composting operations last year after residents complained bitterly and repeatedly about a foul odor from the facility that blanketed parts of town.

Zahn said the article was written with an "agenda" but also added, "We failed, and that happens in business."

Mayor Lenny Curry — who was at the Jaguars State of the Franchise on Thursday — told a

Times-Union reporter he was unaware of the controversial episode in Zahn's previous job but said he remained confident in him as the interim CEO.

"The board unanimously picked an interim CEO a couple of days ago. I met with him yesterday," Curry said. "He has said that he wants to get the business back to its core focus and get the politicians out of it, and I agree with that. I'm going to let him go about the business of getting the employees back to their core business and that is focusing on serving the customers."

It's not clear if JEA board members were aware of the issue before they named Zahn head of the agency.

Councilman Tommy Hazouri told Zahn the hiring process has left a "cloud of mistrust" in

place and questioned whether it was appropriate for Zahn to have a role in crafting the new job description for the permanent CEO if he's considering applying for the job. Several council members asked Zahn whether he planned to apply for the permanent position.

Zahn said it was premature for him to say for certain but that he's open to it if his qualifications match the final job description.

He does not yet have a contract that spells out the terms, pay or duration of his employment.

Dykes, the finance chief, also plans to stay with JEA under a yet-to-be negotiated contract in a role similar to that of a chief operating officer — handling the day-to-day operations of JEA.

Family-owned & Operated • FL Licensed & Insured • Est. 1993

universal
Roof & ContractingSM

Roof Repair -or- Roof Replacement

0% FINANCING
for 60 MONTHS!

*LIMITED TIME OFFER. Not valid with other offers or prior purchases. Minimum contract of \$5,000 required. Offer not applicable on insurance jobs. Zero percent financing for 60 months available on approved credit only. Other restrictions may apply. Offer subject to change without notice. License number available upon request. ©2018 Universal Roof & Contracting.

904-302-8562 | UniversalRoof.com

Get Your FREE Roof Inspection & Estimate!

Enjoy the special moments
as you watch your money grow.

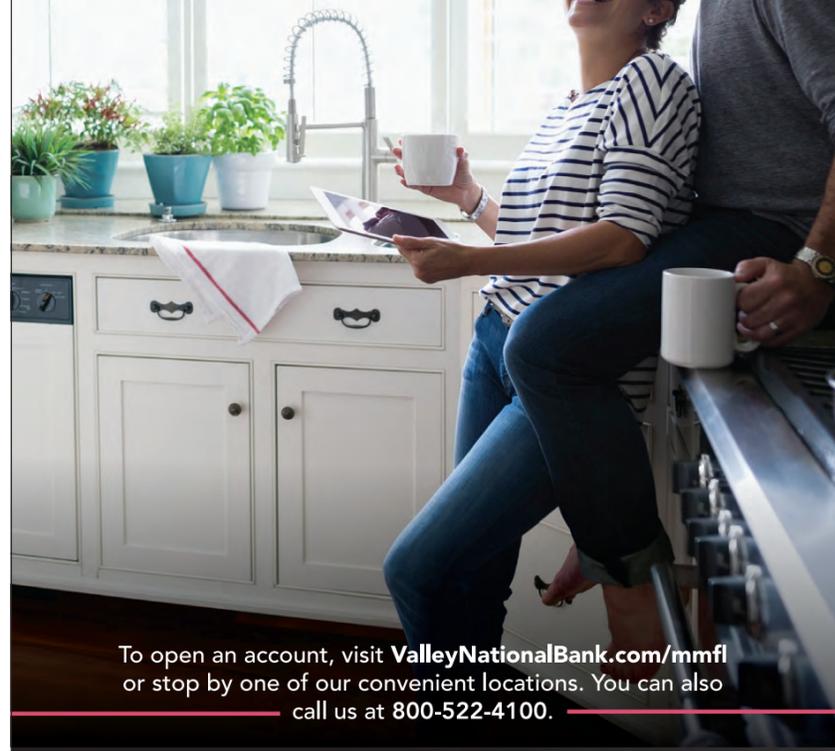
Start saving today with a great rate while having
access to your funds when you need them most.

1.25%
APY

VNB® MONEY MARKET SAVINGS

Features online and mobile banking
with mobile deposit

— For New Money Only —



To open an account, visit ValleyNationalBank.com/mmfl
or stop by one of our convenient locations. You can also
call us at 800-522-4100.

Valley National Bank®

ValleyNationalBank.com

VNB® Money Market Savings: \$10,000 minimum to open. The Annual Percentage Yield of 1.25% is effective as of 04/03/18. A maintenance fee of \$25 will be imposed each monthly statement cycle if the average daily collected balance falls below \$10,000. If the average daily balance falls below \$10,000 or exceeds \$1,000,000, the interest rate will be reduced to .25%. Fees could reduce earnings. Rates subject to change. This offer is available for consumer customers only. Funds deposited must be from another financial institution. See a Bank representative for complete terms and conditions. © 2018 Valley National Bank®, Member FDIC. Equal Opportunity Lender. All Rights Reserved. VCS-7857
JY000302735-01