

# The Florida Times-Union

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\$2



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## MEET JU'S NEW FOOTBALL COACH

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# Council OKs EverBank plan

It unanimously voted to split the cost of the \$90 million project improving the Jaguars' stadium

By Christopher Hong  
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A new outdoor amphitheater and indoor practice facility will stand next to EverBank Field as soon as next fall after the Jacksonville City Council unanimously approved a deal to split the cost of the \$90 million project with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

After a series of lengthy reviews and discussions last week, council members said they are convinced that the ambitious proposal from Mayor Lenny Curry and the Jaguars is a smart investment for the city.

"The city of Jacksonville, the tax-

payers, are going to own \$90 million worth of assets, and we're only going to pay 50 cents on the dollar," Councilman John Crescimbeni said. "That's a deal I find difficult to walk away from."

With the council's approval of the project, which includes the amphitheater and indoor practice facility and an upgrade to the stadium's club seating section, the team expects to begin construction early next month.

The amphitheater will contain roughly 5,000 fixed seats and additional ground seating. The practice

STADIUM continues on A-4



Provided by City Of Jacksonville

A computer rendering of an indoor practice facility and amphitheater the Jaguars plan to build near EverBank Field.

# Coffee on beach, more TOTE trouble



Tim Shortt Florida Today

Thousands of cans and vacuum-packed bricks of Cafe Bustelo coffee have washed up on the beaches of Indialantic, most likely from a barge container that fell overboard this past weekend.

## Company that owned El Faro chartered barge that lost at least 9 containers

By Steve Patterson  
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As many as 25 cargo containers were lost overboard Sunday from a Jacksonville-to-Puerto Rico barge run chartered by the operators of the sunken cargo ship El Faro, Coast Guard officials said Tuesday.

The actual number of containers lost won't be known before Wednesday, when crews in Palm Beach finish removing about 300 of them from the barge Columbia Elizabeth, said Chief Petty Officer Ryan Doss, a Coast Guard spokesman.

Twenty-foot-long containers were perched at odd angles on the edge of the barge, and others could be crushed and concealed under the pile,

CARGO continues on A-4



Carline Jean South Florida Sun-Sentinel

Remaining containers tilted on the barge at the Port of Palm Beach have to be offloaded before the company can know exactly how many containers it lost overboard.

# House votes to tighten visa rules

Bill would require visas from anyone who was in Iraq, Syria in last 5 years

By Erica Werner  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON | Driven by the Paris terror attacks, the House voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to tighten controls on travel to the U.S. and require visas for anyone who's been in Iraq or Syria in the previous five years.

The legislation takes aim at the "visa waiver" program that allows citizens of 38 countries to travel to the U.S. for stays of 90 days and less without first obtaining a visa from an embassy or consulate. Belgium and France, home to most of the perpetrators of last month's Paris attacks, are among the participating countries.

The bill, which passed 407-19, would institute a series of changes, including the new visa requirement for citizens of Iraq, Syria and any other country deemed a terrorist hotspot, along with anyone who has traveled to those countries in the previous five years. Exceptions are made for official government visits and military service.

Countries in the visa waiver program would also be required to share counterterrorism information

VISAS continues on A-4

## FIRST COAST VOTES

Florida Republican Reps. Ander Crenshaw, Ron DeSantis, and Ted Yoho all voted yes. Democratic Rep. Corrine Brown also voted yes. Georgia Republican Rep. Buddy Carter voted yes.

# JEA CEO pledges more money to City Hall in proposals

He offers alternatives to plans that have been discussed since last year



**Paul McElroy**, JEA CEO, proposed changes to utility's city contribution.

By Nate Monroe  
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City Hall worth more than \$114 million a year.

Answering to a new board of directors appointed just weeks ago, JEA's chief executive officer said Tuesday the electric and water utility could substantially meet the terms of a proposed financial aid package for

The agreement would increase that \$114 million payment each year by at least 1 percent, and it would also commit JEA to use its financial muscle in other ways: helping the city avoid costly state fines for failing to meet years-

old nitrogen reduction goals in the St. Johns River and paying some money to remove septic tanks and expand the sewer system.

Since discussions about a new JEA contribution agreement began last year — the current agreement is set to expire — utility officials hoped to arrest or even reverse the built-in \$2.5 million yearly increase in its annual city payment that brought it to the \$114 million maximum.

JEA has long warned that the gulf between its

stagnating revenues and ballooning city payments has to be addressed. The nation's credit-rating agencies have also taken note, saying JEA contributes more to City Hall than its peers and has cast a critical eye toward proposals that seek to use JEA money for city priorities, like paying off pension debt.

One concern over putting too much of a financial squeeze on JEA is that it might add to other looming pressures that together could force higher cus-

tomers electric and water rates.

But CEO Paul McElroy on Tuesday said that, after consulting with board members in one-on-one meetings, the utility is open to many of the increased commitments outlined by city officials in a financial aid package they proposed several weeks ago.

Prompted by controversy in the fall, Mayor Lenny Curry replaced almost the

JEA continues on A-4



Carline Jean South Florida Sun-Sentinel

As many as 25 cargo containers slipped off a barge Sunday and splashed into the ocean between Port Canaveral and West Palm Beach.

## CARGO

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Doss said.

Containers apparently started going overboard offshore Brevard County, and the crew of the tug Capt Latham headed to port to handle the problem.

Doss said nine containers are known for certain to have been lost, one carrying car batteries.

He said that posed a modest environmental

risk but might be a hazard if it washed ashore and was opened by someone who was then burned by the batteries' corrosive contents.

About 1,000 cans of Cafe Bustelo coffee washed ashore Monday near a hotel in Indialantic and are thought to have been part of a load of household goods being sent to Puerto Rico, he said.

One container that has been found was not part of the barge's cargo, ac-

ording to an email from Mike Hanson, a spokesman for TOTE, the company that chartered the barge.

The same company owned El Faro, the 790-foot ship that sank Oct. 1 when it was battered by Hurricane Joaquin while traveling from Jacksonville to Puerto Rico. Thirty-three mariners were lost in that disaster.

Doss said the containers last week might have been lost because of pounding by waves, of being poorly

stacked, or because steel cables that strapped them down rusted and failed.

He said inspectors hope they can tell better when the cargo is offloaded and can decide whether any citations or penalties are appropriate.

Hanson said arrangements are being made to deliver the rest of the barge cargo.

The barge left Jacksonville last week and was scheduled to reach San Juan, Puerto Rico, on Thursday, Tote's website

said.

Losing groups of containers is relatively unusual, but nationwide it probably happens on a weekly basis, Doss said.

A report from the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary in California said up to 10,000 containers are thought to fall overboard annually from a trade it estimated to keep between 5 and 6 million containers in transit at any time.

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## JEA

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entire seven-member JEA board, which may have weakened the utility's hand some in contribution discussions. He asked for and received the resignations of every board member and accepted them from all but one member.

During a meeting Tuesday with a special City Council committee tasked with discussing a new JEA agreement, McElroy presented a few counter proposals, most of which the council members and Curry administration officials seemed to generally approve.

"We're all anxious for outcome," said Council-

man Bill Gulliford, who chairs the special committee.

McElroy proposed:

- A five-year agreement with a contribution floor of \$114 million. Future contributions would be based on a calculation of millage rates assessed on JEA's electric and water infrastructure. The city had originally proposed a 10-year agreement.

- McElroy said JEA is "fairly uncomfortable" trying to gauge its financial picture further than five years into the future.

- The contribution would increase by a minimum of 1 percent each year. It could increase more if the millage-rate calculation — which also includes sales — exceeds 1

percent.

The city had wanted an annual increase based on the higher of either the millage-rate calculation or an annual consumer-price index. The CPI increase would never exceed 1.75 percent.

- McElroy agreed with a city proposal that JEA would contribute, at no cost, water-quality credits the city needs from JEA to meet deadlines to reduce pollution in the St. Johns River. Those credits — which JEA had originally proposed leasing to the city — can be used in place of work the city otherwise would have had to perform to reduce pollution levels in the river.

City Hall needs JEA's credits to shield itself from

hefty state fines for failing to meet nitrogen-reduction goals in the river.

- JEA would pay \$15 million upfront to the city to be put toward work phasing out septic tanks or expanding the sewer system across Duval County. The city would match that contribution over the course of the five-year agreement.

The city had originally sought \$25 million over the course of a 10-year agreement.

JEA and the city appears to be in less agreement over a final component of the proposal: The city wanted JEA to hold the city harmless for any charges it might assess in the future that could negatively affect city budget items. JEA

would contribute money to offset any increases in city expenses with an additional contribution. It's not clear what limit, if any, this provision would have in terms of JEA's requirement to compensate for higher costs passed on to the city.

That provision could be complicated to some degree for JEA, which can't give preferential treatment to certain customers.

Discussions over the contribution will continue in the coming weeks. A contingent of city and JEA officials are traveling to New York this week to meet with the credit-rating agencies to discuss JEA's financial outlook.

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## VISAS

Continued from A-1

with the U.S. or face expulsion from the program. All travelers would be checked against Interpol databases, and visa waiver countries would be required to issue "e-passports" with biometric information.

Some 20 million visitors come to the U.S. annually under the visa waiver program. They already are screened through an online system maintained by the Department of Homeland Security, and the White House has recently announced a series of improvements to that and other aspects of the

program.

But in past years, the program has been used by would-be terrorists, including "shoe bomber" Richard Reid, who boarded a flight from Paris to Miami in December 2001 without a visa and attempted to set off a bomb. Zacarias Mousaoui, the "20th hijacker" from 9/11, also flew from London to Chicago with a French passport but no visa in February 2001, according to a Homeland Security Inspector General report from 2004.

Lawmakers of both parties spoke in favor of the legislation, which is also backed by the White House. It's a rare area of bipartisan agreement af-

ter the Obama administration's fury when the House passed legislation last month cracking down on the Syrian refugee program in the immediate aftermath of the Paris attacks.

The Syrian refugee bill, which the administration said was unnecessary because the small number of Syrian refugees are already extensively screened, has not gone anywhere in the Senate and looks unlikely to advance. The visa waivers bill, on the other hand, may be added to a must-pass year-end spending bill now being finalized on Capitol Hill. There is a different version in the Senate by Democrat Dianne

Feinstein of California and Republican Jeff Flake of Arizona. The travel industry, which backs the House bill as a balanced approach, says the Senate bill goes too far in adding new biometric requirements for all visa waiver travelers that might be difficult to enact.

Separately, some lawmakers are also talking about looking at the fiance visa program that allowed Tashfeen Malik, the shooter in the recent attacks in San Bernardino, Calif., into the country. The Homeland Security Department has already announced a review of that program.

A handful of Democratic lawmakers spoke against

the visa waiver legislation before its passage. Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., said the bill is overbroad in stripping visa waiver privileges from all Syrian and Iraqi nationals and said it should include more exceptions for more people, such as journalists and researchers. "Our focus should be on terrorism, not just country or origin," Ellison said.

But most Democrats joined Republicans in enthusiastically embracing the bill. "This is a good bill; it's one that's time has come," said Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, top Democrat on the House Committee on Homeland Security.

## STADIUM

Continued from A-1

field will also be able to host events.

The club seat renovations will be complete by the first preseason game next year, and the amphitheater and indoor practice facility will be complete in the early fall, according to a written statement released by the team.

Under Curry's proposal, the city will borrow \$45 million to pay for the upgrades and pay off the debt with a special tax on hotel rooms, commonly referred to as the bed tax. That money is restricted by state law to tourism-related expenses and cannot be used to pay for the city's everyday costs, like police and fire services.

Under the plan, the Jaguars and Khan's company, American Thunder LLC, would cover all operating costs for the two new venues and keep all ticket, concession and other revenues earned from events, except for a ticket and parking surcharge that the city would keep. The city would own both new venues.

While the deal encountered little opposition from



Provided by City Of Jacksonville

The City Council approved to split the \$90 million cost of building an amphitheater and practice field downtown.

council members, their auditors raised concerns that the project could in the short-term deplete the remaining amount of the bed tax, which pays for maintenance to the football stadium, baseball stadium and arena. With the tax depleted, auditors said the city could be forced to pay for the maintenance with money currently used to fund everyday city services.

Top officials from Curry's office worked to dispel those concerns during the committee reviews last week, saying there will be money for maintenance if the bed tax continues its recent trend of growth. They also said Curry will try to raise ticket surcharges at the arena and baseball stadium early

next year and that money could be used to maintain those facilities.

By Tuesday, the Council was fully on board with the project. Even Councilman Danny Becton, who last week criticized the deal and was the only person to not approve it in preliminary votes, ended up voting yes.

During the meeting, Becton spoke to clarify his position from last week, which led him into a heated exchange with officials from Curry's office during one committee meeting. He said he was simply pushing to get the city a better deal, but that he believes the upgrades are the right move for the city.

"Certainly, it was not about being against these

facilities, which I agree are some good economic facilities for this city," Becton said.

While the project's merits weren't debated during the meeting Tuesday, several council members spoke about why they supported the project.

Councilwoman Katrina Brown said the project's \$45 million price tag initially created some serious concerns for her since she believes the city has many other basic, unfulfilled needs. But she said she supported the project after learning more about its benefits, especially since the money is limited to tourism expenses.

"I just want people to understand that I think we're intelligent enough to make decisions based on facts, and not based on going to a game and receiving tickets to go to a game," Brown said. Last month, the city's ethics watchdog said she believed council members who received passes to team owner Shad Khan's suite may have been misled into accepting a gift far greater than allowed by Florida's ethics law. Brown received passes to the suite for a game this season, according to the

team's records.

Councilman Jim Love said the amphitheater and practice facility will attract new events to Jacksonville and entice young residents to stay in the city.

"When I ran for office, I wanted to make this city better for three reasons. All of them are my sons. I wanted them to stay here," Love said.

Councilman Bill Gulliford, who said he was "all in" on the project, said the city needs a new amphitheater to replace the one at Metropolitan Park. Gulliford said that facility is constrained by noise complaints from residents across the river, limitations on the number of yearly events the city can host and the deterioration of the stage's tent that recently led inspectors to close it.

"There's no way we can fix Metro Park to work as an amphitheater in the future," Gulliford said.

In a written statement, Khan said the project's approval was a "major step forward in our continuing effort to establish Jacksonville as the best of the best."

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# Expansion ahead for FBI tally system

Method of tracking fatal police shootings, data to grow sharply by 2017

By Kimberly Kindy

The Washington Post

The FBI's system for tracking fatal police shootings is a "travesty" and the agency will replace it by 2017, dramatically expanding the information it gathers on violent police encounters in the United States, a senior FBI official said Tuesday.

The new effort will go beyond tracking fatal shootings and, for the first time, track any incident in which an officer causes serious injury or death to civilians, including through the use of stun guns, pepper spray, and even fists and feet.

"We are responding to a real human outcry," said Stephen L. Morris, assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division, which oversees the data collection. "People want to know what police are doing, and they want to know why they are using force. It always fell to the bottom before. It is now the highest priority."

The FBI's efforts follow a year of national focus on fatalities and injuries at the hands of police, with widespread frustration over the lack of reliable data on the incidents.

Morris said the data will also be "much more granular" than in the past and will probably include the gender and race of officers and suspects involved in these encounters, the level of threat or danger the officer faced, and the types of weapons wielded by either party.

The data also will be collected and shared with the public in "near real-time," as the incidents occur, Morris said, instead of being tallied in aggregate at the end of each year.

Getting reliable data on fatal police encounters in the United States is notoriously difficult. The FBI has struggled to gather the most basic data, relying on local police departments to voluntarily share information about officer-involved shootings. Since 2011, less than 3 percent of the nation's 18,000 state and local police agencies have done so.

After the 2014 shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown unleashed a wave of nationwide protests, activists, media organizations and some law enforcement leaders began clamoring for a more accurate count. In January, The Washington Post began to build a database of fatal police shootings. In addition to recording each shooting, Post researchers gathered more than a dozen details about each case, including the age and race of the victim, whether and how the person was armed, and the circumstances of their encounter with police.

As a result, the public could see information about fatal police shootings in unprecedented detail. As of Tuesday, The Post had identified more than 900 fatal shootings by police — an average of nearly three deaths a day. By contrast, the FBI has recorded about 400 deaths a year over the past decade, or just over one death a day — less than half the rate recorded by The Post.

Last week, a 35-member advisory board comprised of police chiefs and representatives of police organizations from across the country gave the green light to the new FBI data-collection effort. The proposal goes next to the FBI's legal offices for review and then to Comey for his signature.

A working group is also being formed to determine what data should be collected, Morris said; its proposal is due to the advisory board in June.

The new database will continue to rely on the voluntary reports of local police departments; FBI officials said they lack the legal authority to mandate reporting.