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Counsel: 13 Russians indicted

By Eric Tucker
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a historic indictment, the U.S. special counsel accused 13 Russians Friday of an elaborate plot to disrupt the 2016 presidential election, charging them with running a huge but hidden social media trolling

campaign aimed in part at helping Republican Donald Trump defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton.

The federal indictment, brought by special counsel Robert Mueller, represents the most detailed allegations to date of illegal Russian meddling during the campaign that sent Trump to the

White House. It also marks the first criminal charges against Russians believed to have secretly worked to influence the outcome.

The Russian organization was funded by Yevgeny Prigozhin, the indictment says. He is a wealthy St. Petersburg businessman and a member of President Vladimir

Putin's inner circle.

Trump quickly claimed vindication Friday, noting in a tweet that the alleged interference efforts began in 2014 — “long before I announced that I would run for President.”

“The results of the election were not impacted. The Trump campaign did nothing wrong — no collusion!” he

tweeted.

But the indictment does not resolve the collusion question at the heart of the continuing Mueller probe, which before Friday had produced charges against four Trump associates. U.S. intelligence agencies have previously said the Russian

See PROBE, A5

A NEW BANK



Jaguars fan Courtney Burgess takes a photo of her friend Ricky Conway with “Touchdown” the Jaguars statue on Jan. 5 outside EverBank Field. [BOB MACK/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION]

It will be TIAA Bank Field beginning in 2018 NFL season

By Phillip Heilman
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The home of the Jacksonville Jaguars will have a new name for next season: TIAA Bank Field. “Our stadium naming rights agreement with the Jacksonville Jaguars will

continue and EverBank Field will be renamed TIAA Bank Field beginning in the 2018-2019 NFL season, subject to the approval of the City of Jacksonville and the Jaguars,” said Tori Pappas, senior corporate communications specialist at EverBank, which was acquired last year by TIAA.

A spokesman for TIAA could not be reached Friday for comment, and EverBank made no formal

announcement of the move.

In response to questions, Pappas said, “We wanted to tell our employees and clients today about our new future name to give them a better sense of our direction, and we’ll have much more to say and celebrate in mid-2018 when we launch our new combined bank under the TIAA Bank name and brand.”

See JAGUARS, A8



A young girl and a woman embrace Friday as they leave a funeral service for Alyssa Alhadeff at the Star of David Funeral Chapel in North Lauderdale. Alhadeff was one of the victims of the Wednesday shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Nikolas Cruz, a former student, was charged with 17 counts of premeditated murder. [BRYNN ANDERSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

FBI drops ball on shooter tip

Agency says it failed to investigate reports on Florida suspect

By Kelli Kennedy, Curt Anderson and Tamara Lush
The Associated Press

PARKLAND — The FBI received a tip last month that the suspect in the Florida school shooting had a “desire to kill” and access to guns and could be plotting an attack, but agents failed to investigate, the agency said Friday. Florida Gov. Rick Scott called for the FBI’s director to resign because of the missteps.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions said the shooting that killed 17 people Wednesday was a “tragic consequence” of the FBI’s failure and

ordered a review of the Justice Department’s processes. He said it’s now clear that the nation’s premier law enforcement agency missed warning signs.

In more evidence that there had been signs of trouble with the suspect, Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said at a Friday news conference that his office had received more than 20 calls about Nikolas Cruz in the past few years.

A person close to Cruz called the FBI’s tip line on Jan. 5 and provided information about Cruz’s weapons and his erratic behavior, including his disturbing social media posts. The caller was concerned that Cruz could attack a school.

See FBI, A5

Curry undecided on putting JEA up for sale

By David Bauerlein
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As City Council debates whether it will give JEA the green light to put the city-owned utility up for sale, Mayor Lenny Curry said Friday he has not decided whether he would support the city taking that step, which he said would require ensuring terms and conditions are crafted up front to protect the

interests of taxpayers and utility employees.

Curry said he is going through the report that Public Financial Management, a consultant hired by JEA, presented Wednesday to City Council about the many aspects that would come into play if the nation’s eighth-largest municipal utility were put on the market.

See JEA, A8



Jacksonville federal judge: ‘We Americans have to do better than this’

By Andrew Pantazi
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U.S. District Judge Timothy J. Corrigan took the unusual step Friday of opening court with an extended acknowledgement of the tragedy that struck a Broward County high school.

Corrigan, who was appointed to the United States Middle District of Florida’s court in 2002, has handled some of Jacksonville’s most high-profile federal cases in recent years, including last year’s conviction and sentencing of former U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown, the handling of Jacksonville firefighters’ decades-long discrimination battle and he was handling a key civil rights case on Friday that has been brought by a transgender teen seeking to

use the bathroom of his gender identity at school.

But on Friday, before Corrigan began hearing oral arguments in that case, he spoke about the killing of 14 students and three adults at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, the nation’s deadliest school shooting since 2012, when 28 people died at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn.

Back in 2013, Corrigan himself was also the target of a would-be assassin, a defendant who had been convicted in his court who then bought a .30-06 rifle from a sporting goods store. The man fired a single shot into Corrigan’s home, missing the judge by less than two inches.

As he spoke his 350-word statement, Corrigan’s voice seemed to waver with

emotion.

Corrigan’s remarks:

Good morning, before we tend to the matter at hand today, I want to make a statement.

And it is not usually appropriate for a judge to speak from the bench about a matter of public interest unrelated to the case before the court. However, there are exceptions, and this is one of those times.

I think it particularly appropriate given that the case that is before the court involves a school district which is tasked with educating 40,000 students, young persons who are the future of our community and nation.

While words are inadequate, they are all that I have.

I join all Americans in feeling a profound sense of sadness and anger over the senseless deaths

of 14 students and 3 heroic adults in Broward County.

These young people cut down just as they were finding themselves and transitioning into becoming responsible adults our society so desperately needs have been robbed of their potential to live full and long lives.

I grieve for them and their families now deprived of a loved one who helped define their very existence.

As a soon-to-be first-time grandfather, I think how these young people will never have the opportunity to have children, and their parents will never get to know the grandchildren they would have had. As an American, I find this entirely unacceptable.

No parent should have to worry when they send their child to school that their child will be murdered in a random spasm of

violence.

No student should have to worry about their safety while they are in school.

No teacher or administrator should ever have to explain to a parent how their child was lost to a hateful or evil act while under their care.

A society cannot call itself civilized if it cannot protect its children.

We Americans have to do better than this. We just have to.

God bless those who are lost and their families, those who are wounded that they may recover. And God bless the United States of America.

I’ll ask you to observe a moment of silence, please.

Thank you.

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JEA

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“I’m going to spend some time going through the report, digesting it, asking questions, collaborating with members of my team, collaborating with members of City Council and meeting with them to get their ideas,” Curry said. “But as I’ve said many times and I’ll say again — I’m not for or against privatization.”

At the City Council meeting, JEA board Chairman Alan Howard said that based on the high prices that utilities are attracting nationally, the city has a “once in a generation” opportunity for a sale that “could be transformative” for Jacksonville.

Curry said it’s too early to say whether a sale could have that kind of impact because “there’s a whole lot of questions that would have to be answered.”

The JEA board has the legal authority to put the utility up for sale at any time the board decides. But Howard told the council it would be pointless for JEA to put those wheels in motion without having a consensus among council members so bidders know the city is serious about entertaining offers for such a complex transaction.

Part of the debate will involve what kind of

conditions, if any, the city would establish in areas such as jobs for existing JEA employees and rates for utility customers. In the area of city finances, the discussions could establish a minimum dollar amount the city would expect to receive from a sale and how the city would use the proceeds of a sale. Some council members want to get assurances that money would go toward water, sewer and drainage in areas that have been promised those services for decades. Other options could entail setting aside a portion of the proceeds in a tightly restricted account to generate investment earnings and also using proceeds to ease the burden of the city’s debt, which would free up large a large amount of money.

“From my perspective, I would not be supportive of anything that took a lump sum of cash in any scenario — JEA or anything else — and spent it,” Curry said. “Future generations and future taxpayers always have to be protected.”

He said the terms of any sale also would have to have protections in place for ratepayers, and the “people working at JEA need to be protected as well, and their families honored.”

If City Council does coalesce around support for putting the utility up for sale, the final decision on whether to follow through with a sale would be made by the council in a vote that would require 13 of 19

members to be in favor. Some council members have said they want to put the matter before voters, either through a non-binding referendum or by changing the City Charter to require voter approval for a sale.

Public Financial Management determined that selling the utility to an investor-owned firm could generate \$3 billion to \$6 billion for the city after accounting for paying off liabilities such as JEA’s debt.

The disclosure of that dollar figure at the Wednesday meeting didn’t draw any immediate support from council, however, as council members said they needed much more information about the impact of a sale on employees and ratepayers.

“I walked in here really open-minded, and I’ve got a thousand more questions I need to ask,” Councilman Al Ferraro said at the end of the three-hour meeting.

Ferraro was among the council members who said the the most immediate question is whether the city should break from the long history of the public owning the utility.

He asked JEA Chief Executive Officer Paul McElroy what would happen if the council decided against giving JEA a go-ahead to invite offers for purchasing JEA.

“I think we end up in the same spot as we have in the past,” McElroy said in reference to previous studies that didn’t result in putting JEA up for sale. “We recognize the

great value this utility has for this community, the economic impact, the great jobs, the fantastic workforce that we have, and we continue to go forward.”

If City Council decides transferring the utility to private ownership could make sense under the right terms, the next decision would be whether to sell the entirety of JEA, or break up the utility in a way that separates the electric side of the operation from the water/sewer side.

City Councilman Bill Gulliford said there should be “strong consideration” to the city keeping the water-sewer operation and putting the electric operation up for sale because privately owned power companies don’t have water and sewer in their business portfolios. At Gulliford’s request, Public Financial Management said it would give council the “independent models” the firm did on the electric system separated from the water-sewer system.

The council also would have to decide how much it wants to have a role up front in shaping the terms of any sale in relation to rates for JEA customers and jobs for JEA employees.

Public Financial Management’s report said both those issues can be a part of negotiations with a prospective buyer. City Councilman Reggie Brown said leaving it up to negotiations is “very vague” and doesn’t give employees the assurances they need.

Public Financial Management’s report said it’s possible a sale would result in lower electric rates, but it did not quantify what rates might be. The report said a “thorough report” would be needed to project what future rates would be if the city continued to own JEA versus what the rates would be under private ownership that’s regulated by the Florida Public Service Commission.

The council’s debate also will examine what the long-range impact would be on city’s finances, because selling JEA would end the annual contributions the utility has given to the city’s operating budget. This year’s amount is about \$116 million. A privately owned utility would pay property taxes in the amount of about \$60 million, leaving a large gap that would have to be filled to avoid a hit on city services.

Answering the question of how to fill that financial gap would be tied to what the city’s plan would be for how to use the proceeds of the sale, which would be the largest infusion of cash in city history.

The City Council intends to have more meetings to hash out those issues. There is no timeline for a decision.

At Wednesday’s kickoff meeting, City Council President Anna Brosche said, “Colleagues, we have a big task ahead of us.”

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JAGUARS

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TIAA, which takes its name from the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America, is not a party to any other naming-rights agreements, Pappas said.

The name EverBank Field debuted in 2010, replacing Jacksonville Municipal Stadium. The venue was also previously known as Alltel Stadium until a 10-year, \$6.2 million naming rights deal with the telecommunications company ended in 2007. Alltel was purchased in 2008 by Verizon Communications.

Jacksonville-based EverBank Financial Corp. was acquired for \$2.5 billion by TIAA, a financial services provider headquartered in New York.

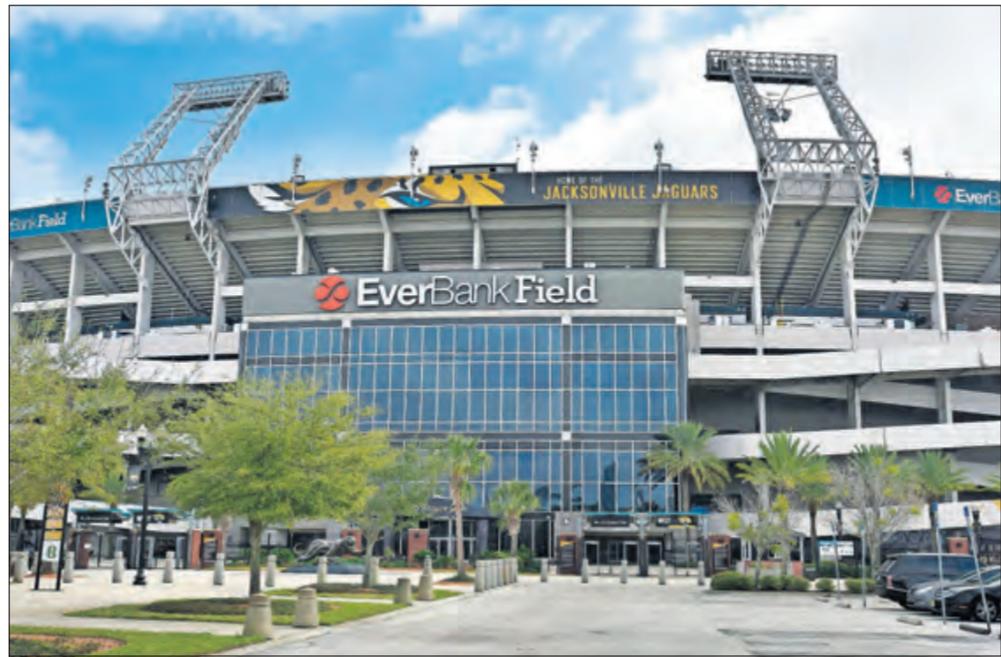
In a statement, Jaguars President Mark Lamping said, “We’re excited for our relationship with EverBank to not only continue, but grow under the new name of TIAA Bank. They

have been a fantastic corporate partner for many years, sharing our mutual commitment to the betterment of the First Coast community. We’re grateful for their long-term commitment to the Jaguars and to the city of Jacksonville.”

The naming rights are granted under a 10-year, \$43 million agreement signed in 2014.

Pappas said, “The existing naming rights agreement among the Bank, the Jaguars and the City remains in place and was not renegotiated. The agreement includes language to address a circumstance where the Bank seeks to change the name of the stadium.”

She added, “The introduction of the TIAA Bank name today is an important step forward in our integration process. We still have a great deal of work to accomplish, but we wanted to share our new bank name now to give everyone a better sense of our future direction.”



EverBank Field, home of the Jacksonville Jaguars, will soon be known as TIAA Bank Field. [WILL DICKEY/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION]

What’s in a name?

TIAA Bank Field, the new name of the Jaguars’ home stadium, may take some getting used to. Here are some other athletic venue names that raised eyebrows, in no particular order. (Note: Minor league baseball stadiums, which often embrace the wacky, not included):

Name	Old Name	City
Camping World Stadium	Florida Citrus Bowl	Orlando
Comments: Not sure. Walt Disney would have approved.		
Guaranteed Rate Field	U.S. Cellular Field	Chicago
Comments: White Sox VP says the name will ‘grow organically.’		
Sleep Train Arena	Arco Arena	Sacramento, Calif.
Comments: Named for mattress chain. Arena now defunct. Fittingly, last paid event was the circus.		
Rabobank Arena	Centennial Garden	Bakersfield, Calif.
Comments: Named for Dutch bank. Is this really a good name for any financial institution?		

easy-Credit Stadium Frankensstadion Nuremberg, Germany
Comments: Should have been easy to improve on old name, but they didn’t. Multiple name changes since.



A wide shot of EverBank Field is seen Jan. 7 during the Jaguars’ playoff game against the Buffalo Bills. [BOB SELF/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION]