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Alvin Brown as a mayor.

Jacksonville Mayor Alvin Brown is facing discontent in and out of City Hall as he tackles the many challenges of political issues since becoming mayor. There has been a series of wrangles occasioned by the discontent arising from the differences between the mayor and some members of the city hall. His vision of, " taking Jacksonville to the next level, through Job creation, downtown revitalization and making education and public safety top priorities" has been hit by a major critique as most members of the city hall oppose his ideas and actions especially on the financial matters. Despite his efforts to steer Jacksonville to the next level, Alvin has been faced with criticism over several instance where he either performed poorly or disappointed the public expectations. For instance, the mayor has continually failed to support a proposed expansion of the human rights ordinance to take into consideration the fate of the homosexuals in the city. This has resulted in serial wrangles between him and other democrats who advocate for equality of all people, homosexuals and bisexuals. According to the human rights activists and political scientists in the City, Alvin has not lived to his promises made before he was elected. He has continually breached and broken the promises he made to the people of Jacksonville before they elected him. He has turned into a conservative democrat who no longer subscribes to the principles of democratic progressiveness. (sunshine state news)

The recent issue about the St. Johns River ferry where the supporters were urging the mayor not to oppose the \$450, 000 spending on the ferry. The budget proposed by Brown in July had not specified any taxpayer dollars for

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the ferry. The City Council earmarked \$450, 000 to keep the service sailing after Oct. 1. Also, the St. Johns River Ferry Commission is seeking \$200, 000 from the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. The mayor has failed to exercise his line item veto authority and the council has not finished its work on the budget. The pressure on the mayor to include the funds for the ferry in the budget were fuelled by the projections that he could leave it out of the budget provisions and allocations. The ferry is a real economic booster for the city and should not be ignored at whatever cost. The idea of the mayor to exclude the ferry from the budget is a contradiction to the incumbent vision of the mayor to take Jacksonville to the next level. The continuous wrangles between the mayor and his other members of the city hall have become a real concern to the economic progress of the city. The city has run in to stagnation from economic progress.

Economically, his policies have become too much conservative and therefore have a negative impact on the economy of the city. His administration has enacted and enforced very conservative fiscal policies for instance and this step has led to the reduction of public jobs available to the citizens, and all budgets to all government agencies have been cut down. The fiscal policies ensued by this mayor are really detrimental to the city in the long run and could result in grave consequences to the city's economy if left unchecked. The action of laying off 200 employees from the city workforce in a bid to cover up the deficit left behind by his predecessor was a real demoralizing act on his administration. It further contravenes the provisions of his vision of taking the city to the next level. He ought to create more jobs rather than laying off workers. (sunshine state news)

Dissatisfaction with his leadership is also evidenced by the recent case whereby he was faced with internal critique due to his incompetent budget for the city. His recent action of committing the city into borrowing to shore up police and fire pension fund is a real threat to the welfare of the taxpayers who will be compelled to bear a burden to offset the debt occasioned on the city. These actions by the mayor have attracted opposition from in-house because some of his administration members are uncomfortable with his conservative strategies which are exposing the economy of the city to unnecessary financial and economic risks. The financial drama that is being founded on the mediocre conservative policies of the mayor could see the city run in to economic incapacitation within no time, or even in the long run. (The Florida Times Union)

The higher taxes that have been reported recently are not favorable to the businesses and the individuals who are being laden with unnecessary luggage. The plan to scrap the allowances for costs of living of retirees is also subject to critique because such people are dependents. (Jacksonville business journal)

On the positive side, his focus on downtown revitalization was recently evidenced when he signed the legislation for Economic, Downtown investments, in August 2013. The legislation set aside \$11 million reinvestment fund which was meant to pursue the vision of downtown revitalization and job creation in the city. The plan splits the fund into two: \$9million set aside for downtown revitalization and improvement activities while \$2 million were left for economic expansion of the city. Such a move would see the economy of the city to experience a hefty rise in the

performance. The entire fund is meant to instill economic empowerment to the residents of the city and ensure that the economy of the city can sustain itself at all times. It is worth noting that the mayor operates a system of debt refinancing which is the ultimate source of such funds. The increased funds enable and facilitate an increased rate of investment within Jacksonville.

Higher investment rates provide a reliable economic base for the future without using any debt financing. The mayor's administration also uses the reinvestment to establish an opportunity for Jacksonville to emerge as a strongly competitive and vibrant against the other cities in America. The rationale behind the efforts to establish a strong economic for the city, is to ensure that the City can sustain itself economically without relying on debt financing. The absence of debt in any economic entity increases its value and economic security.(The Florida star). " The Jacksonville law firm Pajcic & Pajcic gave \$25, 000 to the " Taking Jacksonville to the Next Level" committee. Physician Charles Green, law firm Farah & Farah, and Advanced Disposal Services inked \$10, 000 checks."

During his tenure as the Mayor, his commitment to promote education has not been left behind. In September 2013, he sponsored student veterans with \$3500 for a trip to the national conference in Orlando. In his speech while issuing the check, he reinstated the benefit of such educational trips to the individual veterans and the city as a whole: The city's future would be molded to the better and it would inculcate leadership skills into the veterans. The education policies for Alvin are all geared to the establishment of an informed society in Jacksonville. The Jacksonville public education fund has also served as a potential avenue for education boost under Alvin Brown

as the mayor of the City. Alvin's administration has continually invested in improving the status of all public schools and the turn-out has in turn improved over time. The administration has for instance increased the salaries for teachers despite the opposition from the republicans who in this aspect are wrong. An increased pay for the teachers means better services for the pupils because the teachers are motivated. His economic plan is also founded on informed decision as follows, a 30 year retirement plan for all municipal employees, a scrap of the police deferred retirement option program, scrapping of the living costs allowances for retirees, and employee pension contributions to be set at 14%. This plan will enable the city to achieve its objective of reaching the next level. (Jacksonville business journal)

Mayor Alvin also adopted the Jax2025 project which is basically meant to develop Jacksonville in all aspects to prosperity. The project is founded on the vision for the city which will make the future of the City. The mayor has all along accorded the necessary support needed to ensure that the project achieves the desired goals by the year 2025. This is however a long term objective whose achievement is subject to other leaders who will come after Alvin. The project seeks to commit all residents of Jacksonville to efforts aimed at: Building a vibrant economy, prioritizing excellence in education, develop exemplary governance, creating one of the healthiest communities in the U. S, creating smooth transportation, creating good neighborhoods and ensuring that Jacksonville is a clean city. These target areas of the project go hand in hand with the initial vision of the mayor at election. The project requires the residents of the city to remain focused and get involved

to achieve the targets. The project is a wise endeavor which obtains funding from external donors to push up the economy of the City to a better and sustainable level. Brown has been on the lead to push business ideas and agendas as well as ensuring that issues of crime and life quality are well addressed by his administration. Brown has established a fair and resonated business environment whereby investors are free to exploit any opportunity at their disposal and this is central to the success of the city. Brown has also managed to save the economic position of Jacksonville which was at \$58 million deficit at the time he assumed office without any act of levying taxes. It has taken his wit to cover that hole left by his predecessor without adding any economic burden on the residents. (Jacksonville business journal)

The efforts of the mayor to foster improvement on education in public schools has also been boosted by the mayors mentorship program which is a collaboration of many no-profit making bodies with the common goal of improving the quality of education in public schools. The program also aims at engaging the youths via serial mentorship sessions. The mentorship programs have been tailored to match the needs of the society: they are school based, community based or faith based. The programs aim at exposing the youth to positive experiences and empowering them to work hard in class so as to achieve their best grades. The programs are meant to serve a motivational role in the lives of the youths and create reliable adults out of them in the due course.(Mayors' mentors)

His efforts for economic prosperity of the city are also evidenced by hi recent efforts to get the Jacksonville harbor deepening project in place and motion. This project is aimed at making the port an international class and this will in

turn be a boost to the volume of trade between the city and other cities or even the external world. This will serve best the goal of achieving economic prosperity for the city. He plans to establish a lobby team to look in to the completion of the project by 2014. The port will be an avenue to tap the Asian container terminal and this means a source of income for the city, a reason for a sound economy. The mayor has also taken the responsibility of going to court to save the jaxports bacon from being exploited in a bad way. He also plans to restore the defunct street lights in all streets of the business parks in the city. This is a contribution to security as well as a support for the traders who operate in such areas during the night. The reasonable economic environment provided by the mayor has for instance attracted the investment by many diverse industries and of great significance is the recent investment by Embraer, a plane maker in the city. (Jacksonville business journal)

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