



City of Tacoma City Council Minutes

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 890 2715 0863

Webinar Link: www.zoom.us/j/89027150863

June 02, 2020

5:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Woodards called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

All Council Members participated virtually.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Council Member Hunter.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

In honor of those who have lost their lives to or have been impacted by COVID-19, and George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and the countless others whose lives have been lost due to systemic racism in our nation.

ITEMS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

1. [20-0367](#) Minutes of the Tacoma Public Library Board of Trustees, February 19, 2020.
2. [20-0368](#) Minutes of the Tacoma Public Library Board of Trustees, April 8, 2020.
3. [20-0371](#) Minutes of the Public Utility Board special meeting, May 13, 2020.

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MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to confirm the City of Tacoma’s June 2, 2020, Proclamation of Emergency and a general curfew rule, commencing at 9:30 p.m. tonight and continuing until 5:00 a.m. on June 3, 2020.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

CONSENT AGENDA

There were no Consent Agenda items.

PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no proclamations, recognitions, presentations, or announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment began at 5:11 p.m.

Public Comment ended at 5:12 p.m.

The City Clerk’s Office received three written comments for Public Comment on Resolution No. 40610, regarding the City's commitment to equity, justice, and fairness in response to COVID-19.

REGULAR AGENDA

RESOLUTIONS

4. [RES40608](#) A resolution declaring surplus and authorizing the execution of a Quitclaim Deed to convey vacant, landlocked property, located at 115 and 117 East 64th Street, to Pierce County, to clear title.
[Ronda Van Allen, Senior Real Estate Specialist; Kurtis D. Kingsolver, P.E., Director, Public Works]

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to adopt Resolution No. 40608.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The Resolution was declared adopted.

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

5. [RES40609](#) A resolution authorizing the submittal of the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for Housing and Community Development.
[Darian Lightfoot, Contract and Program Auditor, Neighborhood and Community Services; Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development]

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to adopt Resolution No. 40609.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The Resolution was declared adopted.

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

6. [RES40610](#) A resolution affirming the City’s commitment to equity, justice, and fairness in its response to the novel Coronavirus; affirming that the City intends to utilize its resources, platforms, and authority to identify and work to address the ways that COVID-19 is exacerbating existing inequities in our communities; and reaffirming the City’s commitment to anti-discrimination in communications related to COVID-19.
[Mayor Woodards, Deputy Mayor Blocker, and Council Member Walker]

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to adopt Resolution No. 40610.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The Resolution was declared adopted.

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES

7. [ORD28673](#) An ordinance amending Chapter 1.12 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Compensation Plan, to authorize a temporary increase to the maximum accrual limits for Vacation Leave and Personal Time Off plans.
[Kari L. Louie, Senior Compensation and Benefits Manager; Gary Buchanan, Director, Human Resources]

ACTION: Ordinance No. 28673 was set over for final reading next week.

8. [ORD28674](#) An ordinance amending Chapter 6B.10 of the Municipal Code, relating to General License Provisions, by adding a new Section 6B.10.077, entitled “Director authority to waive license requirements”, to allow the Finance Director to extend or waive license requirements during an economic recession or declared emergency, to mitigate harm to the public health, safety, and welfare.
[Danielle Larson, Tax and License Manager; Andy Cherullo, Director, Finance]

ACTION: Ordinance No. 28674 was set over for final reading next week.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

REPORTS BY THE CITY MANAGER

There was no report.

COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

There were no Standing Committee reports given.

Council Member Ushka provided comments regarding recent events, including Black Lives Matter; apologizing for the systemic oppression; working to support, identify, fund, and pass policies that substantially progress anti-racism throughout the City and neighborhoods; President Trump's encouragement of violence to defend property with military force; and intervening and changing the system as we know it today. She continued by thanking the organizers of the recent march, stating she will continue to march with them in spirit; will continue to stand as an ally during the budget process because the budget is an expression of our values; and will urge the City to change the language in the priority discussions. Council Member Ushka concluded by stating she agrees with and supports Mayor Woodards and Deputy Mayor Blocker that they stand together in a rare moment where substantive change can be created; called on all Council Members to have the courage, empathy, do the work unapologetically, and fully listen to those in the community who are black; and that countless lives have already paid the unjust price of systemic oppression.

Council Member Thoms expressed support of Deputy Mayor Blocker's reconcile steps, including body cameras. He emphasized the need for support and partnership from the State and Federal partners because of the resources needed for systemic inequalities that are predicated by Federal and State rules. He hopes the City can inform the Federal and State partners of the changes needed, including better training, better hiring, and better people to serve the public; and concluded by stating he will work with his colleagues to be supportive of the changes that are necessary to make people believe not only in Tacoma but also in the broader system.

Council Member McCarthy read a statement into the record describing George Floyd's death by a police officer, stated there was no justification for this action whatsoever and that this event was captured on video which should help people understand the outrage being expressed across the community and the world. He stated that we give the public officials particularly the police officers enormous trust and power, that he has tremendous respect for the police force, but with that being said, police violence against people of color is not a thing of the past it is now just being recorded. He further stated the City is not perfect but is doing good work with Project Partnering for Equity and Community Engagement (PEACE); that investing in fair and impartial police training, making sure to hire a diverse police force representative of the community, and resourcing proactive engagement with youth and community to address discrimination of policing is

not enough in America; and elected leaders need to push for change. Council Member McCarthy concluded by reading a verse out of the poem by Langston Hughes "Let America be America Again"; expressed his love and sympathy to the Floyd family and all victims of police violence; stated he would like to fast track the body camera and budget discussion; and that upon receiving the police study which indicated the Police Department is under staffed, he would like to build up the police force in a way that makes the community feel safe.

Council Member Hines stated that in times like this when our collective pain and frustration bursts forth on to our streets and many others across our nation that we need to do more than listen, and that elected leaders need to stand up, speak out, and take action. He concluded by stating he feels the burden of being in his position but recognizes the important opportunity where real change can be made for the community; as a history teacher, the current events that we are seeing right now are not new, the murdering of black men and women has been happening for centuries; the people in the community have heard "wait" which almost always means never, and that we can't tell people to wait or have patience, we need to act now; and reiterated that where we invest the budget and how we make change in the community has to be rooted in equity and anti-racism.

Council Member Beale stated he just had a meeting with Tacoma 2025 staff about budgetary priorities, one of the overarching goals is to improve the perception of safety for those in the community, and according to a community survey, 30 percent of black people, 10 percent of white people, and 4 percent of people of color and Hispanics do not feel safe. He further stated the draft police staffing study has said that we do have some systemic issues based on best practices and the best practices might not necessarily lead to racially equitable outcomes in terms of people feeling more safe, getting body cameras before taking any other actions would be the right way to exercise racial equity in the sense that they listened to what people wanted and then took action, and he does not recall discussing or receiving reminders on what the pillars and goals that have come out of the community on the dialogue of Project PEACE are and would like to review the goals either through the Community, Vitality, and Safety Committee or study session. Council Member Beale concluded by reiterating comments made by Council Member Ushka regarding listening to those in the community who are black and systemic oppression, and by reading an email from Tafona Ervin the Executive Director of Foundation for Tacoma Students, regarding systemic racism.

Council Member Hunter reflected back to when she was a student at Evergreen State College Hilltop Campus 30 years ago and the commitment she made to enter to learn the part to serve; mentioned Southern Poverty

Law Center's hundreds of stories of everyday bigotry from people across the United States, which gives a keen insight into what that experience is and the more ways we can educate ourselves; and stated that with looking at what happened across the country, to our neighbors to the north and south, and the youth and people from Tacoma that gathered and protested at Wright Park in how they conducted themselves in a way that can serve as leadership and a beacon to the rest of the country, she is proud of what Tacoma presents and also really hopeful for the future of Tacoma based on what we have seen so far.

Mayor Woodards stated she is honored to serve as the Mayor of Tacoma and her responsibility as Mayor is to serve everyone in the community. She continued with stating her friends and family are questioning themselves more than they ever have before; we can choose this time to be tired and give up or we can rise up and make the systemic changes that have yet to ever be made; and she is glad everyone wants to look at body cameras, but that is only one part of the solution. She made comments regarding Council Member Beale's points and statistics on what makes people feel safe, including living in a community where they have opportunities to be their best selves, their kids can get a quality education, they can provide for themselves and their families, and they can live in a neighborhood where they feel safe, respected, and apart of; and stated the rise up we have seen about police brutality is only one part of the equation, COVID-19 has exposed the inequities more than any other thing in this Country, this is our moment as a Country, State, and City and it will take every single one of us to make Tacoma the City the way we know, love, and want it to be for everyone. Mayor Woodards concluded by describing gatherings over the weekend, including a rally held by the Tacoma Ministerial Alliance under the leadership of Reverend Gregory Christopher and Bishop White in People's Park, a rally held by youth at Wright Park, and a march in Downtown Tacoma; described another rally held in Tacoma, where residents made sure people respected our community and how she watched the police officers not stop people but made sure they could march safely; stated we may not have the perfect police department but she is proud of them and the community for the way that we have shown up during this time; the challenge for the Council is to carry this work out when no one is rallying anymore and people have gone back to work, the Council and staff together have a chance to make and change the course of history in Tacoma, and will rid this nation of the pandemic which is racism; and stated if residents need to protest, protest peacefully, respectfully, with the thought in mind of who you are doing it for, and with love and compassion.

Mayor Woodards reminded everyone the City Council study sessions will resume next week on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, at Noon.

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MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to convene to an Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss potential litigation, not to exceed 10 minutes.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.

ACTION: Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was declared adopted.

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

The City Council convened to Executive Session at 6:36 p.m.
City Attorney Bill Fosbre was present.

The Executive Session was extended by 10 minutes at 6:46 p.m.

The Executive Session concluded and the City Council meeting reconvened at 6:56 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On proper motion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk