



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 894 9617 1192

Webinar Link: www.zoom.us/j/89496171192 Passcode: 896569

August 24, 2021

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the study session to order at 12:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, McCarthy, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 2 - Hunter and Thoms

Council Member Hunter arrived at 12:30 p.m.

Council Member Thoms arrived at 1:52 p.m.

All Council Members participated virtually.

Briefing Items

1. [21-0821](#) Policing and Community Safety

At approximately 12:03 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli provided a presentation on policing and community safety, including an agenda; the 2021-2022 General Fund budget; budget reductions and adjustments, noting vacancy holds, hiring reductions, fleet replacement reductions, and program oversight adjustments; commissioned and non-commissioned full-time equivalents (FTEs) from 2020 to 2022; policing studies, noting the Matrix Comprehensive Staffing Study, the 21CP Solutions Current State Assessment, the Workforce Equity Study, and the Alternative Response/Divertible Calls Study; staffing recommendations; transformation recommendations; budget enhancements, noting the transformation element, amount, FTEs impacted, and status; transformation efforts that have been completed and are underway; and recent law enforcement changes, decisions, and legislation. Mike Ake, Interim Police Chief, Tacoma Police Department (TPD), presented regional trends related to violent crime; personal, property, and violent crime statistics from 2017-2021; violent crime and property

crimes by offense, location, heat map, and top five locations; patrol response times; calls for services from dispatch and initiated by officers; the patrol deployment model; filled and vacant positions; commissioned officer hires and separations; overtime rates; the hiring process, noting the goal of 120 days from application to hire; the 18-month timeline for officers transitioning from recruits to the primary call responder role; and hiring and staffing difficulties and recent improvements.

Council Member Hunter arrived here, at 12:30 p.m.

Interim Chief Ake continued by reviewing TPD's current response to trends; options for increasing TPD patrols; and a summary of the approach and impacts.

Discussion ensued regarding practices and impacts of overtime, double shifts, and off-duty work; dispatch data and the need for consistent tracking; staffing shortages and temporary hires; impacts of vacancy hold rates on the budget; hiring trends and incentives; officer-initiated calls; a request for additional data on calls for service, response times, and pending calls; property crime response times, rates, and comparisons to other jurisdictions; expectations of the TPD and related resource needs; options for budget changes, including Council-initiated adjustments and mid-biennial budget modifications; the proposed Community Safety Office; and the Matrix Study model.

Council Member Thoms arrived here, at 1:52 p.m.

Discussion continued regarding public safety and community policing goals; recruitment and retention challenges, efforts, and regional comparisons; possible partnerships with other jurisdictions; the City's ongoing transformation efforts; the TPD hiring team; clarifying call type categories, definitions, and priority levels with South Sound 911 (SS911); equity measures and perceptions; officer activities and tracking; COVID-19 impacts; sector patrols; areas with higher crime rates; proactive measures to prevent crime and address broader issues, noting poverty, mental health, addiction, and coordinating with SS911 and other partner agencies; reducing police use of force; call diversion, noting the Tacoma Fire Department Community Assistance Referral and Education Service program and who decides which resources to provide; timing and parameters for future community conversations about community safety; community groups and partnerships, noting the Heal the Heart of Tacoma Core Coordinating Team (CCT), Project Partnering for Equity And Community Engagement, the Community's Police Advisory Committee, and the National Network for Safe Communities; a suggestion for regular check-ins with the CCT; the changing community safety environment; the need for clear goals and

recommendations; statewide constraints and alternatives to the Criminal Justice Training Center; impacts of increasing patrols on other programs and services; community feedback; the need for additional discussion; timeline and next steps to stand up the Community Safety Office; and additional review by the Community Vitality and Safety Committee.

Other Items of Interest

2. [21-0829](#) Proclamation of Emergency Rule No. 4

Mayor Woodards presented Proclamation of Emergency Rule No. 4, explaining the decision to shift back to all virtual meetings due to increased COVID-19 case and hospitalization rates, noting the record-high 14-day case rates, hospitals that are nearing maximum capacity, broader health care impacts, the highly transmissible COVID-19 Delta variant, and the risk to unvaccinated individuals. She concluded by asking all community members to get vaccinated, and by requesting that the full City Council ratify the rule at tonight's meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding upcoming Government Performance and Finance Committee review of guidelines to return to in-person meetings, benefits to in-person discussions for specific topics, and the timeline for a possible return to hybrid or in-person meetings.

3. [21-0822](#) Manuel Ellis Investigation Update

The item was not addressed.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

4. [21-0824](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, August 19, 2021

City Manager Elizabeth Pauli stated that there are three ceremonials on tonight's agenda, recognizing Florence "SeeSee" Rigney; proclaiming August 31, 2021, as International Overdose Awareness Day; and a presentation regarding systems transformation. She further stated that no changes are expected on tonight's agenda, and reminded everyone that Virtual Forum will be held after the meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding a suggestion to provide updates on the Manuel Ellis investigation during tonight's meeting.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk