



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

November 02, 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, Hines, Hunter, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 2 - Blocker and McCarthy

All Council Members participated virtually.

Briefing Items

1. [21-1055](#) Multi-Family Tax Exemption Program

At approximately 12:04 p.m., Council Member Hines, Chair of the Government Performance and Finance (GPF) Committee, presented the GPF Committee's recommendations on the Multi-Family Property Tax Exemption Program (MFTE), including an overview of Committee meetings and discussions, noting the current policy, history, proposals from 2019, and input from the development community and lenders; and outlined the revisions reviewed by the GPF Committee. He concluded by reviewing the nine items the Committee considered, the results of today's votes on individual items, the plan for a resolution to be presented at the November 9, 2021, City Council meeting, and next steps leading to an ordinance to amend the program.

Discussion ensued regarding appreciation Council Member Hines' leadership and staff's work; the thorough and transparent Committee process; the need to align with the Home in Tacoma Project and the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan; concerns about Item 6, related to eliminating the eight-year MFTE Program in mixed-use centers (MUCs) designated "very high" opportunity, based on the City's Equity Index; community concerns related to infrastructure, minimum density, and height requirements in MUCs; providing incentives for higher density in areas that can accommodate it; expanding development opportunities in the south end of the City; preserving commercial uses in

commercial nodes; potential impacts of Washington Engrossed 2nd Substitute Bill 5287 related to affordable housing incentives; concerns about gentrification and displacement in low-opportunity areas; an idea to annually reassess and adjust the program based on Area Median Income (AMI); a comparison of Tacoma and Pierce County AMI; consultations with developers and bankers; a request for an independent financial analysis of impacts of the MFTE Program on development; small business displacement; issues that can be addressed in the Home in Tacoma Project and policies; a possible anti-displacement resolution related to housing; the existing fast-track permitting process for affordable housing projects; incorporating community and Committee input; the idea to develop underutilized areas and expand the MFTE Program to areas of the City that are already zoned for multi-family units; the City's new sales tax to support housing; the importance of regularly reviewing the program; and next steps to take the proposed changes to the full City Council for consideration.

2. [21-1056](#) Mid-Biennium Budget Modifications

At approximately 12:56 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli provided opening remarks on the 2021-2022 mid-biennium budget modifications, and presented an agenda; the purpose of the modification; highlights of the budget modifications, noting existing planned work, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and other federal funds to address emergent needs, and restoration of services; 2021-2022 enhancements, restorations, and updates related to affordable housing and homelessness, the Climate Action Plan, community safety and health, deferred maintenance, projection updates, and transformation. Katie Johnston, Budget Officer, Office of Management and Budget, further presented the proposed 2021-2022 General Fund modification, noting updated revenues due to savings, updated revenue projections, and one-time revenue sources, and expenses related to enhancements, restorations, and updates, updates due to higher expenses, and contributions to the City's emergency reserves; and the City's adopted and re-projected structural gap from 2021 to 2026. She further presented enhancements, restorations, and updates in the 2021-2022 mid-biennium budget modifications, including existing funding and efforts; updates, noting funds that require transfers, trends related to overtime and wage assumptions, liability, grants and federal funding availability, and changes in timing for implementation of the Basic Life Support program; community safety, health, and transformational efforts; affordable housing and homelessness efforts; transformation and belief and trust; access, noting deferred maintenance and facilities, infrastructure, and long range planning; the Climate Action Plan and jump-start projects; changes related to Reserve Policy funding recommendations; updates on specific enterprise funds; ARPA fund allocations, noting future reports from staff; and next steps for discussion,

public hearings, and City Council action.

Discussion ensued regarding appreciation for staff; information provided to Council Members; the process to provide feedback and questions to staff; and funding for specific programs, noting the Tidy-Up Tacoma initiative, the Sister Cities program, the neighborhood planning process, levy consultation, and transformation efforts.

3. [21-1057](#) Basic Life Support Transport Program Update

At approximately 1:34 p.m., Tory Green, Chief, Tacoma Fire Department, presented an update on the Basic Life Support transport program, including an agenda; current program performance, noting strong performance, billing, collections, and Medicaid eligibility; adjustments to the planned deployment, noting reduced recruitment and graduation numbers, and delaying addition of new aid units to June 2022; personnel impacts, noting increased overtime rates, additional time away from shifts, use of mandatory overtime, timing concerns, and other factors; and financial impacts, noting budget adjustments for the delayed program implementation.

Discussion ensued regarding incorporation of these changes in the 2021-2022 mid-biennium budget modifications, role of the City Council, success of the program, new jobs being created, timeline for full implementation, and the impacts of overtime on staff.

4. [21-1058](#) Systems Transformation

At approximately 1:46 p.m., City Manager Pauli presented an update on systems transformation, including new items, noting the City's anti-racist transformation mission, vision, and values statement; interviews for respondents to the City's request for proposals for a communication strategy assessment and recommendations; status of the Tacoma Police Department (TPD) Chief recruitment process, noting candidate interviews on November 16 and 17, 2021, and information available on the City website on the Human Resources page; presentation of the local, state, and federal legislative agenda at the November 9, 2021, joint study session of the Public Utility Board (PUB) and City Council; and information available on the City website at cityoftacoma.org/transform.

Other Items of Interest

5. [21-1059](#) Government Performance and Finance Committee Recommendations on In-Person Meetings

Council Member Hines presented GPF Committee's recommendations on returning to in-person meetings, including the scope of Committee review; the Mayor's Proclamation of Emergency Rule No. 4, requiring that all City Council and PUB study sessions and business meetings, and any other public meetings of the City, be held in virtual format only; the proposed metrics to trigger City Council discussion on in-person or hybrid-format meetings, noting a seven-day rate of new COVID-19 hospitalizations per 100,000 population of less than five, a fourteen-day average case rate of under 200, and justification for those benchmarks; review of current COVID-19 case rates from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department; the recommendation to automatically return to in-person or hybrid public meetings if the two metrics are maintained in Pierce County for six weeks; safety protocols; and comparisons with other jurisdictions.

Discussion ensued regarding considering possible exceptions when in-person meetings would be desirable; the desire for consistency and firm metrics; the Mayor's authority; concerns about handling possible masking, social distancing, and vaccination requirements for public attendees; and interest in arranging an in-person meeting option for the last meeting of the year.

6. [21-1060](#) Manuel Ellis Investigation Update

Ed Wade, Assistant Chief, TPD, provided an update on the Manuel Ellis investigation, including completion of the sufficiency review process for two of the officers, assignment to the Operations Bureau, and process to review and summarize reports for the remaining three officers.

Discussion ensued regarding appreciation for TPD staff's presence at the Annual Interfaith Celebration of Gratitude event sponsored by Associated Ministries and the Islamic Center of Tacoma, on Sunday, October 31, 2021.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

7. [21-1061](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, October 28, 2021

City Manager Pauli stated there is one ceremonial on tonight's meeting agenda, recognizing Washington State Senator Jeannie Darneille, and that no changes are expected on tonight's agenda.

Closed Session - Labor Negotiations

MOTION: Council Member Hunter moved to convene to a Closed Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(a and b) to discuss labor negotiations, not to exceed 60 minutes.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Walker.

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

Ayes: 6 - Beale, Hines, Hunter, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards
Absent: 3 - Blocker, McCarthy and Thoms

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

The Closed Session was held after adjournment of the study session.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk