

Minutes
Joint Municipal Action Committee
Quarterly Meeting with CEOs
Friday, November 18, 2022
8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
Remote meeting via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

JMAC Chair Elizabeth Bonbright called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

ROLL CALL - JMAC COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Bonbright, JMAC Chair, Tacoma Public Schools
Korey Strozier, Tacoma Public Schools
Rosie Ayala, Metro Parks Tacoma
Andrea Smith, Metro Parks Tacoma
Marty Campbell, Pierce County
Ryan Mello, Pierce County

JMAC CHIEF EXECUTIVES

Mike Griffus, Pierce Transit

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE

Sean Eagan, Port of Tacoma
Matthew Mauer, Port of Tacoma
Hunter George, Metro Parks Tacoma
Tim Reid, Metro Parks Tacoma
Jacques Colon, City of Tacoma
Jeff Robinson, City of Tacoma
Carol Wolfe, City of Tacoma
Kacee Woods, City of Tacoma
Chrisy Vindivich, City of Tacoma
Sabrina Chmelir, Pierce County
William Bridges, Pierce County
Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
Aherlow Kasjaka, Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
Alex Mather, Pierce Transit
Gretchen Caserotti, Pierce County Library
Tanisha Jumper, Tacoma Public Schools

INTRODUCTION

Chair Bonbright welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Bonbright moved to amend the agenda to add a tribal land acknowledgement discussion. This motion was moved and seconded and approved unanimously.

After the addition, it was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as amended; passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of October 14th, 2022 be approved as presented; passed unanimously.

PREVIOUS MEETING RECAP / DIRECTION:

Anti-Racism Policy

Tacoma Public Schools has adopted a new anti-racism policy to memorialize the district's goal of perpetually identifying, challenging and changing the values, structures, and behaviors that may perpetuate systemic racism.

Question for today:

How has your agency addressed anti-racism through policies? What actionable steps are you taking to reverse institutional racism and promote equity?

Metro Parks Commissioner Andrea Smith: Metro Parks Tacoma hired an equity officer last year and is interested in adapting its anti-racism resolution into anti-racism policy.

Hunter George, Metro Parks: The county's equity note is similar to the health-in-all-policies approach used by Metro Parks Tacoma and the Health Department.

Chair Bonbright, Tacoma Public Schools: Congratulated Metro Parks Tacoma for the overwhelming passage of its maintenance and operations bond on the recent November ballot.

Jacques Colon, City of Tacoma: The City also incorporated the health-in-all policies framework into their council action process. All resolutions and ordinances will have to have the analysis completed. This will include an equity index analysis. In terms of operationalizing anti-racism, the City has been doing a lot of studies to around housing and contracting to build the legal case to have racially explicit policies. For instance, having targeted rental assistance programs.

Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department: TPCHD is reviewing their internal processes like recruiting to eliminate unconscious bias. Made changes to procurement to make it easier for minority- and women-owned business to compete. Recently finished a slate of assessment work. Conducted a staff survey. Offered anonymous feedback for the first time in relation to racial equity and injustice issues. Finishing up listening sessions. Contracted with 828 Consulting to guide the work to hear directly from staff what the issues still are around racial equity. They now have some recommendations to move forward. Some themes are around micro-aggressions and staff not understanding what micro-aggressions are and what to do about them – will really dive into those issues. Currently standardizing their complaint process and will potentially contract with an ombudsperson or third party to handle complaints.

*[Here is the link](#) to the Board of Health meeting where these policies were discussed. Scroll down to the 11-16-22 Special Meeting video. The Racial Equity and Justice presentation starts at 20 minutes into the video.

Chair Bonbright: Brought up the November 18, 2022 Newsweek cover article: [As Teen Loneliness Rates Soar, Schools May Be Making It Worse, Scientists Say \(newsweek.com\)](#). After an introductory paragraph describing horrific data regarding youth mental health, they say the country is looking to Tacoma, Washington which is bucking this negative trend. The article highlights the work Tacoma Public Schools is doing on social-emotional learning through their Whole Child/Whole Educator approach to education. Superintendent Dr. Josh Garcia is quoted throughout the article talking about the comprehensive community effort to support our students. Improving the access to actual mental health services is key. If you are interested, please read the article (linked above).

POLICY FOCUS AREA PRESENTATIONS: LEGISLATIVE AGENDAS FOR 2023

Chair Bonbright: Now is the time to talk about every JMAC entities adopted or evolving legislative agenda for 2023. We asked each JMAC member entity to include the two bullets below. Tacoma Public Schools has already added these to our agenda, which we passed on October 27, 2022.

- Members of the Joint Municipal Action Committee (JMAC) continue efforts to align common community initiatives under three strategic themes: 1) Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI); 2) public health and safety; and 3) community wealth building. Areas of interest include, but are not

limited to, leveraging the collective impact of local purchasing, removing barriers to government contracts, connecting youth pipelines to careers, ending homelessness, and dismantling systems that perpetuate systemic racism.

- We will leverage legislative opportunities to advance these priority issues with community partners in a collaborative, open manner that supports and respects our collective efforts to benefit our city and region.

JMAC leadership would like each agency to add these bullets to their legislative agenda.

Hunter George, Metro Parks – Government Affairs staff from each JMAC agency have been working to align and discuss their legislative agendas. Tacoma Public Schools and Pierce Transit have adopted agendas, and the remainder are drafts.

Metro Parks Tacoma – Hunter George

- Local governments are constrained by the 1% property tax cap. Metro Parks would like to work with other governments to see the tax tied to the Consumer Price Index with a 3% cap.
- Second item is a school district request to advocate for a constitutional amendment allowing for a simple majority vote for school construction bonds.
- **Parks Rx:** This is a program where your medical provider can prescribe “nature” – as in, “hike in Point Defiance Park twice a week for three weeks”. Studies show this can improve health outcomes. Asking the State to fund pilot projects. Health Department is also a key partner in this.
- **Childcare and Before/After-school Programs:** Metro Parks and partners are providing after-school programming in 40+ schools; getting those licensed as childcare centers would give families access to the State childcare subsidy. Seeking the State’s help in streamlining the process of licensing school sites.
- **Derelict Vessels:** When a boat is abandoned, we must wait 30 days to take control. This is not the same for cars, for example. Asking for the timeframe to be reduced.
- **Urban wildfire protection:** Seeking cooperation and resources to protect Point Defiance, Swan Creek Park, and other urban forests from wildfires.

City of Tacoma – Hunter George (on behalf of Rosa McLeod, who had a schedule conflict)

- Affordable Housing is where the City leads off their agenda. Want to partner with WSDOT to remove encampments from State right-of-way and move people into shelters. City also seeks resources to acquire land, enhance homeownership, etc.
- **Behavioral Health:** Create greater access to community based behavioral health services.
- **Police Transformation and Public Safety:** Establish independent prosecutions for incidents involving fatal use-of-force and deaths in police custody. Address illegal street racing.
- **Transportation:** Funding phase 2 of an access revision for I-5/Tacoma Mall subarea, and replacement of the Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge.
- **Downtown Library:** Requests full funding to the State’s library capital improvement program, which would allow the City to receive a \$2 million grant.
- **Workforce Development:** Support efforts for career pathways and empowering local workforce boards.
- **Vision Zero:** Support policy proposals and funding to improve traffic safety.
- **Public Safety:** Establishing co-responders’ programs and alternatives to police response.
- **Equity and Empowerment:** Advance reforms that address disparate impacts of systems and institutions on communities of color. Support Statewide policies that bolster gender and racial equity in hiring and contracting.

Pierce County Council – William Bridges

- **Housing and homelessness:** Support State funding for micro-homes, homeownership projects, weatherization and repair programs, and programs that address housing stability and affordable housing subsidy.
- **Public safety, health and human services:** Support behavioral health obligations at Western State Hospital and elsewhere; enhance crisis services; revise recently enacted law enforcement reforms to vehicle pursuit and use of force; return long-term committed patients discharged from Western State Hospital to

their county of commitment and make the necessary investments to ensure appropriate care and treatment is available to them there.

- **Environment and land use:** Oppose the siting of an airport in rural Pierce County; increase State funding to plan the Green House Gas reduction work; allow counties to fully fund their Conservation Futures programs.

Pierce County Council Member Marty Campbell: Would like to discuss airport issues. We have nowhere near the infrastructure needed to make this new airport work. We had a study session, and the presenter said they will just need to “move JBLM east of the mountains and make that a civilian airport.” Requests that everyone put language against this airport in their agendas.

- **Economic development and fiscal sustainability:** Support broadband investment, small business and microenterprise recovery, skill building, regulatory reform.

Tacoma Public Schools – Tanisha Jumper

- **Maritime Skills Center:** Capital budget support to build a new facility for a competency-based Maritime Skills Center in the Port of Tacoma to support all South Sound area students.
- **Learning Services Support for the Whole Child:** Establish a robust system for expanded learning opportunities through sustainable funding and priority grantmaking opportunities for community partner agencies.
- **Fully Fund Special Education:** Increase State funding for special education to a rate that fully funds the actual costs of special education as part of the State’s obligation to fully fund basic education.
- **Prototypical School Model Funding Update:** Increase the funding for school support staff such as, McKinney-Vento (for students experiencing homelessness) liaisons/social workers, psychologists (mental health), nurses (IEP supports), technology staff, custodians, security personnel, transportation services and parent involvement coordinators.
- **Simple majority for construction bonds:** The constitutional requirement to achieve approval of a supermajority (60%) of voters to approve school construction bonds puts districts in jeopardy of being able to adequately provide updated and safe instructional space for students. Support sending voters a constitutional amendment allowing for a simple majority vote for construction bonds.

Chair Bonbright: Tacoma as a community has always supported our bonds but some of our neighboring school districts have not been so blessed. For instance, Bethel School District has historically struggled to pass bonds but regularly gets over 50%.

Tanisha Jumper: One thing to add is that the Graduate Tacoma agenda talks about what things Tacoma has been able to do because we pass bond measures. Things that other school districts can’t because their communities do not consistently pass their bond and levy measures.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department – Cindan Gizzi

- **Public health funding:** Support the public health system’s 2024-25 biennium budget request to provide an additional \$50 million to help the system prepare for emerging diseases.
- **Health Equity and Racial Equity and Justice**
 - **Climate justice**
 - **Economic justice**
 - **Housing**
- **Chronic disease prevention:** Support the expansion of Potentially Preventable Hospitalizations work in the communities that have the highest rates of preventable hospitalizations.
- **Parks Rx:** Support funding the pilot projects.

Pierce Transit – Alex Mather

- **Public safety:** Pierce Transit seeks funds to develop and pilot a Transit Public Safety Officer (TPSO) and Behavioral Health Co-Responder program. Update RCW 10.93.080 to include Public Transportation Benefit Areas as a “limited authority Washington law enforcement agency” with the ability to commission an internal police agency should they chose to do so.

- **Infrastructure:** Pierce Transit's base is 34 years old and in need of modernization and retrofitting to accommodate the agency's top priority of safety and the transition to a zero-emission Bus Rapid Transit network and fleet. To that end, Pierce Transit supports any legislation, grant or funding opportunities that invest in infrastructure modernization and zero-emission charging infrastructure. This project is shovel ready.
- **Fleet transition:** Pierce Transit supports any opportunities to further the agency's vision of transitioning its fleet to Zero-Emission propulsion systems. This includes investments in fueling infrastructure, battery storage, the bus fleet, heavy-duty and light-duty support vehicles including vanpool.
- **Community partner priorities:** Pierce Transit supports grant programs and funding tools to facilitate housing projects that support all income levels and policies that incentivize high-capacity transit and transit-oriented development.
- **Bus Rapid Transit:** Work in partnership with Pierce County in securing funds to bolster first and last mile infrastructure connections to the *Stream* Pacific Avenue Bus Rapid Transit corridor. Improvements may include but are not limited to sidewalks, ADA access improvements, and curb extensions to create safer and more accessible transportation options for Pierce County residents.

Chair Bonbright: Shares that she is impressed with Pierce Transit's aggressive and forward-thinking plans.

Port of Tacoma – Sean Eagan

- **Maritime Skills Center:** The Port supports the Tacoma School District's capital budget request to build a new facility for a competency-based Maritime Skills Center.
- **Transportation:** Complete critical freight projects included in the Connecting Washington and Move Ahead WA transportation packages. Specifically, the on-time completion State Route 167; and the appropriation in the 2023/24 biennium of the \$35 million in State funding included in Move Ahead WA for the City of Fife's Interstate 5/Port of Tacoma Road Interchange project.
- **Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge:** Support the City of Tacoma in their efforts to complete the replacement of the bridge.
- **Orcas:** Support continued funding of the Quiet Sound program managed by Maritime Blue to reduce the noise impacts of vessels on Southern Resident Orcas.
- **Workforce development:** Support Investments to facilitate workforce development and business growth, including K-12 Skills Center funding and technical college workforce funding.
- **Small works roster:** Support aligning the small works roster limit for ports with all other governments In Washington.

Hunter George: What follows is an attempt to capture themes from each legislative agenda and put them into JMAC-related buckets:

JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION:

- Housing and homelessness: City, County, Health Department
 - Investments in programs to acquire and develop property
 - Resources to support creating more shelter space
- Childcare/After-School Programs: Tacoma Parks, Tacoma Public Schools
 - Continue enhancing the State's licensing system to streamline how we provide this vital service to kids and families
- Library expansion: City

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY

- Behavioral health: City, Health Department
 - Investments in behavioral health systems and programs
 - Transit safety officer program
- Public safety: City, Pierce Transit, Health Department
 - Transit behavioral co-responder program
- Vision Zero: City, County

- Parks Rx: Tacoma Parks, Health Department

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

- Workforce development: City, Tacoma Public Schools, Port of Tacoma, County
 - Maritime Skills Center
 - Workforce development boards
 - College programs
 - Apprenticeships
- Procurement: City, Tacoma Schools, Tacoma Parks
 - Equity in hiring and contracting

OTHER TOPICS

- Transportation: City, County, Port of Tacoma, Pierce Transit
 - Modernize Pierce Transit's fleet and system
- Local revenue options: Tacoma Parks, City, Tacoma Schools
 - Modernize 1% property tax cap
 - Simple majority for school bonds

Chair Bonbright: Thanked Hunter for coordinating the compilation of legislative agendas. One reflection is that there has been a much more integrated approach to our legislative agendas this year. Of note is how our JMAC agencies are working in conjunction with others on specific and meaningful topics

Metro Parks Commissioner Rosie Ayala: As a first timer, it's exciting to step into a place where alignment is already happening. Excited for what has happened and what MAY happen later in the year. Shameless plug for the December gathering where JMAC will be in person.

Alex Mather, Pierce Transit: Thinking ahead – can we create a communication method to make sure we are all aware when other agencies issues are up for consideration?

Chair Bonbright: Great question: TPS has Charlie Brown and is “gung ho” on JMAC and will help to create a shadow cabinet so all others can talk about what is up and when.

Hunter George: CM Campbell raised a good question about the airport. That may be where individual boards and committees take action to speak as one JMAC. Also the [Seattle Times article about the airport](#) was great. Please read.

Chair Bonbright: Would like to talk about the land acknowledgement. Does anyone have a problem adding one? Would like to start the December meeting with one.

Pierce County Council Member Marty Campbell: Pierce Transit just added a land acknowledgement, and the County will add one as well.

Metro Parks Commissioner Andrea Smith: You can use the Metro Parks acknowledgement in December since you're in our meeting space at the STAR Center.

Chair Bonbright: Great, we will then get staff together to see if JMAC wants to have its own. Hunter, please add that to our agenda for December.

Pierce County Council Member Marty Campbell: Make sure we connect with Puyallup Tribe to make sure whatever is adopted is also good with them.

WORKGROUP UPDATES

Hunter George: Worked with the City of Tacoma to revamp the [JMAC page](#) on the City of Tacoma website. Reworked the content within the constraints of the City's website guidelines. On the site, most minutes and agendas are there but no reports/presentations yet. That is ongoing. We are hoping that every JMAC member has a section on their website that links to the City's JMAC site.

Chair Bonbright: Thank you for this beautiful working website. They will also be adding the work done at the Summit of 60 to the website as well. Thank you to the City for getting us to this point.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Bonbright called for public comment. No comments were provided.

GENERAL COMMENTS BY JMAC

Metro Parks Commissioner Andrea Smith: Reminder that Zoo Lights opens the Friday after Thanksgiving and runs through January 1st or 2nd.

Pierce Transit CEO Mike Griffus: On Black Friday, Pierce Transit will be providing free service to all riders. Advertising on social media and emails through Gov Delivery.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting is our quarterly CEO meeting on Friday, December 9th, 8:00 a.m. to 10 a.m. at STAR Center. Breakfast will be provided. Please be there no later than 7:45 a.m. Reminder that all JMAC elected officials have been invited.

Gretchen Caserotti (Public): Introduced herself as the new Executive Director of the Pierce County Library System. Very excited to work with this committee. Looking forward to getting more involved.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bonbright adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

**Minutes taken by Port of Tacoma*