



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 848 0943 8889

Webinar Link: www.zoom.us/j/84809438889

October 06, 2020

12:00 PM

JOINT MEETING WITH THE PUBLIC UTILITY BOARD

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the joint study session to order at 12:06 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Public Utility Board Members:

Present: 5 - Bushnell, Cooley, Flint, Patterson, and Watson

All Council Members and Public Utility Board Members participated virtually.

Briefing Items

1. [20-0658](#) Proposed Budget Workshop

At approximately 12:10 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli presented the proposed 2021-2022 budget, including a budget calendar; the budget development process; the community engagement process; budget principles; City Council priorities; community feedback themes; anti-racist transformation; City Council priorities; 2021-2022 financial overview; City budget; General Fund revenue and expenditure; updated projections; the proposed budget; reductions and mitigations; other approaches to closing the gap and enhanced services; addressing COVID-19 revenue impacts; transformation efforts; policing transformation efforts; policing transformation in the 2021-2022 budget; organizational transformation; maintaining essential services; COVID-19 response and recovery, noting federal and state funding, and enhancing and restoring priority programs; budget summary; and community engagement approach.

Discussion ensued regarding the creation of the Office of Community Safety,

future Balancing Act Tool surveys and community participation, agreements with unions and reductions, engagement efforts, and budget modifications after COVID-19.

2. [20-0661](#) Systems Transformation Update

At approximately 1:35 p.m., Mayor Woodards introduced Melanie Harding, Chief Policy Analyst to the Mayor. Together, they presented the Heal the Heart of Tacoma proposal, including Resolution No. 40622 commitments, defining transformation, the traditional approach, community-led systems transformation, assumptions, network growth and evolution, supporting transformation, acknowledgement of harm and healing, standing up transformation, and the roles of the Mayor and the City Council.

Discussion ensued regarding outreach, past transformation efforts, and long-term efforts.

The joint study session recessed at 2:20 p.m.

The joint study session reconvened at 2:32 p.m.

Joint City Council/Public Utility Board Briefing Items

3. [20-0662](#) Utility Rates Budget Workshop

At approximately 2:33 p.m., Jackie Flowers, Director, Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU), presented the 2021-2022 budget and rate proposal, including the agenda; strategic directives; public outreach; proposed rate adjustments; financial challenges and actions taken to mitigate rate impacts for Power and Water; Power reserves; Water reserves; residential rate comparisons for Power and Water; rail short line tariff rates; customer assistance, noting the 2020 Emergency Assistance Program and ongoing assistance and program enhancements; payment assistance enhancements; proposed eligibility expansion; TPU's biennial budget; new Tacoma Power rates, noting a prepay option, shore power, and clean alternative fuels; and a summary of the utility budget goals and impacts.

Discussion ensued regarding impacts to utility bills, job vacancies in Power and Water, surplus power, how winter weather will affect the power levels and revenues, revenue that would be lost if there was no increase, charging different rates for usage brackets, rate payer categories, annual increases over the last five years, water availability and rates relative to climate change issues, revenues and costs from moving oil cars on short line rails, equity in

customer assistance programs, fixed charges versus variable charges, and comparing City rates to other cities in the nation.

At approximately 3:50 p.m., Mike Slevin, Director, Environmental Services (ES), presented the 2021-2022 budget and rate revenues for ES, including challenges, the Environmental Services Commission and recommendation letter, the prior six year revenue plan, 2021-2024 revenue differences, the 2021 six year revenue plan, average residential customer bill, 2020 residential bill comparison, average residential bill impact for all utilities, bill payment assistance, poverty thresholds, and the Emergency Assistance Program.

Discussion ensued regarding financial impacts on the community, impacts on utilities if there was no increase, and matching economic growth with rate increases through owning the public utilities.

City Council Briefing Items Continued

4. [20-0663](#) Infill Pilot Program-Prep for Public Hearing

At approximately 4:19 p.m., Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, and Mesa Sherriff, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Services (PDS), presented the Residential Infill Pilot Program, including purpose, program history, lessons learned, proposed program updates, two-family housing, small multi-family housing, cottage housing, planned infill housing, community input, and next steps.

The joint study session adjourned, and the regular study session convened at 4:30 p.m.

Discussion ensued regarding design review, changes in the program, architectural design standards for duplexes, and flexibility in residential zoning.

Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

5. [20-0664](#) Weekly Report to the City Council, October 1, 2020

City Manager Pauli stated that the weekly systems transformation update would be posted online. She further stated there are three ceremonials on tonight's agenda, one proclaiming October 8-11, 2020, as Arbor Days and Green Tacoma Days, one proclaiming October 2020 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and one walk-on ceremonial proclaiming October 12, 2020, as Indigenous Peoples' Day. She concluded by stating there are no other changes to tonight's agenda.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk