



City of Tacoma

Committee of the Whole Minutes

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402

9th Floor Visibility Center

July 01, 2014

3:00 PM

Call To Order

Mayor Strickland called the meeting to order at 3:36 p.m.

Present: 8 - Campbell, Ibsen, Lonergan, Mello, Thoms, Walker, Woodards and Strickland

Absent: 1 - Boe

Briefing Items

1. 14-0559 Billboard Update

Peter Huffman, Director of Planning and Development Services (PDS), stated the purpose of today's discussion is to seek input from the Council on planned community outreach on alternative approaches to reduce billboards in the City, focusing primarily on neighborhood areas first. He stated PDS would like to facilitate a working group of stakeholders to reach out to the community to review approaches to take through the Planning Commission and Council process.

Brian Boudet, Planning Manager, PDS, stated the City and Clear Channel are currently in a standstill agreement on billboards. He provided background information on previous amortization for nonconforming billboards, enforcement action, and litigation to-date, stating in August of 2012, the 2-year standstill agreement was reached with Clear Channel to explore alternatives. He stated in August of 2012, approximately 390 billboard faces existed in the City, the majority are owned by Clear Channel, and approximately 70 faces have been removed since 2012, and approximately 320 billboard faces currently exist in the City. He then reviewed current regulations in Tacoma Municipal Code Section 13.06.521.M. Mr. Boudet stated staff's intent is to put together a stakeholder group in the community and work over the next few months and create a report to provide to Council at the end of 2014 or early in 2015 on alternatives. He concluded by reviewing the proposed makeup of the community working group and next steps. Discussion ensued regarding the makeup of the community working group.

Council Consideration Requests

2. 14-0557 Shared Work Program

Council Member Ibsen stated he is requesting Council consideration for staff to implement a Shared Work program if necessary as part of the 2015-2016 biennial budget process. He stated the program was created by the Washington State legislature in 1983 to provide businesses and organizations with greater flexibility in retaining employees at reduced hours, rather than through layoffs, during periods of downturn. He stated the program is delivered through the Washington State Department of Employment Security and allows both public and private sector employers to temporarily reduce employees' hours 10 to 50 percent and for those qualified workers to receive partial unemployment benefits to replace a portion of the lost wages, noting the federal government will cover most of the cost of the shared-work benefits through June of 2015. He stated initial research by staff has confirmed that the City is eligible to participate in the program. Discussion ensued regarding how this would be implemented for represented employees versus non-represented employees, if this is an administrative action or something that would need to be implemented through legislation, if the City has ever explored this option in the past, and if there are penalties if temporary reductions in the workforce need to become permanent. Mayor Strickland requested this item be scheduled for further review at the Government Performance and Finance Committee. Council Member Walker requested information on other cities or governmental entities that have used the program and their experience.

3. 14-0558 Municipal Health Clinic

Council Member Ibsen stated he is also requesting Council consideration for staff to research the feasibility of a municipally-sponsored health clinic for City employees. He stated several cities and counties across the country operate healthcare clinics for their employees as both a cost-sharing measure and means of promoting employee wellness. He noted the clinics are often located on-site or close to the municipality and provide primary care services, including prescriptions, blood draws, and x-rays to employees, their dependents, and in some cases, to retired employees. He stated following the 6-year budget forecast, and considering that healthcare costs are one of the City's biggest cost drivers, it is important to consider the feasibility. Mayor Strickland requested this item be scheduled for further review at the Government Performance and Finance Committee.

Committee Reports

Council Member Mello stated the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) recently approved their budget, and attention will now be turned to the plan to get the South Sound out of non-attainment, noting the PSCAA is on schedule to submit to the Environmental Protection Agency by this fall, and if accepted, the South Sound will be in a 10-year air quality monitoring period.

Council Member Walker discussed the recent housing conferences she has attended.

Council Member Campbell stated the annual Crystal Judson Family Justice Center barbeque is July 25, 2014. He provided an update from the Arts Commission on the Sun King artwork on Dock Street. He stated the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health is working on their budget; and announced that on July 14, 2014, a District 4 town hall meeting will be held at Lincoln High School with the Washington State Department of Transportation to discuss the upcoming closure of the Pacific Avenue and McKinley Avenue bridges.

Mayor Strickland stated she recently attended the U.S Conference of Mayors' New American City Forum where sustainable development and the role that Mayors play in education were discussed.

Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Marilyn Strickland, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk