



# City of Tacoma

## City Council Study Session Minutes

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

Webinar Link: [www.zoom.us/j/89496171192](https://www.zoom.us/j/89496171192) Passcode: 896569

**March 02, 2021**

**12:00 PM**

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### Call to Order

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

### Roll Call

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

All Council Members participated virtually.

### Briefing Items

1. [21-0208](#) Violent Crimes Update

At approximately 12:03 p.m., Interim Chief Mike Ake, Tacoma Police Department (TPD), provided opening remarks; introduced Fred Scruggs, Assistant Chief, TPD; and presented an update on homicide trends, including a definition of homicide, and the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Assistant Chief Scruggs reviewed homicide trends from 2016 to 2020, including homicides and clearance rates and murder and non-negligent manslaughter case statistics; a summary of contributing factors that led to homicide; and comparisons to other cities, noting a national trend of increasing homicide rates. He further reviewed homicide trends from 2019 and 2020, including comparisons of homicide rates by month, location, victim age range, victim race and ethnicity, victim statistics, arrestee statistics, and arrestee race and ethnicity.

Interim Chief Ake concluded by summarizing homicide rates and trends and outlining next steps.

Discussion ensued regarding the difference between NIBRS and City data, the difference between in-custody deaths and officer-involved shootings, issues in other cities, prosecution of cleared homicide cases, risks to innocent bystanders, increasing public access to information, contributing factors

specific to 2020, staffing and resource constraints, strategies to reduce officer-involved shootings, impacts of transformation efforts, de-escalation training, factors that contribute to violent crime, factors that impact clearance rates, building trust, violent crime rates in homeless and transient populations, increases in other violent crimes, appropriate community safety responses by TPD or other staff, youth and gang-related crime, COVID-19 impacts on arrest and incarceration rates, impact of clearance rates on crime rates, and budgeting for forensics.

2. [21-0209](#) Pierce County Regional Street Racing Response Update

At approximately 1:40 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli presented an update on the Pierce County regional street racing response, including regional efforts by various Pierce County city managers and mayors, existing City of Tacoma laws, recent enforcement efforts, nearby cities' laws, and recommendations.

Discussion ensued regarding the ongoing investigation of an officer-involved incident on January 23, 2021, enforcement options, an idea to provide sanctioned locations for street racing, possible legislation, equity impacts, safety on public streets, safety of onlookers and pedestrians, public sentiment, the City's strategy versus the regional strategy, disincentives for illegal street racing, the City's liability, wider issues of traffic violence, the Vision Zero traffic safety policy, and next steps.

3. [21-0210](#) Systems Transformation

At approximately 2:38 p.m., City Manager Pauli presented the systems transformation update, including new items, noting data, recruitment of a new PEACE and Reconciliation Coordinator position, updates on the Workforce Equity Study, and implementation of body worn cameras at TPD; the system transformation update table; the next steps timeline; and a long range transformation timeline.

Discussion ensued regarding Washington Initiative 940 compliance and body worn camera implementation.

## Other Items of Interest

4. [21-0219](#) Grocery Worker Compensation during the COVID-19 Proclamation of Emergency

Mayor Woodards presented a draft ordinance related to grocery worker compensation during the COVID-19 Proclamation of Emergency, and introduced City Attorney Bill Fosbre. City Attorney Fosbre outlined the proposed ordinance and its elements, noting which business would be impacted, the timeframe, notice requirements, and policy decisions for the City Council to consider.

Discussion ensued regarding a request for more information and data, relative risks, the City's role and potential issues of the ordinance, proposed hazard pay amounts, linking the proposed ordinance to the Proclamation of Emergency, feedback from the business community, other cities' ordinances and impacts, workers in other industries, and a timeline for additional City Council discussion and action.

5. [21-0278](#) Letter to Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson regarding the Manuel Ellis case.

Mayor Woodards presented a draft letter to Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson regarding the Manuel Ellis case on the one-year anniversary of his death, and requested the City Council sign on to the letter.

**MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to approve the submission of a letter to Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson regarding the Manuel Ellis case.**

**SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.**

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

**Ayes:** 7 - Blocker, Hines, Hunter, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

**Absent:** 2 - Beale and McCarthy

## Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

## Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

- 6. [21-0211](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, February 25, 2021

City Manager Pauli stated there is one ceremonial on tonight's meeting agenda, proclaiming March 2021 as Red Cross Month, and that no changes are expected to tonight's agenda.

### Executive Session - Pending & Potential Litigation

**MOTION: Deputy Mayor Blocker moved to convene to Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss pending and potential litigation, not to exceed 30 minutes.**

**SECONDED BY: Council Member Thoms.**

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

**Ayes:** 7 - Blocker, Hines, Hunter, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

**Absent:** 2 - Beale and McCarthy

The City Council convened to Executive Session at 3:30 p.m.  
City Attorney Fosbre was present.

The Executive Session concluded and the study session reconvened at 4:02 p.m.

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Discussion continued regarding forwarding the proposed grocery worker compensation ordinance to the March 9, 2021, Economic Development Committee meeting for discussion.

### Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

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Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

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Doris Sorum, City Clerk