



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

September 28, 2021

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the study session to order at 12:01 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 2 - McCarthy and Thoms

Council Member McCarthy arrived at 12:03 p.m.

Council Member Thoms arrived at 1:50 p.m.

All Council Members participated virtually.

Briefing Items

1. [21-0932](#) Draft Legislative Agenda

At approximately 12:03 p.m., Mayor Woodards made opening remarks regarding the City's draft Washington State legislative agenda and introduced Anita Gallagher, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager's Office.

Council Member McCarthy arrived here, at 12:03 p.m.

Ms. Gallagher introduced Briahna Murray, Vice President, Gordon Thomas Honeywell, and presented the agenda development timeline. Ms. Murray provided an overview of the 2022 Washington State legislative session, noting length, format, and topics; the City's legislative agenda, noting the top three to five legislative priorities, the City Council's commitment to advocate and prioritize items on the agenda, collaboration with community partners, and the City's support/oppose/monitor list. Together, Ms. Gallagher and Ms. Murray reviewed recommendations for the legislative agenda, including police transformation; transportation improvements and preservation; proposed legislation to expand authorization for automated speed enforcement; affordable housing and homelessness;

transfers to the Northwest Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Processing Center; highlights of the City's support/oppose/monitor list; and collaboration with community partners.

Discussion ensued regarding appreciation for staff, the short legislative session, smelter plume cleanup goals, funding related to COVID-19 recovery, regional issues such as homelessness and encampments, funding available from the Washington State legislature and Governor's Office, financial support for housing and utility bills, housing stabilization, coordination and partnership with the Washington State Department of Transportation, integration of the Tacoma Public Utilities priorities, property tax exemptions for investment and rehabilitation of commercial properties, options related to the Northwest ICE Processing Center, speed and red light cameras, Governor Jay Inslee's powers under the COVID-19 proclamation of emergency, and next steps.

2. [21-0933](#) Community Safety and Policing

At approximately 1:05 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli provided opening remarks regarding community safety and policing, and introduced Mike Ake, Interim Chief, Tacoma Police Department (TPD). Interim Chief Ake presented the agenda; an overview of calls for service, noting the top three call types by district, call priority definitions, rates of calls received and dispatched from 2016 to present, and South Sound 911 (SS911) dispatch policy response chart; an analysis of violent crime, including hot spot analysis with maps comparing rates in the two previous years, an Equity Index overlay, density near the Downtown Tacoma Partnership (DTP) area, and rates by day of the week and time of day; the violent crime reduction strategy, noting short- and long-term goals; short-term strategies, noting activities related to patrol, investigations, community policing, and administrative services; mid term strategies, noting intelligence-based leads for groups repeatedly involved in gun violence, regional partnerships, partnerships with assigned prosecutors, ongoing collaboration with Human Resources, online testing and increased tests annually, and developing a recruitment program; and the long term strategy, noting divertible calls, communication and collaborative engagement with community groups, regional collaboration with surrounding jurisdictions and federal partners, full staffing, and Crime Analysis Unit changes related to technology and staffing. He concluded by reviewing impacts and considerations, noting staffing trends for commissioned officers, the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA), and transformation efforts; and a summary, highlighting community partnerships, a holistic approach, full staffing, and strategic patience.

Discussion ensued regarding community engagement and impacts of COVID-19; data and the importance of reporting criminal activity; staff retention and the number of officers eligible to retire; morale and recruitment issues; systems transformation efforts; the definition of a fully-staffed department; and questions regarding the BLEA, noting what other agencies use for training, options to implement a local training program, and wait lists for placement.

Council Member Thoms arrived here, at 1:50 p.m.

Discussion continued regarding the number of applicants compared to training placements; hiring rates and impacts related to the prior vacancy hold; the gap between separations and new hires; staffing impacts on crime rates; call types, priorities, and response times; impacts of State regulations and legal cases; TPD's relationship with the Pierce County jail; repeat offenders and violent crimes; data collection and analysis; options to offer different scheduling options as a recruitment strategy; trust, outreach, and discussions with community groups; the systems approach to addressing issues; transformational goals; street design, traffic calming, and enforcement options; next steps, noting budget modifications, implementing study recommendations, and the role of the community; methods to support struggling communities; historic impacts of policies; accountability; resources needed to implement short-term strategy goals; ideas to show the City Council's support for the TPD and the proposed plan; community perceptions and the role of police officers; the short-term need for additional officers; and next steps for staff and future discussions.

Other Items of Interest

3. [21-0934](#) Council Consideration Request - Naming Proposal

Mayor Woodards presented a Council Consideration Request regarding the "Brewery Blocks" place name request from Horizon Partners Northwest and neighborhood proponents, including the proposal to refer the request to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee to oversee the process and make a recommendation to the full City Council; the proposed boundary between South 21st and South 23rd Streets between Pacific Avenue and the yet-to-be-developed public thoroughfare known as the Prairie Line Trail; and the request for City Council action to be taken by the end of 2021.

Discussion ensued regarding support to refer the request to IPS for review.

3a. [21-0945](#) American Rescue Plan Act Funding Update

Mayor Woodards presented an update on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding proposals as a continuation of the September 21, 2021, Committee of the Whole discussion, including evaluation criteria, noting proposals that fill an immediate need, those that have direct service impacts, and those that address funding impacted by COVID-19 financial constraints; a review of the remaining unfunded proposals; and funding options, noting the option to fund all proposals in full, to fund some proposals based on the evaluation criteria, and to prioritize the proposals and reconsider them in December 2021.

Discussion ensued regarding goals to distribute funds timely, and next steps for City Council action.

4. [21-0935](#) Manuel Ellis Investigation Update

Interim Chief Ake presented an update on the Manuel Ellis investigation, including the process to review the two completed investigations, and attempts to interview witnesses.

Discussion ensued regarding status of the investigations.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

5. [21-0936](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, September 23, 2021.

City Manager Pauli stated there are three ceremonials on tonight's meeting agenda, proclaiming October 2021 as Health Care Heroes Month, proclaiming October 2021 as Tacoma Arts Month, and a systems transformation update; and that a motion is expected on tonight's agenda to continue Ordinance No. 28770, regarding eliminating the eight-year Multi-Family Property Tax Exemption Program in mixed-use centers designated "very high" opportunity, based on the City's Equity Index, to the meeting of November 9, 2021; and a motion to confirm the Mayor's Proclamation of Emergency Amended Rule No. 2, regarding eliminating payment plan requirements and late fees for utility payments during the term of the Proclamation of Emergency.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 3:33 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk