



City of Tacoma City Council Study Session Minutes

733 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402

Conference Room 16

August 21, 2018

12:00 PM

JOINT MEETING WITH THE PUBLIC UTILITY BOARD

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the joint study session to order at 12:11 p.m.

Present: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Camarata, Hunter, Ibsen, McCarthy, Mello, Ushka and Mayor Woodards

Council Member Hunter participated telephonically.

Public Utility Board Members:

Present: 5 - Cooley, Flint, Larkin, Patterson, and Chair Jones

Briefing Items

1. [18-0972](#) Click! Broadband Partnership

At approximately 12:14 p.m., Chris Bacha, Chief Deputy City Attorney, City Attorney's Office, made opening remarks relative to Click! Network (Click!) broadband partnership and introduced Christopher Mitchell, Director of the Community Broadband Networks Initiative, Institute for Local Self-Reliance. Mr. Mitchell stated the Institute's focus for the past 13 years has been internet access. He provided his and the company's background, values, priorities, past business experiences, his view of Tacoma before and after Click! implementation, their stance on the open access network model, and challenges with the open access network model. Mr. Mitchell presented the Community Network map on web, noting a breakdown of various models used by municipalities and current trends. He further stated that in an open access network model, it is important to identify the decision makers, investors, and key factors, noting net neutrality, privacy, costs, service areas, and customer feedback. Mr. Mitchell then provided information on past experiences with public-private partnerships, including the City of Westminster, Maryland, noting a well-written contract with clear requirements for the provider; the City of Huntsville, Alabama, noting

municipally-owned electric utility partnering with Google for fiber network; and the City of Urbana, Illinois, noting their lessons learned. He concluded by providing recommendations.

Discussion ensued regarding Huntsville's contract timeframe, customers' market share, and what services Google provides; regional public networks versus municipally-owned networks; what happens to network ownership and control when a private partner decides to augment the network with their own capital, fiber, and infrastructure; and the future of hybrid fiber coaxial networks. Discussion continued regarding the City's 12 policy goals, municipally-owned network implications on the "digital divide" and economic development, which model would be most suitable for both aspects, the Click! Network timeline, the number of municipally-owned networks that provide Cable TV components as a part of what they already have or through a separate contractor, the disadvantages and advantages for a municipality as a retailer, operational costs, future options for cable utility, fair opportunities to compete in open access networks, and internet service as a utility.

Joint Executive Session - Pending Litigation

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

SECONDED BY: Council Member Mello.

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

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Camarata, Hunter, Ibsen, McCarthy, Mello, Ushka and Mayor Woodards

Public Utility Board Members:

Ayes: 5 - Cooley, Flint, Larkin, Patterson, and Chair Jones

The Council and Public Utility Board convened to joint Executive Session at 1:05 p.m. City Attorney Bill Fosbre and Chief Deputy City Attorneys Chris Bacha and Tom Morrill were present.

The joint Executive Session was extended by 30 minutes at 1:35 p.m. and 15 minutes at 2:05 p.m. and 2:20 p.m.

The joint Executive Session concluded and the joint study session reconvened at 2:25 p.m.

18-0972 Click! Broadband Partnership

Mr. Bacha continued the presentation regarding the Click! broadband partnership and introduced Dr. Robert Wack, City Council President, City of Westminster, Maryland. Dr. Wack provided a background, history, decision making process, research process, fiber optic concept, successful outcomes, and responsibilities. He then provided information on a comparison of different models; ownership of fiber and control over utilization; fiscal impact; and construction process and timeline, noting construction phases, community feedback, and fiscal impact.

Discussion ensued regarding demographics of the City of Westminster pilot project customers, household income, main service providers in the area, the take rate, and what services are provided through the pilot project.

Joint Executive Session - Pending Litigation

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

SECONDED BY: Council Member Mello.

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

Ayes: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Camarata, Hunter, Ibsen, McCarthy, Mello, Ushka and Mayor Woodards

Public Utility Board Members:

Ayes: 5 - Cooley, Flint, Larkin, Patterson, and Chair Jones

The Council and Public Utility Board convened to joint Executive Session at 2:50 p.m. City Attorney Bill Fosbre and Chief Deputy City Attorneys Chris Bacha and Tom Morrill were present.

The joint Executive Session was extended by 10 minutes at 3:20 p.m. and 15 minutes at 3:30 p.m.

The joint Executive Session concluded and the joint study session reconvened at 3:45 p.m.

Mayor Woodards instructed staff to schedule, as soon as possible, a study session for public option model information to be presented.

Other Items of Interest

Council Member Beale stated a local radio station, 88.5 KNKX, anticipates moving their location to Downtown Tacoma. He then requested the Council to sign onto a letter of endorsement in support of centralizing a new source in Downtown Tacoma.

Committee Reports

This item was not addressed.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

2. [18-0973](#) Weekly Report to the City Council, August 16, 2018

Acting City Manager Tadd Wille stated there is one recognition, recognizing Ms. Pat Flynn, and there are no expected changes to tonight's agenda.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the joint study session was adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk