



City of Tacoma City Council Study Session Minutes

733 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402

Conference Room 16

April 16, 2019

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the study session to order at 12:09 p.m.

Present: 7 - Beale, Blocker, Hunter, Mello, Thoms, Ushka and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 2 - Ibsen and McCarthy

Council Member Thoms participated telephonically.

Council Member Ibsen arrived at 12:14 p.m. Deputy Mayor McCarthy arrived at 12:31 p.m.

Briefing Items

1. [19-0395](#) Homelessness Program Update

At approximately 12:10 p.m., Linda Stewart, Director, Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), provided opening remarks regarding the homelessness program update, and recognized the partner agencies in attendance, including Catholic Community Services (CCS), Salvation Army, and the Tacoma Rescue Mission (TRM), as well as City staff who worked on the program. Erica Azcueta, Homelessness and Household Stability Program Manager, NCS, presented information on the homelessness point in time count, primary causes of homelessness, and challenges to exiting homelessness.

Council Member Ibsen arrived here, at 12:14 p.m.

Ms. Stewart and Ms. Azcueta outlined causes of homelessness for people of color as detailed in the 2018 Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities (SPARC) report; barriers to exiting homelessness for people of color; types of homelessness that are both seen and unseen; shelter availability in the City; contracted services to address homelessness; complementary services, including mental health and substance use disorder services, food banks, furniture, legal services, other case management

services, and rental and/or utility assistance; contracted services for homeless youth and young adults, including the overnight shelter, Crisis Residential Center, spending toward a Tacoma Housing Authority (THA) facility, the Beacon Activity Center, and the Arlington Drive Youth Campus; the Therapeutic Mental Health Court pilot program launched in October 2018; revisions to Chapter 1.95 of the Municipal Code, the the Rental Housing Code, related to preventing homelessness; Ordinance No. 29498 related to temporary sheltering; temporary sheltering outreach and engagement, including a flyer to encourage faith-based and non-profit organizations to host temporary shelters; and the City's homeless emergency declaration, outlining the Phase I Mitigation Site, Phase II Stability Site, and evolving work on Phase III.

Shawn Gustason, Assistant Police Chief, Tacoma Police Department (TPD), presented information regarding the Homeless Outreach Team, including a history since the program launched in May 2017, partnership between TPD and NCS, changes to operational approaches, and results, including encampment cleanups, and TacomaFirst 311 responses.

Ms. Azcueta reviewed information on the City's Stability Site, including a history and how staff have integrated what they've learned into operational approaches; demographics of those sheltered at the Stability Site, highlighting the number of those served who previously lived in an encampment or outside prior to entry; engagement at the Stability Site; and the emergency declaration funding for Stability Site operations. City Manager Elizabeth Pauli stated the City has funded the Stability Site through 2019, and that staff are working on a transition plan in collaboration with CCS.

Deputy Mayor McCarthy arrived here, at 12:31 p.m.

Ms. Pauli continued by outlining next steps, including mid-biennial budget review of continued funding, costs for reduced operations at the Stability Site, and alternatives related to expanded shelters. Ms. Stewart described options for shelter expansion, including a goal to increase the number of permanent shelter beds at the TRM; data related to exits from the Stability Site to housing; and calls for emergency services.

Daniel Murillo, Housing Division Manager, Community and Economic Development (CED), reviewed the City's Affordable Housing Action Strategy, unmet need for housing, and a snapshot of housing market conditions and needs. Ms. Stewart concluded with a review of SPARC recommendations, noting that the City has assumed responsibility for the next phase to operationalize recommendations. Ms. Pauli provided closing remarks recognizing staff and community partners.

Discussion ensued regarding the current sunset date for the Stability Site; increasing awareness and outreach to faith-based and non-profit organizations; cooperation and coordination efforts; impacts of trespass authorizations, warnings, arrests, and offers of service; costs to repurpose an existing TRM building; data on housing shortages for different household income levels; efforts to engage business districts and the Tacoma Economic Development Board; creating an inventory of resources, including an upcoming City Council Contingency Request for a community 'faith audit'; reporting issues and requesting enforcement at parks; causes of homelessness; impacts of closing or reducing the Stability Site; long-term and widespread issues of affordability and homelessness; City Council policy decisions and direction to staff; financial resources from outside the City; an idea to focus on permanent supportive housing; existing shelter shortages; strategies for those who decline services; success of the existing model; resource constraints and budget; a feasibility study for youth and senior services; and a suggestion for additional City Council discussion, review, and policy decisions related to homelessness and the Stability Site.

2. [19-0396](#) Environmental Action Plan

This item was not addressed.

Other Items of Interest

Mayor Woodards stated she is drafting a letter in support of Washington State Initiative I-1000 related to a statewide Affirmative Action and Diversity Commission Measure, which is before the State Legislature. Ms. Pauli and City Attorney Bill Fosbre outlined regulations related to Council opinions on ballot measures.

Discussion ensued regarding next steps for a letter or City Council resolution.

Committee Reports

There were no Committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

3. [19-0398](#) Weekly Report to the City Council, April 11, 2019

Ms. Pauli stated the City received many positive responses regarding the proposed appointment of Toryono Green as Fire Chief.

Ms. Pauli further stated tonight's meeting agenda includes a proclamation to proclaim April 22, 2019 as Earth Day; a presentation of the 2019 Excellent 10 Award for the Lincoln District Streetscape Improvement Project; a recognition of Fire Chief James P. Duggan; and a possible motion to confirm the appointment of Toryono Green as Fire Chief, followed by a swearing-in ceremony; and that no changes are anticipated to the agenda.

Executive Session - Performance Review

MOTION: Deputy Mayor McCarthy moved to convene to Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to discuss the City Manager's performance review, not to exceed 45 minutes.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Ibsen.

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

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

The City Council convened to Executive Session at 2:00 p.m.

The Executive Session concluded and the study session reconvened at 2:45 p.m.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

Doris Sorum, City Clerk