



City of Tacoma

Community Vitality and Safety

Committee Minutes

747 Market Street Tacoma, WA 98402

Conference Room 243

June 08, 2017

4:30 PM

Chair Keith Blocker, Vice Chair Marty Campbell,
Joe Lonergan, Lauren Walker Lee, Ryan Mello (alternate)

Call To Order

Chair Blocker called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

Present: 4 - Blocker, Campbell, Lonergan and Walker Lee

Briefing Items

1. [17-0570](#) Regulation of electroshock devices (TASERS)
[Briefing and Code Change Request]
[Keith Echterling, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office]

Keith Echterling, Assistant City Attorney, stated staff is requesting the City Council to pass an ordinance to remove the prohibition of electroshock devices from Chapter 8.66 of the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC). He stated the Code currently regulates the possession, sale, and manufacture of electroshock devices and those caught carrying are subject to punishment as a gross misdemeanor offense, up to 364 days in jail and up to a \$5,000 fine. He noted there are only a few municipalities nationwide who regulate or criminalize possession of these devices. Mr. Echterling stated electroshock devices are commonly identified, and pointedly by a 2016 United States Supreme Court case, as devices that are intended to be utilized for self-defense. He provided information on the Supreme Court case referenced, and stated it is likely a court reviewing electroshock devices would give constitutional protection to that item. Mr. Echterling stated Tacoma should no longer regulate these devices to the extent that is currently done, and continuing to do so potentially exposes the City to constitutional challenges. He concluded by briefing the Committee on the history and most recent changes to TMC Chapter 8.66, Weapons, and how the use of electroshock devices may be regulated.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the Supreme Court decision, what the State of Washington and other Washington cities are doing, and what Codes and enforcement tools could regulate electroshock devices for uses other than self-defense.

Public comment was heard from Philip Watson, Firearms Policy Coalition.

MOTION: Council Member Campbell moved to recommend this item to the full City Council for further action.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Walker Lee.

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

Ayes: 4 - Blocker, Campbell, Lonergan and Walker Lee

Topics for Upcoming Meetings

2. [17-0571](#) June 22, 2017 - To be determined
Chair Blocker stated no items have been scheduled for June 22, 2017.

Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

Public Comment

Public comment was heard earlier in the meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Keith Blocker, Chair

Doris Sorum, City Clerk's Office