

**Minutes**  
**Joint Municipal Action Committee**

Friday, February 9, 2024

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting: in-person option (Tacoma Municipal Building, Conf. Rm. 248) and  
virtual attendance option via Zoom

**CALL TO ORDER**

JMAC Chair Walker called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

**ROLL CALL – JMAC COMMITTEE**

Kristina Walker, JMAC Chair, City of Tacoma, and Pierce Transit  
Rosie Ayala, JMAC Vice Chair, Metro Parks Tacoma  
Elizabeth Bonbright, Tacoma Public Schools  
Deanna Keller, Port of Tacoma  
Don Meyer, Port of Tacoma  
Korey Strozier, Tacoma Public Schools  
Ryan Mello, Pierce County and Pierce Transit  
Sarah Rumbaugh, City of Tacoma  
Tim Reid, Metro Parks Tacoma

**JMAC CHIEF EXECUTIVES IN ATTENDANCE**

Josh Garcia - Tacoma Public Schools  
Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.  
Mike Griffus, Pierce Transit  
Elizabeth Pauli, City of Tacoma  
Shon Sylvia, Metro Parks Tacoma

**GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE**

Alex Mather, Pierce Transit  
Amy Cruver, Pierce County Council  
Andrea Smith, Metro Parks Tacoma (JMAC alternate)  
Carol Mensah, Pierce County  
Carol Wolfe, City of Tacoma  
Chelsea Talbert, City of Tacoma  
Christina Caan, City of Tacoma  
Chrisy Vindivich, City of Tacoma  
Colleen Meiners, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.  
Dan Grimm, Pierce County  
Deborah Trevorrow, City of Tacoma  
Holly Bamford Hunt, Bamford Foundation  
Hugh Taylor, Pierce County  
Jacques Colon, City of Tacoma  
Juan Beltran-Gonzalez, Senator Patty Murray's Office  
Kacee Woods, City of Tacoma  
Kaitlan Ohler, Imagine Justice  
Krystle Amundson, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.  
Melanie Harding, City of Tacoma  
Morris Aldridge, Tacoma Public Schools  
Patti Spaulding-Klewin, Pierce County  
Pricilla Lisicich, Pierce County Birth to 25 Advisory  
Sally Perkins, Practical Solutions  
Sean Eagan, Port of Tacoma  
Sonja Hallum, City of Tacoma  
Stacy Page, Tacoma Public Schools

## **WELCOME**

**Chair Kristina Walker** welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**Chair Walker** made a tribal land acknowledgment.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved as presented; passed unanimously.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of January 12, 2024 be approved as presented; passed unanimously.

## **PREVIOUS MEETING RECAP / DIRECTION**

### **Recap and thoughts on December 2023 Year-End Meeting:**

**JMAC Chair Walker** shared a recap of the February meeting which focused on the Maritime 253 Skills Center with a presentation by Adam Kulaas with Tacoma Public Schools and Matthew Mauer with the Port of Tacoma. They provided an update on joint plans to build and operate a high school that will be designed to maximize workforce development opportunities serving our global port. They also offered ways we could all get involved.

**Chair Walker** also quickly recapped the February discussion on setting JMAC priorities for 2024. JMAC members discussed topics from the 2024 priorities list that are connected to JMAC's strategic themes of JEDI (justice, equity, diversity & inclusion), public health and safety, and community wealth building. Staff will keep an ongoing list of topics and JMAC members are always welcome to contribute to the list.

## **TACOMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOND LEVY, PROPOSITION 1**

*Morris Aldridge, Executive Director of Planning & Construction*

*Stacy Page, Facilities Communication Coordinator of Planning & Construction*

**Morris Aldridge, Tacoma Public Schools**, gave an informational briefing on Prop. 1, a measure on the Feb. 13 ballot in Tacoma that would provide \$650 million in improvements and upgrades across the school district, including replacement or renovation of 11 schools. He shared that one of the things that TPS has tried to do with the bond program is to make sure that they're touching all learning environments so that no matter where your child goes to school, they're in a great learning environment overall. Also, the School Board has challenged us since 2016 to reinvest back into our community, and we try and do as much of that as we possibly can. Proposition 1 would continue to improve the safety and security of our schools.

**Aldridge** then reviewed several examples of replacement schools and major modernizations that will occur under this bond, if approved. This also includes some ADA improvements at the schools. Another area they will look at is roof and mechanical upgrades throughout the district, as well as heating, plumbing and HVAC improvements/upgrades on several campuses as well.

**Aldridge** described the replacement process and purpose for boiler and heating replacement, as well as the need for replacing/using artificial turf and materials for the safety of students.

He finished the presentation describing the need for a "central kitchen" which is a need in a district of our size (20,000 students or more). It will provide better quality menu items with healthier and fresher options. Individual school kitchens will also receive upgraded equipment to support a new central kitchen.

**Aldridge** then reviewed Phase 2 of the Maritime Skills Center that would also benefit from this bond. Prop 1 is a \$650 million bond measure maturing over a maximum of 25 years. The cost to a Tacoma homeowner would be about \$7.53/month or \$90/year. He then took questions.

**Chair Walker** thanked Morris Aldridge for this information. She then asked if there was funding in the bond to electrify any of the outdated boilers or equipment.

**Morris Aldridge** confirmed that this funding would include upgrading all gas boilers to electric boilers at the facilities. All new building and remodels are outfitted with 100% electric equipment.

**Elizabeth Bonbright, Tacoma Public Schools**, thanked Morris Aldridge and Stacy Page for this overview, and then shared some information on the “design build” construction model which is a focus of the bond money to design the most efficient and safe environments for students. She said this aligns well with our JMAC priorities.

**Chair Walker** stated that the approval of this bond measure is critical as it ties into so many of the things that we focus on at JMAC, and ultimately, this funding ties into so many other areas in our community and within all of our missions.

#### **CEO DISCUSSIONS/UPDATES:**

As the Legislature passes the halfway point of the 2024 session, JMAC’s chief executives shared the status of priority bills and requests, and offered advice on how to help each other.

**Elizabeth Pauli, City of Tacoma**, started the discussion by thanking Sonja Hallum, the City’s Government Relations Officer for her work tracking and communicating these items. The City is focused on five priorities this session.

The first priority is in the area of emergency sheltering as the City does not have the resources to continue operation of the shelters at the level that is currently needed. It is looking at the potential of closure of over 300 beds by the end of the year. The City requested \$3 million in the supplemental budget to maintain the 300 beds and possibly add additional beds, as well as funding to assist individuals with transitioning out of a shelter.

The second priority area is the Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge and funding for the long-term construction needs. The request is for \$45 million over several biennia to provide for the design, and then matching funds that they’ll need to be able to obtain any federal funding.

The third area of priority involves Climate Commitment Act investments, most of which center around municipal decarbonization projects.

The fourth priority area is the 1% property tax cap and a request to connect it closer to inflation.

Lastly, the City is supporting the Metro Parks capital requests in 2 areas involving People’s Community Center and a new community center serving the South End.

**Sean Eagan, Port of Tacoma**, then presented legislative priorities for the Port, which includes ensuring State Route 167 stays in scope and on budget as well as the challenges the funding is facing within the transportation budget.

They support the City on the importance of funding for the Fishing Wars Memorial Bridge. The Port will support this effort with preparing the larger grant applications primarily on the Federal level.

The Port of Tacoma is also supporting the City on a bill that provides tax credits to Short Line railroads for basic maintenance and repair. This is something that would benefit Tacoma Rail.

Lastly, the Port is in partnership with the Port of Seattle and the Northwest Seaport Alliance on the adopted Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy to eventually decarbonize all marine cargo operations by 2050. They have been speaking to lawmakers about the importance of adopting those joint Port and Transportation Committee recommendations.

**Mike Griffus, Pierce Transit**, shared that there are initiatives headed for the November statewide ballot that would affect the carbon tax credits if passed. This would impact transit significantly, including funding that they have budgeted for to use on renewable CNG and electric buses, as well as the funding for free rides for youth 18 & under.

He also shared that this will be **Alexandra Mather's** last JMAC meeting as she is leaving Pierce Transit, but he is happy that she is staying in the industry because she is a real advocate for public transit.

**Shon Sylvia, Metro Parks Tacoma**, spoke about the legislative priorities they are working on in collaboration with several government affairs staff at the partner agencies. First, as the City Manager mentioned, Metro Parks has capital requests involving additional services and design studies regarding People's Community Center and a new South End community center.

Metro Parks is also supportive of the 1% property tax cap lift.

Lastly, they are repackaging in the next session the "Parks Rx" pilot program that would provide more access to parks and recreation spaces and services to improve mental and physical health.

**Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.** shared that they have three priorities.

The first is a bill addressing how vaccines are defined. The current description excludes RSV and other new vaccines, so they are hoping for this correction.

The next one is around syphilis treatment. This Senate bill would allow medical assistance with telehealth supervision to provide shots, intramuscular injections for syphilis treatment. This will allow public health departments across the state to treat unhoused people who have a harder time accessing medical treatment.

The third bill is around modernizing the child fatality statute. This allows public health agencies across the state to conduct formal child death reviews. This bill would bring together multiple systems including law enforcement, the medical examiner's office, and child protective services to come together and review these tragic child deaths from a systems point of view with the hope that improvements would be made to prevent future child deaths.

**Dan Grimm with Pierce County** shared two items of awareness. First, funding for the Fishing Wars Bridge is critical, but do not forget that Milroy Bridge in Fife needs to be replaced as well.

**Ryan Mello, Pierce County**, shared that it is important to educate the legislature about sharing the revenue needs of local government to do constitutionally mandated services and core services, as well as continue to educate the legislature about the long-term funding capacity and financial capacity for local governments due to the rising costs of delivering these types of services. That includes the rising labor costs of mandated services that are delivered by the county on behalf of all community members.

They're also making specific requests about the local document recording fee backfill to address the revenue loss in this area. The document recording fee is a fee collected on the recording of documents at the auditor, and a good portion of it goes to homelessness prevention and intervention services.

They're also asking for dollars to further rental assistance, as our American Rescue Plan Act dollars end. This funding is important to providing affordable housing, addressing homelessness and public safety, and rental assistance which is an effective strategy to keep people housed.

Pierce County has also sent letters expressing the need for SR 167 funding and other major transportation projects. They've also expressed the need for revenues in Pierce County for Climate Commitment Act dollars which include things like Safe Routes to School (SRTS). Pierce County has identified 4 SRTS projects that are funded with local dollars that need to be matched for sidewalks, crosswalks, and safe crossings to school.

**Josh Garcia, Tacoma Public Schools**, stated that there are no new bills and no new unfunded mandates in education. However, due to the McCleary decision, there are funding issues which may include layoffs across the state in the field of education because of disproportionate funding. Schools have been asked to fund only the basics. There are many competing priorities throughout the state, and Pierce County school districts have a shared legislative alignment in those asks.

### **SUMMER LATE NIGHT PROGRAM**

**Elizabeth Bonbright** provided an update on plans for the 2024 summer program that's designed to give youth a safe place to hang out and thrive with friends. She also thanked everyone for the efforts that made this such a success, and it has encouraged other organizations to follow suit.

On January 17, an article came out in District Administration which is a monthly trade publication for education leaders in public K 12 school districts. It was an excellent article that spoke to the partnerships that successfully built this program. <https://districtadministration.com/how-to-create-safe-spaces-for-students-on-summer-nights/>

Then in February, the website Getting Smart, which is a site for education leaders that share innovation and learning and build community driven equity and access, published an article about the summer late night program collaboration. <https://www.gettingsmart.com/2024/01/25/community-collaboration-the-success-story-of-tacoma-public-schools-summer-late-nights-program/>

She thanked all the CEOs for their support with funding with the short timeline last year, as well as other support provided for this program- with an example being the Pierce Transit bus schedules shifting to accommodate the hours of the program. This year, there is much more time to plan and raise investments, and she is looking forward to your involvement and advocacy.

### **PUGET SOUND TAXPAYER ACCOUNTABILITY ACT GRANTS**

*Carol Mensah, Division Manager, Community Action Programs, Pierce County Human Services*  
*Priscilla Lisicich, Chair, Pierce County Birth to 25 Advisory Board*

**Carol Mensah**, Pierce County shared an update on grants issued so far from the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Act (PSTAA) and goals for the upcoming 2024 round of competitive grants. These grants are intended to improve educational outcomes in early learning, K-12, and higher education, including, but not limited to, youths that are low income, homeless, or in foster care, or other vulnerable populations.

The Birth to 25 Advisory Board consists of representation from public health, behavioral health, youth workforce development, juvenile justice, and more. The Board is looking at the system holistically to improve educational and well-being outcomes for children and families in Pierce County.

**Mensah** then reviewed the list of grant investments currently funded by the PSTAA dollars. When focusing on the investments, the board has had conversations around sustainability and looking at policy to help communities build social capital.

2024 – 2025 goals are to identify and finalize priorities and narrow the focus for the \$6 million that will flow into the community. There will be focus on early learning facilities for capital enhancements. They are also focusing the funding on high-quality early learning programming. Another goal is to increase staff and educator diversity. She also shared it's great to have the opportunity to hear what JMAC members are doing, and make sure that we are having those conversations so that we can leverage some of the resources in the community to ensure these programs are sustainable.

**Priscilla Lisicich** is the current B-25 Advisory Board Chair. The Board is seeking more applicants, especially membership from County Council Districts 2 and 5. Their challenges that continue to arise surround equity as well as our commitment to creating funding and programming that will support the diverse landscape that we have in Pierce County. How are we going to invest funds over the lifecycle of a person from birth through the age of 25?

She also shared that they are having conversations about the best arenas to make investments, and the Pierce County Council and the County Executive have done a great job of raising concerns around childcare, early childhood education, and early learning. The Board is here to advise on policy and funding because they must think about long term investment, and what will be a return on that investment. Our Advisory Board wants to make sure that we play a role in helping to build those partnerships and create those opportunities for partnerships to exist to ensure a successful and sustainable program.

Pierce County is actively seeking Application Evaluation Committee Members, as well as Birth-to 25 Advisory Board Members. Interested parties may reach out to Patti Spaulding-Klewin at [patti.spaulding-klewin@piercecounywa.gov](mailto:patti.spaulding-klewin@piercecounywa.gov).

PSTAA RFP link: <https://www.piercecounywa.gov/7829/Current-Solicitations>

**STAFF WORKGROUP UPDATES-**

None provided due to time constraints.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS-**

None provided due to time constraints.

**GENERAL COMMENTS BY JMAC-**

**Chair Walker** called for JMAC general comments. No comments were provided.

**NEXT MEETING-**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 8th, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Walker** adjourned the meeting at 9:41 a.m.

*\*Minutes taken by City of Tacoma*