



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402, Council Chambers

Dial: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 894 9617 1192

Webinar Link: www.zoom.us/j/89496171192 Passcode: 896569

March 21, 2023

12:00 PM

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

Present: 8 - Blocker, Bushnell, Daniels, Diaz, Hines, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

Absent: 1 - Rumbaugh

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

Briefing Items

1. [23-0287](#) Alternative Response Quarterly Update

This item was presented later in the study session.

2. [23-0288](#) Sound Transit Project Updates

At approximately 12:02 p.m., Brian Boudet, Planning Division Manager, Planning and Development Services, provided opening remarks about the City's relationship with Sound Transit (ST) and introduced Andrew Austin, South Corridor Government Community Relations Manager, ST.

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

Austin provided further opening remarks on ST projects, reviewed the agenda, and introduced Julie Timm, Chief Executive Officer, ST. Timm outlined the history of ST in Tacoma, noting the 20th anniversary of Tacoma Link, the City Council's letter to the ST Board of Directors about ST3 Tacoma Dome Light Rail Extension Project delays, and how ST plans to respond and look ahead to the future.

Diane Wiatr, Development Manager, ST, presented the Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) project update, including current status, noting

identification of additional alternatives to study in the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) at the March 23, 2023, ST Board meeting, and public engagement; proposed additions of two new station options in the City of Fife; and proposed additional alignments in south Federal Way. Austin concluded by reviewing schedule implications of these proposed changes on the Draft and Final EIS, ST Board selections, projected completion dates, and next steps.

Madeleine Greathouse, Hilltop Tacoma Link Extension (HTLE) Executive Project Director, ST, presented updates on the HTLE project, including current status, noting the project is over 98 percent complete; remaining work, noting construction work and systems integration testing; and community engagement. Austin concluded by further reviewing the community engagement effort, adoption of fares for Tacoma's system that align with the rest of the ST system, and new One Regional Card For All (ORCA) Lift cards for low-income riders.

Austin presented updates on the South Tacoma Sounder access improvements project, including a project overview, noting proposed improvements, goals, the target schedule, and the current project phase; examples of improvements in and around existing ST stations; and in-person engagement about the project.

Discussion ensued regarding the relationship between the City, ST, and Pierce Transit; community engagement and outreach; possible locations for new TDLE stations, noting the Tacoma Dome and Portland Avenue sites, and access and safety issues for pedestrians; ORCA passes and options for contactless payments using a mobile device; economic opportunities and needs near new light rail stations; creating a welcoming gateway; the Tacoma Dome Business District; accessibility and mobility concerns; alternative locations in the City of Fife; Sounder commuter rail ridership, noting COVID-19 and remote work impacts; the larger ST3 expansion package, noting timelines and future investments; and appreciation to ST for providing frequent updates and addressing the City's concerns.

1. [23-0287](#) Alternative Response Quarterly Update

At approximately 12:52 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli presented the City's alternative response quarterly update, including an overview; current response methods; focus areas, noting expanding the homelessness outreach, a new Behavioral Health Crisis Response Team (BHCRT), and Community Service Officers (CSO); future response methods; the response spectrum, noting risk levels and response types.

Mary Hallman, Assistant Chief, Tacoma Fire Department (TFD), presented the BHCRT program, including a project overview, noting leadership, purpose, outcomes, and the 2023 implementation timeline; the mental health and behavioral health crisis response team structure, noting the expected work and staff members in each group; and implementation status.

Allyson Griffith, Director, Neighborhood and Community Services, presented on expansion of the Homeless Engagement and Alternatives Team, including a project overview, noting leadership, purpose, outcomes, and the 2023 implementation timeline.

Crystal Young Haskins, Assistant Chief, Tacoma Police Department (TPD), presented on the addition of limited commission CSOs, including a project overview, noting leadership, purpose, outcomes, and the 2023 implementation timeline; and key differences between police officers and CSOs, noting the types of people who might be interested in working as CSOs.

City Manager Pauli concluded by reviewing the implementation timeline and related programs, including the Community Trauma Response Team (CTRT), noting the City's contract with JCW & Associates, the response plan, program launch, ideal volunteers, and outreach; and the Community Safety Plan, noting the process to formalize TPD's approach to collaborating with the community, responding to community needs and issues, and fostering community relationships.

Discussion ensued throughout regarding outreach and communication, noting visual resources, communications tools, and education about future changes; the role of the TFD Community Assistance Referral and Education Service program; appreciation for quarterly status updates; matching the needs of residents to appropriate responses; whether all calls will receive a response under the new model; how CSOs will interact with commissioned police officers; routing calls from various call centers, noting 911, 211, and 988; requests for future data, noting call routing and dispatch flows, identifying gaps, and understanding how calls transition back and forth between the various teams; the goals to add new services while releasing other TFD and TPD staff to focus on other work; helping people feel safe; the need for flexibility and adjustments as the new program is implemented; and the importance of community engagement and feedback.

Other Items of Interest

3. [23-0289](#) Letter to Tacoma Art Museum Board of Trustees and Leadership

Council Member Diaz presented a draft letter to the Tacoma Art Museum (TAM) Board of Trustees Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) regarding plans by TAM employees to form a union, noting the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting on Thursday, March 23, 2023, a request for Council Members to sign on to the letter, and a revision to the draft language.

Discussion ensued regarding the request to take action at tonight's meeting, clarifying language related to unionizing, and support for the request.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

4. [23-0290](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, March 16, 2023

City Manager Pauli stated there are two ceremonials on tonight's meeting agenda, proclaiming Saturday, April 1, 2023, as Jerry Cantrell Day, and a Compassionate Tacoma recognition for the CTRT; and that no changes are expected to tonight's meeting agenda. She further stated that Community Forum will be held on Tuesday, April 4, 2023, due to cancellation of the Tuesday, March 28, 2023, meeting.

Executive Session - Review the Qualifications of a Public Employee

MOTION: Deputy Mayor Walker moved to convene to an Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to review the qualifications of a public employee, not to exceed 60 minutes.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Ushka.

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

Ayes: 9 - Blocker, Bushnell, Daniels, Diaz, Hines, Rumbaugh, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards


The City Council convened to Executive Session at 1:48 p.m.

The Executive Session was extended by 20 minutes at 2:48 p.m.

The Executive Session concluded, and the study session reconvened,
at 3:08 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the study session was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.



Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor



Doris Sorum, City Clerk

For