



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

733 Market Street, Tacoma WA 98402

Conference Room 16

March 28, 2017

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Strickland called the study session to order at 12:13 p.m.

Present: 6 - Blocker, Ibsen, McCarthy, Mello, Walker Lee and Mayor Strickland

Absent: 3 - Campbell, Lonergan and Thoms

Council Member Campbell arrived at 12:19 p.m.

Briefing Items

1. [17-0326](#) Community Technology Survey Results

At approximately 12:14 p.m., Jack Kelanic, Information Technology Director, introduced the 2016 community technology survey team members present, including Elizabeth Moore from Applied Inference, Dr. Andy Gordon from the University of Washington Evans School, and Rachel Austin from Pacific Market Research, who was not in attendance. He stated this was the first community technology survey in Tacoma, provided background on why the survey was conducted, and stated this is the first step toward addressing the digital divide in the community.

Council Member Campbell arrived here, at 12:19 p.m.

Ms. Moore then presented the survey scope, approach, methodology, and demographics. Mr. Kelanic, Ms. Moore, and Dr. Gordon all presented key data and findings of the survey. Mr. Kelanic summarized the findings, stating nearly all residents have devices/access; libraries provide a valued service; inequities and challenges exist, specifically with respect to seniors, specific racial/ethnic communities, and specific neighborhoods; residents support equitable access; and the City does have a role to play as a leader and facilitator. He concluded by presenting preliminary recommendations regarding internet access, affordable devices, public access computing, digital literacy training, and next steps.

Discussion ensued throughout the presentation regarding access to technology, digital literacy, Hilltop, policy needs, further exploring issues other than cost, focusing on senior centers, the role of Click! Network, mobile devices, public access to computers, and surplus City equipment.

2. [17-0327](#) Permit System Process Improvements

At approximately 1:05 p.m., Peter Huffman, Planning and Development Services Director, recognized the leadership of Council Member McCarthy and recognized Jeremiah Lafranca, Master Builders Association (MBA), for their collaboration and partnership in this process since July 2016. He stated the key objectives of the process improvements are to reduce barriers to development, continue to streamline permitting processes, work towards full cost recovery, enhance service levels, and improve customer engagement. He then presented completed efficiencies and upcoming policy decisions and code changes, including performance bonds, fee in-lieu for off-site improvements and nexus and proportionality, and right-of-way occupancy permits. He also discussed fiscal impact, an upcoming fee discussion with MBA, and next steps.

Mr. Lafranca thanked Council Members for coming to the MBA and asking how Tacoma can be more attractive to builders. He shared concerns and issues expressed by MBA members, noting one complaint heard often is the “sidewalk to nowhere” where off-site improvements are required when the infrastructure is nowhere in the neighborhood and the improvement is out of character. He stated one member shared a story from Tacoma that the performance bond was more expensive than the project itself so no work has been completed on the property. He concluded by stating Tacoma is a great place to build and there is a lot of opportunity here.

Discussion ensued regarding the collaborative review process, positive improvements that have been made, tree permitting, fee in-lieu nexus and proportionality, and the process for next steps.

Other Items of Interest

There were no other items of interest.

Committee Reports

Council Member Campbell stated he and Council Members McCarthy and Lonergan attended a town hall meeting of almost 200 citizens in the South End and heard about issues including crime, graffiti, camping in recreational vehicles, blight, and abandoned houses. Council Member McCarthy noted the topics brought up in this district differed from those in his district and it is important to realize and address issues that exist and are not brought up at meetings downtown.

Council Member Mello reported, on behalf of his representation on the Association of Washington Cities, both chambers in the legislature have released their budgets and there is a lot of impact to cities. He briefly discussed issues with large impact that will be closely watched, including human services funding and a proposed shift in pension costs for police and fire.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

3. [17-0328](#) Weekly Report to the City Council, March 23, 2017
- Elizabeth Pauli, Interim City Manager, stated there are no proclamations, recognitions, presentations, or announcements, nor are there any expected changes to tonight's agenda. She stated a motion will need to be made tonight to select a presiding officer as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are both absent.

Executive Session - Pending Litigation

MOTION: Council Member Campbell moved to convene to Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) to discuss pending litigation, not to exceed 5 minutes.

SECONDED BY: Council Member Ibsen.

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

Ayes: 6 - Blocker, Campbell, Ibsen, McCarthy, Mello and Walker Lee
Absent: 3 - Lonergan, Thoms and Mayor Strickland

The Council convened to Executive Session at 1:44 p.m. Acting City Attorney Bill Fosbre was present.

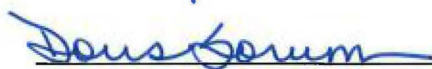
The Executive Session concluded and the study session reconvened at 1:49 p.m.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 1:49 p.m.



Marilyn Strickland, Mayor



Doris Sorum, City Clerk