



City of Tacoma

City Council Study Session Minutes

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

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

February 09, 2021

12:00 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Woodards called the study session to order at 12:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: 9 - Beale, Blocker, Hines, Hunter, McCarthy, Thoms, Ushka, Walker and Mayor Woodards

All Council Members participated virtually.

Briefing Items

1. [21-0131](#) City of Tacoma's Approach to COVID-19 Rental Assistance and Use of Federal Rental Assistance

At approximately 12:03 p.m., Allyson Griffith, Assistant Director, Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), presented the City's approach to COVID-19 related rental assistance and the use of federal funds, including the 2020 funding and distribution; and rental assistance funding received for 2021, noting the amount received, the proposal to distribute funds to the Living Access Support Alliance, utility assistance, and the Pierce County rental assistance web portal.

Discussion ensued regarding Area Median Income (AMI) rates in Tacoma compared to Pierce County, demographics of individuals served by Pierce County's program so far, funds spent inside the Tacoma city limits versus elsewhere in Pierce County, outreach to eligible households, services to senior citizens, limits on assistance funds and time ranges, communication with tenants and landlords, funding sources connected to the rental assistance portal with Pierce County, and next steps.

2. [21-0133](#) Encampment Basic Services

At approximately 12:21 p.m., Linda Stewart, Director, NCS, provided updates related to shelters and warming centers, including a new website for outreach

and shelter data updates that will be online by the end of February, sheltering resources for upcoming freezing temperatures, and the referral process.

Discussion ensued regarding supporting documentation and contacts, the number of new shelter beds added since last year, legal issues related to camping in public places, whether the number of homeless individuals has decreased, cost-effective use of shelter capacity, public perceptions and frustration, relaying the City's past work and successes, the draft homelessness strategy coming forward to the City Council later this month, Federal Emergency Management Agency funding sources, options to set up a managed encampment site, the stability site model, a focus on case management and helping people transition to permanent housing, impacts of COVID-19, responding to community member concerns about criminal activity, the number of people served, increasing housing, reasons people do not accept shelter or other services, estimating the number of encampments and people living there, the Metropolitan Development Council report, and safe parking.

Ms. Stewart further provided updates on the encampment mitigation pilot project, including the services and number of locations, expanding the Purple Bag Program, recruitment for a new safety-related position in NCS, projected pilot program costs, and monitoring requirements.

Discussion continued regarding costs for resources and staff, suggestions to recruit site monitors, the difference between hygiene stations versus managed encampment sites, equity at warming shelters, the proposed site locations, alternative programs and priorities for funding, immediate needs versus long-term strategies, proposed length of the program, alternate locations, impacts the hygiene stations may have on existing encampments, measuring success and deciding when to end the program, and next steps.

3. [21-0139](#) Systems Transformation

At approximately 2:46 p.m., City Manager Elizabeth Pauli presented the system transformation update, including new items, the systems transformation update table, the next steps timeline, and the draft transformation timeline.

Discussion ensued regarding implementation of the Body Worn Camera program, and providing high-level transformation updates at regular City Council meetings.

Other Items of Interest

- 4. [21-0141](#) Council Consideration Request - Joint Municipal Action Committee

Council Member Walker stated that she and Deputy Mayor Blocker are requesting \$6,000 from the Council Contingency Fund to support a contract, sponsored by the Joint Municipal Action Committee, for consulting services to better align the work of participating organizations.

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Mayor Woodards requested Council Member feedback on format and timing of the Council Retreat.

Discussion ensued regarding virtual meeting format issues and strategies, scheduling, and a preference for scheduling the Retreat as two half-day sessions on February 26 and 27, 2021.

Council Member Ushka requested clarification on the encampment basic services program discussion, feedback, and next steps.

Council Member Hunter provided an update on Tacoma's Age-Friendly City designation from the American Association of Retired Persons, and the first meeting of the Age-Friendly Advisory Committee.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports given.

Agenda Review and City Manager's Weekly Report

- 5. [21-0140](#) Weekly Report to the Mayor and City Council, February 4, 2021

City Manager Pauli stated that there is one ceremonial on tonight's agenda, proclaiming February 2021 as Black History Month, that no changes are expected to tonight's agenda, and Community Forum will be held this evening.

Adjournment

On proper motion, the study session was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Woodards", written over a horizontal line.

Victoria R. Woodards, Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doris Sorum", written over a horizontal line.

Doris Sorum, City Clerk