**Minutes**

**Joint Municipal Action Committee**

Friday, March 10, 2023

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

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

virtual attendance option via Zoom

**CALL TO ORDER**

JMAC Chair Kristina Walker called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

**ROLL CALL – JMAC COMMITTEE**

Kristina Walker, JMAC Chair, City of Tacoma + Pierce Transit

Elizabeth Bonbright, Tacoma Public Schools

Marty Campbell, Pierce County + Pierce Transit + Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.

Deanna Keller, Port of Tacoma

Ryan Mello, Pierce County Council

Tim Reid, Metro Parks Tacoma (attending in place of Rosie Ayala)

Andrea Smith, Metro Parks Tacoma

Korey Strozier, Tacoma Public Schools

**JMAC CHIEF EXECUTIVES**

Josh Garcia, Superintendent, Tacoma Public Schools

Shon Sylvia, Metro Parks

**GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE**

Rosa McLeod, City of Tacoma

Jeff Robinson, City of Tacoma

Deborah Trevorrow, City of Tacoma

Chrisy Vindivich, City of Tacoma

Bucoda Warren, City of Tacoma

Kacee Woods, City of Tacoma

Carol Wolfe, City of Tacoma

Kaitlan Ohler, Imagine Justice Project – Guest Presenter

Hunter George, Metro Parks

William Bridges, Pierce County

Amy Cruver, Pierce County Council

Jani Hitchen, Pierce County Council

Evan Koepfler, Pierce County

Catherine Rudolph, Pierce County

Gretchen Caserotti, Pierce County Library

Alex Mather, Pierce Transit

Matthew Mauer, Port of Tacoma

Esmeralda Paredes, Port of Tacoma

Sally Perkins, Practical Solutions

Nora Flemming de Sandoval, Safe Streets

Tracy Jones, Tacoma Public Schools

Alicia Lawver, Tacoma Public Schools

Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

**INTRODUCTION**

Chair Walker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Chair Walker read the City of Tacoma’s 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 February 10, 2023, be approved as presented; passed unanimously.

**PREVIOUS MEETING RECAP / DIRECTION**

We had our CEOs with us last time to discuss the legislative session.

**REPORT FROM EXECUTIVES:**

**JMAC Chair Walker** commented that there are a number of housing bills still alive in the legislative session. She looks forward to budget conversations on the capital and transportation side.

**Hunter George, Metro Parks,** shared that he looked back at the bills watched by the Government Affairs Peer Group, and there were many JMAC members who signed in support of 4 of the bills: Pierce Transit’s limited law enforcement authority; City of Tacoma’s bill against street racing; the 3% property tax bill; and the “Parks Rx” bill.

**Ryan Mello, Pierce County Council,** gave an update on the busy legislative session and that the proposed property tax increase from 1% to 3% is a high priority. He met with the House majority leader who indicated support in the House, but that it won’t be forwarded if there’s not enough support in the Senate. He encouraged members to contact their Senators to encourage support for the bill. They remain engaged this session on behavioral health and public safety issues. The bill to set up the Guaranteed Basic Income pilot was not passed, so they are trying to get it accomplished by extending the Tacoma pilot and expand it into Pierce County through a budget proviso.

**Andrea Smith, Metro Parks,** shared that the Parks Rx bill got through two committees but did not get to the Senate floor. They will try to get it added to the budget as a proviso.

**Elizabeth Bonbright, Tacoma Public Schools,** shared that the two biggest legislative items for schools are funding for Special Education (which is greatly underfunded, causing TPS to use levy funds) and transportation, and the allocation formulas that are used for education. TPS has to use levy funds to meet the legal mandates. Another issue is transitional kindergarten, which is being worked out.

**Matthew Mauer, Port of Tacoma,** thanked committee members for their help with funding for completing Highway 167. Please continue to offer support for this.

**Alex Mather, Pierce Transit,** shared that the Limited Authority bill didn’t make it through committees, so they will be going the proviso route. She commended the Pierce County delegation for their support.

**Rosa McLeod, City of Tacoma,** shared that theStreet Racing bill made it through the Senate, but prospects were less certain in the House.

**YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION EFFORTS**

**Chair Walker** mentioned that students are organizing an event at Mount Tahoma High School to be held on March 15th regarding this topic.

**Kaitlan Ohler, Imagine Justice Project Director,** presented the work being done mostly outside of government agencies to transform systems around the community with a focus on positive youth development and community-centered healing.

For some youth, there is an imbalance in normal adolescent brain development and risk and protective factors which can lead them disproportionally into the juvenile justice system, a lot of which is for normal adolescent behavior. Institutional and implicit bias and racism are also factors faced by black and brown students, leading to more disproportionality. There is clear research that shows that cutting youth off from existing systems of support by entering the court system may cause their brains to be hyper-focused on this as their sense of identity and can be detrimental to their future growth.

She described several major initiatives supported by the Imagine Justice Project.

* Youth Serving Agencies Network (YSAN) started in 2018 under Safe Streets. YSAN is a consortium of positive youth development service providers. They increase coordination and collaboration of organizations to maximize positive impact on court-connected youth. Their vision is to build relationships between organizations doing similar work so youth are not falling through the cracks while also leveraging resources. For example, they hope to have more shared funding that helps benefit all.
* The AmeriCorps Team, launched in August 2021, does the bulk of the work. There are 20 full-time positions serving at YSAN partner organizations working with youth who are in contact with the juvenile justice system. They are also impacting the organizations where they serve. The impact on members themselves is important. There’s a huge need for local investment; 60% of funding comes through the federal level AmeriCorps, but they need to raise about $400,000/year to help provide safe housing, etc.

In addition to agencies YSAN and AmeriCorps Washington, she focused on Peace Point, a new community-driven collaborative effort happening across Pierce County that’s focused on youth violence prevention and intervention. It is not a program or project of Imagine Justice Project; they are just one of multiple organizations collaborating to develop a community-driven plan with a goal to prepare a strategic plan for preventing violence, decrease engagement with the juvenile justice system, and encourage health and well-being for youth ages 12-24. This plan is intended to be a widely agreed upon campaign to shape the future – not a document that sits in a drawer. The vision is to be an interwoven support system to ensure that young people, especially the most vulnerable, are connected to resources and opportunities to help them thrive.

They start in community, seeking people who have been disproportionately impacted by violence and those individuals impacted. It’s an emergent process where they learn and change as we go. In addition to community partners, the project organization includes a planning team with youth and young adults, a youth core team, and a team of researchers, writers, and communicators.

They look at root causes – such as poverty, racism/oppression, intergenerational trauma -- and service gaps – such as coordination/collaboration, resources, authentic engagement -- neither of which is easily fixed. The shape of the plan is still being worked out. They want it to be held accountable to the root causes, such as poverty, but also make sure that what they come up with doesn’t make the root problems worse in the long-term, such as the “war on drugs”. They hope the plan will be a framework for JMAC and others for funding and policy.

There are many challenges. It’s hard building trust within the community and with individuals from different community groups. There’s a huge scope and aggressive timeline instituted by the State Department of Commerce, with a finalized plan required by June 2023. There are also funding constraints, with a projection that they will be roughly $20,000 short by the time they reach the June deadline.

Looking forward, they seek wider community engagement and buy-in. In May, they will hold community summits/events (virtual and in-person) to get input to identify problems with the plan so they can be fixed and to continue to build trust and coordination. In June, they will host a celebration/launch party of the plan.

Most critically, they will need to identify funding for implementation of the plan. The State Department of Commerce has indicated that they are working on a decision package to get funding for implementing the work that the IJP has identified in the strategic plan across the three counties.

JMAC members made comments and asked questions.

* **Vice Chair Mello** shared his understanding that possible funding for the developed plan would come forward in the next legislative session. He is enthusiastic to figure out how JMAC members can support the Peace Point project.
* **Tacoma Public Schools President Bonbright** feels this is a great opportunity for JMAC to move as one. How can we best take the JMAC work on violence prevention and move forward collectively on structurally supporting this work? She mentioned to Ms. Ohler about Narrative Changers, which TSP Board Director Strozier is a part of.
* **Project Director Ohler** will communicate with JMAC as their first drafts come out to help inform JMAC work on a structural response. She appreciates the enthusiasm and support being expressed.
* **Councilmember Campbell** sees connections to the work being done here, but there is a so much that needs done around youth violence besides just this plan. But this does need to be a part of it.
* **Councilmember Hitchen** clarified that the scope and outreach of the plan encompasses all of Pierce County, not just Tacoma. She looks forward to learning more.
* **Chair Walker** commented that JMAC has identified working on youth violence prevention as a great fit with our other buckets of work. How can we move forward on supporting this work?
  + **Vice Chair Mello** struggles with JMAC’s capacity and the deep vs. broad question. Where do we go deep in a couple of areas in the next year or two while still percolating everything in our strategic framework? We don’t want to return to a day where JMAC only “talks” about issues but doesn’t take action.
  + **Andrea Smith, Metro Parks Tacoma,** shared they are doing pre-work with Tacoma Public Schools to incorporate some violence prevention elements in the Beyond the Bell and Club Beyond programs.
  + **Tacoma School Board President Bonbright** wondered how we build out the “Whole Child/Whole Community” work since kids are at home 1/3 of the time, in school 1/3 of the time, and in the community 1/3 of the time. She believes it’s incumbent on all of us to adopt and live the Whole Child components. Another way to think about “taking action” is by taking the Whole Child language and teaching it to the community, medical community, Health Department, and to families so everyone is on the same page to help nurture mental health and live Whole Child. She suggests a workshop.
  + **Superintendent Garcia, Tacoma Public Schools,** agreed with what has been said regarding engagement of kids within safe spaces. The idea of the Whole Child framework is that we weave into the collective pieces to give connectivity. We have a framework, and we’ve adopted a resolution. How do we build connections? How do we act now? How do we act with urgency – not to do something different, but to build on and enhance and execute?
  + **Chair Walker** recommended that a few JMAC executive members meet before the next meeting to outline some action items that can be brought forward at the next meeting. Interested members indicated their interest in the meeting chat.
  + **Vice Chair Mello** asked Director Bonbright if the Whole Child framework is embraced well by the Birth to 25 Advisory Group? Member Bonbright thinks they understand the concept but not the application. She thinks it needs to be implemented more widely.
  + **Chair Walker** thanked everyone for the engagement. She highlighted that there are 2 areas that could use more funding: 1) the gap for the AmeriCorps volunteers and 2) the gap for the plan itself. If your agency can help, please do.
  + **Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department,** recommended that Ms. Ohler watch for the Birth to 25 PSTAA Fund proposals to help with funding.

**STAFF WORKGROUP UPDATE**

**Hunter George, Metro Parks,** shared that a Rotary 8 Major Projects Committee will be presenting to Rotary 8 on March 16th regarding a new playground/community park being built at Jennie Reed Elementary. We’ll hear more about their intentions after that meeting.

He shared a list of future topics that are under consideration for JMAC meetings:

* + - Equity Action Collaborative – language access plans
    - Equity Index success stories
    - Homelessness response
    - Behavioral health crisis response
    - Violent Crime Reduction Plan – community engagement
    - Supplemental safety programs – park rangers, ambassadors, etc.
    - Youth employment pipelines
    - Anti-displacement plan
    - Climate justice – identifying current work that could be aligned
    - Supporting children through the Puget Sound Taxpayer Accountability Act
    - Black Home Initiative

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

* **Chair Walker** shared that the City of Tacoma is hosting an in-person Sustainability Expo on April 22nd.
* **Vice Chair Mello** shared that the Pierce County Council formally adopted its Equity Index process. He thanked all those who have helped work on this. The Equity Note process goes live on April 1st.
* **Vice Chair Mello** also shared that the County Council will be considering the 1/10th of 1% for housing and related services. This would generate $20M per year for permanent affordable housing to people in the county outside of Tacoma and unincorporated Pierce County. The City of Tacoma has already adopted this.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting is Friday, April 14, 2023, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 9:16 a.m.