**Minutes**

**Joint Municipal Action Committee**

Friday, March 11, 2022

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Remote meeting via Zoom

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ROLL CALL - JMAC COMMITTEE**

Elizabeth Bonbright, Chair, Tacoma Public Schools  
Kristina Walker, Vice-Chair, City of Tacoma

Kiara Daniels, City of Tacoma

Rosie Ayala, Metro Parks Tacoma

Andrea Smith, Metro Parks Tacoma

Marty Campbell, Pierce County

Ryan Mello, Pierce County  
Kristin Ang, Port of Tacoma

Deanna Keller, Port of Tacoma

Korey Strozier, Tacoma Public Schools

**JMAC CHIEF EXECUTIVES**

Mike Griffus, Pierce Transit

# **GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE**

Jacques Colon, City of Tacoma

Jeff Robinson, City of Tacoma

Chrisy Vindivich, City of Tacoma

Bucoda Warren, City of Tacoma

Carol Wolfe, City of Tacoma

Kacee Woods, City of Tacoma

Tim Reid, Metro Parks Tacoma

Norinda Rosario Yancey, Metro Parks

William Bridges, Pierce County

Evan Koepfler, Pierce County

Chelsea Talbert, Pierce County

Heather Moss, Pierce County Human Services

Penny Grellier, Pierce Transit

Linda Shilley, Pierce Transit

Matthew Mauer, Port of Tacoma

Sally Perkins, Practical Solutions

Andrew Strobel, Puyallup Tribe of Indians

Cindan Gizzi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Renée Meschi, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Victor Rodriguez, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Tracy Jones, Tacoma Public Schools

Alicia Lawver, Tacoma Public Schools

Liz Collins, University of Puget Sound

Dianna Kielian, Community Member

**AGENDA ITEMS**

**INTRODUCTION**

Chair Bonbright commented that this is the third month of focusing on JMAC’s monthly goals. The committee focused on JEDI in January, Community Wealth Building in February, and the focus for this meeting covers the Health & Safety goal.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be accepted as-is; passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of February 11, 2022 be approved as-is; passed unanimously.

**POLICY FOCUS AREA PRESENTATION: *HEALTH AND SAFETY***

Victor Rodriguez, Health Equity Manager for the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, presented on *Health in All Policies (HiAP).*

* The presentation discussed the question of “What really makes us healthy?” and revealed that health is most influenced by social, economic, and environmental conditions, while too often systems focus on individual behaviors rather than where we live, learn, work and play. The Health Department is trying to partner with local agencies to help influence these environments.
* HiAP is the idea that decision makers consider health, equality, and racial justice when making policy decisions. Some decisions impact some groups more than others, raising the question of whether they have been engaged in the conversation. Improving community health requires cross-sector partnerships.
* Policy decision examples that could be implemented at different levels such as in the workplace, in institutions, and in public policy were shared. For example, the City of Tacoma has passed a resolution to consider health and equity in their decision-making.
* Implementing HiAP requires commitment to health in all policies; building understanding about the conditions that affect health; applying the lens in decision-making; adopting policies that advance the health, vitality and resilience of community members; convening cross-sector partners to advance common goals. We need to be “Pro” in all these areas and use social capital to bring different sectors together. Resources include the Health Lens Analysis Tool (HLAT), the COVID-19 Equity Report, health equity maps, and technical assistance/trainings offered by the health department.
* The HiAP approach can make the county healthier and more resilient. Addressing pre-existing adverse social, economic and environmental conditions can help us deal with health emergencies in the future. Recovery from COVID-19 is going to be a long-term process. What role can JMAC play in this recovery process?

**Discussion:**

* **Kristina Walker, Tacoma City Council Member** shared that she attended the United Way event that spoke about ALICE people (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and how this group was disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. She encouraged others to look at their work. Setting policies using the HiAP approach is key to helping.
* **Elizabeth Bonbright, Tacoma Public School Board President,** shared that the school district has created an Equity Policy Review Team, comprised of a diversity of community members, which considers and recommends revisions to Tacoma Public School District policies as they are created or as they are revised by the Tacoma School Board.

*See attached PowerPoint presentation.*

**POLICY FOCUS AREA PRESENTATION: Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness**

Heather Moss, Director, Pierce County Human Services presented.

The Pierce County Council directed Pierce County Human Services to convene a steering committee to create a “Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness.” To accomplish this task, they created an 18-member steering committee, a 12-member shelter work group, and 7 subcommittees from within those two groups, along with lots of community engagement with the public, to create the plan. They shifted from what’s previously been done to looking at overall community success rather than just program focus. They talked about concepts such as Functional Zero (realistically: create a system where we have the right services and supports to offer to individuals as soon as they enter the homeless system such as short-term shelter). They also focused on Targeted Universalism, which is a new concept where you have an overall goal but recognize that different populations have different needs that need different targeted approaches. Other items include collaboration, thinking about shelter, and funding (not just what we have now, but would we need to end homelessness).

They identified a fairly accurate estimate of the unsheltered homeless in the county. There are a few ways that this estimate can be reached. One is a “Point in Time” count, which is HUD-required for any entities that receive funding for homeless services. This annual count occurs across the country on the same day in communities where it’s required. There’s also a Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) where, when people come into to coordinated entry, they are added to the system. Using those sources, they have an estimate of 3300 current homeless in the county at any given time. We currently have 1000 shelter beds, leaving an approximate shortfall of 2300 shelter beds. She showed a map of the seven council districts which are divided for equal populations. District 4 is the primary district with homelessness, with lots in Districts 2 and 5 also.

The committee created six goals:

* Create a unified regional system and response;
* Use data to ensure effective interventions for all;
* Prevent homelessness, which includes an expanded view of what it means to be homeless;
* Ensure adjacent programs, like schools, healthcare, and law enforcement, meet the needs of homeless populations;
* Meet the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness;
* Expand permanent housing

To achieve the goals of functional zero, they created a conceptual model, with each colored box representing an individual homeless person who is in a state of homelessness. The system would need 5 each for homeless prevention and shelter and transitional housing; 20% for diversion programs; 30% rapid rehousing; 15% housing vouchers, 10% permanent supportive housing, and 15% affordable housing. Unfortunately, the recommendations versus the reality are very different, as shown in the next graph.

Next, they looked at the current and needed Annual Operations funding required to reach the functional zero goal. The blue boxes show what currently exists compared to the orange boxes which show what is needed to reach functional zero. Capital funding also has to be taken into consideration.

There are also cost offsets once functional zero is reached, which would save a conservative estimate of $48 million/year by saving on funds currently being spent on things like healthcare and law enforcement and criminal justice, among others. There are also opportunity costs, such as more money coming in due to increased tourism and local business.

Director Moss gave a quick overview of the proposed initial funding using $9M from the American Rescue Plan.

Next steps to get plan approval includes outreach to municipalities, incorporating other study findings, implementation, pursuit of funding, and the steering committee’s ongoing role.

**Discussion:**

* **Ryan Mello, Pierce County Council Member:** Share that this plan is up for final consideration by the council on Tuesday, March 15th, and they welcome community input before the vote. The county needs to figure out how not to become tired/complacent. A notable thing about the plan is the accountability measures that have been added to help government agencies hold themselves accountable, such as having the needed data, eliminating what’s not working, etc. He encourages everyone to read the plan. He emphasized that this can’t be Pierce County Government’s project but a Pierce County at-large project. The JEDI work that JMAC has identified as a goal is encompassed in this homelessness work. For example, we know that people of color with criminal records are at a much higher risk of homelessness compared to their white peers who’re also in the criminal justice system. It makes it harder for them to find employment and housing. We also need to realize that there’s not a quick fix so we cannot get bored with it: it takes time to finance and implement all the required pieces.
* **Kristina Walker, Tacoma Council Member:** Commended Heather for the graphic representation showing where we are and where we need to go. She asked that they talk in future meetings about how other agencies that may not seem obvious fit into this? She agrees that this is county-wide multi-agency work that needs to be done. She asked Heather how the equity index work is being applied to the work they’re doing. Heather responded that the equity index follows economic indexes, as resources need to be applied where they live. They need their community support/services for where they will be, which they’ve found generally is the same area where they lost their housing.
* **Kiara Daniels, Tacoma City Council Member:** Asked how we divide this work in a practical way? How does this get put into action by the individual entities such as City of Tacoma, Metro Parks? That’s another visioning process we can do. She also commented that we can create programs, but how do we also look at policy decisions by looking at how people got here, and how could we have created those situations? In what ways have we created systems that have made it so they can’t find housing (such as when they are released from the criminal justice system) through policy making? Heather responded regarding similar City/County roles. For example, she works almost daily w/her city counterpart in the Neighborhood and Community Services department. The city is also actively working on a homelessness plan, so they’re trying to keep both organizations aligned as much as possible and working together to address the questions. She feels they also need to think more broadly and reach out for help from church communities, business communities, funding from other organizations. One of the major needs is housing subsidies, which is not sustainable at the local government level; it requires state and federal level help.
* **Marty Campbell, Pierce County Council Vice Chair:**  Thanked Heather and her team for the work they are doing. It’s a living, breathing document that shifts as needed. We have to build systems that can move quickly to address emerging needs, which this does.

*See attached PowerPoint presentation.*

**FUTURE TOPICS: Vision Zero; Review and Reflect on JMAC Objectives and Process**

**JMAC Chair Bonbright** shared that time is of the essence for JMAC to be impactful. In April, we want to have a pause moment where we reflect with all of you. We’ve focused on great issues – but to what end? What goals do we want to set? What requests do we want to make of each JMAC entity? What is it that we want to do? Where do we go from here? Be thinking about this for next time.

**JMAC Vice Chair Kristina Walker** reiterated that many of you were part of the JMAC Summit of 60 event, where we created a large plan. We want to do that work: Think about how to hold each other accountable and how do we commit to these things as a group. What can we commit to taking back to our colleagues? And how do we circle back to that. The conversation next month will be about the work that needs done and how we can take it to the next level.

**JMAC Chair Bonbright** thanked the CEOs and JMAC members for appointing dedicated staff members to be a point person for their organization, which will help us focus on the on the groundwork. She and Council Member Walker will be reaching out to JMAC members individually to get their input on the above questions. You can also share musings from what we’ve learned these last 3 months.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair Bonbright called for public comment.

* Sally Perkins gave a written comment that we need to look at systems because sometimes the systems that we create, as policy makers, can disproportionately impact people of color and people of limited resources.

**GENERAL COMMENTS BY JMAC**

Chair Bonbright called for general comments by JMAC members:

* **Elizabeth Bonbright, Tacoma Public School Board President**, shared that mask mandates in Tacoma Public Schools are going away based on updated guidance from the state and county health departments. TPS is dedicated to upholding personal choice for students and staff who do or do not want to wear masks.
* **Kristina Walker, Tacoma City Council Member,** asked Metro Parks colleagues what process will be used to fill the open seat on their Board. Rosie Ayala shared that the process should be made public the week of March 14, 2022 and the Board will review candidates in April. The Metro Parks leadership team is finalizing the process before sending it out.
* **Mike Griffus, CEO, Pierce Transit**, shared that the “Move Ahead Washington” package was passed at the legislature, so Pierce Transit will be working on a policy to offer free rides for those 18 and under on all of its system. The policy must be implemented by October 2022 in order to receive the funding. He also shared that TSA has extended masking requirements on public transportation through at least April 18th.
* **Marty Campbell, Pierce County Council Vice Chair,** thanked Metro Parks for the phenomenal work they’ve done at the dog parks at Swan Creek park. Additionally, he encouraged Metro Parks to choose someone from East Tacoma for their board position as there is a lot of equity work that needs to be done there.

Chair Bonbright thanked each member for the work they’re doing and thanked Pierce County Human Services for their aspirational but also practical presentation about dealing with homelessness. In April there will be discussion for how JMAC can reach out and communicate with the Summit of 60 participants from the Rainforest event about the work that has been done since that event.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 8, 2022, 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Bonbright adjourned the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

\**Minutes taken by Tacoma Public Schools*