

# Metro Public Safety Advisory Committee

## General Committee Meeting #16

### MINUTES

Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

#### I. Call to Order

##### A. Zoom Meeting Protocols

Facilitator Richard France called the meeting to order. Facilitator Thomson Dryjanski announced Spanish and American Sign Language interpreter services would be available throughout the meeting.

##### B. Agenda

Facilitator France reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

##### C. Roll Call

**Present:** Andrea Urmanita, Carrie Madden, Chauncey Smith, Clarence Davis, Constance Strickland, Darryl Goodus, Esteban Garcia, Fabian Gallardo, Florence Annang, Glenda Murrell, James Wen, Jose Raigoza, Ma'ayan Dembo, Maricela De Rivera, Dr. Sabrina Howard, Scarlett de Leon

**Absent:** Raul Gomez, Scarlett de Leon, Mohammad Tajsar, Jessica Kellogg, Charles Hammerstein, Ashley Ajayi

##### D. Approval of Meeting Minutes for 11/17/21

Committee members voted to approve the meeting minutes for the November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. The minutes were approved unanimously.

#### II. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants. No public comments were shared.

#### III. Discussion

##### A. Presentation & Discussion of Public Safety Survey Results

The committee received a presentation of public safety survey results and provided questions and comments to the consultant team. [That presentation can be found here.](#)

- a. **Context-setting:** Facilitator Mahdi reminded members that the survey was not a PSAC approved work product and was largely developed by Metro before PSAC was underway.
- b. **Presentation from the Public Safety Survey representatives:** Aaron Weinstein, Dr. Richard Bernard, and Shikari Byerly presented results from surveys conducted of Metro riders, people experiencing homelessness, and staff.
- c. **Survey Methodology:** Dr. Bernard shared that the surveys were conducted online or by phone and were offered in multiple languages. The consultant team modified the survey to include more than fifteen of PSAC Public Safety Survey ad hoc committee's edits.
- d. **Key Survey results:** Consultant Byerly summarized that most riders usually feel safe on Metro except at night. Overall, riders want to increase lighting, unarmed security staff, and

transit ambassadors, whereas a smaller portion of riders would like more law enforcement. She shared that the survey showed mixed sentiments around safety concerns related to unhoused riders.

- i. Byerly also shared results from the survey of unhoused riders – notably that fewer than half of the respondents experiencing homelessness reported that they were not treated well by Metro operators and security; these riders would also like to see improvements to safety and physical environment, including adding restrooms, additional staff to assist people with disabilities, and transit ambassadors.
  - ii. The internal survey of Metro staff showed their primary concerns were around providing resources to better ensure their personal safety.
- e. **Q&A**
- i. Member Davis asked if the staff survey disaggregated responses by demographic characteristics, including gender, race, and ethnicity.
    1. Staff member Weinstein responded that these variables were included in the survey and would follow up with additional information for the committee.
  - ii. Member Smith commented that based on survey results, PSAC recommendations are in line with what most Metro riders would like to see regarding public safety.
  - iii. Member Dembo asked for more information about the breakdown between infrequent and current riders.
    1. Dr. Bernard responded that current riders made up 70% of responses. The survey had questions that asked about riding frequency that allowed survey analysts to distinguish between current and infrequent Metro riders.
  - iv. Member Wen responded to the finding regarding Metro operators' perspectives on the agency's approach to unhoused riders. He indicated that he feels Metro operators are not necessarily uncompassionate but stressed and performing too many job duties. He asked if it would be possible to add a question regarding operator's mental health in a follow up survey.
    1. Staff member Weinstein responded that they can certainly incorporate this question if there is a follow up survey.
    2. Member Murrell shared her experience as an African American female train operator and her safety concerns with unhoused riders.
    3. Member Raigoza also shared his safety concerns as a Metro operator and previous negative experiences with violent riders.
  - v. Member Davis shared concern for accessibility issues for riders with disabilities – specifically vision impairments.
    1. Dr. Bernard responded that 17% of survey takers reported having a disability and 13% of them experience low-vision or blindness.
    2. Member Goodus asked for surveys to be made more accessible to capture more responses from riders with disabilities.

## B. Discussion of Committee Work to Date & Next Steps

- a. **Context-setting:** Facilitator France reviewed PSAC's timeline through the beginning of 2022 and potential discussion items for tonight.
  - i. Member Dembo suggested moving up the CAHOOTS guest speaker presentation to before recommendations.
- b. **Infrastructure Protection Services:** Member Madden asked for direction from committee members regarding recommendations from the IPS ad hoc committee, specifically why the previous set of recommendations were not approved.
  - i. Facilitator France summarized the ad hoc committee's recommendation to approve Metro staff recommendations to amend the IPS contract during the extension period were voted down during a previous general committee meeting.
  - ii. Member Wen shared his concern with the contract extension for the specific contractor (RMI) and cited a lack of clarity with the recommendation's wording that impacted his decision to vote no.
  - iii. Member Murrell asked for clarification as to why there are subcontractors listed under RMI in the contract and expressed her personal frustration with contracted security being distracted on their cell phones while working.
    1. Staff member Dickerson clarified that subcontractors are needed to ensure coverage throughout the Metro system and encouraged Member Murrell to contact the security operations center to report these cell phone incidents.

- c. **Media Coverage of PSAC:** Committee members discussed recent media coverage of the committee.
  - i. Links to media coverage:
    - 1. [LA Times](#)
    - 2. [Sheriff's Press Conference](#)
  - ii. Member de Rivera provided an overview of the Sheriff's press conference and indicated that the Sheriff gave an oversimplified and disingenuous overview of PSAC.
    - 1. Member Annang asked if the committee can draft a response in the press to the Sheriff's comments and clarify the committee's goals.
      - a. Metro Chief of Staff Englund responded that individual members can respond as an op-ed but is unsure of the impact it will have on the Sheriff.
    - 2. Member de Rivera shared that in response to the press conference, Metro board members were vocal in their support of PSAC.

#### **IV. General Public Comment**

Public comment was taken from meeting participants. The following comments were shared:

- A. Commentor shared their apprehension with the transit ambassador program.
- B. Commentor indicated they are a bus operator and shared their negative experiences that could have benefited from law enforcement.
- C. Commentor expressed their dissatisfaction with the committee's stance on armed security.
- D. Commentor listed their difficulties riding Metro, including lack of Wi-Fi and unreliable services.
- E. Commentor apologized for the comments from the Sheriff.
- F. Commentor shared their distrust with the Sheriff's department and expressed their support for PSAC.

#### **V. Adjournment**

- A. Meeting adjourned at 7:09 PM

#### **VI. Next Steps**

- A. The committee will reconvene on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.