

# Metro Public Safety Advisory Committee General Committee Meeting #21

## Meeting Summary

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

### I. Call to Order

#### a. Zoom Meeting Protocols

- i. Facilitator Richard France called the meeting to order. Facilitator Thomson Dryjanski announced Spanish and American Sign Language interpretation services would be available during the meeting.

#### b. Agenda

- i. Facilitator France reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

#### C. Roll Call

**Present:** Andrea Urmanita, Ashley Ajayi, Clarence Davis, Ma'ayan Dembo, Esteban Gallardo, Darryl Goodus, Charles Hammerstein, Sabrina Howard, Jessica Kellogg, Glenda Murrell, James Wen, Jose Raigoza, Maricela de Rivera, Chauncey Smith, Constance Strickland, Mohammad Tajsar

**Absent:** Carrie Madden, Florence Annang, Scarlett de Leon, Raul Gomez

#### d. Approval of Meeting Minutes for 02/02/22

- i. Committee members voted to approve the meeting minutes for the February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, meeting.
- ii. Yes: 11 Abstain:1 No:0
- iii. Meeting minutes were approved

#### e. New Metro Staff Introduction

- i. Metro staff introduced Gina Osbourne as the new Metro Chief Safety Officer who will oversee SSLE and risk safety asset management.

### II. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants.

- a. There were no requests for public comment.

### III. Discussion

#### **PSAC Work-to-date**

Committee members reflected on the committee's work-to-date and shared feedback on outstanding items that the committee should or will include in its workplan.

- a. **Context setting:** Facilitator France provided a summary of the recommendations passed by the committee, new roles that have been developed, alternatives advanced, and data produced. He also reviewed next steps and asked for feedback.
  
- b. **Member feedback:**
  - i. Member Ajayi asked what the plan was for outstanding items that are not addressed before June.
    - 1. Metro staff replied that they are currently finishing up the procurement to employ a consultant to complete the evaluation of PSAC. The goal is to complete the evaluation by May to chart next steps before the committee term ends.

#### **Update on Initiatives Related to Motion 26.2 & Motion 37 Amendment**

Metro staff Nicole Englund, Judy Gerhardt, and Deserae Jones provided an update on the agency's various safety initiatives including security blue light boxes, right-of-way intrusion prevention, the transit ambassador program, elevator attendants, operator security, flexible dispatch, and outreach program improvements.

- a. **Next steps:** Metro staff shared that they will present a more comprehensive version of tonight's updates at the next Metro Board meeting.
  
- b. **Flexible Dispatch Initiative:** Member Tajsar asked for more information on intelligence sharing and communication between bus operators and law enforcement.
  - i. Metro staff replied that there will be recommendations coming to the general PSAC committee on the Flexible Dispatch program in April. The initiative will put LAPD dispatchers in the Bus Operations Center so a dispatcher can quickly respond with the most appropriate responder.
  - ii. Member Smith responded that although the idea of putting police dispatchers into Metro's dispatch system to listen and decrease response times may seem like a good idea for community safety, but that there is research showing that it puts people of color at a higher risk for over-policing. He shared a [link](#) to an article that provides more information.
  
- c. **Funding:** Member Ajayi asked for more information regarding allocated funding for the initiatives mentioned.
  - i. Metro staff responded that funding came out of the motion 26.2, which allocated funding available in the current fiscal year, and has already been approved by the Board.
  
- d. **Operator Safety and Right-of-Way Intrusion Prevention:** Member Murrell asked for clarification on the button mentioned for operator safety.

- i. Metro staff responded that the panic button alarms are in a conceptual stage and would enhance, rather than supplant, the current systems in place.

### **Metro Budget Equity Assessment Tool: Metro Office of Equity and Race**

Executive Officer KeAndra Dodds presented an update on how the Office of Equity and Race is working with Metro staff to measure equity in their annual budget process.

#### **a. Questions and Comments:**

- i. Member Ajayi asked if the MBEAT assessment has been applied to the most recent bus service changes.
  - 1. Dodds clarified that the MBEAT is not applied to service changes and is instead applied only during the budget process when making funding requests.
- ii. Member Davis asked work the office has accomplished so far and what projects are currently in progress.
  - 1. Dodds replied that the budget equity assessment has grown in use and is now being applied to budget requests agency-wide, resulting in a general cultural change. They added that additionally the office is ensuring equity is considered in every step of a project's process, are training equity liaisons, and they developed a compensation policy for members of advisory bodies.
- iii. Member Tajsar asked what the biggest challenge to implementing new approaches to budgeting has been.
  - 1. Dodds shared that training staff and making sure the tool is comprehensive of Metro's scope are the most difficult.

### **Budget Allocation Exercise**

Facilitators Mahdi and Dryjanski lead a discussion and exercise around Metro's public safety budget allocation.

- a. **Context setting:** Facilitator Mahdi summarized reviewed the major spending categories from last year's public safety budget. She emphasized that this exercise is solely for public safety and not inclusive of Metro's full operating budget.
  - i. Member Ajayi asked how the process of categorizing and ranking different potential funding streams is equitable.
    - 1. Facilitator France shared that by April, the committee must provide input on Metro's budgeting process for public safety and this is a mechanism to reach consensus with the group.
    - 2. He added that after listening to the previous presentation on Metro's budget equity process, the facilitation team has some possible next steps and questions for the committee.
    - 3. He added that the budgeting process will inherently require tradeoffs and prioritization.
- b. **Mentimeter Exercise:** Facilitator Dryjanski led the committee through a polling exercise to gather initial data on the committee's preferences for how Metro allocates its public safety budget. [The results of the polling can be found here.](#) The following section details questions and clarifications asked during this discussion item.
  - i. **Creating Safe Environment:** Member Tajsar suggested expanding on the projects

that fall under this category to achieve the vision for a safe environment that the committee has discussed.

1. Facilitator Dryjanski shared that the categories are based on how Metro has grouped things together, but the facilitation team will follow up with a more detailed survey. He also clarified that the purpose of today's exercise is to set a baseline for future conversations.
  - ii. **Emergency Response:** Metro staff shared that emergency operations are the high-level coordination and collaboration with other transit agencies/partners for planned and unplanned emergencies or other large public events.
    1. Member Dembo asked if Metro is acting solely as a transit agency or more as a countywide convener.
      - a. Metro staff responded that during such instances, they have representation in their Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that represents the agency's needs. While all other entities have their priorities, they work to find balance within a unified command system. Within their EOC, they have representatives from the Sheriff's Department, City Emergency Planning, and the Fire Department.
    2. Member Wen asked if there are any remaining funds from the previous fiscal year in the emergency response budget.
      - a. Metro staff were unsure if there was a remaining budget but shared that funds do not roll over. Funds for the EOC primarily come from grantmaking.
  - iii. **Homeless Outreach:** Member Davis asked if the 11 million dedicated to homeless outreach includes future funding from a built-in ecosystem like recycling programs.
    1. Facilitator Dryjanski responded that this is not something that would likely fall under the homeless outreach budget. However, he noted that this is something that can be suggested as a possible alternative/initiative in a future discussion the committee will have.
  - iv. **Investments in Technology:** Member Howard shared that they voted to keep the budget for this item about the same because it is not clear to them that investing in it would improve the rider experience or safety.
    1. Member Murrell shared that they support increasing funding for this item, especially to improve the effectiveness of the camera system.
  - v. **Law enforcement:** Member Tajsar noted that having more than half the total budget dedicated to law enforcement seems fundamentally at odds with what the Board and the public want.
    1. Member Davis shared that it does not seem that law enforcement will be removed, but the budget should gradually be reduced.
  - vi. **Safety and Security Initiatives Support:** Metro staff shared that this item is for labor costs which includes benefits, workers compensation, and other standard fringe benefits for Metro's Security Department.
- c. **Next Steps:** Facilitator Dryjanski announced that the facilitation team will follow up with a survey that includes detailed line items.

IV. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants.

- a. There were no requests for public comment.

V. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

VI. Next Steps

- a. The committee will reconvene on 03/02/22.