

# Metro Public Safety Advisory Committee General Committee Meeting #26

## Meeting Summary

Wednesday, May 04, 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 Cuevas-Flores 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, Darryl Goodus, Florence Annang, Glenda Murrell, James Wen, Jose Raigoza, Maricela de Rivera, Chauncey Smith, Constance Strickland, Mohammad Tajsar, Esteban Gallardo, Ma'ayan Dembo, Sabrina Howard

**Absent:** Scarlett de Leon, Raul Gomez, Jessica Kellogg, Ashley Ajayi, Charles Hammerstein, Clarence Davis

#### d. **Approval of Meeting Minutes for 04/20/22**

- i. Committee members voted to approve the meeting minutes for the April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting.
- ii. Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

### II. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants.

- a. Commentor shared opposition to police contracts on Metro and urged PSAC to call on Metro to refuse to contract with the Sherriff's department.

### III. Discussion

#### **Discussion of Reimagining Public Safety Strategic Framework**

Committee members discussed their position on predictive policing systems on Metro.

- a. **Context Setting:** Member Smith provided an overview of the flaws with a predictive policing system, which were raised by a coalition of community-based organizations and other PSAC members. The coalition laid out its concerns in a [jointly signed letter](#) submitted to the Metro Board.

b. **Discussion:**

- i. Member Tajsar shared his experience with predictive policing programs. He added that the committee should take a stand against intelligence-led efforts because it takes away focus and resources from policing alternatives.
  - 1. Member Tajsar spoke about ShotSpotter, a police surveillance vendor that uses strategically positioned microphones in cities to listen for gunshots. This service was recently acquired by the Pasadena Police Department, despite widespread community opposition.
- ii. Member Annang shared that she has conducted research on intelligence gathering programs and found that often it is focused on data collection in vulnerable communities. She indicated this would move Metro's policies further from achieving equitable outcomes.
- iii. Member Dembo commented that she agrees with Member Annang and thinks there are better solutions to fill existing data gaps.
- iv. Member de Rivera acknowledged the existing high level of surveillance and encouraged members to critically think about how these resources should be shifted.
- v. Member Garcia raised the importance of balancing the priorities of anti-surveillance with the priorities of riders who have experienced violence on Metro.
- vi. Member Howard shared that committee members should think of both long-term and short-term visions. She noted that while safety alternatives need to be considered as long-term solutions, police might be necessary in the near term.
  - 1. Member Goodus expressed support for Member Howard's comment and agreed that although a predictive model should be moved away from in the long-term, it might still be needed in the immediate to keep riders safe.
- vii. Member Urmanita asked Metro what their timeline is for implementing predictive policing programs.
  - 1. Metro staff responded that they are not implementing predictive policing but instead are using data from bus rider complaints to identify bus lines that have the most incidents. For the timeline, staff indicated that the motion requires Metro to report back in August, at which time a finalized policy will be brought to the committee and public.

c. **Informal poll:** Members voted on whether they oppose the use of predictive policing systems on Metro to understand if facilitators should draft a formal vote.

- i. The results of the informal poll were (8) members said they opposed the use of predictive policing systems and (4) members said they were not sure.

**New board motion:** Facilitator France reviewed the new board motion from the Board for staff to draft a policy for applying public safety analytics and develop a bias free policing policy.

### **Discussion of Metro's Partnership with Los Angeles Sheriff's Department**

Committee members discussed issuing a recommendation for Metro to end their partnership with LASD, following the [Sheriff's recent statements](#) regarding Metro's current policing contract that is out for bid presently.

- a. **Context setting:** Member Tajsar presented his proposal for PSAC to issue a recommendation to Metro and the Board to refuse to contract with the Sheriff's department, even if the agency continues with policing contracts.
- b. **Discussion**
  - i. Member de Rivera shared that she is in support of drafting something that states PSAC's opposition to a partnership with LASD. She also raised the concern that officers from the Sheriff's department would still respond to 911 calls from Metro.
  - ii. Member Smith expressed support for Member Tajsar's recommendation and added that the Sheriff is fearmongering to generate more support for inefficient policies.
  - iii. Member Annang also shared support for the recommendation and stated it is important to take a collective stand against being intimidated.
  - iv. Member Raigoza stated support for the recommendation and flagged that with the Sheriff currently on Metro, riders and drivers are not receiving quality security services.
- c. **Potential next steps:** Facilitator Mahdi reviewed the three potential next steps (1) no follow-up (2) draft and review a proposal (3) solicit additional input
  - i. Members in chat commented that they would like to review a proposal at a future meeting.

### **Review of Flexible Dispatch Recommendations**

Committee members discussed and voted to approve their recommendations on Metro's Flexible Dispatch Initiative.

- a. **Context setting:** Members from the Non-Law Enforcement Alternatives ad hoc committee provided context on the recommendations for the Flexible Dispatch Initiative.
  - ii. Member Smith shared that he supports the suggested recommendations but that the proposal is not in alignment with the PSAC's goal of phasing out Metro's contracts with law enforcement.
  - iii. Member Strickland expressed confusion with which dispatch services the recommendations are referring to.
    1. Facilitator France clarified that Flexible Dispatch would move an LAPD dispatcher into Metro facilities to be able to deploy resources.
    2. Member Strickland shared that from her conversations with dispatchers, they need support for non-law enforcement services.

**d. Discussion**

- i. Member de Rivera expressed support for Member Smith's comment to support the recommendations while keeping PSAC's long-term vision of ending Metro's contracts with law enforcement.
- ii. Member Raigoza asked if the police dispatchers are police officers or civilians. He also asked how the performance of the dispatcher program will be evaluated and further developed.
  - 1. Metro staff responded that the dispatcher works for the City of Los Angeles and is not a sworn police officer.
  - 2. Member Raigoza added that he was a dispatcher for many years and asked how the flexible dispatch program will be different from past programs.
    - a. Metro staff shared that response times will be reduced. They also indicated that the dispatchers in the current proposal would be able to use real-time information to adjust and coordinate. This will not be possible if they are not affiliated with LAPD because they will still have to call in to a remote location and will not have direct access to the resources from the police department.
- iii. Facilitator France suggested the committee articulate that they want Metro to investigate the option of also placing a civilian dispatcher that is not affiliated with a police department.
  - 1. Member de Rivera shared that the overall goal is to not spend additional Metro funds with contracted police agencies.
  - 2. Member Smith asked if there is any research demonstrating that an LAPD dispatchers would be more beneficial than providing additional support and resources to current dispatchers.
    - a. Member Raigoza highlighted the need for more research and learning from past dispatcher programs.
  - 3. Metro staff stated key performance indicators, particularly around response times, will be used to measure the success of the program. They added that Metro does not currently have a 911 facility to respond to calls and the Flexible Dispatch program will bring these resources in house, a request they have heard from Metro operators.

**e. Proposal:** Facilitator France proposed to approve PSAC's Flexible Dispatch recommendations with the amendment that Metro also consider a civilian dispatcher that is not affiliated with any policing agencies.

- i. Member de Rivera asked for an amendment to include that the dispatcher should be a Metro employee.

**f. Voting Action**

- i. Vote to approve the flexible dispatch recommendations as written with the addition

that Metro should investigate the option to consider a civilian dispatcher with no police affiliation.

- ii. Yes: 10 No:1 Abstain: 0
- iii. The item was approved

#### IV. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants.

- a. Commentor shared that although they understand the push for a more equitable security model on Metro, they also acknowledge the safety gaps and unintended negative consequences on safety.

#### V. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

#### VI. Next Steps

- a. The committee will reconvene on 05/18/22.