

Other Business

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of August 11, 2021

Subject: Formation of Metro Transit Police Work Group

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Bylaws of the Metropolitan Council, art. III.C.

Staff Prepared/Presented: Charles Zelle, Chair, 651-602-1390

Division/Department: Chair's Office

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve Chair Zelle's recommendation to:

1. Form an internal Metro Transit Police Work Group through March 2, 2022.
2. Appoint the following members to serve on the Work Group: Reva Chamblis, Chair; Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, Kris Fredson, Robert Lilligren, Abdi Muse, Phillip Sterner, Susan Vento, and Wendy Wulff.

Background

The purpose of forming this Work Group is to facilitate the police review.

Minnesota Statutes 473.407, Subdivision 1 states "the council may appoint peace officers, and establish a law enforcement agency, known as the Metropolitan Transit police, to police its transit property and routes, to carry out investigations, and to make arrests."

In [June 2020](#), Chair Zelle announced that the Metropolitan Council "in fulfilling our oversight role will be conducting a comprehensive review of the Metro Transit department's policing policies, practices, and relationships," and that this review would "inform our ongoing efforts to improve transit security and customer experiences on our region's transit system."

In July 2020, the Metropolitan Council began working with the Citizens League to develop and implement a robust community engagement strategy to guide this work. The Citizens League addressed the Metropolitan Council on August 4, 2021, on its findings. The Work Group will build upon the Citizens League work by developing a series of Metropolitan Council Committee of the Whole discussions and formulating recommendations.

Work Group Charge

The Work Group duties are two-fold:

1. Design a series of Committee of the Whole discussions
2. Develop recommendations for consideration by the full Council

The Work Group will design a series of Committee of the Whole discussions that will occur at an approximately monthly basis from August 2021 through February 2022. The Committee of the Whole meetings should provide opportunities for the Council Members to receive information from the MTPD, the results of the Citizens League review and other public input, and from other sources, ask questions, articulate priorities, and provide feedback as the work group develops recommendations.

By February 28, 2022, the Metro Transit Police Review Work Group will report back to the full Metropolitan Council with recommended transit safety and security outcomes and strategies to achieve the outcomes. The

recommendations must also identify data and other information that Metro Transit will provide the Metropolitan Council as part of regular Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) updates that will begin in Q1 2022. Once the Metropolitan Council accepts the recommendations, the adopted outcomes and strategies will serve as Metropolitan Council policy guidance for the Metro Transit Police Department.

In designing the Committee of the Whole sessions and in developing the recommended outcomes and strategies, the work group will:

- Ensure recommendations address safety and security for riders and employees
- Acknowledge the history of systemic racism in policing generally and establish recommendations on how the MTPD should address disparities and dismantle inequities through their work
- Review and identify opportunities to strengthen policies, procedures, and practices
- Address issues raised by Council Members during the Committee of the Whole meetings and through other channels. Topics identified to date include: use of force, code of conduct enforcement, interaction with youth, MTPD oversight and governance, officer training, and disaggregated data needs
- Use results of the Citizens League engagement as a key input to guide and inform priorities, outcomes, and strategies
- Incorporate additional stakeholders, data, policing standards, best practices, and other critical information that need to be considered in addition to the Citizens League engagement results
- Identify barriers that may need to be addressed to achieve recommended outcomes or carry out recommended strategies
- Confer with the Equity Advisory Committee and the BIPOC work group as appropriate throughout the process of reviewing MTPD and developing recommendations

Rationale

The Metro Transit Police Work Group will play a critical role in structuring the police review process to meet Chair Zelle’s June 2020 goals. The Metro Transit Police Work Group will be expected to shape the Committee of the Whole presentations planned at a frequency of approximately one presentation per month from August 2021 – February 2022 as part of their work to arrive at recommendations by February 28, 2022.

The work group will complete its work and report back to the Council by February 28, 2022 at which time the group’s work will be completed and the work group will end, unless the Council determines that the group should be continued for an additional period of time to address any items identified for further consideration.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The Metro Transit Police Review Work Group will take an approach to reviewing the Metro Transit Police Department that is centered on the *Thrive* principles of integration, collaboration, and accountability. This Work Group will explicitly use equity as a lens in their work as called for in *Thrive*, including meaningfully using the community engagement conducted by the Citizens League to develop recommendations.

Funding

The Regional Administration Division and Metro Transit Division will provide primary staff support of the Metro Transit Police Work Group as part of its regular work.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition.