

Minutes

Committee of the Whole



Meeting Date: June 1, 2022

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Street

Members Present:

- Chair, Charlie Zelle
- Judy Johnson, District 1
- Reva Chamblis, District 2
- Deb Barber, District 4
- Molly Cummings, District 5

- John Pacheco, District 6
- Robert Lilligren, District 7
- Abdirahman Muse, District 8
- Raymond Zeran, District 9
- Peter Lindstrom, District 10
- Susan Vento, District 11

- Francisco Gonzalez, District 12
- Chai Lee, District 13
- Kris Fredson, District 14
- Phillip Sterner, District 15
- Wendy Wulff, District 16
- = present

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Council Chair Zelle called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:00 p.m.

Agenda Approved

It was moved by Sterner, seconded by Vento to approve the agenda. Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Lilligren, seconded by Vento to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2022 regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried.**

Mary Bogie, Regional Administrator, introduced Metro Transit Interim Chief of Police Rick Grates. Interim Chief Grates was previously a captain and joined the department in 2005. He has been recognized many times and received numerous awards for his excellence of service. Interim Chief Grates introduced the Metro Transit Police Department officers in attendance as well.

Information

1. Metro Transit Safety & Security Draft Action Plan

Lesley Kandaras, Chief of Staff, Metro Transit, introduced the draft Metro Transit Safety and Security Action Plan. Kandaras went through a brief overview of the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) review process. Phase one was a transit safety conversation. Citizens League and Twin Cities Innovation Alliance engaged approximately 1,000 people to learn about public safety on transit. Phase two was the Police Work Group comprised of eight Council Members, and their resulting vision and recommendations. Phase three was the development of the Safety & Security Action Plan. Kandaras noted that Metro Transit is not the only agency in the country struggling with public safety. Pam Steffen, Manager of Customer Relations, Metro Transit, shared information on Area of Work 1: Improving conditions on the system. Steffen shared several examples of action items for improvement. Metro Transit will also undertake a review of the Code of Conduct and enforcement procedures. Steffen also shared a list of measurable goals and metrics for improving conditions on the system. Steve McLaird, Acting Director of Bus Transportation, shared information on Area of Work 2: Training and supporting employees. McLaird gave examples of actions that Metro Transit will take to expand employee training, as well

as improve communication between MTPD and frontline staff. McLaird also shared measurable goals that are under consideration. Sergeant Kadra Mohamed, Metro Transit Police, shared information about Area of Work 3: Engaging customers and partners. Sgt. Mohamed shared examples including developing an approach to regular public engagement regarding public safety on transit, and strategies and plans to engage youth. MTPD will also continue to invest in the MTPD Homeless Action Team (HAT). Sgt. Mohamed also shared measurable goals for this work area. Kandaras shared that the plan will address systemic issues through staff-level operational partnerships, Metropolitan Council policies, and the Metropolitan Council's role in convening partners to address regional issues. The team will bring forward a business item for Council approval of the plan.

Council Members had questions and comments regarding the possibility of social worker engagement within the police department, the common theme of rebuilding connections, late-night ridership and rebuilding service, strategies that were not included in the plan and the barriers, the systemic issues that the Council members will need to work on as well as communication to the public, a request for ride-alongs and ways for the Council to engage with officers, crime perception versus reality, working with other jurisdictions, and the need for responses and consequences for behaviors. Wes Kooistra, General Manager, Metro Transit, commented on the connection with the Council's mission of fostering economic development of the region. Council members also commented on unsheltered homelessness, the immediacy of the action plan and accountability, crime prevention, community and MTPD staff interactions, transit safety and severe weather, the simultaneous police chief searches for Metro Transit, St. Paul, and Minneapolis, the Real-Time Information Center (RTIC) data, the lack of information about individual neighborhoods rather than just general ridership, infrastructure and safety, exercising regional leadership, and a request for updates and accountability.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole meeting of June 1, 2022.

Approved this 15th day of June, 2022.

Council Contact:

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