

**Minutes  
Joint Municipal Action Committee  
Quarterly Meeting  
November 8, 2013**

**PRESENT:** Rick Talbert, Chair (Pierce County Council)  
Aaron Pointer (Metropolitan Park Board)  
Tim Reid (Metropolitan Park Board)  
Anders Ibsen (Tacoma City Council)  
Kurt Miller (Tacoma School Board)  
Debbie Winskill (Tacoma School Board)  
Evette Mason (Port of Tacoma)  
Alisa O'Hanlon (City of Tacoma)  
Nancy Davis (Metropolitan Park District)  
Brynn Brady (Pierce County)  
Minutes taken by Metro Parks Tacoma

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Rick Talbert called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

The attendees introduced themselves. Also in attendance was Josh Garcia, Tacoma Public Schools; Mark Williams, Pierce County; Randy Lewis, City of Tacoma; Kurtis Kingsolver, City of Tacoma; Steve Knauer, Metro Parks Tacoma; and Su Dowie, Foss Waterway Development Authority.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as published.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Rick Talbert moved for approval of the minutes of October 11, 2013. Tim Reid seconded. The chair declared the motion passed.

**Discussion of Proposed Legislative Agendas and Priorities**

**Metro Parks Tacoma**

Nancy Davis began the presentation with Metro Parks Tacoma's top legislative priorities for the upcoming biennium. She stressed the importance of developing strategic partnerships and asked the group's assistance with introductions to key groups and individuals to advance transportation initiatives.

Ms. Davis reported that the second phase of Destination Point Defiance (Missing Link) is top priority. This phase focuses on the entrance to Point Defiance including a round-about. Other priorities were a South End Recreation and Adventure Campus (SERA) and improvements to Titlow Park.

Specialized Recreation funding and insurance coverage for physical exercise prescribed by doctors is being explored by Metro Parks. Funding for a master plan development at Swan Creek Park and a potential eastside community center is also

being sought. An introductory public meeting for the proposed center is slated for November 14, 2013 at Stewart Heights Park.

Storm water treatment at Wapato Lake is a city-wide priority, explained Steve Knauer. Metro Parks and the City of Tacoma have done extensive research and are close to finalizing a plan. Mr. Knauer informed members that the district was successful controlling the blue green algae last summer, but a long-term solution needs to be in place.

### **Pierce County**

Brynn Brady reported that funding for transportation remains a top Pierce County item. Tim Reid asked who is taking the lead on SR 167. Ms. Brady stated a consultant was hired to take the lead, with a strong coalition in place and dozens of local businesses weighing in with their support.

The County hopes to capture revenue from the upcoming US Open Golf Tournament to attract future tournaments to the area. Capital funding will provide for a floating moorage at Chambers Bay by 2015.

The County is proposing a state jail study that takes a comprehensive look at jail capacity to make sure resources are being spent appropriately. Ms. Brady reported the County is currently bearing the high costs of housing felons with mental health issues and there is a pressing need for new facilities.

### **Port of Tacoma**

Evette Mason reported that completing SR 167 is a top legislative priority for the Port of Tacoma. The business climate in Washington is also a concern. Ms. Mason further explained the Port of Seattle is not their only competitor, mentioning both Canada and Mexico as other competitors.

Ms. Mason stated the Port is waiting for Model Toxic Control Act (MTCA) funds earmarked for site cleanups through an agreement with the Department of Ecology. The legislature chose not to fully fund the project this past session and they are waiting for \$5 million. The importance of cleaning up these sites and putting them back into use was emphasized. She reported no projects are currently being funded in the Tacoma area.

Storm water management is another top item. Ms. Mason explained they are researching the best technologies to manage storm water and hope to incorporate results from a State study. They are seeking \$2 million in funding from the State.

The Port is also watching fish consumption as this is linked to storm water issues and Commencement Bay water quality.

### **City of Tacoma**

Randy Lewis reported that the City is closely watching storm water topics. Mr. Lewis explained there are special funding requirements for regional facilities in Tacoma. South Tacoma is required to hold storm water in underground pools and control its flow. This leads to higher costs and the need for the City to be innovative.

Next session the City will look at affordable housing (abatement of properties) with hopes of having city lien levels harmonized with county levels.

Transportation is another top priority. Mr. Lewis reported a transportation package is being introduced today in a special session that fully funds SR 167 with no tolls. This is a controversial package and Mr. Lewis stated he would be surprised if this issue is resolved by January 2014.

Chair Talbert asked about changes to state law dealing with the affordable housing trust fund. Mr. Lewis explained previously the legislature assigned the Department of Commerce to select projects. Now the legislature picks the projects and he feels the selection process will not be given back to state agencies.

## **Tacoma School Board**

Josh Garcia reported the Tacoma School Board is urging the legislature to continue funding basic education, especially in the following areas: full-day kindergarten; class size reduction; levy equalization (LEA) and Learning Assistance program (LAP).

Expanding K-12 construction funding to accommodate growing classroom demands is another key initiative. Mr. Garcia highlighted increasing the allowance formula, asking for matching funds on school remodels, increasing funding for joint projects like SAMI, including pre-school and kindergarten enrollment numbers in funding requests, and new branch campuses to support technical CTE.

Innovation and reform are also key topics. TSB is asking that college-level dual credits be transferable at all state schools and have a cap on costs. Flexibility in teacher and student evaluations, and free STEM College entrance exams for accelerated class participants were also recommended.

Debbie Winskill explained levy equalization in more detail. She stated Tacoma has high property taxes with a portion being paid back to the district. The State has talked about taking away these funds (\$7 million).

## **General Discussion**

Tim Reid made the suggestion that JMAC members meet with legislators as a group to go over targeted action items. No decision was reached on this.

Aaron Pointer began a discussion on charter schools and asked what effect they would have on the local school district. Mr. Garcia responded, saying in a variety of areas including: enrollment, budget capacity, maintenance and operations, facilities and flexibility. He added that the rules are just being created. Mr. Reid asked who authorizes charter school curriculum. Mr. Garcia explained that charter schools can apply locally or go through the state. Mr. Reid asked if it can be required for students to take certain topics. Mr. Garcia replied that he did not believe so. Kurt Miller added there are five charters being proposed in Tacoma. Mr. Garcia invited everyone to watch and see if these charter schools pass during their televised coverage on November 25, 2013.

Chair Talbert needed to leave at 9:00 a.m. and turned his duties over to Acting Vice-Chair Aaron Pointer. Before leaving, Chair Talbert mentioned adding leadership selection to next meeting's agenda.

Tim Reid asked Anders Ibsen for an update on the local pothole issue. Council Member Ibsen explained it is an \$800 million problem. Kurtis Kingsolver explained there is not an easy answer, explaining why taxes and bonds were not viable options.

## **DISCUSSION OF MUTUAL INTERESTS AND CONCERNS/FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

No items were discussed.

## **SETTING OF NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

- Elections for Leadership Succession
- Port of Tacoma and Tacoma School District Levies
- Legislative Priorities Update (Members report any significant changes adopted to 2014 agendas)

## Future Agenda Items

Earth Week Citizen's Academy Update (Anders Ibsen)  
Transport of Coal through Tacoma  
Affordable Housing Policies (Anders Ibsen / Lauren Walker)  
Foss/Hylebos Recontamination (Port of Tacoma)  
Update on Eastside Community Center, January 2014 (Metro Parks Tacoma)  
Earth Economics (Metro Parks Tacoma)

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Friday, December 13, 2013 at 8:00 a.m. in Conference Room 248.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

Note: Minutes for December to be taken by Metro Parks Tacoma.