

League of Women Voters of Tacoma – Pierce County Observer Corps

Pierce County Council January 15, 2019

Lydia Zepeda reporting Started at 3:04pm ended at 4:06pm

Members present: Marty Campbell, Connie Ladenburg, Jim McCune, Dave Morrel, Douglas Richardson, Pam Roach, Derek Young

Others present: County directors and staff, members of the public.

Click to see: [agenda and packet of materials](#)

Consent agenda – no of items on the consent agenda were accessible on the website. Young removed R2019-3 and final settlement of \$950,000 for Court of Appeals to separate votes. Consent agenda as modified approved 7-0

Resolutions

[Proposal R2018-165](#): names appointments of council members to external boards, commissions, committees and organizations for 2019
Approved 7-0

[Proposal R2018-172s](#) Allocation of historic preservation grant funds for 2019. This is the 8th year of these county-wide grants (for incorporated and unincorporated areas). Funds come from document recording fees. The allocation for 2019 is \$80,908 for 10 projects in Districts 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7. Grants come from districts with strong historical preservation groups. District 4 and 5 haven't applied.
Approved 7-0

[Proposal 2019-2](#) Most of the meeting concerned the adoption of Pierce County Western State Hospital Task Force State Legislative Priorities for 2019. It is the culmination of months of work in response to Governor Inslee's announcement to close civil commitment at Western State hospital. The report is in response to concerns that this will result in many mental health patients being released in Pierce County. There are 3 areas of concern for Pierce County: lack of communication about discharge of clients to the community; concern about competing funding priorities; and a focus on prevention of mental health problems. The Task force identified the following priorities: community based facilities; community based treatment; behavior health facilities; housing; and workforce development, training and retention.

Discussion of the resolution included support for efforts to build and retain behavior health workforce who will lose their jobs due to closure of civil commitment; the need for Pierce County be at the table for all State legislative discussions about closure of civil commitment; the fact that Washington State has a constitutional amendment to provide mental health care, but the mandate is often unfunded; and discussion of the need to change the standard for

intervention to prevent mental health problems. Currently, we don't hospitalize people until they are a risk of harm to self or others; the standard is "imminent risk," it should be "need for treatment."

An amendment was added to distinguish between civil and civil criminal flips to enhance public safety. Civil criminal flips refer to people charged with crimes but deemed incompetent. It is not possible to prosecute someone deemed incompetent. If they cannot be restored to competence, they can be civilly committed (as a "criminal flip"). Civil commitments are often released quickly, therefore distinguishing between civil and civil criminal flips is a way to make sure additional measures are taken not to release someone who may be a risk.

The resolution passed 6-1 (P.Roach opposed)

Other business

Resolution R2019-3 To appoint Claudia Jensen to Key Peninsula Advisory Commission.
Passed 7-0

Motion to approve \$950,000 final settlement court of Appeals. No discussion of what it was.
Motion approved 7-0

Citizen's forum

No one spoke.