

League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County Observer Corps

Name of Agency: Tacoma City Council

Date: October 2, 2018

Observer Reporting: C Rikerd & Ann Williams

Length of Meeting: 2 hours 52 minutes

Members Present/Absent: All present, Council Member Mello by telephone

Others present (i.e. media, public): Puyallup Tribal Council, GTCF Institute for Community Leadership representatives

Content (what is being discussed): *Did they approve some action?*

Does anything relate to League priorities or positions? If so, do you recommend local League action?

Was access to materials for certain agenda items limited or excluded from you? Was background material available to the public?

http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_council/CCMeetings/

All background material is available online. Access is through the agenda PDFs.

Background material is not printed for the general public.

Proclamations:

- 18-1119 Proclaiming October 2018 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month
- 18-0953 proclaiming October 2018 as Tacoma Arts month
- 18-1145 Recognizing the Kiwanis Club of Tacoma

Resolutions:

- RES40122 Declaring the 2nd Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples' Day; the Puyallup Nation Flag, to be flown in council chambers, was presented to the Tacoma Council by the Puyallup Nation's Color Guard, initiating the renaming of the bridge between Puyallup Ave. to Fife with a name recognizing the Puyallup Tribe of Indians' current and historical presence.

Resolution 40122, was preceded by discussion of the past history of the Puyallup Tribe and its relationship with the City of Tacoma. It seemed clear that the last two years have seen significant work to improve the relationship, culminating in this resolution. The resolution itself provides for a declaration that the second Monday in October will heretofore be known as Indigenous Peoples Day, the presentation of the Tribes's flag to be flown in the Council Chambers in perpetuity and to begin the process of renaming the East Eells Bridge (which crosses the Puyallup River at Fife) with a name recognizing the Tribe and its historical significance. It passed unanimously, all members being present. (One electronically)

There were several short speeches by tribal members, the most compelling from 2 elders who challenged the Council to take action to clean up the Puyallup River Delta, and to renounce the use of this area by the fossil fuels industry.

- RES40115, 40116, 40117, 40118: authorizing work on side sewers, underground storm and waste water pipes
- RES40119, 40120: approved hybrid cloud integration data structure and protection
- RES40121: elevator repair and maintenance at Greater Tacoma Convention Center
- RES40123: 12 year tax exempt agreement for development of new apartment / retail building at 705 S I St; the 5 'affordable' rate 400 square foot apartments will rent for \$1044 to \$1192, with basic utilities.

- RES40124: directs the City manager to prepare a draft Priority Hire Ordinance and Community Workforce Agreement to prioritize the hiring of residents who live in economically distressed areas for certain public works construction; a task force will be convened to recommend a plan within 6 months. Several speakers asked for special consideration of minority owned businesses.

While this resolution only begins the drafting process, there was significant public input from those who saw unmitigated good, and those who were suspicious, based on the outcomes of similar ordinances in other cities, that non-union companies (which tend to be small and minority or woman owned) would not benefit. The Council indicated that it would take this concern under advisement as it drafted its ordinance and agreement so that it fit the needs of Tacoma.

Public Hearings:

18-1085 Hearing on the proposed amendment to Chapter 1.95 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Tenant Rights Code, to include tenant relocation assistance. The current section of the Code is found at: <http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/cityclerk/Files/MunicipalCode/Title01-AdministrationAndPersonnel.PDF>

- The proposed changes include Tenant Relocation Assistance of up to \$2000, paid by landlord and city.
- The proposal will be taken up later at a council study session.
- The amendment addresses the concerns of tenants displaced by sale or renovations of properties (gentrification). It takes advantage of state law that allows for the requirement of tenant relocation assistance in the event that a landlord demolishes, substantially rehabilitates or changes the purpose of his residential property. The proposed amount of \$2,000 per qualified dwelling unit would help the actual costs of moving. Half the amount would be required of the landlord, and half would come from the city.
- 11 speakers testified. All but one supported low income tenants who have been affected by these events. They were grateful for the assistance, but noted that the amount was in many cases only a fraction of the costs incurred. Several pointed out that Section 8 voucher holders, who would not qualify for rental assistance in this amendment, are also being displaced from smaller buildings and single homes, and have no protection from the state 20-day eviction process. All the speakers pointed out the non-existence of housing for low, extremely low, and poverty level income populations.
- The amended Tenant Rights code is expected to be effective 2/1/2019.

Public Meetings of interest to League – i.e., were there any public meetings announced that you think League members may be interested in attending and/or becoming involved with the issue?

The Tenant Rights amendments will be discussed in a council study session as soon as it can be scheduled.

League members involved in the Homeless study, based on the final report, might want to present a statement to the council about using the definition of ‘affordable housing’ at \$1000 a month, which excludes so many citizens from finding shelter.

Process & Protocol (Observations about participants, conduct, and procedures of the meeting, and appropriate accommodations for disabled in sight hearing and physical):

i.e., did the members appear to have done their “homework”? Were members courteous to each other and the public? How does the group respond to your presence?

The council and Mayor are consistently respectful to all speakers, follow the announced agenda, and make knowledgeable comments and questions to presentations.