

## **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TACOMA-PIERCE COUNTY**

### **OBSERVER REPORT**

**By Lydia Zepeda**

#### **Tacoma City Council meeting**

**November 19, 2019**

**Present:** Keith Blocker, Lillian Hunter, Anders Ibsen, Conor McCarthy, Ryan Mello, Robert Thoms, Catherine Ushka appeared at 5:30

**Absent:** Chris Beale, Victoria Woodards

#### **Meeting called to order at 5pm**

Standing room only. The first 20 items of business were dispatched in 5 minutes. This included the pledge of allegiance, approving 16 minutes for Council meetings, setting the December 3 meeting to discuss amendments to the the 2019-20 Action Plan for Housing, January 9 at 1:30 to discuss development of South 66th street between South Adams and South Tacoma Way, and January 23 to discuss development of North Adams between North 27th and North 28th and

**20.** Resolution No. 40478. Ratification of agreement among Washington State Patrol; Pierce County Sheriff's Department; King County Prosecutor's Office; and municipalities of Auburn, Bonney Lake, Federal Way, Lakewood, Tacoma, and Tukwila to cooperate (share information) regarding car thefts, to which \$10,000 was allocated from the 2018 Washington Auto Theft Prevention Grant Award, retroactive to January 25, 2018. Approved.

### **PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**21.** 19-1313 Proclaimed Saturday, November 30, 2019 as Small Business Saturday. Approved unanimously

**22.** 19-1314 Proclaimed November 2019 as Entrepreneurship Month. Approved unanimously

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Deputy Mayor McCarthy removed item 42. ORD28634 granting of cable contract to Rainier Connect from agenda. This meant no public comment on this item was allowed.

Thirty-on people were allowed to speak for two minutes each. They all spoke regarding issues of homelessness, some spoke about the specific ordinances that were to be voted on ORD 40488 to allocate \$380,000 for tiny homes for 8 months at 802 MLK, ORD28636 related to Zoning, "Temporary Use" to update geographic location and square footage requirements for temporary shelter sites. 28637 and ORD28638, renewing the declaration of an homelessness emergency declared two years ago.

Not one person spoke against the homeless, although two people complained about drugs and feces and one of these about safety. These issues were blamed on lack of public services like toilets. Everyone spoke to the need for URGENT action, that much more needs to be done.

Many people mentioned the “Point In Time” (PIT) method of counting the homeless severely undercounts the homeless. According to PIT, there are 1500 unhoused, while service providers say there are at least 3600.

Many people mentioned that the City Council’s December 1 tent ban would create a crisis because there is no where for people to go; given there are only 760 shelter beds, there will be 2800 without shelter.

Many people implored the City Council to put people first and not acquiesce to business interests. Several people who were or had been homeless implored the Council that people will die because of the tent ban. They and others discussed the police sweeps that have cleared the unhoused from certain areas, throwing their tents and belongings away, leaving the homeless without shelter, clothes and their possessions. An ER doctor invited the Council to visit his ER to see the effects their policies will have in terms of illness, amputations and deaths. Another person asked if the Council would attend the funerals of the people who would die as a result of their policies.

Over and over again, the public implored the Council to address the causes of homelessness and to provide affordable housing.

Deputy Mayor McCarthy ended the public comment without letting the last 8-10 people speak. He was obviously angry. The crowd booed him and someone yelled, “Where are the people supposed to go? It is cruel!”

The council continued with the regular agenda for a couple minutes:

23. 19-1311 They **awarded \$300,000 for an auto accident** in the case of Irene Yi v. City of Tacoma and David Johnson. After no discussion,

The audience spontaneously continued their public comment to each other with their backs to the City Council. The City Council walked out. After about 10 minutes they came back and Deputy Mayor McCarthy told people to leave and go talk in the hall.

24. 19-1324 They awarded **\$2,040,000 to U.S. Oil** for a power outage in 2016. Passed unanimously with no discussion.

25. RES40479 **\$3,926,300.10** contract to **Global Contractors LLC**. Passed unanimously with no discussion.

26. RES40480 **\$5,483,592** contract to **Carollo Engineers, Inc.**, Passed unanimously with no discussion.

27. RES40481 **\$1.5 million** paid to **Wells Fargo Bank**, Passed unanimously with no discussion.

28. RES40482 contract of **\$730,357.49** to **Green Earthworks Construction Inc.** Passed unanimously with no discussion.

29. RES40483 **\$240,045** to Resource Systems Group Inc, Passed unanimously with no discussion.
30. RES40484 designated 28 public works projects and salary categories Passed unanimously with no discussion.
31. RES40485 allow electronic filing of documents. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
32. RES40486 **8-year property tax exemption** granted to Encompass Property Management LLC for 42 market rate rental units at 632, 638 and 640 N. Trafton. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
33. RES40487 **8-year property tax exemption** granted to Ethos Development LLC to develop 188 units at 1402 Tacoma Ave S. McCarthy tried to bring to vote, but Ushika asked if there was a presentation. He responded there was not but Ms. Bingan could answer questions. These included that **studios would rent for \$1100 a month**. Passed unanimously.
34. RES40488 **granted \$388,000 for tiny home project** on 802 MLK. They will only be allowed on the site for 8 months, after which a developer will take over the site. Passed unanimously.
35. ORD28627 **Amend Chapter 1.12 of the Municipal Code**, relating to the Compensation Plan, to align with provisions with agreements negotiated with the Tacoma Joint Labor Committee; the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 483, Customer and Field Services Unit; and the Teamsters Local Union No. 117, Tacoma Venues and Events Unit. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
36. ORD28628 **Fixed the amount of the Ad Valorem tax levies** necessary to identify the amount of the estimated revenues from property tax levies to match estimated expenditures for debt service and other funding requirements. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
37. ORD28629 **Authorized an increase in the 2020 general property tax revenue collection in terms of both dollars and percentage**. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
38. ORD28630 **Fixed the amount of the Emergency Medical Services levy** necessary to identify the amount of the estimated revenues from the property tax levy to match estimated expenditures for debt service and other funding requirements. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
39. ORD28631 **Authorized an increase for the 2020 Emergency Medical Services property tax** levy in terms of both dollars and percentage. Passed unanimously with no discussion.
40. ORD28632 **Modified the 2019-2020 Biennial Budget** to appropriate funds for contractual obligations, transfers, and other budget adjustments; authorized interfund transfers and

contributions; and accepting, depositing, and appropriating miscellaneous donations, contributions, and/or fees. Passed unanimously with no discussion.

41. ORD28633 **Modified the 2019-2020 Capital Budget** to recognize changes in transfers, additional revenues, and budget adjustments. Passed unanimously with no discussion.

42. ORD28634 **Grants a non-exclusive 20-year franchise agreement to Rainier Connect North LLC, to construct, operate, maintain, and provide cable television services in the City.** Removed from agenda. meaning no public comment allowed at this meeting.

43. ORD28635 **Amended Chapter 1.12 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Compensation Plan,** to implement rates of pay and compensation for represented and non-represented employees, and changes in classifications to reflect the organizational structure, No council questions. **It will be voted on December 3 meeting.**

44. ORD28636 **Amends Chapter 13.06 of the Municipal Code, relating to Zoning, “Temporary Use”,** to update geographic location and square footage requirements for temporary shelter sites. No council questions, **it will be voted on December 3 meeting.**

Linda Stewart indicated this is look at permitting of temporary shelters e.g by churches, to reduce barriers. These include, no more than 6 total temporary shelters at any time, one mile apart no minimum number per site, 150 sq feet per person.

45. ORD28637 (First and Final Reading) Extends the **declaration of emergency** and the emergency authority granted pursuant to Ordinance Nos. 28565, 28430, 28457, and 28477, to remain in effect until such time as there is shelter **availability** for 95 percent of unsheltered individuals in Tacoma as noted in the annual **Point In Time Count**. Passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS none

REPORTS BY THE CITY MANAGER emergency shelter report on Nov 13: 353 people served, 114 found housing

COMMITTEE REPORTS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Government Performance and Finance Committee - Ibsen

Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee - Mello

ADJOURNMENT 7:45 pm