

TUMWATER PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
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CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair Leatta Dahlhoff and Councilmembers Peter Agabi and Angela Jefferson.

Staff: City Administrator John Doan, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Crimmins, Police Commander Jay Mason, and Police Administrative Manager Laura Wohl.

Others: Jason Bean-Mortinson, Thurston County LEAD Program Manager.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE, MARCH 14, 2023:

MOTION: Councilmember Jefferson moved, seconded by Councilmember Agabi, to approve the minutes of March 14, 2023 as presented. A voice vote approved the motion.

LEAD PROGRAM UPDATE: Police Commander Mason reported the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program was initially developed in Seattle. The program is now a national program that has evolved over time. The original concept was the diversion of low-level drug offenders from entering the criminal justice system and moving them to other forms of assistance. The Tumwater Police Department supports community partnerships and desires to connect with community members and to identify effective and efficient ways to deliver services. The Thurston County Prosecutor's Office assumed leadership of the LEAD Program in 2010. Over the last several years, the impacts on how the Department delivers service significantly changed how community partnership organizations deliver services. The LEAD program has been responsible for many of those changes. Police Commander Mason introduced, Jason Bean-Mortinson, Thurston County LEAD Program Manager, to provide an update on the LEAD program.

Mr. Bean-Mortinson said the program was initiated through a partnership between the Thurston County Prosecutor's Office and Thurston County Public Health and Social Services with support from local law enforcement agencies. The process entailed a year of negotiations to launch the program and to begin delivering services. He joined the program as Program Manager for Thurston County LEAD. Olympia Health and

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Recovery Services was awarded the RFP to provide direct case management services. The initial program originated in the Bell Town area of Seattle following frustration with cyclical arrests and re-arrests often occurring multiple times within a 24-hour period.

The original plan was to consider offenders with simple possession charges. At that time, the Washington State Supreme Court issued the Blake decision following the award of the program grant. Other changes in legislation altered the way law enforcement interacts with communities creating a need for flexibility in the program in terms of acceptance of referrals. The program continues to maintain its focus and its original goals. Goals include increasing the use of non-emergency community behavioral health services, increase resilience, stability, and well-being for program participants, reduce reliance on jails for individuals with behavioral health conditions, and reduce arrests and time spent in custody.

The program serves a population that is frequently in contact with law enforcement. The program works to stabilize those individuals and decrease the number of contacts with law enforcement.

Some of the key components of the program include direct case management focusing on reduction in harm, low barrier, and meeting people where they are in the community. The program provides some flexible funding for support other programs cannot provide. The program offers transportation to individuals and strives to serve as a responsive person-centered program with heavy emphasis on harm reduction and trauma-informed care. The program is 100% voluntary, employs screenings, and works with referral partners to secure the best referral to the program. The program is not intended to respond to crisis but works with people who are able to give voluntary consent. A majority of the referrals have been either self-contact referrals or community-based referrals (first responders).

Another component of the program is the system change or the collective impact of the program. Operational workgroups meet weekly to engage stakeholders both at the leadership level and at service delivery levels to problem solve the struggles and challenges participants are facing individually and with the overall system.

The operational workgroups discuss and review trends of unhoused communities and local encampments and drug use on the streets. The program provides assistance in locating people with a majority of referrals transients who are difficult to locate and connect to services. Weekly meetings with law enforcement provide support in identifying their location. The Family Support Center is participating in weekly meetings to assist with connections to housing resources in the community.

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The program has been providing services for two years. Current experience speaks to many people struggling with substance use, mental and physical health issues, lack of housing, trauma, and a history of multiple legal contacts and charges. Most of the participants experience barriers in terms of engaging in services and finding them employment and housing opportunities. Demographics in the program match closely with some of the county demographics and those who have frequent contacts with the legal system. The program serves most areas of the county. Opportunities exist for growth in the system by expanding services to other areas.

Mr. Bean-Mortinson reviewed program statistics for the first year of the program (2022). Although the program is harm-reduction based and meets people at their location, most people want to connect with traditional services. The program has connected many individuals to traditional non-health programs, substance use disorder treatment, or other services to help them become stabilized and move out of crisis and into stability. The team transports individuals, assists in laundry needs, and provides transportation to therapeutic court programs and other community-based support programs.

Councilmember Jefferson asked about major challenges the program has experienced and how the increase in fentanyl use has changed the role of providing behavioral health services. Mr. Bean-Mortinson said fentanyl has affected the program substantially. He experienced some of the impacts when the first wave of the opioid epidemic occurred; however, that experience was not as devastating as the fentanyl epidemic. The use of fentanyl has increased the number of overdoses and fatalities. The program has sponsored training on overdose prevention and overdose response to ensure people have the information and facts available about the risks of use and how to prevent fatalities when possible. Within the program, two overdoses were successfully reversed. The program required a shift from people avoiding fentanyl to people intentionally using fentanyl despite the risks. The use of fentanyl is extremely high risk for overdose and fatality unlike any other drug society has encountered. The program has successfully moved people to traditional treatment contributing to a decrease in overdose incidents.

Councilmember Agabi commented on his surprise as to the amount of fentanyl usage both locally and across the country. He asked whether the program has tracked data on the number of referral services for specific timelines. Mr. Bean-Mortinson responded that services totaled 2,371 of community-based programs. Most people enrolled in programs are attending weekly or multiple times a week. Participants tend to stabilize over time, as the program can be intensive in terms of contacts.

Councilmember Agabi asked whether it is possible to pinpoint specific

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services that could be targeted based on the number of cases. Mr. Bean Mortinson explained that to some degree it might be possible by following up with law enforcement partners or identifying contacts that live near encampments. There is some need community-wide for a range of services. Many individuals are also unwilling to use or distrust traditional services. The program provides a lower barrier and is an easier way for those individuals to connect to some resources and support.

Chair Dahlhoff noted that many of the referrals from Tumwater are generated by the Fire and Police Departments. She questioned whether there would be any opportunity to review the data in more detail to either target or tailor services. Police Commander Mason advised that the data includes referral sources, as well as law enforcement arrest diversions. In Tumwater, the number of law enforcement arrest diversions totaled eight. Since 2011, the environment has changed substantially and many offenders are no longer booked for basic drug offences. The department is attempting to understand the environment especially during the latest legislative cycle in terms of how the program can benefit the Tumwater community. In terms of contacts, officers often encounter individuals experiencing a crisis not connected to a specific criminal offense. Officers recognize the need for additional resources for those individuals and refer them to the LEAD Program. The Fire Department also has experience in contacting people who are in crisis and seeking ways to change outcomes. At this point, the program is too new to utilize the data fully. Additionally, resources are limited at a level necessary at this time.

Mr. Bean-Mortinson reiterated that the program is not a crisis service. Although the program meets people at their location, one of the challenges for first responders is places to take individuals because those resources are not provided by the program. The program provides follow-up, ongoing, and long-term stabilization for individuals. The program is often not able to meet the needs of immediate response to a crisis. The program lacks places to take people in the community. At this time, the region has no crisis stabilization units or similar type of program.

Recently, the program implemented participant surveys as required by contract and as a measurement to gauge the effectiveness of the program. The survey response is based on a scale of 1-5 with 5 designating much agreement and 1 not in agreement. For the most part, the surveys reflect the program is receiving positive response. The lowest responses were questions about feeling safe. Although there have been several low responses to the question, a comment was included indicating the program was one of the reasons the person continued to engage because the program provided some sense of safety that otherwise was lacking in their life.

Mr. Bean-Mortinson emphasized the importance of understanding the

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model, as the program is not intended to serve as crisis services or crisis response. The program is designed to be 100% voluntary with no compliance component. Efforts continue on adapting the program and response to enable multiple contacts with individuals who may initially refuse to consider the program. Some success has occurred with several unhoused individuals by providing them with some assistance with their pets. It is also important that law enforcement and other partners understand that people have to be at a place where they understand and agree to consent to participate in the program. Other lessons learned include the importance of flexibility in the program in terms of how the program functions and operates. The Tumwater Fire Department recently began submitting referrals. The program adapted the referral form to embed within first responder notes to become part of the response process. Discussions are underway with Police Commander Mason to include information within field response notes about the availability of the program. It is important to incorporate flexibility to the extent possible on how referrals are received and the response.

Mr. Bean-Mortinson described efforts by case managers often working in conjunction with local law enforcement to locate unhoused individuals to serve. Some guidelines have been instituted on outreach and follow-up. Any referrals received, a case management peer travels throughout the community to locate the person. If unable to locate the person, the immediate response is to contact the referral source with a request for assistance in contacting the individual. The standard calls for one minimum outreach each week to locate the person during the first month and a minimum of one contact every other week during the second month with one more attempt to locate the person in the third month. During those efforts, communication is ongoing with the referral source.

Pending legislative changes with respect to possession of drugs continue in negotiations; however, it is likely drug possession may entail a misdemeanor possession charge with heavy emphasis on encouraging law enforcement diversions and requiring pre-trial offers for diversion options.

The program receives funding partially in response to the Blake decision for recovering navigator. The funding helped to double the capacity of the program. Work is ongoing between the LEAD program, local law enforcement, and partners. Mr. Bean-Mortinson said he is hopeful that additional funding will become available for services to enable more response and larger caseloads.

Councilmember Jefferson asked about level of staffing for the program at this time. Mr. Bean-Mortinson advised that the program has two case management professionals providing intakes and assessments for traditional treatment as needed. The program employs seven peer case managers.

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Mr. Bean-Mortinson shared some success stories of individuals and families.

Chair Dahlhoff queried Mr. Bean-Mortinson of his top messages to share with the City Council. Mr. Bean-Mortinson said it is likely some state-level changes will affect how the state directs the program to interact with this particular population for connected services. There is room to expand the program in Tumwater and provide more services within the community. There have been some significant successes within the community with people lives being saved and people stabilizing and healing. The program has made it possible for some people to achieve success.

Chair Dahlhoff summarized the success of the program as moving people out of crisis and into civility.

**FIRE ENGINE
PURCHASE:**

Fire Chief Hurley reported in August 2011, Tumwater voters passed a levy lid lift for public safety to include funding fire engine purchases. The plan included the purchase of four fire engines over a 25-year period. The proposal is to purchase the third fire engine.

Assistant Fire Chief Crimmins identified existing fire engines and the reason for requesting the purchase at this time. The purchase enables the Fire Department to move Engine T1 into a reserve status for three reserve engines, all pumpers. One of the older reserve engines will then be surplus leaving the department with two reserve engines and two front-line engines. Reserve fire engines are necessary for service calls or if main engines need repair, as well as providing back-up service to an event either in the City or outside the City.

The engine features a Cummins X15 diesel engine meeting 2027 EPA standards with 75% less emissions than its predecessor. To reduce emissions further, the engine will feature a state-of-the-art idle reduction system powered by lithium ion batteries. The overall compartment design will be very similar to the last engine purchased in 2019. One significant change is the move from a top-mount to side-mount pump panel. This will considerably shorten the wheelbase of the engine making it more maneuverable.

Fire Chief Hurley reported the purchase price has increased since the last engine purchase of approximately \$750,000. The proposed purchase price for the new engine is \$1,157,000 because of supply chain issues the industry has been experiencing. The delivery time is 38 to 43 months after placement of the order. Some prepayments will afford some discounts to the City. The proposal is to purchase the engine through a purchasing cooperative, Sourcewell, which includes Pierce equipment and meets

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requirements for competitive bidding. The City previously purchased other equipment through Sourcewell. The agreement with Sourcewell is still current and meets legal requirements.

Fire Chief Hurley invited the committee to visit the Fire Department and participate in a tour of the engines or schedule a ride-a-long.

Staff requests the committee recommend the City Council approve and authorize the purchase of fire engine #3 (identified as Engine T1) using the Sourcewell Purchasing Cooperative as specified by the Fire Department and in substantially similar form as approved by the City Attorney in the amount of \$1,238,023.55 and authorize the Fire Chief to approve change orders in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.

Councilmember Jefferson questioned the reasons for the extended length of time before the City receives delivery of the fire engine. Fire Chief Hurley said some of the delay is attributed to supply chain issues and the volume of engines the company produces. Some departments place orders for 10 or more engines at one time.

Councilmember Agabi asked how the purchase and future purchases would be affected if voters approve the Regional Fire Authority proposal. Chair Dahlhoff referred to information within the meeting packet addressing his questions. When the City initially proposed the public safety levy lid lift, the City committed to the purchase of four fire engines. The City plans to meet that commitment and purchase all four engines regardless of the outcome of the RFA proposal.

MOTION:

Councilmember Jefferson moved, seconded by Councilmember Agabi, to recommend the City Council approve and authorize the purchase of fire engine #3 (identified as Engine T1) using the Sourcewell Purchasing Cooperative as specified by the Fire Department and in substantially similar form as approved by the City Attorney in the amount of \$1,238,023.55 and authorize the Fire Chief to approve change orders in an amount not to exceed \$20,000. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

The committee supported placing the action on the Council's consent calendar during the April 18, 2023 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Chair Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting at 9:01 a.m.