

**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 Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Police Chief Jon Weeks, Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Crimmins, Police Commander Jay Mason, Police Lieutenant Jennifer Kolb, Police Management Analyst Dr. Oliver Bowers, Communications Manager Ann Cook, and Police Administrative Supervisor Laura Wohl.

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

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

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

Councilmember Agabi joined the meeting.

FLOCK SAFETY PRESENTATION: Police Commander Mason and Management Analyst Dr. Oliver Bowers briefed members on a new state technology tool available to the Tumwater Police Department.

Police Commander Mason reported the department continually evaluates technology for implementation by the department and for use within the community. Many factors are weighed as to whether the department invests or utilizes technology. In many instances, police departments implemented technology without input and community awareness as to how the technology would be deployed and utilized. The new tool enables the City to network with other law enforcement along the I-5 corridor and across the state and it affords the department with the capacity that is currently lacking.

Dr. Bowers said the system is similar to the license plate scanning system. The real-time technology was deemed the best choice for the department after reviewing other systems. The system is comprised of individual cameras placed at specific locations within the City, such as significant intersections with ingress and egress to the City. The system generates a list of stolen vehicles or wanted vehicles within 45 seconds of a vehicle

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pinged by one of the systems and it creates a time-sensitive and audible search function to assist in investigations. The system is supported by the ACLU and is in use across the state.

The cameras are mounted on poles at intersections throughout the City. Cameras ping license plates and provides alerts within 45 seconds. The system can generate unique fingerprints of similar types of vehicles with distinguishing features, such as a cracked window, vehicle decals, or other vehicle accessories installed on a vehicle. The operating system can be accessed by the department. The system adds functionality to the department that is currently lacking. The system identifies when a vehicle of interest enters the City. The system helps to track wanted suspects from another county the moment the vehicle enters the City. The system can also help locate missing persons identified through a silver alert used for missing people who fit specific age-related or mental health criteria. Missing people identified through the alert system could be identified by the system as soon as the vehicle enters the City within 45 systems. Data from the system are retained only for 30 days and then purged from the system.

The system also has a deterrent effect on certain crimes. People who steal vehicles do not enter jurisdictions if the system is installed because the vehicle will be immediately pinged and an alert issued.

The system enables police departments to collaborate with local businesses and corporations enabling the police department to install cameras at a business location. For example, a camera placed at the parking entrance to a local grocery store could send an alert if a stolen car enters the parking lot.

Police Commander Mason added that the system is unique as it enables other entities to collaborate with the department and build on the system. If a small business is encountering issues with commercial retail theft or fraud, the business could invest in a camera. Information from the camera feeds into the system and is accessible by law enforcement. The I-5 corridor experiences much commercial retail theft from individuals living outside of the area that impacts local businesses. Other entities, such as a homeowners association (HOA) could also invest in the system if the HOA is experiencing significant issues involving property thefts, mailbox thefts, or vandalism.

Other benefits the system can provide is identifying vehicles involved in a hit and run incident, stolen and wanted vehicles, organized retail theft along the I-5 corridor, regional suspects, and anti-terrorism components that can alert to certain vehicles on a watch list.

The system is a 24/7 indiscriminate monitoring of key roadway locations. The objective system scans all license plates. Data produced by the system

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are owned entirely by the City. Data are stored on a government-secured cloud server with a full audit trail required for all searches. The system retains data for 30 days.

Councilmember Jefferson inquired as to whether a court order is necessary to access data from the system, whether the City will incur additional personnel costs, and personnel tasked for reviewing or accessing the data. Dr. Bowers said no reviewing or monitoring of the data occurs. The system only alerts if a license plate is identified on a watch list or the department is seeking a specific vehicle. If the plate matches an alert, it generates an alert.

Councilmember Agabi asked about the circumstance surrounding the purging of data after 30 days if an individual appears in court. He asked whether the City maintains a backup of the data. Dr. Bowers advised that searchable data is purged after 30 days. If the system is utilized as a means to identify a vehicle, the system provides an identifiable ping documenting the vehicle at a specific moment in time. The information is pulled from the system as the vehicle was identified while all other data are purged.

Councilmember Agabi inquired about other cities that are using the system.

Police Commander Mason advised that numerous law enforcement agencies along the I-5 corridor are using the system. The City of Centralia has used the system for some time and serves as a benchmark for the department based on the city's experience. All major law enforcement agencies in Thurston County are currently evaluating the system.

Police Chief Weiks added that the ACLU was instrumental in eliminating the use of license plate reader technology because of the invasive nature of that system. This particular technology is supported by the ACLU.

Dr. Bowers added that the system is objective as it only alerts on wanted license plates. Data are only available for 30 days and the system does not create a large list of license plates. It was constructed to ensure functionality for a specific purpose. Data supporting the system indicates that on average, the system was responsible for up to 50% vehicle recoveries. Cities with the system reported up to a 40% reduction in robberies, a 60% reduction in commercial burglaries, and up to an 18% reduction in residential burglaries.

Police Commander Mason emphasized how the system has value in terms of capacity the department is unable to provide, as well as enabling the department to partner and support the retail and business community. The retail sector has been significantly impacted over the last several years through retail theft losses and other challenges.

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Police Chief Weiks requested the committee's support of the proposal to enable the department to move forward with the process.

Councilmember Jefferson inquired as to the cost of the system while noting that the statistics reflect a substantial reduction in robberies and other crimes. She supports pursuing implementation of the system.

Councilmember Agabi said he believes the system would be useful but tempered his concern ensuring that the ACLU supports the system. He asked how the increase in notifications will affect the capacity of the department to handle the increase in workload.

Police Commander Mason said the management of resources is the responsibility of police administration in terms of management of resources and prioritization of response. It is important to have access to information that is actionable rather than lacking the information because it will assist in better management of resources.

Chair Dahlhoff conveyed support for the system with a caveat. She cited information on other jurisdictions currently evaluating the system in Thurston County. In terms of the system as an investigative tool, a deterrent effect, how the department manages resources, improved capacity, and partnerships and collaboration, she would prefer bundling the system with body cameras, similar to other local jurisdictions. At this time, the Tumwater Police Department does not have body cameras. She prefers moving forward with an entire package to serve both the police and the community.

Police Chief Weiks said bundling of the systems would likely not be possible as the proposal is from a different funding source than the body cameras. The department is scheduled to present the committee with body camera information in January 2024. The new technology will be presented separately. Staff did not explore costs until the committee was briefed to obtain support of the proposal. Staff plans to research costs and implementation requirements.

Chair Dahlhoff said in addition to linking the request with the Council's strategic priorities and goals, she would like the request to link with the pending police report and with the prior community survey in terms of feedback from the community.

Police Chief Weiks confirmed the request.

**SCHOOL
RESOURCE
OFFICER UPDATE:**

Police Chief Weiks advised that the update will include an overview of the program and trends during the current school year. Detective Lieutenant Kolb supervises the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program.

Lieutenant Kolb reported the primary purpose of the SRO Program is for

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positive interactions with students, faculty, and parents in the Tumwater School District. The goal is to support a safe and healthy learning environment and keeping focus on the goal of supporting students to graduate. Both SROs attend graduations in support of students who are graduating.

Both SROs serve the Tumwater School District high schools, district office, and the bus barn. The SROs follow the National Association of School Resource Officers model, a school-based policing concept that divides SRO responsibilities as educators, informal counselors, and law enforcement officers.

SROs do not focus on punitive measures and do not become involved in any school discipline decision. Any school discipline is the responsibility of the school and the district. SROs are seen by students, parents, and faculty as real people and not just a person in a uniform. They are viewed as friends and another caring adult in the school environment. SROs are the primary point of contact in the justice system for victims, witnesses, and suspects. They serve as an advocate to help navigate the justice system. SROs also assist in helping de-escalate conflict between parents and students by working through situations utilizing guidance and mentorship.

Duties of SROs include working collaboratively with the district to provide a safe and healthy learning environment, attending school events, graduations, celebrations, and assemblies, reading and playing games with students, working collaboratively with Tumwater Parks and Recreation Department personnel, attending Tumwater Youth Program events, and interacting daily with students. SROs offer educational sessions throughout the year and teach classes on substance abuse, active shooters, school safety, and situational needs. SROs work collaboratively with the district on school safety measures to include working with the newly hired school safety manager to address safety at all schools in the district. SROs provide security at larger sporting events and assist life skills students to deescalate students in crisis to assist the student in reentering the classroom. SROs seek opportunities to create culture, inclusivity, and involvement, such as creating friendly competitions between Black Hills High School and Tumwater High School and involving as many students and staff as possible. One SRO funded, cooked, and served hot dogs for all graduating seniors last year during a lunch period at Tumwater High School.

In response to a request for information on data and trends, Lieutenant Kolb offered to provide the committee with information on the number of training sessions provided by the SROs.

Police Chief Weiks added that the Council also receives the information within the monthly report provided by the Police Department. The report

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includes information on all SRO activity for each quarter and includes information on the number of presentations to classrooms, assemblies, and other training offered by SROs.

Chair Dahlhoff expressed interest in learning more about interactions with youth because there have been challenges for some students. She would like information on opportunities to engage differently with different youths in the school district because of some disconnects. She asked for a summary of that type of information to be included in the annual police report to the community.

Police Chief Weiks responded that the volume of data is extensive. However, staff can review the data cumulatively. The monthly report speaks to interactions and engagement of SROs with students individually.

Chair Dahlhoff replied that the challenge is the lack of any information for room for improvement or the challenges and examples she learns about from others that are never reported. Police Chief Weiks said it is difficult as he is not aware of the information she is receiving. Chair Dahlhoff offered to follow-up with the Chief to provide some examples.

Councilmember Jefferson conveyed a request to receive demographic information as some members in the community have conveyed that Black and Brown students are facing higher arrest rates, higher discipline rates, and bullying. She has received many complaints about how some students have been treated. She offered to meet with Chief Weiks to share more information.

Councilmember Agabi asked whether it is possible to publish SRO data that could be provided to parents and guardians of students in the school district each month.

Chair Dahlhoff said she spoke to Dr. Bowers about thresholds and specific data the committee is seeking. She requested a discussion on specific data metrics the committee is seeking to narrow the focus from all available data as well as filling specific requests for data on a quarterly basis. Police Chief Weiks suggested a discussion outside the committee as it would be dependent upon the data, source, and ownership of the information.

Lieutenant Kolb reviewed some trends. SROs report incidents of vaping in restrooms, online bullying and harassment, and unauthorized students accessing school campuses.

Lieutenant Kolb shared information on the some positive outcomes experienced by SRO Boling involving his participation in the Tumwater High School Car Show and tailgating activities.

City Administrator Parks shared information on recent ride-alongs with

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police officers. Both officers shared positive information about the Tumwater community and one officer shared information about his positive interaction with SROs when he was a student at Tumwater High School.

City Administrator Parks shared that her observation of the tension surrounding data speaks to the amount of data the Tumwater Police Department collects as well as data collected by the Tumwater School District. The request for more information from the committee is a compilation of data from both the Police Department and from other sources. The department can provide data the City collects. However, some of the desired data is from other sources and not available to the City. The meeting between Chair Dahlhoff and Chief Weiks would be helpful to assist staff in understanding the specific type of data the committee is seeking and what data the City can provide and data the City is unable to provide.

Chair Dahlhoff noted that in response, the positive examples shared by City Administrator Parks does not deflect from the positive experiences within the community nor does it deflect from any room for improvement and for people who have different experiences. Any questions that might appear to be uncomfortable are not intended to be disrespectful or to discount any positive interactions. It is important for the City and the department to be transparent and accountable to those who have different experiences and to build trust and rapport to ensure the City is pursuing due diligence for belonging and inclusiveness for all people.

ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Chair Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting at 9:03 a.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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