Call to Order

Roll Call

Executive Session – Closed to the public

Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (1) (iii), to discuss litigation or legal risks of a proposed action.

Reconvene to Open Session

Presentation and Discussion

1. Proposed New Public Safety Model for the Transit System

Rodney Chandler
Emergency Management Coordinator

Adjournment

American Disability Act (ADA) accommodations are available with a 72-hour notice. Please contact the Clerk’s office at 253-581-8066 for special accommodations.
Public Safety at Pierce Transit
Current Model 2021

- In 2021, Pierce Transit contracted with the Pierce County Sheriff Department (PCSD) for 19 Officers
  - 1 Chief
  - 2 Sergeants
  - 14 Patrol
  - 1 Canine
  - 1 Investigator

- In 2021 Pierce Transit also had two contracts with the City of Lakewood and Federal Way
  - City of Lakewood 1 patrol officer per shift / two shifts
  - City of Federal Way 1 patrol officer per shift / three shifts

- Pierce Transit utilizes Public Safety Officers (PSO) and Service Supervisors as part of system security and safety
PCSD Scheduled Reductions

- In August of 2021, Pierce County Sheriff Department (PCSD) notified Pierce Transit they would reduce the number of officers available to Pierce Transit starting in January 2022.

- **January 2022 reductions**
  - 7 Patrol Deputies

- **July 2022 reductions**
  - 7 Patrol Deputies
  - 1 Canine

- **July 2022 remaining officers under contract with PCSD**
  - 1 Pierce Transit Police Chief
  - 2 Sergeants
  - 1 Investigator
Background

• With the decrease in our PCSD coverage, we will have a decrease in officers on duty and may have longer response times to serve our employees and the public

• The biggest deficit which we will experience in July of 2022 is a reduction in our Law Enforcement (LE). This will impact our ability to cover and respond to:
  • Commerce
  • Tacoma Mall Transit Center
  • Tacoma Community College Transit Center
  • Tacoma Dome Station
  • 72nd Street Transit Center
  • Routes in the encompassing areas serving these locations

• Remaining areas in Pierce Transit’s service area will continue to have Public Safety presence
Goals

• Increase Public Safety visibility and protection to our operators, facilities and passengers

• Look at short and long-term solutions and evaluate:
  • Temporary private security
  • Expanding our PSO program
  • Our decreasing law enforcement presence
  • Impact of our Service Supervisors

• Evaluate benefits and challenges to each solution
Four Areas Reviewed

• Law Enforcement - Contracts

• Public Safety Officer – Expand program

• Temporary Private Security - Contract

• Service Supervisors – Role in Public Safety
Law Enforcement

- Law enforcement (LE) contracts in place for July 2022:
  - PCSD – Expiration 12/31/2022 – no extensions
  - City of Lakewood - Expiration 12/31/2023 – two one-year extensions
  - City of Federal Way - Expiration 12/31/2023 – no extensions
  - City of Puyallup (pending City of Puyallup and then Board approval)
Law Enforcement Challenges

• July of 2022 biggest concerns for our Public Safety Team:
  • Pierce Transit cannot obtain a LE service contract with the City of Tacoma
  • PCSD may not be able to respond in the City of Tacoma
  • 90% of our calls are in the City of Tacoma

• This is the worst-case scenario. If this happens, Pierce Transit will have a decreased public safety presence and decreased response times in the following areas:
  • Commerce
  • Tacoma Mall Transit Center
  • Tacoma Dome Station
  • Tacoma Community College Transit Center
  • 72nd Street Transit Center
  • Routes in the encompassing areas serving these locations

• Any public safety issues would require our Communication Center to call 911
  • We would then rely on LE response from the jurisdiction where call generated
Public Safety Officer - Overview

- Currently the agency has 14 PSOs and 2 PSO Sergeants
- Based at the Tacoma Dome Station
- Shift schedule allows for 24/7 coverage
- Additional training through our academy (10 weeks)
- Strong hiring criteria
- PSOs are unarmed employees of Pierce Transit
  - Specially trained officers trained to ensure safety and security in Pierce Transit facilities and vehicles
  - Detain people committing or have committed an act of violence
  - Issue exclusions-trespass notices
Private Security - Information

- Licensed by the WA State Dept of Licensing
- Multiple private security companies in the Puget Sound area
  - Utilized by private and public employers
- Flexible services, for example customer can request:
  - Training required
  - How many hours a week at various locations
  - What kind of background checks are required
- Initial training
  - 8 hours of pre-assignment
  - 8 hours of post-assignment
Private Security - Continued

• Assume the liability for their employees' actions

• Private security companies currently have lower hiring standards and training requirements

• Do not have the power to enforce criminal laws or make arrests

• We have examples of contracts and Scope of Work utilized for this type of service
  • Sound Transit
  • Skagit Transit
  • Intercity Transit
  • Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada
Service Supervisors – Support in Public Safety

- Agency has 36 Service Supervisors
- 20 field shifts staffed M - F
  - Cover Dupont to Overlake, all PT and ST routes
- 11 field shifts staffed Sa - Su
- Essential duties for Public Safety
  - Takes charge of accidents or other emergency scenes, ensuring safety and security of operators, customers, agency equipment
  - Assists operators in courteously gaining passenger cooperation by advising customers regarding Agency policies, procedures, rules and regulations
  - Provides liaison among individual operators, Operations management and customers or customers’ care providers
  - Works with police officers and PSOs to provide a presence for transit operators and customers
Short Term Solution – Law Enforcement

• A service contract with the City of Tacoma and use of extra duty PCSD Deputies are needed
  • Tacoma Police will not respond to calls outside City limits
  • PCSD may not be able to respond inside Tacoma City limits
  • Would still need PCSD to be able to respond to Fife, Milton and Edgewood and unincorporated Pierce County
Short Term Solution

City of Tacoma and PCSD

- If we are successful entering a service contract with the City of Tacoma our ideal staffing would be:
  - 6 officers per day / covering 3 shifts per day M-F
  - 2 officers per day / covering 1 shifts per day Sa-Su
  - They would be stationed at:
    - TMTC
    - TCC
    - Commerce
    - Tacoma Dome Station

- Utilize PCSD as extra duty shifts
  - We would need 2 officers per day / covering 1 shifts per day Sa-F
Short Term Solution
City of Tacoma and PCSD

Benefits
- Fully commissioned officers
- Increase current minimum staffing
- Adds LE presence to the East side of our service area with addition of Puyallup PD if contract is approved
- Maintains or decreases our response times
- Maintains Public Safety command structure
- Allows us access to LE data
- Maintains good relationships with other departments

Challenges
- Cost – hourly rate estimate could vary between $78 - $85
- City of Tacoma would need to agree to a service contract
- PCSD would have to agree continue to allow for extra duty deputy inside the City of Tacoma
- LE staffing challenges, other departments may stop contracting with us for LE services in the future
Short Term Solution – Private Security
Without Short Term City of Tacoma contract and PCSD

Benefits
• Agency set requirements
  • Training, hiring, uniforms, reporting, anything we request
• Assume liability
• We dictate hours, locations to be covered
• Increased visibility, increased coverage
• Could be implemented quickly using an RFP process

Challenges
• Depending on our requirements and length of contract, would drive cost
• They have hiring challenges as well
• Would take additional Pierce Transit staff time to implement
• Lower hiring standards
• Union concerns
• May not get the same employees consistently covering an area
• We would need to work with them to develop a strong partnership with local LE
Long term Solution
Public Safety Officer and Law Enforcement without City of Tacoma Contract

Benefits
- Maintaining our Public Safety command structure
- Allows us access to LE data and maintains good relationships with other departments
- Increased visibility, increased coverage
- PSOs have special training
- Consistent personnel assigned to areas
- Could partner with PC agencies to develop behavioral health solutions and training
- Could assume Transit Ambassador roles
- Once established would allow the agency to plan for expansion if needed
- Increased PSO presence in the field, LE agencies would accept them

Challenges
- Maintaining our existing LE contracts
- Retention
- Recruitment
- We would have to develop a sustainable academy
- Need to purchase additional equipment and vehicles
- Would have to maintain a contract with PCSD for command staff
- Agency retains liability
- December 2022, WSTIP may no longer cover PSOs
- Risk team looking at commercial carriers
- Self-insured would require $2.5 million for reserves
Behavioral Health Partnerships (BHP) & Transit Ambassadors

Benefits of BHPs

• Connect vulnerable community members with established BHPs
• Partner with BHPs to develop training
• Establish relationships to help with our community BHPs missions and goals
• Partner with BHPs to become more aware and recognize community members in crisis
• Determine if the agency can become a co-responder with our community BHPs

Benefits of Transit Ambassadors

• Pierce Transit does not conduct fare enforcement
• Educates customers on fare policies and on obtaining fares through mobile ticketing apps. Ticket vending machines and vehicle farebox.
• Answers questions regarding transportation services, routes, schedules, stop locations, trip planning
• Refers complaints to appropriate authority for investigation and resolution
• Maintains knowledge of transit system changes and improvements
Proposed Next Steps

July 2022 Public Safety Model

- Reduced PCSD Deputies
- Public Safety Officers
- Service Supervisors
- City of Lakewood PD contract
- City of Federal Way PD contract
- City of Puyallup PD contract (pending approval)

Supplement the July 2022 Public Safety Model

- Contract for service with the City of Tacoma
- Permission from the PCSD to respond within Tacoma City Limits
- Prepare and issue RFP for temporary private security
- Prepare long term plan to expand Pierce Transit PSO program to cover additional service areas
Discussion