

**The Regular Board Meeting will follow after this meeting at 4:00 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting Participation Information:**

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, a physical meeting location will not be provided for this meeting. The public is welcome to attend the meeting by calling 1-253-215-8782 or 1-669-900-6833 and entering Meeting ID No. 82601714113, or by accessing <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82601714113>

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**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.



**Pierce  
Transit**

# **Public Safety at Pierce Transit**

524

Pierce Transit

WASHINGTON  
C4313C

# 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 PSO's 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
- PSO's 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

