



Board Report

File #: 2024-0270, **File Type:** Informational Report

Agenda Number: 33.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE JUNE 20, 2024

SUBJECT: PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE:

- A. the status report on Metro's Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC); and
- B. a report on PSAC's recommendations on the proposed Transit Community Public Safety Department.

ISSUE

In June 2020, the Board directed the CEO to form an advisory committee to contribute recommendations on ways to use a community-based approach to public safety on the transit system. This Board report provides an update on the work of the Public Safety Advisory Committee from February to May 2024.

BACKGROUND

Metro established the first PSAC cohort as a pilot on April 7, 2021. During its 16-month term, the cohort:

- Provided guidance on the development of a community-based approach to public safety.
- Shared input on the development of the multi-agency policing contract renewal.
- Reviewed the Customer Code of Conduct.
- Provided feedback on Metro's mission and value statements regarding public safety.
- Guided the establishment of Metro's Transit Ambassadors program, among other accomplishments.

The first cohort was established to cover specific objectives over a designated period, and their work concluded on August 17, 2022. At the September 2022 Board meeting, the CEO recommended that

the PSAC continue. The second cohort was established on February 25, 2023, and will serve for two years.

PSAC elected an executive committee to serve from February 2024 to February 2025.

- Jeremy Oliver-Ronceros, Chair
- Misty Wilks, Vice-Chair
- Darryl Goodus, Secretary

Work Plan Objectives

Together with Metro CEO Wiggins, the PSAC Executive Committee developed a work plan that outlines five objectives framing PSAC's scope of work to enhance the customer experience by addressing safety concerns on the system. The Executive Committee, staff, and CEO together identified key strategies that the committee can review, evaluate, and/or help advance. The PSAC Executive Committee meets with CEO Wiggins monthly to agree upon PSAC meeting agenda items. Agenda items have included, but have not been limited to, Metro Transit Security Bus Riding Teams, the Customer Experience Plan, Exploration of a Transit Community Public Safety Department (TCPSP), Metro's Ambassador Program Evaluation, safety for people with disabilities, station intervention strategies, crisis response strategies, and a PSAC community listening session.

DISCUSSION

At its November 2 meeting, the PSAC discussed and voted to create three Ad Hoc Committees for more in-depth conversations and to allow time to develop thorough recommendations in the event the Board adopted and advanced an implementation plan to develop an in-house Metro Transit Community Public Safety Department. The three ad-hoc committees included focused discussions on 1) personnel, 2) job duties, and 3) oversight.

Throughout December, the three PSAC Ad Hoc Committees held two two-hour workshops each. Each workshop facilitated meaningful discussion and brainstormed recommendations for CEO Wiggins' consideration. The meetings created a space to review public input and community priorities from the PSAC Listening Session and the eight supplemental in-person engagements held countywide during Fall 2023. The initial workshops allowed for extensive conversations to categorize ideas and ultimately synthesize them into recommendations that address how officers of an in-house community public safety department should be evaluated before being hired, be routinely trained before and after deployment onto the system and be overseen while performing their duties with the highest standards of excellence in public safety.

At its February 1, 2024 meeting, the PSAC agenda focused on each Ad Hoc Committee bringing forth their proposals and engaging the membership in a robust discussion that ultimately led to 22 recommendations. The full list of recommendations and management responses are detailed in Attachment A. The general themes of the recommendations are below.

1. Personnel Ad Hoc Committee Discussion

- Ideal qualifications and experience of candidates

- Desired types of officer training needed before being deployed on the system

2. Job Duties Ad Hoc Committee Discussion

- Enforcement of Metro's code of conduct and fare payment
- Community engagement and fostering trust as a core function
- Ongoing training for culturally competent community policing, in line with Metro's care-based approach

3. Oversight Ad Hoc Committee Discussion

- Recommendation to create an oversight entity
- Oversight as a committee/commission to establish performance measures

During the March 7, 2024 meeting, the PSAC received several updates, as follows:

The Ambassador Program staff provided an update on the evaluation of the Metro Ambassador program. The PSAC members are very pleased with the great work the Ambassadors are doing and find it very uplifting that they have already saved more than 200 lives while working on the system.

An update on the law enforcement "ride-along" was also on the agenda. The update included a recap of the ride-along opportunity and information on how to sign up. The chair wanted to recount his own experience of having been on a six-hour ride-along with one of Metro's law enforcement partners. Chair Oliver-Ronceros shared that he enjoyed getting to experience first-hand what it is like to provide safety and security services on the Metro system. He was very happy to have participated because it raised his awareness of what officers face in the line of duty, and he witnessed how they interact with customers and people in distress. As a result, he is more empathetic. He encouraged everyone on the Committee to make the time to participate in a "ride-along," noting that this experience will help him better carry out his work as the Chair of the Public Safety Advisory Committee, and suggesting it could be helpful for others as they continue engaging in PSACs work. He firmly believes that

Lastly, a high-level summary presentation was made to the PSAC by Isai Rosa, Metro Community Relations Manager, about the general themes of the public comments received through the listening session and engagements from last Fall. To ensure that the PSAC members were getting themes representative of diverse voices and experiences, staff also included public comments from PSAC meetings, as well as comments related to public safety that would have derived from the Metro Customer Call Center reports, social listening (data gathered from social media), and messages received via the Metro Transit Watch app. While the bulk of comments received at the Fall Engagement events and the Listening Session were about public safety, some also commented on the need for Metro to improve:

- Cleanliness of the system
- Stations
- Bus and rail frequency

Overwhelmingly, the public asked Metro to enforce its Code of Conduct and fare payment and increase the visibility of law enforcement and transit security officers on the system. Many comments were also made on the Ambassadors, mostly praising the program and expressing a deep

appreciation for their work. A few comments also criticized the Ambassadors' authority as being too limited.

At its April 4, 2024 meeting, staff presented on the newly formed Station Experience Unit. Building on the recent Westlake/MacArthur Park Station improvements, this report identified the next steps for implementing intervention strategies to improve community health and safety at additional Metro stations. Stations for initial pilot interventions include:

- Lake Av in Pasadena (A Line)
- Hollywood/Highland (B Line)
- Downtown Santa Monica (E Line)
- Norwalk (C Line)

Additionally, the Customer Experience (CX) Strategy and Insights team, joined by SSLE, shared an update on the 17 safety-related action items included in the 2023 CX Plan. The CX team reported that all the action items are in progress, with one completed and provided an overview of the latest activities for each action item. Staff also shared that there are several capital projects to improve safety across our system, such as camera and operational enhancements, as well as other action items like increasing the number of homeless outreach staff and addressing safety training among employees. The 2023 CX Plan can be found at [this link <https://www.metro.net/about/customer-experience-hub/>](https://www.metro.net/about/customer-experience-hub/).

At the May 2, 2024, meeting, System Security & Law Enforcement (SSLE) staff shared an update on the recent security incidents that have taken place on the system over the past several weeks. During his preliminary review of recent security incidents, Interim Deputy Chief, System Security and Law Enforcement Robert Gummer engaged the Committee in a discussion on fare enforcement. After a one-hour discussion, the Committee brought forth two motions to form ad hoc committees: one to develop alternatives to fare enforcement and the second to identify recommendation(s) to address equitable fare enforcement. It was determined that the committees would meet during May to finalize and bring forth their recommendation(s) by the June 6, 2024, PSAC meeting.

Additionally, SSLE presented its FY25 proposed Public Safety Budget. The proposed budget reflects the agency's commitment to further its public safety portfolio to increase rider and employee safety. This is implemented through investment in Metro Transit Security Officers, funding operating costs for the Emergency Security Operations Center, and funding for needed systemwide infrastructure enhancement and vulnerability threat assessments.

Finally, Metro's Emergency Management Department (EMD) staff presented on Metro's emergency preparedness and response activities for disabled persons and others. The PSAC is interested in how Metro plans for evacuations from rail stations and throughout the system to provide a safe and effective experience for all customers, including Metro riders who may have different accessibility and functional needs or who otherwise might require assistance to exit safely. The EMD also shared how Metro plans, prepares, and responds to special events, natural disasters, and emergencies,

collaborating with local jurisdictions and partner agencies to decrease impacts on Metro riders and staff.

EQUITY PLATFORM

PSAC plays a crucial role in addressing equity within the transportation system. Equity is a central consideration in the committee's decision-making processes, as it strives to ensure that all members of the community, especially those historically marginalized or underserved, have access to safe and reliable transportation options. Through its commitment to inclusivity, community engagement, and data-driven approaches, the committee strives to create a transit environment that is safe, accessible, and equitable for all residents of Los Angeles County. This update highlights PSAC's important role in supporting Metro's equity platform. For example, PSAC's community engagement efforts to develop its recommendations for a potential new Transit Community Safety Department started with community listening sessions that allowed all interested stakeholders to provide feedback about public safety in a safe space and allow different perspectives on this topic to flourish. These listening sessions ultimately shaped the PSAC recommendations, as described in Attachment A.

The recommendations are grounded in equity, and they ensure that the new Transit Community Safety Department includes personnel requirements and job duties for effective service to diverse communities. The recommended establishment of an Oversight Committee that includes a countywide outreach and recruitment process ensures equitable demographic and geographic representation, including people with disabilities, older adults, and youth. All the PSAC recommendations address equity, diversity, and inclusion. PSAC's framework for developing these recommendations focuses on holistic, equitable, and justice-minded guiding principles that respect the humanity of all people.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The work of PSAC supports Metro's Strategic Vision Goal #2, which is to deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system.

This goal outlines that the agency will specifically take action to improve security and ease of use by preventing crime and enforcing Metro's code of conduct. Metro will rely on a multi-layered, integrated security program that includes technology, people, and partnerships to achieve a safe system. The PSAC is a key component to help reach this goal as the committee will work to safeguard the transit community by taking a holistic, equitable, and welcoming approach to public safety.

NEXT STEPS

Metro's System Safety & Law Enforcement Department and its consultant will continue to review and, as appropriate, include the recommendations as part of the Transit Community Public Safety Department Implementation Plan that will be presented to the Board in the coming months. Staff will continue to meet with the PSAC as it continues to explore safety and

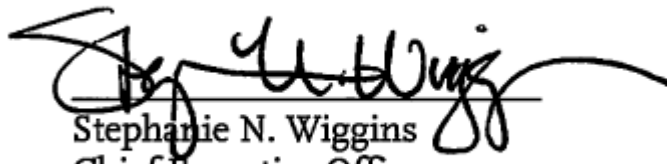
security on the Metro System and advance the objectives detailed in their annual work plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - PSAC Final Recommendations and Responses

Prepared by: Patricia Soto, Director, Community Relations, (213) 922-7273
Lilian De Loza-Gutierrez, Executive Officer, Communications (213) 922-7479
Yvette Rapose, Deputy Chief, Customer Experience, (213) 418-3154

Reviewed by: Jennifer Vides, Chief Customer Experience Officer, (213) 922-4060



Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)

Ad Hoc Committees Final Recommendations

Thursday, February 1, 2024

Personnel Ad Hoc Committee

Metro safeguards the transit community by taking a holistic, equitable, and welcoming approach to public safety. Metro recognizes that everyone is entitled to a safe, dignified, and human experience. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department will be holistic, equitable, and justice-minded, respecting the humanity of all people. To that end, Metro shall seek to identify professionally qualified candidates who are culturally aligned with the new department.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Candidate outreach efforts will focus on bringing in diverse members of the community.

1. Each candidate will undergo a holistic review, background check, and psychological analysis and/or evaluation as part of the application process.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Candidates considered for officer positions will be screened for minimum qualifications, participate in the selection process that will demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities, complete a background investigation, and undergo a psychological and physical examination.

2. To ensure effective service to diverse communities, Metro shall seek personnel:
 - a. Whose language proficiency reflects the transit riders they serve, including ASL and other LA County threshold languages.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Outreach will be done to attract diverse candidates during the recruitment process.

- b. Experienced working with diverse communities.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Outreach will be done to attract diverse candidates during the recruitment process. Additionally, employment training will focus on building the necessary skills to work with diverse populations.

- c. Experienced working with interdisciplinary teams, including mental health professionals, crisis teams, de-escalation training, and/or sensitivity training.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Staff will incorporate this experience into the job description so related questions can be asked during the testing/interview process. Staff also recommends this be incorporated into the training curriculum after employment.

3. Metro's Transit Community Public Safety Department (TCPD) shall prioritize candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to serving the population that Metro serves; this commitment may have been demonstrated through background or training and/or experience that includes but is not limited to social work, military background, community outreach and/or mental health.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. This preference can be added to the job description so that related questions can be asked during the testing/interview process.

4. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall have demonstrated an ability to show sensitivity and responsiveness to the diverse needs of Metro riders. They are trained to respect riders' privacy, check assumptions or prejudgments, and respond to situations with empathy and compassion.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Qualifications can be added to the job description so that related questions can be asked during the testing/interview

process. Additionally, staff recommends that these skills be incorporated into the training curriculum after employment.

Job Duties Ad Hoc Committee

1. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department is a law enforcement agency whose top priority shall be securing rider, employee, and partner safety while engaged with Metro.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. This philosophy will be foundational to the proposed department.

2. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall have the authority to enforce Metro's Code of Conduct.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. This responsibility will be included in the job description.

3. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall engage with the community professionally and proactively on buses, train cars, platforms, and mezzanines at community and station activations and other Metro locations and events.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. This responsibility will be included in the job description.

4. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall serve as active members of the Metro system operations community, building trust among and coordinating with the appropriate various units in the multi-layered approach to safety, including but not limited to:
 - a. Metro bus and rail operators

- b. Cleaning and maintenance staff
- c. Metro Ambassadors
- d. Mental health service providers
- e. Homeless service providers
- f. Community-based organizations
- g. Law enforcement partners

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Collaboration and coordination will be foundational to the proposed new department.

5. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall have a working knowledge of the Metro system, assist with wayfinding, and be able to aid passengers in the event of service interruptions and major delays.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. This will be incorporated into the training curriculum.

6. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall undergo routine training beyond federal, state, and locally required mandates on the following topics:
 - a. De-escalation (every year)
 - b. CPR (every two years)
 - c. Unconscious bias (every two years)
 - d. Emergency narcotic overdose treatments
 - e. Evolution of best practices in community safety
 - f. Hate crime awareness and prevention
 - g. Engaging people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Metro will exceed POST certification training standards and provide additional specialized training that focuses

on the transit system, such as rail and bus safety, trauma-informed, crisis intervention training, anti-bias, LGBTQ+ awareness, cultural diversity, active shooter, workplace violence, incident command, and terrorism prevention in a transit environment.

7. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department shall host a monthly *internal* review of SSLE's monthly safety report and schedule a weekly huddle to address de-escalation and on-the-spot problem resolution.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Metro already has a similar internal review process for the Transit Security Officers that can be expanded to include the TCPSD officers.

8. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department shall have access to technology that will help foster trust and transparency. At a minimum, they shall have body-worn cameras and communication devices that are seamless across the safety ecosystem, and throughout the Metro system.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. All officers will be equipped with body-worn cameras.

9. Metro's Transit Community Safety Department officers shall have the authority to enforce fares in a way that is equitable and does not target any particular rider group.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation.

Oversight Ad Hoc Committee

1. LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) shall implement an oversight commission with the power to investigate issues and complaints against the Transit Community Safety Department (TCSD).

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Information about the formation of an oversight body will be included in the implementation plan.

2. The Oversight Commission shall work with the Office of the Inspector General to subpoena officers and documents, provide staff and research support, and investigate incidents on the Metro system.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. The OIG's office will maintain independent authority for fact-finding and disciplinary recommendations.

3. The oversight commission shall have the authority to implement recommendations that align with Metro's safety vision and mission.

Metro Response: Metro partially supports this recommendation. The oversight commission can make recommendations, but the authority to implement them is the responsibility of the CEO and the board.

4. The oversight commission shall be established with at least 15 members.

Metro Response: Metro does not support this recommendation. Staff recommends that the commission not exceed 9 members based on surveys of other transit agency oversight commissions.

5. Elected officials shall not influence the oversight commission membership selection process.

Metro Response: Metro does not support this recommendation as the selection process has not been determined.

6. The oversight commission membership selection shall include a county-wide outreach and recruitment process to ensure equitable geographic and demographic representation from throughout LA County, including people with disabilities and older adults.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation.

7. The oversight commission shall include no more than one member who is a retired law enforcement officer. No member of the oversight commission shall be a police officer or a military personnel officer on active duty.

Metro Response: Metro partially supports this recommendation. Having law enforcement representation in the oversight commission will bring great value through the sharing of first-hand experience and knowledge. However, the percentage of oversight commission members with a law enforcement background shall not exceed 20 percent of the commission.

8. Oversight commission membership shall include representation of Metro riders, inclusive of transit-dependent riders and choice riders.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation. Metro will support the recruitment process with broad and intentional education and outreach about the opportunity to serve on the commission.

9. The oversight commission shall include a balance of professionals in the field of safety and security, the field of mental health, civil rights law/social justice, and members of the community.

Metro Response: Metro supports this recommendation.

10. Members of the oversight commission shall be members of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and undergo training in best practices for effective and transparent policing.

Metro Response: Metro partially supports this recommendation. Members shall undergo specific training courses to prepare them for their role. Training courses will be identified before recruitment to advise the applicants on the requirement to serve. While it will not be a pre-requisite for new commission members to already be members of NACOLE, it could be Metro's goal to offer members an opportunity to become members.



Metro

Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC)

Board Update June 20, 2024

February 1, 2024, PSAC Ad Hoc Committee

1. Personnel Ad Hoc Committee

- Ideal qualifications and experience for candidates
- Types of officer training to undergo before being deployed on the system

2. Job Duties Ad Hoc Committee

- Enforcement of Metro's code of conduct and enforcement of fares
- Community engagement and fostering trust as a core function
- Ongoing training on culturally competent community policing, in line with Metro's care-based approach

3. Oversight Ad Hoc Committee

- Whether to recommend creating an oversight entity
- Oversight as a committee/commission to establish performance measures

March 7, 2024, PSAC General Meeting

1. Metro Ambassadors Program Update

- Senior Director, Karen Parks, provided the annual report
- PSAC suggested ride along opportunities with Ambassadors

2. LA Sheriff Ride-Along Experience

- Chair Oliver-Ronceros reported on his experience and encouraged other PSAC Committee members to participate

3. High Level Recap of Community Listening Sessions

- Community Relations Manager, Isai Rosa presented on what we heard from the public through the eight community events, station activation and community listening session last Fall
- Recap included responses and public comments collected from in-person interactions, virtual meetings, events, CCATs, and Social Listening



Metro

April 4, 2024, PSAC General Meeting

1. Introduce the new Station Experience Unit

- Principal Transportation Planner in Operations, Jorge Martinez, provided:
 - Overview of the new unit focused on enhancing safety and cleanliness at designated Metro stations.
 - Update on successful intervention methods at Westlake MacArthur Park
 - Overview of the partnership with Throne Public Restrooms
 - Best practices to be implemented at designated stations.

2. Customer Experience Plan Safety-Related Action Items (CX)

- Chief Customer Experience Officer Jennifer Vides, joined by Senior Manager Lauren Deaderick and Senior Executive Officer of Systems Security and Law Enforcement, Robert Gummer, provided updates on the 17 safety-related action items in the 2023 CX Plan.

May 2, 2024, PSAC General Meeting

1. Security Incidents and FY25 Budget Update

- Interim Deputy Chief of Systems Security & Law Enforcement, Robert Gummer, provided an update on the recent security incidents on the Metro system.
- Mr. Gummer presented the FY25 proposed public safety budget.

2. Emergency Procedures for Disabled Persons

- Interim Sr. Director of Emergency Services & Homeland Security's Moniek Pointer, presented emergency preparedness and response activities for disabled persons.
- Ms. Pointer shared Metro's plans for evacuation from rail stations and throughout the system in the event of an emergency.



Thank You



Metro®