



CITY OF  
**TUMWATER**

**PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA**

**Online via Zoom and In Person at  
Tumwater City Hall, Council Conference  
Room, 555 Israel Rd. SW, Tumwater, WA  
98501**

**Tuesday, September 10, 2024  
8:00 AM**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes: Public Health & Safety Committee, July 9, 2024
4. Fire Department Staffing Briefing (Fire Department)
5. Police Strategic Growth Plan Discussion (Police Department)
6. Additional Items
7. Adjourn

**Meeting Information**

All committee members will be attending remotely. The public are welcome to attend in person, by telephone or online via Zoom.

**Watch Online**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88405096060?pwd=xWeZ97NaR5ZEaPUligrZxhCPeQigH.1>

**Listen by Telephone**

Call (253) 215-8782, listen for the prompts and enter the Webinar ID 884 0509 6060 and Passcode 005579.

**Public Comment**

The public may submit comments by sending an email to [council@ci.tumwater.wa.us](mailto:council@ci.tumwater.wa.us), no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the meeting. Comments are submitted directly to the Committee members and will not be read individually into the record of the meeting.

**Post Meeting**

Audio of the meeting will be recorded and later available by request, please email [CityClerk@ci.tumwater.wa.us](mailto:CityClerk@ci.tumwater.wa.us)

**Accommodations**

The City of Tumwater takes pride in ensuring that people with disabilities are able to take part in, and benefit from, the range of public programs, services, and activities offered by the City. To request an accommodation or alternate format of communication, please contact the City Clerk by calling (360) 252-5488 or email [CityClerk@ci.tumwater.wa.us](mailto:CityClerk@ci.tumwater.wa.us). For vision or hearing impaired services, please

contact the Washington State Relay Services at 7-1-1 or 1-(800)-833-6384. To contact the City's ADA Coordinator directly, call (360) 754-4129 or email [ADACoordinator@ci.tumwater.wa.us](mailto:ADACoordinator@ci.tumwater.wa.us).

**TUMWATER PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING  
July 9, 2024 Page 1**

**CONVENE:** 8:00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Peter Agabi and Councilmember Kelly Von Holtz.

Excused: Councilmember Leatta Dahlhoff.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Police Commander Jay Mason, Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Crimmins, and Police Administrative Supervisor Laura Wohl.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES:**

**JUNE 11, 2024:**

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Von Holtz moved, seconded by Chair Agabi, to approve the minutes of June 11, 2024 as published. A voice vote approved the motion.**

**THURSTON  
COUNTY  
PROSECUTOR  
UPDATE:**

Jon Tunheim, Thurston County Prosecutor, briefed members on the status of Tumwater misdemeanor cases. The City contracts with Thurston County to provide prosecutor services. The Thurston County Prosecutor's Office administers all Tumwater misdemeanor cases, as well as any felony referrals from the City. The current caseload is approximately 1,300 open misdemeanor cases, which includes City of Lacey cases. Each deputy prosecutor is handling 330 open cases. The District Court has indicated the caseload level is nearing the pre-COVID level.

Over the last year, challenges have been in hiring and retaining lawyers. Last year, the Criminal Division had 11 vacant positions. Today, 28 lawyers are assigned to the Criminal Division. Efforts have concentrated on recruiting and onboarding new lawyers. A new program, *Intern to Employment* was created. Interns working in District Court who achieve Rule 9 status (limited license to practice) are eligible to apply for full-time employment prior to taking the bar exam. If selected, interns receive a provisional employment offer conditioned on passing the bar exam. The Office has hired four lawyers through the program. Two new hires are pending dependent on testing results. If hired, the Prosecutor's Office would have two vacant positions.

Mr. Tunheim described the impacts of digital discovery or the changing environment of evidence within the criminal justice system. Digital evidence includes cell phone data, personal computer, surveillance cameras from residents and businesses, and the addition of dash cameras and body cameras video. The City of Olympia has implemented a full body camera program within the Police Department similar to the Thurston

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County Sheriff's Office and Lacey Police Department. Washington State Patrol is scheduled to implement the state's body camera program. As a result, each case from a traffic stop to a homicide produces digital evidence that must be stored and maintained. Challenges include managing and storing data and providing data to defense attorneys through the discovery process. The Prosecutor's Office is implementing a new software program, *Justice Premier*, to enable uploading all digital evidence into the cloud, managing the evidence in the cloud, and providing evidence to the defense through the cloud.

Alternative therapeutic courts in Thurston County continue to experience success. Recently initiated is the Law Enforcement Division Program. A pathway was created for the Prosecutor's Office to utilize the program. Misdemeanor cases that meet criteria can be referred to the program from the Prosecutor's Office.

The Washington Supreme Court is considering changes in public defense caseload standards. The new standards are not in effect at this time. The Board of Governors for the Bar recommended standards to the Supreme Court. Public comment on the proposed standards is open until October 31, 2024. The new proposed caseload standards would significantly impact the Prosecutor's Office financially as it would reduce the number of cases a public defender could handle requiring the addition of lawyers to handle cases.

Christy Peters, Thurston County Prosecutor's Office, reported on a recent study of public defender resources in 39 counties across the state. Thurston County was identified as being at full capacity with no vacancies of public defenders.

Chair Agabi questioned the impact to the Prosecutor's Office in terms of maintenance and storage of data if new standards are adopted for public defense. Mr. Tunheim advised of some connection as discovery includes the management of evidence forwarded from law enforcement agencies, which would not change. However prosecution and defense lawyers must take time to view all video to understand the evidence forwarded from law enforcement. More hours of video sent from law enforcement agencies requires more time invested in each case creating additional workload and resources for prosecution and defense.

Mr. Tunheim cited a recent case of a police pursuit involving over 25 officers from multiple jurisdictions with all officers wearing body cameras. Most of the patrol cars had dash cameras resulting in hours of video for one pursuit case.

Ms. Peters said the Prosecutor's Office is considering the expansion of the internship program. Typically, the program included both undergraduate

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interns in addition to law students. It is now more important for undergraduate students to participate as they review body camera footage saving a significant amount of case time.

City Attorney Kirkpatrick noted that if the proposed standards for public defender caseloads are adopted, the City’s costs for public defense with the Office of Public Defense could double. The Association of Washington Cities is involved and sponsoring some listening sessions. The committee will receive updates as the issue moves forward. Although the Office of Public Defense is at full capacity today, the new standards affect caseloads requiring more public defenders.

**HOMELAND  
SECURITY REGION  
3 OMNIBUS  
MUTUAL AID  
AGREEMENT:**

Fire Chief Hurley reported Homeland Security Region 3 is comprised of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Masson, Pacific, and Thurston Counties. The agreement is available to most cities, counties, and tribes within the region. Homeland Security Region 3 serves as an emergency management function through coordination and cooperation for all hazards planning, preparedness programs, response, and recovery.

Participating agencies expressed an interest in mutual assistance throughout the entire region using different resources, not just fire department resources. In the event of an emergency, agencies request assistance for personnel, equipment, and materials. Each jurisdiction and county has many resources that could be shared. The agreement enables mutual assistance during natural and human-caused emergencies.

Participation in the agreement is voluntary and reimbursement is negotiable.

Fire Chief Hurley cited an example of how agreement was utilized approximately two years ago to respond to a fire at a nursing home in Montesano. The incident devastated the facility displacing 77 residents. The Region 3 Incident Management Team was activated and was able to coordinate the transfer of patients to other facilities in and outside the region.

Staff requests approval to place the Homeland Security Region 3 Omnibus Mutual Aid Agreement on the July 16, 2024 City Council consent calendar with a recommendation to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Von Holtz moved, seconded by Chair Agabi, to place the Homeland Security Region 3 Omnibus Mutual Aid Agreement on the July 16, 2024 City Council consent calendar with a recommendation to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign. A voice vote approved the motion.**

**INTERAGENCY**

City Administrator Parks reported the proposed agreement is identical to a

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**REIMBURSEMENT  
AGREEMENT  
IAA25301 BETWEEN  
WASHINGTON  
STATE  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
OFFICE OF THE  
COURTS AND CITY  
OF TUMWATER:**

prior agreement and covers the period from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. The agreement is between the Office of the Courts and the City of Tumwater for legal fees reimbursed to a party subject to the felony drug possession law deemed unconstitutional by the Blake decision. The agreement enables the City to reimburse any costs the City might incur if someone who was subject to the law requests reimbursement of fees. The agreement establishes a maximum amount of \$28,507 the City could potentially recover.

City Attorney Kirkpatrick noted that the City has not incurred any expenses with respect to reimbursements resulting from the Blake decision other than for fees absorbed by the Office of Public Defense.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Von Holtz moved, seconded by Chair Agabi, to place the Interagency Reimbursement Agreement IAA25301 Between Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts and the City of Tumwater, on the July 16, 2024 City Council consent calendar with a recommendation to approve in substantially similar form as approved by the City Attorney and authorize the Mayor to sign. A voice vote approved the motion.**

**ADDITIONAL  
ITEMS:**

There were no additional items of discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Chair Agabi adjourned the meeting at 8:39 a.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
Puget Sound Meeting Services, psmsoly@earthlink.net

TO: Public Health & Safety Committee  
FROM: Brian Hurley, Fire Chief  
DATE: September 10, 2024  
SUBJECT: Fire Department Staffing Briefing

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1) Recommended Action:

This item is informational only

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2) Background:

Fire Department staff work 24-hour shifts on a 4-platoon schedule. This briefing will give an overview of how Department staffing is implemented to ensure all response units are fully staffed each day. Information on nationally recognized response standards will also be presented.

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3) Policy Support:

- Provide and Sustain Quality Public Safety Services
    - Ensure timely, efficient, and effective public safety response in our community
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4) Alternatives:

Discussion Only

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5) Fiscal Notes:

Discussion Only

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6) Attachments:

None

TO: Public Health & Safety Committee  
FROM: Jon Weiks, Chief of Police  
DATE: September 10, 2024  
SUBJECT: Police Strategic Growth Plan Discussion

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1) Recommended Action:

There is no action required. This is for discussion only.

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2) Background:

In June 2024 the police department provided the City Council a presentation of the completed 2025-2029 Tumwater Police Department Strategic Growth Plan (PSGP). The Public Health and Safety Committee has additional questions and has requested an opportunity to discuss the PSGP further. The police department will be providing the Committee an overview of the process, timeline, and internal/external communications related to the development and publishing of the PSGP.

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3) Policy Support:

2023-2024 Strategic Priority: *“Provide and Sustain Quality Public Safety Services”*

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4) Alternatives:

This is for discussion only.

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5) Fiscal Notes:

None

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6) Attachments:

A. Focus Group Plan Outline



# FOCUS GROUP PLAN

## WHAT & WHY

When building a comprehensive policing model, it is essential to include both quantitative and qualitative research. The quantitative research is based on the principles of representative sampling and statistical analysis. The qualitative research builds upon the quantitative. The quantitative data provides the initial structure, while the qualitative gives the descriptive information that completes the picture.

In developing the Police Strategic Growth Plan (PSGP), the results of the 2022 Community Survey provided the quantitative data on which to build the plan. The survey clearly demonstrated community support for the current policing style of TPD. The next phase of the process is to add the qualitative research.

The purpose of this phase is to engage with the community and inform the process so that the PSGP can accommodate the long term wants and needs of the city. Within the context of Tumwater, the police department is heavily focused on community policing and proactivity. However, the police department wants to understand what that proactive policing looks like for the city of Tumwater so that they can work to meet the needs of residents more effectively. As the field of policing advances, community relations become even more important and increasingly high expectations from residents requires community collaboration.

The community policing approach is aimed at providing more effective and efficient crime control, reduced fear of crime, improved quality of life, and improved police services and police legitimacy, all through proactive engagement. Engaging in an open dialog with the community helps foster positive relations while providing greater accountability of police, greater public share in decision making, and greater concern for civil rights and liberties.

Extant research frameworks created for advancing community policing through community governance have demonstrated four distinct levels of engagement (Diamond & Weiss, 2016):

- Inform- such as providing balanced and objective information to assist in understanding the problems, alternatives, and solutions.
- Consult- such as obtaining feedback on analysis, alternatives, and decisions.
- Involve- such as collaborating directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.
- Partner- such as partnering with the public in each aspect of the decision-making process, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution, in which all participants' input is equally valued.

While strategically planning for the future of the Tumwater Police Department it is therefore imperative to inform the public of the process by which we are building the PSGP, including the evidence-based and research-driven factors that have laid the foundation. This ensures that the community understands that the Tumwater Police Department are approaching staffing in the most appropriate manner and building a deliberate model for the future. The use of the Community Survey and then focus groups ensure that the community is being involved in the process of building the strategic staffing plan and their input becomes an integral part moving forward. This level of community involvement allows for cyclical and ongoing consultation regarding the processes and the decisions. Finally, creating partnerships with the community and including them in the decision-making process demonstrates transparency and inclusion. It also fulfills Sir Robert Peel's 7<sup>th</sup> Principle of Policing a Tumwater Police Department core value:

*Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.*

## HOW

The Tumwater Police Department (TPD) will be conducting a series of focus groups to provide the qualitative data needed to develop the PSGP. Since focus groups are a form of qualitative research, it is important to utilize proper research methodology and protocols to ensure the integrity and validity of the data gathered. The Tumwater Police Department Management Analyst Dr. Oliver Bowers is an established and qualified researcher with extensive experience in advanced research methodologies and human subjects research within social and behavioral research in Washington State.

Focus groups are a type of in-person interview with the purpose of information-gathering in which the researcher guides the group discussions to specific areas of interest. The focus groups typically consist of 8 to 15 people and are created through purposive sampling to bring together participants who can provide a mixture of perspectives (Tartaro, 2021). There will be a total of four focus group sessions on different days and at different times, each with a different group of people, to fully explore the same topics.

Within the research framework, there are three distinct stages: Exploratory research, descriptive research, and evaluation research. The exploratory stage is the first stage in the process and is focused on learning something unknown, which in this case is the community perception of the Tumwater Police Department and this utilized the Community Survey. The descriptive stage, which is the middle stage of the process, aims to provide extensive details of items learned from the previous stage. Within this context this means providing details on the topics covered in the community survey by exploring them

in depth with community members. The evaluation stage, which is the final stage of the process, is aimed at determining the efficacy of the overall process.

This empirically grounded and evidence-based process is built on the concept of the Wheel of Research (Khaldi, 2017) in which quantitative research informs theory and generates hypotheses which can be further explored and reexamined through qualitative research. The deductive process of quantitative methodologies is therefore supplemented by the inductive process of qualitative methodologies. The question guide of the focus groups has been built based on the data gathered through the survey (multimethod approach to focus groups) so that the foundation of these areas of exploration are grounded in existing data. Therefore, the use of focus groups is an evidence-based practice that will inform the strategic plan and allow the police department to build a thorough understanding of the community and how best to serve them and meet their needs moving forward, which is an established practice within community policing research (Connors & Webster, 2001; Diamond & Weiss, 2016; Doane & Cumberland, 2018; Fisher-Stewart, 2016; Kimbrough, 2016; Liederbach, Fritsch, Carter & Bannister, 2008).

Recruitment for the focus groups will use non-probability sampling, specifically purposive and quota sampling, so that the focus groups represent a wide variety of views, perspectives, and demographics (James & James, 2017). This sampling approach will provide a substantial breadth of participants, increasing the external validity of the focus group approach.

To further demonstrate the validity of the focus group, it is important to address the following components: The use of a focus group guide, akin to an interview guide, built on variables drawn from existing research and with a logical foundation, will demonstrate construct validity. Having those measures validated by people other than the principal researcher, such as the command staff, will demonstrate criterion validity. Ensuring that each topic within the focus group guide covers all dimensions of the specific measures being discussed will demonstrate content validity, and those measures being conceptually related to the topics will also demonstrate face validity. Finally, taking findings from previous survey data and exploring them on this level allows for more generalizability across settings, while also helping to avoid ecological fallacy and demonstrating ecological validity.

A limitation of qualitative methods includes reactive effects, such as participants being aware that they are being observed and altering their responses. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher's interactions with the group are minimal and serve only to guide the conversation. Further to this, the arrangement of the focus group's physical setting will be organized in ways that minimize the potential for reactive effects. This includes: the seating arrangement, who can be present, and the room in which the focus groups will take place. The group will be arranged in an almost circle so that none of the participants are in a clear leadership position and are focused on the session and not on other factors in the room. Furthermore, the focus groups will not be recorded so participants feel more comfortable engaging in discussion. This approach requires comprehensive note taking but it has been demonstrated that the recording of focus groups can stifle participant and affect group discussion dynamics.

Focus groups use group interactions to produce data and insights that would otherwise be less accessible. They provide large amounts of rich data within limited time and have been demonstrated to be a very efficient method of qualitative data collection (Dantzker, Hunter, & Quinn, 2016). Focus groups avoid the depth and detail of individual opinions and experiences in favor of data from groups discussing topics of interest. This allows the research to avoid becoming entrenched in the anecdotal and personal experiences of the participants. Within the context of this process, this approach will afford the department an understanding of the policing style they want and expect without becoming bogged down in the details of how to implement it.

The use of a natural, less-structured guide allows for unscheduled probes which work well in focus group settings and allow for deeper explorations and clearer emergence of themes. However, conversations veer and issues such as groupthink and dominant participants can skew focus group discussions so the researcher acts as a guide to redirect conversations but there is also a need for a policy moderator. Within focus groups, the researcher aims to drive participants' responses to Perceptions, Opinions, Beliefs, and Attitudes (POBA) and away from proto-social analytic or putatively factual observations. POBA talk is generated quickly by participants as it does not require consideration or calculation and allows for significant variation among participants (Potter & Robles, 2022).

After all the focus groups are complete, qualitative content analysis is performed. Notes and jottings are compiled, the data is cleaned and organized to generate an information base that can be searched for patterns and themes, which can then be systematically embedded in explanations. The results of the qualitative content analysis will be used to generate recommendations based on a greater understanding of the needs of the community. The police command staff will use the information gathered to inform the Department's service model and to illustrate the policing style the community expects from TPD as part of the PSGP.

## FRAMEWORK & GUIDE

### SETUP

Best practices demonstrate that when conducting a focus group an interview guide should be used with approximately five to seven open-ended questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). These questions are based on the Community Survey and are aimed at stimulating group discussion regarding the specific areas of focus.

There will be up to four focus group sessions to maximize the potential for participation and diversity. Each session will last a maximum of 90 minutes, in line with ideal duration to avoid fatigue whilst maintaining engagement throughout. The 90 minute sessions will be divided up into 15 minutes of introduction and explanation, 60 minutes of discussion, and up to 15 minutes for closing discussion and debriefing. A weekday morning session, a weekday evening session, a weekend session will be offered. A final session, scheduled at a time and date convenient for additional participants, may also be included.

Participants will be recruited via several key means, including the city website, department outreach, social media, and community groups. Participants will be invited to fill out a brief demographic questionnaire (age, gender identity, race/ethnicity, profession, household income, education level) as well as a section in which they can explain why they wish to be part of this process. This will allow for a diverse group of Tumwater residents from a wide variety of backgrounds to be selected for the focus groups. For each session a maximum of 15 participants will be selected based on maximum diversity per session, allowing for some potential attrition. Once a participant becomes part of the focus group research they will become part of the overall process and will consistently be kept up to date with the project.

Each session will include the selected participants (with name badges), the principal researcher, a moderator (to help mitigate discussion topics regarding department policy and state law) and a note taker. In order to maintain the integrity of the focus group, minimal observers will be permitted and those allowed in the session must be seated at the rear of the room so as to not distract or influence the participants.

The questions in the interview guide provide a framework for the discussion but may not be asked in a precise order. The goal is to ensure that all topics are addressed within all focus groups, but based on the organic nature of the discussions some topics may be addressed when logically relevant. Each question is based on the results of the Community Survey and relates to key concepts regarding community policing and proactivity within the city of Tumwater.

## THE ANALYSIS

The notes taken by note taker, along with any taken by the researcher (Dr. Bowers) and the moderator, will be consolidated. Dr. Bowers will perform a Thematic Network Analysis. Through this iterative process, the information will be distilled into primary and secondary themes. Primary themes describe the over-arching concepts about public safety and policing expressed by the community. The secondary themes drill down to more specific areas of each primary theme. The analytical process is lengthy and Dr. Bowers anticipates results will be available two to three months after the focus groups conclude.

## USING THE THEMES

Dr. Bowers will present the themes derived from the Thematic Network Analysis to the TPD Command Staff. While designing the PSGP, Command Staff will build the policing service model to meet the needs and wants expressed by the community. Each aspect of the PSGP, from staffing to technology, will be linked back to the primary and secondary themes. This will allow TPD staff and the community to clearly understand the connection between our service moving forward and the resources needed to provide it.