

MEETING OF THE SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM
PUBLIC SECURITY COMMITTEE

1255 Imperial Avenue, Suite 1000
San Diego, CA 92101

September 27, 2019

1. Roll Call

Ms. Montgomery called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM. A roll call sheet listing Public Security Committee members' attendance is attached.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Arambula moved to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2018, Public Security Committee Meeting as well as the minutes of the March 29, 2019 Public Security Committee Meeting. Mr. Sandke seconded the motion, and the vote was 6 to 0 in favor, with Mr. Fletcher absent.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4. Appointment of Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Brady – Mr. Brady spoke in favor of Monica Montgomery to be appointed chair of this committee. He commented that she has exhibited strong points of leadership on City Council and has the temperament and attitude necessary to lead the MTS Public Security Committee forward.

Michael McConnell – Mr. McConnell stated he supports Monica Montgomery. He stated that she has already showed great leadership at City Council and believes this body would benefit greatly from electing her chair.

Ellis Rose – Mr. Rose commented he was here today to firmly support the election of Councilmember Monica Montgomery to the chair. He stated that she has done an outstanding job on the San Diego City Council and suspects that she will continue to do that here.

BOARD COMMENTS

Action Taken – Appointment of Chairperson

Ms. Aguirre made a motion to nominate Ms. Montgomery as the chairperson of the committee. Mr. Sandke seconded the motion, and the vote was 6 to 0 in favor, with Mr. Fletcher absent.

Action Taken – Appointment of Vice Chairperson

Mr. Arambula made a motion to nominate Ms. Aguirre as the vice chairperson of the committee.

Ms. Galvez seconded the motion, and the vote was 6 to 0 in favor, with Mr. Fletcher absent.

5. Semi Annual Security Report (January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019) (Manny Guaderrama)

Manny Guaderrama, MTS Chief of Police, provided a presentation for the Semi-Annual Security Report for January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019. The presentation started with the introduction to the Transit Enforcement Department then continued with trolley and bus crime statistics, special enforcement details, quality of life and transient camp details, non-compliant arrests, See Something Say Something, and concluded with the upcoming Security Contract. The presentation also included several field videos including officers, employees and patrons.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jon Brady – Mr. Brady commended MTS on the systems safety given the number of passengers. He voiced his concern about the abundance of fare violation citations largely impacting people in poverty and recommended reevaluating this and the zero tolerance policy.

Michael McConnell – Mr. McConnell commented that there are issues that he hopes this committee will sort through. He suggested that we look at the way security is being provided in San Diego and really try to utilize our dollars to provide more public safety.

Sally Jacobus – Ms. Jacobus said she uses the bus and trolley system all the time and appreciates the accessibility. She asked if there is a program that can be set up to help those who are low income and do not have the means to pay.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Sandke commented that the public speakers reminded him that we need compassionate security. In regards to the assault videos, he felt that it is important for MTS to be aware of what is going on throughout the system. Mr. Sandke commented that our mission is to serve those who do not have cars and that are transit dependent. He stated that since we do not have the luxury of a gated ticket environment, we need to find other ways to ensure the safety of our employees and our riders.

Vice Chair Aguirre asked if it was standard procedure to ask for identification when there is a suspected fare evader. Chief Guaderrama replied yes. Vice Chair Aguirre questioned how much money is being spent on processing fare citations and court procedures. Chief Guaderrama responded that he does not have that dollar amount.

Mr. Arambula asked if MTS recovers anything from the citations for fare evasion and would like to see those numbers presented at the next meeting as well as what is spent on court procedures. Mr. Arambula also requested to see all paperwork regarding officer protocols. Chief Guaderrama stated that he would provide the Transit Enforcement Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Training Manual at the next meeting.

Chair Montgomery mentioned that as a region there is an overall issue that needs to be dealt with and that issue is homelessness. Chair Montgomery mentioned she would like to look into how the removal of homeless camps including debris and trash from one area affects other areas. Paul Jablonski, Chief Executive Officer, mentioned that MTS has been ordered by the Water Control Board to stop the behavior causing water contamination along the San Diego River.

Chair Montgomery stated she would like to look at our fare evasion policy and how it stems from the penal code. She mentioned that the state now allows for administrative procedures to make these citations a civil matter as opposed to a criminal matter. Chief Guaderrama feels that in our environment, making it a civil penalty will have a negative impact on our system as civil penalties would not hold the person accountable.

Mr. Jablonski said the most important data is our fare evasion rate and commented that we have one of the lowest rates compared to other major transit systems. This is due to the number of contacts made, and the number of fare checks conducted, which keep people honest in buying fares. Reducing fare evasion contacts may negatively impact the revenue needed to keep services running.

Ms. Galvez asked to explain the evolution of the Joint Agency Task Force (JATF). Chief Guaderrama stated that it has been a unique cooperation between all the agencies in San Diego County. Chief Guaderrama explained the history of the JATF, funding, agency participation, and criminal background checks.

6. Upcoming Security Contract Procurement – Committee Discussion

Chief Guaderrama continued his presentation regarding the Upcoming Security Contract Procurement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Adrian Scott – Adrian Scott voiced their feelings about not feeling safe riding the trolley even with security presence.

BOARD COMMENTS

Chair Montgomery commented that she would like to hear from officers and whether they think their training is helpful on the job. Chair Montgomery would like to make sure that what we are spending money on is really working and is helpful. Chief Guaderrama stated officers are asked to complete class evaluations and the feedback has been very positive.

7. Homeless Outreach Planning (Sharon Cooney)

Sharon Cooney, Chief of Staff, provided a presentation on homeless outreach planning. Staff has been speaking with the City of San Diego as well as the County of San Diego to work on a plan in addressing some of the issues related with homelessness that MTS is experiencing on transit vehicles as well as stations. Ms. Cooney asked how MTS can connect people to services who can help them. Ms. Cooney would like to see how we can partner with the agencies that are currently responsible for assisting people into real sustainable shelters. Ms. Cooney stated the staff will continue to explore pre-filing and homeless outreach programs and would bring possible programs forward to the board for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Brady – Mr. Brady commented on not being able to afford transit passes. He asked if they could be offered at a lower rate for agencies who want to help people suffering from poverty.

Michael McConnell – Mr. McConnell suggested MTS ask the people who need the help, how to help them, then develop a program based on that feedback.

Ellis Rose – Mr. Rose voiced his concerns that The San Diego Regional Task Force for the Homeless is not being utilized. He would like to see a program that connects homeless people with outreach workers.

Kuni Stearns – Mr. Stearns commented on how people with vehicles, running or not, are not eligible for free bus passes. He also talked about general relief, receiving free passes and how there might be some room for improvement.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Arambula asked Mr. Jablonski if there are any MTS staff members charged with the responsibilities of coordinating possible resources for homeless people. Mr. Jablonski responded that Ms. Cooney has been taking the lead on this along with Mr. Guaderrama. He stated that with all the information gathered thus far, we now need to figure out a viable way to put together a multi-pronged program.

Vice Chair Aguirre commented that she would like to explore other paths that would be less challenging for those who are already in a very difficult situation.

Chair Montgomery commented that she feels it is important that we loop in the Regional Task Force on Homelessness. She stated that we do have a lot of programs and resources, but we do not collaborate enough together. She commented that there is no connection between those who are in charge of the resources and those who are actually going through the issues and need resources.

Chair Montgomery asked Ms. Cooney about the comment that was made regarding not having a lot of success getting people into programs. Ms. Cooney stated the comment was referring to the couple of times our officers went out with the Police Department Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). Tim Curran, Deputy Director of Transit Enforcement, commented that he has worked with the officers and the HOT Team. Mr. Curran said they made numerous contacts with people in need, but very few people took the services stating contacts were great but acceptance of services was very minimal.

Chair Montgomery stated that part of our challenge is to find a balance with what was discussed here today with what can be a barrier to help. Chair Montgomery commented that as we develop a program, it is very important that we define the different functions of the outreach component and law enforcement.

8. Committee Member Comments

Ms. Galvez stated she would like to interact directly with security officers to ask what we could do better to help them. She would also like to speak to bus operators and/or people who have been victimized to see how they feel and to ask what they need from us so we can better serve them.

9. Next Meeting Date

Next meeting is to be determined based on the members' availability.

10. Adjournment

Chair Montgomery adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

/s/ Monica Montgomery

Chairperson

Attachment: Roll Call Sheet

PUBLIC SECURITY COMMITTEE
SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM

ROLL CALL

MEETING OF: SEPTEMBER 27, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: 2:05 p.m.

ADJOURN: 3:55 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBER	PRESENT (TIME ARRIVED)	ABSENT (TIME LEFT)
AGUIRRE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:00 p.m.	3:55 p.m.
ARAMBULA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:00 p.m.	3:55 p.m.
FLETCHER <input type="checkbox"/>		
GALVEZ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:05 p.m.	3:55 p.m.
HALL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:00 p.m.	3:07 pm
MONTGOMERY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:00 p.m.	3:55 p.m.
SANDKE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m.

SIGNED BY THE CLERK OF THE COMMITTEE:



CONFIRMED BY MANUEL GUADERRAMA:



c: Clerk of the Committee
Accounts Payable
Attachment to Original and Draft Minutes