

MEETING OF THE SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM
PUBLIC SECURITY COMMITTEE (PSC)

February 17, 2022

1. ROLL CALL

Chair Montgomery-Steppe called the Public Security Committee (PSC) meeting to order at 2:01 pm. A roll call sheet listing PSC member attendance is attached.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Elo-Rivera moved to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2021 San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) PSC meeting. Mr. Whitburn seconded the motion, and the vote was 5 to 0 in favor, with Vice Chair Aguirre and Mr. Goble absent.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

4. Security and Passenger Safety Community Advisory Group Meeting (Sharon Cooney)

Sharon Cooney, MTS Chief Executive Officer, lead the discussion with an update on the first CAG meeting. Ms. Cooney stated that it was more of a business meeting in regards to getting it set up, explaining what their rolls would be and to pick their Chair and Vice Chair. Ms. Cooney mentioned that all sixteen members attended the first meeting and she was pleased to see the youth advocates were very much engaged. Ms. Cooney stated she wanted to give CAG an idea of how they would feed into the Public Security Committee and recommended having CAG meetings before every Public Security Committee meeting. Ms. Cooney wanted to engage the Public Security Committee for ideas to give the CAG to start working on. Ms. Cooney mentioned having the CAG do a deep dive into the data being collected for the Pilot Diversion Program and have them share suggestions on how to potentially adjust the program. Ms. Cooney stated another issue is complaints in regards to unbridled sexual harassment occurrences and mentioned that the CAG could offer some ideas on ways to lessen or deter such actions.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Mr. Whitburn appreciated the opportunity to provide suggestions. He asked to what extent do riders know what to do when in uncomfortable or unsafe situations. He asked if the information out there mentions what to do, where to turn or who to talk to and is it in the appropriate languages to be accessible to all. Ms. Cooney mentioned talking to a rider who has felt threatened on their commute and quizzed them to see if they knew who MTS personnel were and what they look like. The response was that the rider did not know and thought the officers they saw were police officers. Ms. Cooney suggested asking the CAG to ride the system to look and see what MTS could do better in regards to displays explaining to riders who to look for and approach for assistance. She

mentioned there is also the See Something Say Something texting program and call in number and asked if that could be displayed better onboard the vehicles.

Mr. Elo-Rivera appreciated MTS engaging the community on public safety issues. He suggested that in future CAG meetings they could recommend ways for the security staff to effectively and age appropriately discuss enforcement with youth riders in a way that maintains safety for everyone while making everyone feel welcome.

Ms. Galvez commented on the issue of sexual harassment and would like to send a clear message that misconduct and sexual harassment will not be tolerated on or around MTS properties. Ms. Galvez mentioned the idea of proactive advertising on buses, on trolleys and in MTS stations.

Chair Montgomery-Steppe was pleased to see the different backgrounds of the CAG and the different sectors of the community that they represent. She mentioned the importance in setting up parameters between the MTS Board, the Public Security Committee and the CAG as to what the relationship is going to be including the process for moving information forward. Chair Montgomery-Steppe commented on how people view public safety and that she would like to see a more concerted effort to connect MTS systems with numbers already known such as the 211 or 911 numbers.

Action Taken

No action.

5. Director's Security Update (Al Stiehler)

Al Stiehler, Director of Transit Security & Passenger Safety, previewed that his presentation would discuss updates on projects, sharing information on new items, plans for 2022, challenges being faced moving forward, and utilizing the CAG to help with challenges. He started the presentation with Inter-Con's transition phases mentioning how they started early to fill empty posts not being filled by Allied Security. Mr. Stiehler stated that Inter-Con is always professional and energetic during the transition meetings. Mr. Stiehler commented that the Naloxone project has been very successful, that it is done being a pilot project and stated MTS has received approval from the County to continue utilizing Naloxone. Mr. Stiehler mentioned MTS will make sure MTS officers are trained and equipped with this life saving medication. Mr. Stiehler commented that the Bus Enforcement Support Team (B.E.S.T.) has been successful and is getting lots of praise from bus operations, bus drivers, dispatchers and managers.

Mr. Stiehler commented on the homeless outreach efforts and mentioned some of the issues including limited bed availability and beds not being available due to ambulatory problems. Mr. Stiehler mentioned the projects MTS is working on to increase productivity in their outreach efforts. He mentioned that he is working with the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team known as PERT to try and get a PERT clinician imbedded with MTS similar to what local police agencies have. Mr. Stiehler stated that he has a meeting with the Mobile County Response Team to see how they can fit into our joint outreach program. Mr. Stiehler shared some pictures and a video of community

engagements the MTS staff has been involved in. He reviewed the employee survey given to the code compliance staff and the results from that survey. Mr. Stiehler discussed what's next for 2022 including a new deployment strategy and the development of a Wellness Council spearheaded by a code compliance supervisor. He also noted they are looking into creating a Professional Standards Unit to identify any misconduct that would discredit the security department or MTS and would investigate internal and external complaints and misconduct. Mr. Stiehler concluded his presentation mentioning a few of the challenges moving forward which included outreach effort enhancements, crime reduction to provide the safest environment for MTS riders, and fare collection enforcement.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Mr. Whitburn commented that he appreciates MTS's partnerships on addressing the challenges surrounding homelessness. He acknowledged the bed availability issue, mentioned having more capacity now and hopes this helps improve the situation. Mr. Whitburn stated he likes that MTS is doing more increased visibility for security.

Mr. Elo-Rivera shared his thoughts on the bed availability issue and stated the quicker the City Council or the City of San Diego knows about issues the quicker it can be addressed to lessen barriers and to make sure measures are being taken to make them as rare as possible. Mr. Elo-Rivera inquired about the Professional Standards Unit position. Mr. Stiehler mentioned he would like the position to be filled with someone outside the company who does not have a relationship with the officers and has experience in handling internal and external investigations. Mr. Stiehler stated MTS just purchased new tracking software that will monitor complaints, monitor uses of force and can keep track of officer behaviors.

Chair Montgomery-Steppe mentioned how important it is to have beds available and asked that MTS continue to reach out when issues arise. Chair Montgomery-Steppe inquired about the Naloxone locations and where it tends to be needed the most. Mr. Stiehler stated most calls are for the downtown metro area especially around the 12th and Imperial station. Chair Montgomery-Steppe asked if MTS has designated fare zones and Ms. Cooney stated MTS does have markings showing where fare paid zones begin.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS AND OTHER BUSINESS

No Committee Comments.

7. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 pm.

/S/ Monica Montgomery Steppe
Chairperson
San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Attachment: Roll Call Sheet

PUBLIC SECURITY COMMITTEE
SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM

ROLL CALL

MEETING OF (DATE) 02/17/2022

CALL TO ORDER (TIME) 2:01 pm

CLOSED SESSION _____

RECONVENE _____

ADJOURN 2:47 pm

COMMITTEE MEMBER	(Alternate)	PRESENT (TIME ARRIVED)	ABSENT (TIME LEFT)
AGUIRRE	<input type="checkbox"/>		
ELO-RIVERA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:01 pm	2:47 pm
GALVEZ	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:01 pm	2:41 pm
GLORIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	WHITBURN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:02 pm
GOBLE	<input type="checkbox"/>		
HALL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:01 pm	2:47 pm
MONTGOMERY STEPPE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2:01 pm	2:47 pm

SIGNED BY THE CLERK OF THE COMMITTEE: *Karen Wroniewski*