

**PUBLIC SAFETY POLICY COMMITTEE  
HIGHLIGHTS**

**Thursday, January 14, 2021**

Zoom

[Public Safety Policy Committee Slides](#)

**ATTENDANCE**

Members: Bob Whalen (Chair); Pippin Dew (Vice Chair); Bill Baber; Darlene Barber Martinez; John Bauters; Drew Bessinger; Henry Bouchot; Russ Brown; Peter Castro; Paul Cheng; Andrew Chou; Justin Cummings; Lara Delaney; Beatriz Dieringer; Bob Dunn; Phill Dupper; Lisseth Flores; Claudia Frometa; Bob Frutos; Gerry Gonzalez; Mike Healy; Laura Hernandez; Steve Hofbauer; Dawn Holm; Melissa Hunt; Brian Johsz; Mike Judge; Ray Marquez; Consuelo Martinez; Laura McCorkindale; Sean McGlynn; LeeAnn McPhillips; Peggy McQuaid; Rudy Mendoza; Sonya Morrison; Afshin Oskoui; Greg Park; John Pena; Matt Rahn; Erin Resner; Gracie Retamoza; Kendall Rose; Shanelle Scales-Preston; Marty Simonoff; Scott Smith; Eric Sonstegard; Lauren Sugayan; Tami Trent; Michael Vargas; Alan Wapner

League Partners: Lisa Holmes; Rochelle Swanson

Staff: Melanie Perron, Deputy Executive Director, Advocacy and Public Affairs; Caroline Cirrincione, Legislative Policy Analyst

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

President Cheryl Viegas Walker, Mayor, El Centro welcomed everyone to the first policy committee meeting of the year and thanked members for their service to all California cities. Mayor Viegas Walker explained that policy committees are vitally important and are directly connected to Cal Cities' core mission of advocating for the common interests of cities. She explained that this year has been challenging for city officials, as cities are facing public health and economic challenges due to the pandemic and the shutdown of local economies. Cities are also responding to nationwide calls for equity and justice and endeavoring to root out discrimination and racism in their communities.

Mayor Viegas Walker emphasized that Cal Cities, now more than ever, is committed to providing resources and information to help cities make informed decisions for their communities during these challenging times. She closed by thanking everyone in attendance for their work as a policy committee member.

Mayor Viegas Walker then introduced Carolyn Coleman, Cal Cities Executive Director. Ms. Coleman thanked committee members for all their work. She explained that at a time when cities needed help, they have stepped up and have been problem solvers.

Ms. Coleman said that the work of the policy committees is central to Cal Cities advocacy, which is at the heart of the organization. She thanked committee members again for serving on the committee and wished them a great meeting.

Chair Bob Whalen, Council Member, Clovis, and Vice Chair Pippin Dew, Council Member, Vallejo, welcomed committee members and provided an introduction.

**II. Public Comment**

Chair Whalen asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

### **III. Assembly Member Mike Gipson, Chair, Select Committee on Police Reform**

Assembly Member Mike Gipson talked about his role as chair of the Select Committee on Police Reform (Select Committee). He emphasized the importance of having diverse input in police reform conversations from law enforcement, community organizations, and other stakeholders. Assembly Member Gipson explained that he is open to all policy ideas and views the Select Committee's role as reimagining policing in California.

Assembly Member Gipson then answered questions, and a discussion ensued. Committee members asked about police recruitment and what he will do to ensure small cities can continue to staff their departments. Assembly Member Gipson explained the Select Committee does not want to exacerbate recruiting challenges. However, it is important to recognize the power police officers hold and how essential it is to have the right kind of people in those roles. Assembly Member Gipson also discussed legislative efforts and debates around minimum qualifications for police positions, such as educational and age requirements.

### **IV. General Briefing**

In accordance with the customary practice of convening all policy committee members for a general briefing prior to the start of policy committee meetings, the Cal Cities advocacy team compiled a [General Briefing Update Document](#), which includes the latest on legislative and budgetary matters affecting cities.

### **V. Overview of Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules**

Cal Cities staff briefly reviewed Parliamentary Procedures and Robert's Rules. This document is designed to provide examples of common procedural matters encounter by Cal Cities policy committees. This includes how to make a motion, vote on a motion, and determine if there is a quorum. Members were directed to the informational packet for more comprehensive detail.

### **VI. Committee Orientation**

Cal Cities staff provided a brief overview of the purpose of policy committees and the appointment process. This document details key committee roles and responsibilities such as adding agenda items, taking positions on bills, and the committee schedules and processes, among other things. Members were directed to the informational packet for more comprehensive detail.

### **VII. Existing Policy and Guiding Principles**

Cal Cities staff explained the importance of the guiding principles. This document contains Cal Cities policies that reflect positions taken by the policy committee and Cal Cities Board and is used as a reference tool for Cal Cities staff when reviewing legislation. Members were directed to the informational packet for more comprehensive detail.

### **VIII. Cal Cities 2021 Strategic Priorities**

The committee was updated on the Cal Cities 2021 strategic priorities. Cal Cities staff discussed the virtual League Leaders retreat and explained the process by which strategic priorities are established. The Cal Cities 2021 strategic priorities are as follows:

1. **Secure state and federal funding for local COVID-19 public health response and economic recovery for all.** Secure direct and flexible funding and resources for cities of all sizes so they can continue to protect residents from the pandemic, deliver

essential services, support small businesses, and lead the recovery in our communities. Improve communication and coordination with regional, state, and federal governments on public health orders and programs to stimulate equitable economic recovery.

2. **Secure funding to increase the supply and affordability of housing and resources to assist individuals at risk of – or already experiencing – homelessness while preserving local decision making.** Secure additional resources to increase construction of housing, particularly affordable housing, workforce housing, and permanent supportive housing, and ensure cities retain flexibility based on the land use needs of each community. Increase flexibility and resources to provide navigation assistance and emergency shelters, and strengthen partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure mental health, substance abuse treatment, and wraparound services are available for adults and youth at risk of – or already experiencing – homelessness in our communities.
3. **Improve state-local coordination and planning to strengthen community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery.** Pursue additional resources and support to mitigate the effects of climate change, sea level rise, catastrophic wildfires, and flooding in our communities. Promote community disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery in collaboration with the state and federal governments. Increase availability and access to the National Flood Insurance Program to include other natural disasters.
4. **Protect and modernize critical infrastructure.** Seek increased state and federal resources for critical and sustainable local infrastructure projects including roads, public transit, active transportation, water availability, and broadband deployment that enhance workforce and economic development and improve quality of life.

#### **IX. Adoption of 2021 Work Program**

In order to produce the committee's work program, committee members were asked to respond to an online survey illustrating the top priorities for the committee to focus on in the coming year.

Chair Whalen reviewed the results of the survey and opened it up to the committee for discussion. One committee member asked for an update on Proposition 20, a Cal Cities supported proposition rejected by voters on the 2020 ballot. Cal Cities staff agreed to provide an update at an upcoming meeting and noted how that conversation could tie into "addressing crime rates" in the work program. Additionally, Cal Cities staff discussed the formation of the public safety task force. President Cheryl Viegas Walker will be making appointments to the task force soon, and their work will be presented and considered in the Public Safety Policy Committee.

Ultimately, the committee unanimously adopted the following items as their work program:

- Police reform including 21st Century Policing, community relations, and funding;
- Additional tools and resources to address homelessness, mental health, domestic violence, drug rehabilitation, human trafficking, and workforce development for ex-offender reentry;
- Emergency and disaster preparedness and resiliency; and

- Addressing crime rates.

**X. Budget Update**

The committee was updated on the Governor's record-breaking \$227.2 billion budget proposal for the 2021-22 fiscal year. The proposed budget includes a \$164.5 billion General Fund and projects \$34 billion in total reserves and surplus. The budget significantly restores the state's rainy day fund and economic support reserves that were diminished last year. A surplus of \$15 billion, largely in one-time funds, is available for spending to address COVID-19 and support resilience and recovery. Additional information on the budget can be found in the [General Briefing document](#).

Cal Cities staff also highlighted public safety specific budget items. This included budget allocations to enhance the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) fire prevention and suppression capacity, consolidation of the new Department of Cannabis Control, assist courts in adapting to providing services during COVID-19, and initiate investigations into officer-involved shootings.

**XI. Legislative Agenda**

Cal Cities staff briefed the committee on bills that have been introduced and what they are expecting to see in this year's legislative session. Cal Cities staff specifically highlighted legislation related to minimum qualifications and disqualification from employment for law enforcement, sexual assault forensic evidence testing, use of force, and the use of kinetic energy projectiles, among other issues. While it is still early in the legislative session, the committee will continue to receive legislative updates on public safety measures at upcoming meetings.

**XII. Next Virtual Meeting: Thursday, April 15, 2021, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm**