

Metro | Meeting minutes

Meeting: Equity Strategy Advisory Committee
Date: Monday, March 9, 2015
Time: 3 to 5 p.m.
Place: Metro Regional Center, Room 301, 600 NE Grand Ave., Portland

Attendees

Equity Strategy Advisory Committee: Carl Talton, Irene Konev, Daniel Vázquez, Betty Dominguez, Julia Meier, Kirsten Kilchenstein and Philip Wu

Absent: Virginia Nguyen, Ben Duncan, Pam Treece, Judi Martin, Rey España

Guests:

Metro: Patty Unfred, Nyla Moore, Martha Bennett, Scott Robinson, Scotty Ellis, Senior Leadership Team: Jim Middaugh, Tim Collier, Mary Rowe, Teri Dresler, Paul Slyman, Kathleen Brennan-Hunter, Elissa Gertler, Robyn Williams, Nathan Sykes and Jeff Frkonja.

Welcome, introductions and agenda review

Carl Talton opened the meeting with introductions from the attendees. Martha Bennett welcomed and thanked the Senior Leadership Team for coming to the meeting. This opportunity is to have cross conversation about strategic ways to move the needle in the region. We want to focus this meeting on our long-term impact. We will be meeting later to discuss short-term action items.

Review of Metro's operations and main lines of business

Martha presented the "How Metro Works" diagram to the group. Metro has four lines of business: Garbage and Recycling System, Land Use and Transportation System, Parks and Nature System, Venues System. In these four areas Metro provides policy, plans, programs and direct and retail services. Metro employs 1843 employees, including staff at the venues. Metro's total annual budget is \$611M. Metro issues around \$30M in contracts per year.

Daniel Vázquez asked about workforce ethnicity. Mary Rowe responded that 80.7% of the workforce is white and the remaining includes all groups of color. There's been a small

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decrease of white employees since 2012. Patty announced that she will begin creating a list of information requested by ESAC, since there will not be enough time to dive deep into each topic.

Review and discussion of program/policy areas

• Overview of Metro department programs and initiatives; potential areas for most impact; and current barriers

Paul Slyman, Property and Environmental Services Director, presented the Garbage and Recycling System. Garbage planning has always been done at the regional level. Public benefits include: health and environmental protection, and best value for the public's money. Solid waste funds are used for solid waste purposes. We keep garbage rates affordable though RRR-recycle, reduce, and reuse. If you only recycle one thing, recycle aluminum (the process of extracting ore is very burdensome to the environment). The system is focused on the future: electronics and packaging are different today than they were 20 years ago. We want to make these services available to everyone. Residents self haul their garbage to Metro transfer stations. This allows us to serve all kinds of customers. Major areas:

- **Policy and programs:** education, recycling information hotline, focused on the future,
- **Regulations:** make sure they play by the same rules, inspectors, compliance, RID: regional illegal dumping patrol -cleaning up dump sites,
- **Operations:** two public transfer stations that accept self hauling of garbage keep rates affordable and reduce the number of illegal dump sites to be cleaned up,
- **Metro paint recycling facility:** recycled paint is sold for \$10 a can and redistributed through Miller Paint; this helps to keep paint out of the landfill

Carl asked about some illegal dumping sites and who has responsibility to clean them up. Paul explained that other jurisdictions have some responsibility for cleaning illegal dumping sites, but Metro has the means do so. Julia Meier asked about contracts through garbage and recycling. Paul explained that construction is a large part of the contracts from the Garbage budget. Daniel Vázquez asked about paint sales to which Paul replied that paint sales bring in \$2M annually. The revenue helps to keep resident billing down.

Elissa Gertler, Planning and Development Department Director, presented about the Land Use and Transportation System. Planning thinks about people's favorite places in the region. Elissa distributed the "What is your place in the region?" handout with a tree illustration. Planning has programs (leaves), partnerships (trunk) and policies (roots). Philip Wu shared that the tree metaphor has been used a lot in equity work, specifically around culture and language. Philip suggested that Metro try to overlay the Land Use and Transportation tree illustration with an equity tree illustration. Julia shared that she is interested in seeing the roots in the other core areas of Metro.

Kathleen Brennan-Hunter, Parks and Natural Areas Department Interim Director, presented the Parks and Nature System. The big bodies of work within this department are: land

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science and conservation, natural areas, maintenance, visitor services groups, planning, cemeteries, and partnerships and investments. Kathleen summarized the “Metro Parks and Nature” handout. Parks is working with new contractors that have not worked with Metro in the past. Connect to Nature is a program that helps to give diverse communities more access to nature. Julia Meier has helped Metro design the program. The Center for Intercultural Organizing partnered with Metro to get feedback on how to better do this work with community based organizations.

Betty asked how you distinguish the approach to take with property acquisition and disposition when those properties include housing units. Kathleen explained that this department seeks to acquire land for conservation and that housing structures are acquired when Metro obtains new reserve lands that contain that kind of structure. Metro has set up contracts with Proud Ground (a local Community Development Corporation) for the disposition of the appropriate housing units within land acquired for conservation purposes.

Tim Collier, Finance and Regulatory Services Department Director, explained that Metro offers training and outreach programs for minority-owned, women-owned and emerging small businesses (collectively known by their acronym: MWESBs). His department works a lot with the Oregon Procurement Information Network and chambers of commerce to find out about tools and openings. Carl shared that there were a lot of firms that would not apply for various reasons. Martha explained that it happens from both sides, with some companies posing as MWESBs when they are not.

Teri Dresler, Venues and Visitor Services General Manager, presented the Venues System. Metro operates four venues: Oregon Convention Center, Oregon Zoo, Portland’s Centers for the Arts, and Portland Expo Center. These are gathering places for entertainment and fun. All of the venues have opportunities for education and employment. Areas of interest include: hiring and internships, programs/events, and purchasing and contracting (MWESB, First Opportunity Target Area). Education programs and employment are places where we can move the equity dial. Carl asked about opportunities for seniors. Teri responded that there are plenty of opportunities for employment and volunteering for seniors. Philip asked about paid parking at the Zoo/Washington Park and access for low income residents. Teri explained that the City of Portland owns and manages the parking lots. Metro’s Transit Management team helped to plan how to transport visitors from one venue to the next, bridging the gap between the paid parking and visitor transit (free transit with your paid visitors pass).

Discussion: From a regional perspective, what are the greatest opportunities and challenges (including political considerations)?

Philip suggested thinking about the policy roots for each area with its outcomes. Julia asked about affordability and those opting out of services in garbage. Paul Slyman responded that

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there are some multifamily homes that opt out of services or place the burden of the service on the tenants. What can Metro do to bring access to multifamily homes in this area?

Martha asked the group to hear their thoughts on transportation. Philip tried to get a better understanding of Metro plans and local jurisdiction's plans. The regional transportation plan is the future of the region.

Betty discussed the Tri-Met transit networks and costs. Daniel asked about the relationship between Tri-Met and Metro. Elissa explained that both agencies are like siblings and need one another to be successful. However, both are independent government agencies with their own goals. How is Metro connecting with travel outside of Portland?

Julia wanted a better understanding on the scope of authority that Metro has when it comes to transportation. How do residents make a difference? Elissa shared the upcoming public comment period for the Regional Flexible Funds Allocation (RFFA) in September is the best way to hear from residents on their transportation concerns and to stress for equity considerations. This helps set the policy to lead investment criteria. Jeff Frkonja adds that investments in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program must be consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.

Flipchart Notes

Deeper Dive Requests:

- Review the demographics of Metro staff broken down by venue/department for the four lines of business.
- Review the demographics of Metro staff broken down by types of employment (full-time, part-time, temporary, etc.).
- Review the locations of illegal dumpsites.
- Use Land Use and Transportation's tree analogy as a guide to develop similar analogies for the other three lines of Metro's business.
- Provide a deeper understanding of Metro's relationship with other agencies (i.e. TriMet, ODOT, etc.) to better identify Metro's "sticks" and potential "carrots".
- Review the demographics of those who are opting out of garbage service to better understand equity implications around affordability.

Potential Action Items:

- What can Metro do to provide more garbage/recycling service to multi-family housing?

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Potential Equity Strategy Approaches:

- Use the 2040 Plan, the larger planning vision, as a lever to push for equity goals.

Next steps

Metro Council Retreat on July 30th Philip Wu will participate as the ESAC representative.

Discussion group report

Deeper drive into transportation in August

Survey on ways to get together more often

Carl asked for a motion to approve the June ESAC meeting minutes. Betty moved and Irene seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

The next ESAC meeting will take place on Monday, August 17, 2015, 3 – 5 p.m., at the Kaiser Town Hall, 3704 N. Interstate Ave., Portland. .

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Nyla Moore