



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Parks and Nature Oversight Committee
Date/time: Wednesday, September 15, 2021, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Place: Zoom recording: <https://vimeo.com/606953562/9e7b02e542>
Purpose: Review oversight committee's bylaws, establish group agreements and meeting protocols.
Outcome(s): Committee votes on approving group agreements, protocols and shared understanding of bylaws as established by Metro Council.

Committee Members:

Tana Atchley Culbertson	Michelle Lin
Burt Edwards	PK Melethil
Lisa Freedman	Michael Morrow
Bryan Mercier	Tabitha Palmer DuPrau
Georgena Moran	Vivek Shandas
Cary Watters	Erin Upton
Owen Wozniak	Nicole Johnson
Shantae Johnson	

Council Representatives:

Councilor Shirley Craddick
Councilor Christine Lewis
Councilor Mary Nolan

Metro staff:

Beth Cohen	Melanie Reinert
MG Devereux	Mychal Tetteh
Humberto Marquez Mendez	Melissa Weber

JLA: Allison Brown

Public:

Leigh Crabtree
Peter Swinton

Absent

Eric Peterson
John Ferguson
Martita Meier
Shannon Shoul

Topics

Welcome and Agenda Review

Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement, began the meeting by welcoming everyone and reviewing Zoom tools and logistics, including that the chat is public record (a full record of the chat can be found in [Appendix A](#)).

Councilor Christine Lewis gave opening remarks, starting with a Native Land Acknowledgment. She continued by expressing the importance of equity in regional parks, and how Metro is working to provide access for all. She concluded by expressing appreciation to the committee members for their commitment and dedication to this important process.

Allison took roll and reviewed the agenda.

Parks and Nature Updates

Beth Cohen, Metro, gave some Parks and Nature updates.

- Chehalem Ridge and Newell Creek will both open later this year
 - Construction has continued at both parks.
 - Visitors will hopefully be able to utilize both parks at the end of the year, pending Covid safety guidelines; more to come.
- Bond refinement status update
 - Work continues on refinement of the six bond program areas into programs ready to invest in the regions parks trails and natural areas.
 - There will be 2 virtual bond information sessions on September 28 and 30 (links were provided in the Zoom chat).
 - These information sessions will provide an update on overall bond refinement and engagement as well as more specific updates on two of the programs – the Protect and Restore program (land acquisition program) and walking and biking trails program.
- Parks and Nature 5-year local option levy
 - Bond dollars must be spent on work that funds capital projects so the local action levy supports operations and non-capital projects.
 - Voters first approved a five-year local action levy in 2013 with a focus on protecting clean water, restoring fish and wildlife habitat, and connecting people with nature.
 - In 2016, voters of the region approved a five-year renewal at the levy rate of \$0.096 cents per \$1000 of assessed value.
 - About half the levy funding maintains and restores habitat on land acquired through three bond measures. The other half supports park operations, improves public access at Metro sites, supports volunteer education programming, and goes to grants for community projects.
 - Levy funding is set to expire in June 2023.
 - Earlier this year the Metro Council asked to develop a potential renewal package that the council could consider referring to voters in 2022. This package builds off the existing rate of the levy and the existing framework and categories for funding and also adds an increased focus on racial equity and climate resilience. More information can be found here: www.oregonmetro.gov/futurefunding.

Beth then gave a brief status update on the bond measure (information can be found in Sections 1 and 4 of the committee onboarding and resources packet).

- There was \$475 million to improve water quality, protect fish and wildlife, and connect people to nature. The six programs are as follows:
 - Land acquisition and restoration
 - Improvements at Metro parks
 - Community grants
 - Local government allocations
 - Trails
 - Large scale community visions

- These programs strive to make the region more resilient to climate change and invest in outcomes favorable to communities of color and other communities who have not benefitted equitably from past investments.

Beth reviewed the schedule and plan for the work ahead. Between this meeting and the last meeting of the year, Metro President Peterson will likely appoint two co-chairs for the committee, who will serve 1-2 year terms. The committee should be prepared to give a one-year report to Council in early 2022. It will be up to the committee to choose the focus and format of the Year One Report, but the committee will receive support and resources from Parks and Nature staff in producing that document.

There were no questions or comments from committee members.

Allison asked for committee members to share where their day jobs may intersect with the work of the committee. It is common practice to note any potential conflicts of interest for the record and for fellow committee members.

- Erin Upton noted that she works for Dialogues in Action, which is partnering with Metro to develop an outcomes framework.
- Owen Wozniak noted that they are the board president for the Intertwine Alliance, which receives funding from Metro to support the mission of engaging partners across the region to support a vision for parks and nature.
- Georgena Moran noted that she works with Access Recreation, which has partnered with Metro on doing the trails and access trails, some of which may be impacted by bond funding from Metro.

Discussion: Group Agreements

Allison started the discussion by asking the group to reflect on how they hold space together and work as a group. She noted that there had been some concern regarding using Robert's Rules of Order and asked the group to hold off on discussing process rules until later in the meeting. The following is a list of agreements drafted based on input from the committee with the goal of making discussions meaningful, equitable, and effective. These can be edited at any time:

- In discussions, challenge ideas rather than individuals.
- Approach different opinions with curiosity, seek to understand.
- Keep the needs and concerns of the local community and the larger region at the forefront of the work.
- Keep focus on the objectives of the meetings; work with facilitator to note additional topics for discussion.
- Keep multi-tasking to a minimum.
- Notify committee chairperson and Metro staff of any media inquiries and refer requests for official statement or viewpoints to Metro. Members will not speak to the media on behalf of the committee or Metro.
- Share questions they have with the full committee so everyone can benefit from the answers.
- Members in working groups commit to capturing discussions to transparently share the results of discussion with the larger group.

One addition sent in by email: Hold silence once someone is done talking to avoid people getting cut off or interrupted.

The committee members discussed the group agreements. Highlights from the discussion include:

- Share meeting materials in advance of meetings so that people have time to read and prepare for meetings.
- To ensure that others speak and lower the risk of one person dominating the meeting, consider waiting until three other people have spoken before you speak again.
- One member suggested revisiting the group agreements after meeting for a year.
- At the heart of the group agreements is being respectful of one another. They can also help the group work efficiently.
- There was some concern that committee members are speaking from their own experiences, which may mean communities or experiences that member's do not identify with may not be represented in committee discussions.
- Committee members discussed the role of committee members. Should members advocate for the communities they represent, ensure that any ideas or proposals represent the full diversity of the Portland Metro area, or should they elevate and bring up different perspectives for consideration? The group discussed developing an agreement focused on 'elevating the voices of communities.'
- A committee member suggested the following agreement: We will foster and build an anti-oppressive, inclusive, encouraging, and brave space.

Allison reviewed the new suggestions to the group agreements and asked the group to show a thumbs up/hands if they felt good about them. Group agreement was reached.

Committee Bylaws and Protocols

Allison introduced the next presentation and discussion topic. Some of the protocols for the committee cannot be changed, while others, such as voting mechanisms, can be decided by committee members.

MG Devereux, Deputy Director for Metro Parks and Nature, presented on the structure of committee bylaws. These are the expectations for the committee as established by Metro Council in the Metro Code. The bylaws include:

- A quorum of 13 members are needed for a vote
- Recommendations made by consensus
- Decisions being final unless a majority agrees there is sufficient new information to reconsider
- No proxy or absentee votes
- All committee members are "public officials"

Allison opened the discussion by outlining different methods for consensus-based decision making. She asked the group about their preference for voting methods that can provide clear recommendations without silencing those who may disagree with the majority. Highlights from the discussion include:

- Using Zoom reactions may not work to reach consensus as this Zoom functionality may not work for all members. The group will need a variety of options (verbal or typed in the chat) to eliminate barriers to voting.
- Be sure to provide people enough time to respond to consensus-building questions.

- There was a question about what ‘consensus’ means within the context of this committee. Allison shared that typically, consensus means that the group is given enough time in discussion to come to an agreement. However, the group could determine what consensus means for them.
- Someone asked what types of things the group will vote on and what Metro will do with those decisions. There was some concern and a question about how meetings and decisions would be recorded and documented and if Metro would be treating committee decisions more as suggestions than formal decisions about how to move forward. MG let the committee know that in terms of any recommendations the committee may make, those will be advisory in nature. Metro wants to know if the committee agrees with the proposals or ideas that Metro brings to them and to give feedback about anything that is missing or needs to be revisited.
- Beth added that staff will work to make this process, and being on the committee, as accessible as possible. Metro staff will take care of any bureaucratic and documentation needs.
- Someone suggested that voting and building consensus begin with a discussion about what the committee is talking about and end with a clear summary of what the committee’s consensus is and clearly state the committee’s decision. Allison agreed and suggested that they could include some of the comments people shared to provide more clarity for how consensus was reached.

Allison then recommended that if the committee is going with the consensus model, that they not change the bylaws around proxy or absentee voting. People who are absent can send in comments for discussion but would not vote. She then asked if everyone was on board with consensus and added that they would make space for quieter voices to be heard.

There was some confusion about what consensus would look like. Allison shared that they could add language to the bylaws defining consensus as:

When the group is at or above a quorum of members, all members vote “yes” or “I can live with it.” If there is not consensus, but two-thirds are a yes/okay, then the vote would be considered a “recommendation” by the committee and the dissents would be noted for decision makers.

The group reached general agreement on moving forward with this model of consensus.

Bylaws and Meeting Conduct

Allison then shared expectations for bylaws and meeting conduct, which included:

- All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with rules set by the Committee. *In the absence of such rules, the Committee will follow Robert’s Rules of Order.*
- Members commit to attending all meetings unless they are prevented from doing so by reasonable excuse.
- Committee members will notify staff ahead of meetings they are unable to attend and will read material and request briefings from staff on information, deliberations, and outcomes of the meeting.
- The Committee will not use alternates or proxies.

She asked for feedback on how people felt about this, stating that Robert’s Rules would only be used as a last resort. Highlights from the discussion include:

- Someone asked if an outside facilitator would be at all meetings. Beth let the group know that Allison will serve as facilitator in the short term, but later down the road, co-chairs will

help with facilitation. Someone said that they preferred that a facilitator does a “temperature check” of the room but does not facilitate round robins. Others agreed.

- There was concern that Robert’s Rules may hinder the committee’s ability to come to consensus; however, the consensus decision making process they agreed upon may mitigate this risk.

Allison further refined the consensus building framework for the group based on discussion:

When the group is at or above quorum, consensus is reached when all votes are “yes” or “I can live with it.” If these does not happen, a two-thirds voting “yes” or “okay” will result in a recommendation. Furthermore, a facilitator or co-chair will incorporate tools to ensure that discussion is robust.

Allison asked group members to vote by raising their hands or typing into the chat to indicate their approval. All committee members present voted to approve the bylaws and group agreements, pending final edits as noted above.

Outcomes Framework

Beth presented on the framework for evaluation of bond investments to ensure they were following equity and climate resistance criteria, found on slide 18. This included:

- Establish a set of bond-wide outcomes (based in bond criteria) that each specific program area would be responsible for showing progress toward over the life of the bond
- Identify metrics that each program area could use to measure progress toward the set of outcomes already established
- Provide a framework for the oversight committee to evaluate bond progress over the years.

The bond resolution sets criteria and principles. Parks and Nature staff identify outcomes, indicators, and potential metrics for each bond program area. The framework will be brought to Council for approval in early October, resulting in the prioritization of potential metrics and data collection tools (Slide 19).

Erin Upton, while representing Dialogues in Action, shared a draft of project phases and process. Staff are in Phase 1 (Impact Framework), which focuses on developing an impact framework for each of the bond program areas. Phase 2 (Data Collection) will consist of collecting and analyzing data, and Phase 3 (Applications) will focus on determining the implications of the analysis and findings in Phase 2 and applications for strategy, stakeholder communications, and public engagement (Slide 20).

The objectives of Phase 1 include (Slide 21):

- Clarify intent of bond criteria to establish a set of outcomes which show progress
- Develop a foundation for evaluation to measure outcomes and impact
- Develop an Outcomes Framework to articulate the intent of each program

As a part of Phase 1, the consultant team lead each of the Metro program teams through 5 different steps:

1. Intended impacts and outcomes
2. Indicators
3. Metrics and qualities
4. Theory of change (if/then)
5. Bond criteria fidelity

Erin shared the capital grants process and how it has impacted public engagement and decision making as an example what working through these steps looks like (Slides 23-25). The framework will continue to be revised by Metro staff and then brought before Council and additional community partners.

Allison asked if there were any questions from the committee. Questions included:

- Is there a step within this process where community members can give feedback? Beth responded that the program teams are using information and summaries from community engagement done prior to bond development and incorporating that into the overall framework. As Erin mentioned, the first step is bringing this to the Metro Council, but there might be some opportunity to weave in community vetting and feedback.
- How might the results from outreach be translated to the 'indicators' and 'criteria' (or metrics) for evaluating proposals? Beth indicated that that is the work they are doing right now – making sure that community engagement is being incorporated into the three bond criterium. Metro staff will have more details to share in November. Erin added that it will be important to consider how the data is gathered, tools are developed, and communities engaged in future phases.
- Is this framework used for projects being proposed or approved projects? Beth shared that because they are in the early phases of bond implementation, most of the projects are in the "proposed" phase. Staff is still developing and refining the programs. The framework has helped staff be intentional about the outcomes for the programs they are working on, which is enriching other work happening in parallel and identifying potential gaps. A committee member said that it would be helpful for them to understand how bond projects are proposed, reviewed, and approved and how the framework will influence or change that. MG shared that the process will look different for each of the six bond criteria, depending on some of the bond language that was included when it was adopted. While community engagement, racial equity, and climate resilience are included in all of the work that is going forward, some of these will need to be adapted and updated as the programs develop.
- Who are the decision makers in the interim? Who is the committee influencing? MG shared that it depends. Each of the bond areas have different levels of decision making.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

MG reviewed the topics for the November meeting (Slides 26, 27):

- Review evaluation framework approved by Metro Council
- List of potential metrics for collecting data to understand bond impact
- Approach to working groups

Additional topics in the fall will include:

- Co-chairs will be appointed by President Peterson
- More information about Newell Creek and Chehalem Ridge
- Initial bond financial reporting
- Doodle poll on the approved bylaws and group agreements

Beth said if members were interested in co-chair appointments, they could reach out to her or MG. Allison encouraged committee members to share any comments or questions in the chat and reminded committee members they can contact Beth Cohen with questions by emailing beth.cohen@oregonmetro.gov.

Allison thanked the committee for their time and ended the meeting.

Decisions

The group decided on what voting consensus meant to the Committee.

Actions agreed upon

N/A

Appendix A: Zoom Chat

Owen Wozniak: Hi Everyone, I'm away from my desk so I'll be off camera for most of this session.

Bryan Mercier (he/him): Apologies, but I'm double booked in a work meeting that is carrying over and will rejoin shortly

Melanie Reinert (she/her): www.oregonmetro.gov/public-projects/parks-and-nature-bond-measure

Information session September 28, 4-6:00 p.m.:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tZEsceGgrz8uH9WeT8DPWkykLpL1cHi2fn-j?utm_source=Parks+and+Nature+bond+refinement&utm_campaign=bcf838f90b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_07_10_29_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_371451c6ccbfc838f90b-&mc_cid=bcf838f90b&mc_eid=UNIQID Info session September 30, 10:0 a.m. - noon:
https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZwrduGvpzorHN3IEdms7p0dlsImU7hJqLLX?utm_source=Parks+and+Nature+bond+refinement&utm_campaign=bcf838f90b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_07_10_29_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_371451c6ccbfc838f90b-&mc_cid=bcf838f90b&mc_eid=UNIQID

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https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tZEsceGgrz8uH9WeT8DPWkykLpL1cHi2fn-j?utm_source=Parks+and+Nature+bond+refinement&utm_campaign=bcf838f90b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_07_10_29_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_371451c6ccbfc838f90b-&mc_cid=bcf838f90b&mc_eid=UNIQID Info session September 30, 10:0 a.m. - noon:
https://us02web.zoom.us/join/tZwrduGvpzorHN3IEdms7p0dlsImU7hJqLLX?utm_source=Parks+and+Nature+bond+refinement&utm_campaign=bcf838f90b-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_05_07_10_29_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_371451c6ccbfc838f90b-&mc_cid=bcf838f90b&mc_eid=UNIQID

www.oregonmetro.gov/futurefunding

Georgena Moran (she, her): My Internet is spotty so I'm not hearing everyone.

Melanie Reinert (she/her): I'm so sorry Georgena! I will have a recording available too. Let me know if you have any questions about something in particular and I can try to recap for you, too.

Cary Watters (she/her): Georgena, you may want to try calling in via phone so you can hear us better! Also, here is a group agreement from another team I am a part of that I will elevate here: "We will foster and build an anti-oppressive, inclusive, encouraging, and brave space."

Melanie Reinert (she/her): I'll pull it up. Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): US: +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 408 638 0968

Nicole Johnson: 👍

Owen Wozniak: 😊

Lisa Freedman: Georgena, The thumb emojis are in this chat feature. If you look at chat, there is a smiley face in the upper right hand corner of the chat box. When you click on it, it pulls up a bunch

of emojis. That's where the thumb symbols are. Having said that, I think making sure we have voice options, rather than just using the thumb up, sideways, or down action. Having the options is important

Erin Upton (she/her): Sure, I'll keep it concise.

Apologies that was for Beth :)

What Allison just described sounds good to me.

Michelle (she/her): thanks for clarifying

Lisa Freedman: Thank you, Michelle, for helping drive us to a definition of consensus.

Georgena Moran (she, her): Thanks, Lisa. Does it appear on my video as well as the chat when I use it?

Lisa Freedman: it should, right there in this little chat box and then next to your photo in the video

Michelle (she/her): Will we always have an outside facilitator at our meetings?

Michael Morrow to Everyone: 👍

Vivek S. (he/his): Perhaps related: Can you help us understand how the results from the outreach (just described in the example) might be translated to the 'indicators' and 'criteria' (or metrics) for evaluating proposals? Did I miss this?

Michelle (she/her): Is this framework used for projects being proposed or approved projects?

Georgena Moran (she, her): I think groups surrounding emphasis on the bond criteria is very important.

Michelle (she/her): How are co-chair appointments happening?

Lisa Freedman: Looking forward to getting into it!

Owen Wozniak: Thank you all - I'm eager to discuss further how the work is divided.

Vivek S. (he/his): Thanks for spending this time on process...very helpful to surface these topics early and often!

Tabitha: I think the groups are a good idea and would like more time to discuss the different options.