

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Wednesday, September 4, 2019

12:45 PM

**Joint Metro Exposition Recreation Commission(MERC)/Metro
Council Work Session
Oregon Convention Center, D136**

Council work session

1. Call to Order and Roll Call (12:45 PM)

Council President Lynn Peterson called the Metro Council work session to order at 12:45 p.m.

Present: 7 - Councilor Sam Chase, Councilor Shirley Craddick, Councilor Craig Dirksen, Councilor Bob Stacey, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Christine Lewis, and Lynn Peterson

2. Safety Briefing (12:50 PM)

President Peterson introduced Mr. Craig Stroud, Executive Director of the Oregon Convention Center (OCC), to provide a safety briefing.

3. Work Session Topics:**3.1 Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC) Update (12:55 PM)**

Attachments: [PowerPoint: Portland EXPO Venue and Asset](#)

President Peterson introduced the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC)'s Chair Karis Stoudamire-Phillips.

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips provided a brief update on the First Opportunity Target Area (FOTA) program, an initiative created to offer first-opportunity jobs to individuals residing in economically distressed neighborhoods within the vicinity of OCC. She noted the expansion of the program in 2013 to ensure African American communities also had equal access to these opportunities and the resulting advances in the program since.

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips introduced Commissioner Ray Leary. Commissioner Leary mentioned the MERC Commission's goal of creating a process that would be framed to provide opportunities for people of color and other minorities within the Metro region. He provided an update on OCC's initiatives to accomplish this goal and noted that the venue had completed 49% of its recent

construction in partnership with firms that were certified by the State of Oregon's Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID). Commissioner Leary stated that 35% of the venue's workforce consisted of people of color, which was significantly higher than the averages for the region or the state.

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips introduced Commissioner Deidra Krys-Rusoff. Commissioner Krys-Rusoff reviewed various performance measures and reports by OCC concerning its capital improvement projects. She emphasized the importance of financial oversight and accountability to ensure the proper allocation of public funds. Commissioner Krys-Rusoff described OCC's recent efforts to implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lens on all projects and provided examples, such as the Portland 5 Arts Center's roof restoration project in collaboration with the National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC).

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips introduced Mr. Scott Cruickshank, General Manager of Metro's Visitor Venues. Mr. Cruickshank provided a brief overview of the history of the Hyatt Regency Hotel project and reviewed its current status. He stated the hotel's expected opening date as of January 6th, 2020, and mentioned the project's effort thus far to partner with COBID certified construction firms.

Council Discussion

Councilors Chase and Lewis stated their appreciation for the MERC Commission's efforts in increasing equity and opportunities for people of color within the Metro region. Councilor Craddick indicated her gratitude to the efforts put into making the Hyatt Regency Hotel project a reality over the past decade.

Councilor Stacey addressed the necessary but

uncomfortable conversations that have surfaced through the MERC Commissions work and stated his appreciation for bringing them to light. Councilor Gonzalez indicated his appreciation for the successful efforts to integrate policies that support continued economic growth as well as equitable workforce practices.

President Peterson inquired of the next steps for the programs overseen by the MERC Commission.

3.2 Community Construction Training Program (1:10 PM)

Attachments: [PowerPoint: Community Construction Training Program](#)

President Peterson introduced Ms. Heather Back, Metro's Visitor Venues Communications and Policy Development Program Manager, Ms. Kelly Hanes, Senior Project Manager at Worksystems, Ms. Pat Daniels, Executive Director of Constructing Hope Pre-Apprenticeship Program, and Mr. Joe McFerrin, President/CEO of Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center and Rosemary Anderson High School (POIC+RAHS).

Ms. Back provided a brief overview of the Community Construction Training Program (CCTP) and its goal to bring more women and people of color into the construction trades industry. Ms. Daniels noted the growing gap within the construction industry's workforce. She described the barriers in place for people of color and other minority groups to be able to access apprenticeship programs, which prevents them from assisting in filling the labor gap in the long run.

Ms. Daniels introduced the CCTP pre-apprentice program grantees, including Oregon Tradeswomen, Constructing Hope Pre-Apprenticeship Program, POIC, and Portland Youth Builders. She stated the funding from CCTP would support these organizations in providing apprenticeship programs which were certified by Oregon's Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI), at no cost to the student, and would

include wrap-around support services such as job placement and childcare.

Ms. Daniels stated the program had an enrollment of about 66% of people of color and 43% women and provided further information performance measures used to measure the success of the program. She mentioned that 83% of program participants had been placed in the construction field, with 30% having registered in apprenticeships. Ms. Daniels noted 91% of apprentices served by the program's support services, which included providing tools/boots, transportation to and from the apprenticeships, and childcare, were women or people of color.

Ms. Hanes detailed the expected Return on Investments (ROI) for individuals participating in CCTP. She noted that the average starting wage as \$18-20 per hour and stated that 43% of graduates had been on public assistance before participating in the program. Ms. Daniels emphasized CCTP's goal to assist formerly incarcerated and low-income individuals in improving their quality of life by providing opportunities within the construction industry.

Mr. McFerrin provided a brief overview of POIC+RAHS, an employment and training organization for adults and youth, with 600 students participating region-wide. He noted 300 trainees had registered within the first three cohorts of the program, of which 49% were African American males, 27% Hispanic males, and 10% White males.

Mr. McFerrin emphasized the importance of providing paid apprenticeships for the program's participants. He mentioned the fourth cohort was currently underway and stated that 87% of the participants from the previous three cohort had continued to State-approved apprenticeship programs.

Ms. Back introduced a video highlighting the experiences of existing pre-apprenticeship program participants.

Council Discussion

President Peterson inquired of any improvements or feedback Ms. Daniels, and Mr. McFerrin may have for Council or the MERC Commission so they may help better support next year's program. Ms. Daniels responded with appreciation for the monthly workforce tracking meetings, and added tracking by trade and ethnicity had helped identify where more future outreach would be needed. Mr. McFerrin noted his appreciation for collaborative partnerships with job sites, which provided students the opportunity to visit these locations.

Councilor Lewis asked how Metro could be more helpful in assisting with childcare services and what the next steps may be. Ms. Daniels responded that increasing CCTP's funding for support services as the best approach. Ms. Hanes mentioned a newly implemented model for childcare services, which provides access to program participants a year beyond completing their training, thereby allowing graduates with some stability while they search for work.

Councilor Gonzalez inquired of the language barriers that exist for individuals from diverse backgrounds trying to enter the construction industry. Ms. Daniels noted that most of the language support currently available was for Spanish-speaking individuals; however, there was a movement within the apprenticeship programs to integrate other languages in the future. Mr. McFerrin emphasized the importance of adding services aimed at a diverse workforce to attract individuals from all walks of life.

Councilor Lewis advised Metro to encourage the State to

invest in their programs to increase diversity within the construction industry.

3.3 Expo Development Opportunity Study (1:40 PM)

Mr. Cruickshank provided a brief overview of the Portland EXPO Center and noted the purpose of the presentation to identify current challenges and opportunities facing the venue.

Mr. Cruickshank summarized current challenges facing the Portland EXPO Center, including the aging conditions of Halls A, B, and C, the need for significant capital investments to improve existing conditions, the venue continuing to function at an annual deficit, and the unsuccessful attempts of diversifying the venue's revenue streams. He reviewed the Portland EXPO Center's financial status and the investments and changes made to its budget in the past five years.

Mr. Cruickshank reviewed the Portland EXPO Center's functions and its impact on the region's community. He noted the venue's role in serving as a gathering place for the community, hosting events as the largest multi-purpose facility within the state, and supporting a variety of visitors, events, and workers annually. Mr. Cruickshank delved into the cultural and historical significance of the Portland EXPO Center.

Mr. Cruickshank introduced Ms. Hilary Wilton, Metro's Senior Development Project Manager. Ms. Wilton reviewed the research underway to explore potential action options for the Portland EXPO Center. She stated the three phases of the project as first to conduct a Phase 1 Environmental Investigation, then update the Property Title Report and Assessment, and lastly, to create a Development Opportunity Study (DOS). Ms. Wilton introduced the various groups collaborating on the DOS, including leadership, technical expertise, and project management

teams. She further added the DOS consultant project team, which included Cascadia Partners, Harst Crowser, and Chicago Title.

Ms. Wilton broke down the key phases of the DOS, which included learning, assessment, evaluation, and recommendations, and provided a brief overview of each phase. She stated potential developmental priorities for the project and the decision-making tools available to compare alternative priorities and impacts.

Mr. Cruickshank summarized the next steps of the project to narrow the program scenarios by the end of 2019 and asked the Council and the MERC Commission for any feedback.

Council Discussion

President Peterson asked for the MERC Commission's input on potential criteria to define the outcomes of this project and the presented developmental priorities.

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips suggested including critical stakeholders, such as the venue staff, under the developmental priorities. She added monthly briefing would be helpful for the MERC Commission to stay consistently involved in the creation of the program. Chair Stoudamire-Phillips emphasized the importance of community involvement and advised for those involved in the project to be respectful and cognizant of the site's cultural significance when making future decisions. She emphasized the importance of communicating the project's strategy and timeline effectively with the community and integrating engagement from the beginning of the planning stages.

Commissioner Dañel Malán stated her appreciation for the

Portland EXPO Center's operational team and their existing efforts in community engagement. Commissioner Krys-Rusoff noted the importance of including the Portland EXPO Center's clients, which primarily consisted of small business owners, in the engagement process. She requested the consideration of alternative funding options, such as a potential bond measure, to be kept in mind when discussing venue renovations.

Chair Stoudamire-Phillips mentioned the inevitable shift in events relocating from OCC to the Portland EXPO Center as the city's tourism industry continues to grow.

Commissioner Leary, regarding the venue's cultural significance, stated the importance of transparency and addressing the Vanport flood's significant impact on the African American community. President Peterson requested an outreach or community engagement plan as part of the next steps for this project.

Councilor Chase inquired of the venue's market potential and options for expanding its use to increase the future site's value. He requested further investigation into increasing zoning capacity for the site and other potential applications. President Peterson advised researching the possible risks associated with each alternative use, as well.

Councilor Dirksen asked for the consideration of other developing event spaces within the Metro region and their prospective impacts on the Portland EXPO Center.

Councilor Gonzalez noted the Columbia River Crossing Project and inquired of its potential future impacts on the Portland EXPO Center. President Peterson added Washington State legislature had invested \$35 million into the restart of the Columbia River Crossing Project and noted the uncertainty of the future of the project.

Commissioner Damien Hall stated the importance of creating a Scope of Work (SOW) for the DOS, and to integrate additional research focusing on the stakeholder input process.

Councilor Craddick asked for consideration of the public good versus the economic value of the Portland EXPO Center property. Commissioner Leary mentioned the possible impact of the Hyatt Regency Hotel Project on the Portland EXPO Center and its community.

President Peterson summarized the discussion and asked for the next steps to include the creation of a community engagement plan and recommendations for how to then integrate that feedback into future investment plans.

Councilor Lewis advised for the creation of a financial model that incorporates community interests, specifically from those historically neglected communities such as the African American and Japanese.

4. Chief Operating Officer Communication (2:25 PM)

President Peterson introduced Mr. Andrew Scott, Metro's Interim Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Scott stated the 2023 Government Finance Officers Association Annual Conference would be held in Portland with an estimated 46,000 attendees, and added the achievement was a direct result of the Hyatt Regency Hotel Project.

Mr. Scott introduced Metro's Innovators Process Improvement Program and provided a brief update on the program's achievements thus far. He noted the program had been estimated to have saved 2000 hours of staff time and provided examples of successful projects within the program.

5. Councilor Communication (2:30 PM)

Councilor Gonzalez stated he would be attending an event hosted by the Yakama Nation on September 5th along with President Peterson and other Portland leaders, as well as the Railvolution Conference in Vancouver B.C, Canada, the following week.

6. Adjourn (2:35 PM)

Seeing no further business, Council President Lynn Peterson adjourned the Metro Council work session at 2:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Janani Srinivasan, Council Policy Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

Item	Topic	Doc. Date	Document Description	Doc. Number
1.0	PowerPoint	9/4/2019	Community Construction Training Program	090419cw-01
2.0	PowerPoint	9/4/2019	Portland EXPO Venue and Asset	090419cw -02