

**MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL
STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, February 16, 2000
Council Chamber

Members Present: Susan McLain (Chair), Rod Park (Vice Chair), Bill Atherton

Also Present: Presiding Officer David Bragdon

Members Absent:

Chair McLain called the meeting to order at 4:21 PM.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Chair McLain explained this was the first meeting of this new Council committee. She noted a list of possible committee discussion items from various sources. She introduced Doug Riggs from Pac/West Communications. She said the goal of this meeting was to put together a more formal work plan for the committee. She noted some budget implications from the budget talks of the morning that might affect lobbying efforts and said it was important in the work plan to talk about subject matter as well as how to fund these endeavors.

2. UPDATE ON STATE LEGISLATORS' TOURS OF METRO

Doug Riggs, Pac/West Communications, 5285 SW Meadows Rd, Suite 340, Lake Oswego 97035, stated that Metro is often misunderstood by people in the region. He said many people did not know Metro ran the Zoo or the Convention Center and he had people, including elected officials, ask about the possibility of changing bus routes. He noted that few people were aware of the connection with civic stadium or Parks and Openspaces programs. He said Metro's best kept secret was the business licensing system. Most of the elected officials he talked to were unaware that kind of a streamlining effort was being undertaken. He added that if you sit down and chat with people about what Metro did, and emphasized the fact that Metro was created by the voters, he found willingness to work with us on issues. he said the past session in Salem was a perfect example of that point. he thought folks in Salem thought Metro would be a prime target of the House and the Senate but instead of sitting back the Metro Council and Executive made a conscious decision to launch a fairly aggressive offensive strategy in Salem so they drafted, filed and introduced 5 bills and worked them through the legislative process. He reported that in the end, four of the five bills were passed and signed by the Governor. The pool chlorine bill did not pass but he felt it was one of the topics they still needed to discuss.

Councilor Park commented that the Department of Agriculture had received the Attorney General's opinion and, in fact pool chlorine did not fall under the Oregon Department of Agriculture, per se, so in this particular case, the folks in Salem were mistaken. He said it had been an educational process and hoped they could take care of it next session.

Mr. Riggs said Pac/West had developed a cooperative and effective working relationship with both the majority and the minority in Salem. He reported a willingness there to take a look at issues like the pool chlorine bill. He reported the only anti-Metro action taken during the session was a hearing at which Executive Officer Mike Burton and then Presiding Officer Rod Monroe

made such an effective defense of the agency that by the end even the sponsor of the bill had positive things to say about Metro. He said they had been working to build on the successes they had last session. Term limits and an increasingly complicated list of issues meant that now, during the interim period, they had to keep working.

He said tomorrow's tour had four legislators and four staff people coming to learn about Metro and the following week had at least two more signed up for the tour, possibly four. He felt the tours helped form a better working relationship with them. He also noted that the chamber was an excellent resource for state and federal caucuses and they could definitely take advantage of it in the future

Councilor Bragdon said his was a great room but there were also other assets. He said the Zoo had great meeting facilities. He urged Mr. Riggs to keep that in mind also. He said it was not necessarily the fault of the legislators if they did not know about the connection between Metro and the Zoo. He held up a Zoo handout and noted there was nowhere on it that said Metro. He noted the same thing with Oregon Convention Center information. He said Metro should do a better job of informing folks about their relationships with their facilities.

Mr. Riggs agreed. He continued that they had begun to extend their relationships with some of the federal legislators. They were worked at getting some federal representatives here for the Stellar Cove exhibit opening this summer and Senators Smith and Wyden would be attending. He said that might also be an opportunity to give them tour, before or after that event.

Chair McLain said it would be a good idea for the invitations go out on Metro letterhead, signed by Presiding Officer Bragdon and have him be part of hosting group representing Metro. She commented that the Zoo did not give too many breaks on room prices. We need to deal with rents. She thought the tour of the Zoo was a good idea

3. REVIEW OF STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

Mr. Riggs said he had been in Washington DC on Monday and Tuesday and met with the Oregon delegation about environmental clean-up of the Columbia River as well as some Metro issues. He said of particular interest to the Parks and Openspaces Department was HR 701, the Land Conservation Act. He reported it had passed the House Resources committee and would probably receive a 30-day referral to the House Budget Committee and they expect floor action in April or early May. The Senate was also poised to act on that bill.

In response to a question from Chair McLain, he said that Mel Huie was also working on some trails and acquisition money, but the Land Conservation money had larger potential and would be available for a variety of things.

Councilor Park asked whether the environmental lands were the same areas they were currently thinking about regulating on the ESA setbacks.

Mr. Riggs said the bill passed in late November was significantly different than the initial bill they had last summer, and a number of amendments were adopted during the process. His understanding was that the bill was flexible as far as uses. It was a bi-partisan compromise supported by Don Young, an Alaskan Republican, and George Miller, a California Democrat. He said he would go back and take a look at the bill.

Councilor Park asked if there were any perceptions about things Metro did not do, for instance, some folks thought Metro regulated everything from here to the coast.

Mr. Riggs felt that was an accurate concern. He said a number of legislators had expressed concern that Metro was stifling Woodburn's growth or having some other impact on them, but they are actually outside Metro's jurisdiction. He said what was needed is a very basic education process. He noted that term limits had brought a whole new group of folks to Salem that did not have the history of what Metro did.

In response to a question from Chair McLain, Mr. Riggs said the tour had been moved to 11:00 AM to accommodate the Council's meeting in Fairview. Chair McLain hoped that members of this committee could be involved in the tour. Councilor Atherton said he could be available and Councilor Park said he might be also. Mr. Burton said he could be involved at that time as well.

Mr. Riggs said the next few months provided an excellent opportunity for education of the public about Metro which would be beneficial in the near term as well as the long term as far as public support and understanding of the agency. He said he had enjoyed working with the Council over the last 18 months and was looking forward to continuing. He thought they had the foundation of an excellent legislative affairs program in place with many issues. He was looking forward to helping develop a concise, clear agenda and format for this committee.

Chair McLain noted a concern she had heard from a couple of people about what assessment tool Metro used to measure successes of their legislative efforts. She said one, which Mr. Riggs had mentioned, was how many bills actually got passed. Another one, which she had thought of recently, was the fact that she had personally seen the lack of understanding of "who or what is Metro" change and improve over the last 9 years. She asked if there was a way to come up with a tool, not expensive or complicated, that would give an idea of outcomes from this committee's agenda and work plan. She was also curious about the committee's perspective of how to make Metro's efforts better known to the public.

Councilor Park said some of the initiatives coming up would quickly let them know how they were doing based on their outcomes.

Councilor Atherton appreciated the list of issues attached to the agenda. He added two of his own concerns that he would like to have tracked. Under state issues, he wanted to add the role of counties in regionalism, and under federal issues, he felt the federal immigration policy clearly had major impact on growth matters in this country. He asked Mr. Riggs if the best way for Metro Council to come to agreement and communicate a direction would be by resolution, ordinance, or some other method.

Mr. Riggs said the process in the last council, at least from Pac/West's perspective, was effective process and done on a relatively short time frame. He said the Council had some basic guiding principles that helped in Salem. The other thing that helped was the Council and the Executive had identified a very short list of bills they wanted to have introduced and passed. That gave them a specific agenda to work with. He said during the session there were new issues that came up and they tried to keep Council informed of those.

Councilor Atherton said Council had taken a vote and agreed to ask for a hearing on the 20 year land supply but they had not even received the courtesy of a response to that request. He wanted to improve on that communications process.

Mr. Riggs said he would check on that because he thought there had actually been a response. He remembered that it had been fairly controversial within the Republican caucus who was fairly

adamant about keeping it on the books. He added that Pac/West needed to hear as soon as possible if Council felt there was an issue not getting enough attention.

Chair McLain said the goal of today's meeting was to come up with a more definite work plan. She indicated that this committee could be helpful in getting a head start on guiding principles and looking at some things this committee could bring to Council. She noted the long list of issues they were interested, and although they would probably not be able to act on all of them, she felt the committee could send guidance to the Council on issues of concern or interest to other Council members.

Councilor Park commented that he would not be supportive of looking at Federal immigration policies. He asked if it would be helpful to Mr. Riggs, since things moved so quickly in Salem, if the committee developed a white paper of general over all principles so Pac/West would know where the Council stood on certain issues.

Mr. Riggs said yes that would be helpful, but not necessarily needed in the next couple of months. He suggested starting with the guiding principles from last session to see what needed to be modified

Chair McLain said that was indeed where she wanted to start. She said she would work with Mr. Morrissey on a work plan to guide the committee. She also wanted to identify issues to be proactive about and issues crucial for Metro to be able to continue to do their job in the future. She noted that she knew there were items other committee members were concerned about and said they would talk discuss those in detail as well.

Councilor Atherton asked when they would discuss the guiding principles

Chair McLain felt she would like to review the principles from last year and have the discussion at the next meeting so they could review it together.

Councilor Bragdon felt it would be useful to have a list of upcoming issues, even without bill numbers assigned. That would give them a list of guiding principles as well as specific things the agency wanted to work on. He said it would also give councilors advance information regarding upcoming hot issues, for instance when Councilor Monroe traveled to Washington DC in March on transportation issues.

Chair McLain agreed. She said she would talk to Mr. Stone right away to see if Mr. Riggs could help with any briefings for Councilor Monroe before he left on that trip. She noted she would ask Mr. Morrissey for a list of lobbying opportunities, when Mr. Riggs might be in Washington DC at the same time as other Metro staff so he could be available to assist and support them there. She said it would also help with the awareness of when Metro people were there doing work.

She reiterated the items on the committee's list: so far:

- Guiding principles and proactive list of items to work on.
- Look in a proactive way for bills or items coming up and hot issues for the next session
- Mr. Morrissey, Mr. Warner and the Councilors to make a list of lobbying opportunities for the coming year.

Councilor Park asked Mr. Riggs about work groups for really hot issues and the importance of getting a low bill number. He asked what issues were coming back from Salem that Council should be aware of that would have either negative or positive effects on what the Council was doing, and if he saw anything that they should be trying to work with others on.

Mr. Riggs reported that his staff had attended a number of meetings in Salem over last several months. He said it had been quieter than they had expected, but they anticipated issues that Metro should be involved in. He added that as the agenda and draft bills were solidified, there would be a number of opportunities for give and take with the folks in Salem. He mentioned he had spoken with Chair McLain about the possibility of hosting a picnic at Oxbow Park for legislators and their families to get to know some of the region's facilities.

Chair McLain said she had mentioned the picnic idea to Presiding Officer Bragdon and that Charlie Ciecko was also interested in doing it. She felt there was good opportunity for interaction there.

She continued that she saw this committee as an opportunity for outreach. Local committee folks, from city planners to the Rotary Club, who had issues and wanted an opportunity to talk to Metro could come to this committee when a regular Council meeting did not seem to be an option,. She felt this committee would be a good place to share ideas. She asked Mr. Riggs to be on the lookout for groups to talk to the committee. The Committee agreed.

4. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ADJOURN

There being no further business before the committee, Chair McLain adjourned the meeting at 5:11 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Grant
Council Assistant

NOTE: There were no attachments submitted to the record for this Metro Council State & Federal Legislative Agenda Committee meeting