

## MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Thursday, August 14, 2008  
Portland Airport, Columbia Room

Councilors Present: David Bragdon (Council President), Kathryn Harrington, Rex Burkholder, Rod Park, Carl Hosticka, Carlotta Collette

Councilors Absent: Robert Liberty (excused)

Council President Bragdon convened the Council Work Session Meeting at 2:02 p.m.

### I. SUSTAINABLE METRO INITIATIVE BRIEFING

Michael Jordan, Chief Operating Officer (COO), said we were here today to talk about the Sustainable Metro Initiative Strategic portion of the initiative. They were bringing a work in progress proposal. If this was going to be success, the piece needed to be co-created between staff and Council. He noted documents that had been prepared for the meeting including: Strategic Group Concept 2 –Strategy and Accountability as well as Strategy Group Concept 1b – Council Support. (copies of these documents were included in the record). He said they wanted input from the Council about how we prioritize and develop the scope with the departments. He noted the work that needed to be done by the departments but there was a need to shore up the work plan for projects. He explained further the Council support role (Concept 1b). They had also discussed media management. Should a component of this reside with the Strategy Group? He then talked about the Strategy Group Concept 1a. He called for questions. Council President Bragdon talked about work being done in the departments. His interest was in integrating the work with the Metro Council and that we didn't inadvertently create a separation of Council from the agency. Andy Cotugno, Planning Director, said the notion behind the Strategy Group Concept 2 was something that would be done across years. The sequence of the work plan was explained for specific work projects.

Scott Robinson, Deputy COO, talked about what they sought from today's work session (a copy of the details are included in the record). He also reviewed the timeline for the project. Each group had reviewed management practices, staff and organizational structure. They were looking for Council input on the Strategy Group. It was a prerequisite for what they do with other parts of the organization. They wanted to make some announcement to staff by August 25<sup>th</sup> about first steps for reorganization. They would also be conducting an employee survey, as well as where people would move and finally announce the first level of changes in the organization. He was interested in this dialogue that was meaningful for Council's needs. He wanted to make sure it was consistent with what the Council wanted. Stacey Triplett, Nature In Neighborhood Manager, had questions that she was framing for the Council.

Ms. Triplett said she had five questions. The first was a visioning exercise. She wanted Council to project themselves in five years. How would they describe their vision of Metro, if the plan worked? The next questions included talking about Metro's regional perspective.

Councilor Burkholder said it wasn't important what Metro was doing but how Metro was perceived. How did Metro accomplish this? He talked about style rather than what programs Metro ran. Councilor Harrington said things she was worried about before was making sure cross organization work was going on. She wanted to make sure there was collaborative work going on. Similarly that management practices were in place so that all the employees knew what the

organization was doing. They needed to know what their role was and how it related to the overall goals they were trying to do in the region. No matter what happened with the strategy group, she did not want this group to become the eighth councilor. She was hopeful that this came across clearly. She wanted Metro to be successful with our regional partners.

Council President Bragdon said a sign of success was that the Council felt that what they were doing was supported regionally as well as within the agency. This unit would also be successful if it has leveraged its strengths throughout the organization. He wanted Metro to be more than the sum of its parts. He would hope this would show throughout the region. They also needed politically oriented staffing even though the Council was the political face of Metro. Mr. Jordan talked about staff and elected officials around the region and how they interfaced. He talked about the artful balance between staff and electeds. Council President Bragdon said a sign of “unsuccess” was if this group was making up for work that needed to be done elsewhere. Councilor Park said they could agree on what they didn’t want in the soup.

Councilor Collette talked about her experience at the Power Planning Council. They had to create a change in the way people thought. Staff needed to do good analysis. She said success would be a high level of credibility about the analysis and the goals. She would like the staff to have unquestioned credibility. If Metro had more credibility it would be easier for the region to get behind Metro. Ms. Triplett asked clarifying questions about the Power Planning Council. Councilor Collette said the employees knew they were expected to do their best work when they were hired. Good analysis and collaboration were two keys to success of the Power Planning Council. Mr. Jordan summarized, not only were they the best in analysis but also in collaboration.

Councilor Park said success was if Metro was where the conversations actually happened. He felt Metro was unique. He talked about when he first became a Councilor; staff pretty much made the recommendations and decisions and then Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) went through the motions. He was concerned about returning to that model. He felt future Councils needed to have assurances that this was not going to occur. Moving ahead, he wanted to have staff, that was not coloring technical issues. How did they avoid that in the future? Where does that screen occur? Mr. Jordan said we hire people for their technical capabilities. There was a place where that technical capability interfaced with the political arena. He thought this strategic group had the potential to provide a sinew between the technical and the political part of the agency. At some point they were going to talk about the issues of succession. They currently have some staff that had incredible knowledge, how do they keep this balance? The same was true for the political body. He felt they didn’t commit resources in this area.

Councilor Harrington talked about competencies versus skills. There was a need for technical knowledge with political prowess. She assumed that there was room for some combination that worked for the organization. Councilor Collette said at the Power Planning Council the nerds weren’t political. The same person who may give you the top analysis may not have political prowess. Mr. Jordan said as this applied to this organization we have varying skill sets. Where we struggle is in that we don’t have anyone focused on the interfaced of the two skill sets. He asked who was thinking about the preparation of technical work and how it got fed into the political process.

Councilor Hosticka said he would define success was when the region was moving in a direction you wanted it to be going in. He thought that to a certain extent staff was perceived as having a political agenda. Judgments were being made at all levels about those factors. How they characterized information could have a political flavor. What was possible, desirable and within

that what relations do we build to accomplish this? There was also forged consensus and articulating the consensus when it happened. Councilor Harrington said putting your stamp on it was different than determining, forming, and shaping. Councilor Hosticka talked about the Council's job versus staff's role.

Councilor Burkholder said one outcome was one where staff was providing information and support so Council could make the decision. Councilor Hosticka said the agency was an organism. Councilor Park said there was a trust factor. When Dan Cooper, Metro Attorney, provided information, they could trust that information. The level of trust had to be accepted by the Council inside and outside the agency. It came down to credibility. Councilor Hosticka talked about the last round of the Urban Growth Boundary decision.

Ms. Triplett asked what elements tended to build trust? Were there things that they should do to create trust in management practices and in staff skills to accomplish these visions? Councilor Hosticka said under management practices when a staff member was aware of making a judgment and not technical work, there needed to be a screen. There should be a mechanism to screen, which issues needed to go to a political level. Councilor Burkholder said the issue was making sure that management got attention because the organization needed to be run well. The strategy group needed to look outwardly and inwardly. He said a major accomplishment of the Bragdon regime was shoring up management. There had been a lot of work in the past eight years to clean up the management process. Ms. Triplett asked if the strategic team was where they should be looking inward at the agency and outward of the agency?

Councilor Collette asked if we currently have a team of senior managers who looked at everything before it went out? This was the policy review. The idea was to make sure that the messages were consistent. Some one ought to be doing it. Mr. Jordan said when things rose to a certain level, senior management looked at these but they didn't do this with everything. Council President Bragdon said he felt it was good to have standardization. The better goal was that everyone in the agency was expected to have a certain standard. Councilor Collette suggested that from a policy perspective you needed to look for consistency. Mr. Jordan said they didn't have this type of team. Councilor Burkholder talked about conceptualize the goals and objectives. Councilor Collette said the job of the team was to review the material, ask if it was politically correct, and ask if the correct messaging was occurring. Was this strategic team a place for that kind of policy review and oversight? It was important to have a cross pollenization. Council President Bragdon said in the interest of trying to keep this fresh and integrating, he suggested rotating the team. Councilor Harrington said she felt there was a circle missing which was a Council circle. She was not interested in discussing management structure. She was interested in discussing the interface with the political body. She felt she was getting mired down in the technical. She felt we needed to get more effective. Mr. Jordan talked about one of his intents in conceptualizing the notion of this strategic group. What was the Council's role and how could it be best used? Councilor Park talked about the \$60 million issue when Burton was with the agency. This issue had created political suspect inside and outside the agency. He said we had to rebuild the trust. Ms. Triplett asked who would be best to do that? What was the mix of the type of functions they had to have? What were the competencies and skill sets? Were they strategic, political and future looking? Councilor Park talked about the issue of media. He wanted to know if there were other skill sets that they should be looking for in this strategic group. The political advisor was one who would advise, the analyst would be the number cruncher.

Councilor Hosticka suggested adding a campaign manager role to integrate media, Council messages, and to move Councilor's agenda forward. Council President Bragdon said he felt

communications should be included in the skill sets. Mr. Jordan talked about the need for a relationship between Public Affairs, the campaign, and the strategy. Councilor Burkholder said his original conception was a high-level think tank group. The campaign piece was an output to the work rather than a position. It was a mechanism, not a person. Ms. Triplett talked about the way we work which was how the standard was set. Councilor Hosticka said he felt this was a skill. There needed to be a person with those kind of skills and responsibilities. Councilor Collette said there needed to be someone at the top who helped Council map the process. There needed to be someone who was a strategic thinker as well as capable of coming up with the campaign. Councilor Harrington said the project sponsor role seemed to be the implementer. The mastermind needed to be the person who pulled all of the pieces together. Councilor Harrington said they needed to know who that, go to person was.

Ms. Triplett asked about the composition of the strategy group. Should it be small group? Councilor Hosticka provided his feedback about the mastermind. It was a very tricky role.

Council President Bragdon said there was a difference between strategist and tacticalist. Councilor Burkholder said his concern was how you take critical skills and build an attitude. He didn't want it to be a person. How do we have this translate into a group? Regional Leadership Initiative (RLI) was a part of this process. Councilor Park asked if there were a collection of project proposals or do we have a strategy first. Mr. Jordan said there was a relationship. How do the individual projects fit within a context? Ms. Triplett asked if this was the skill set that was needed. Councilor Burkholder said it seemed there needed to have a subject matter knowledge in the group. Would you want to have subject level people involved in this strategic group? How did this group find out what is going on? Mr. Jordan said by not having the subject matter expertise in the group forced the group to interface with the agency. There was an important interface.

Councilors continued to discuss the proposed model. Council President Bragdon suggested a dry run on some of the items such as regional compact. First would be coming to an agreement on the definition of a regional compact. Mr. Jordan said he viewed the group as creating efficiencies unlike what had occurred with scoping the Greatest Place initiative.

Council President Bragdon said this should be repositioning resources and repurposing staff and products, not adding to the FTE count. Mr. Jordan asked Council if they were agreeing to participate in the process? Councilor Harrington asked how much would they participate? All six Councilors agreed to continue with the process.

## **II. COUNCILOR COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilors updated the Council on meetings they had attended.

**III. ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Council President Bragdon adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m.

Prepared by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Billington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Billington  
Clerk of the Council

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF  
AUGUST 14, 2008**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Doc. Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Doc. Number</b>
I	Chart	8/14/08	To: Metro Council From: Scott Robinson, Deputy COO Re: Sustainable Metro Initiative Strategy Group Concept 2 of 2 – Strategy and Accountability	081408c-01
I	Chart	8/14/08	To: Metro Council From: Scott Robinson, Deputy COO Re: Sustainable Metro Initiative Strategy Group Concept 1 of 2 – Council Support	081408c-02
I	Chart	8/14/08	To: Metro Council From: Scott Robinson, Deputy COO Re: Sustainable Metro Initiative Strategy Group Concept 2 of 2 – Council Support	081408c-03
I	What needs to be accomplished today	8/14/08	To: Metro Council From: Stacey Triplett, NIN Manager Re: What do we need today?	081408c-04
II	Committee Direction	8/14/08	To: Metro Council From: Councilor Hosticka Re: I-5/99W Project Steering Committee Direction	081408c-05