

MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Tuesday, April 14, 2009
Metro Council Chamber

Councilors Present: Kathryn Harrington, Rod Park, Carlotta Collette, Rex Burkholder, Carl Hosticka, Robert Liberty

Councilors Absent: David Bragdon (Council President)

Deputy Council President Harrington convened the Metro Council Work Session Meeting at 2:01 p.m.

1. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA FOR COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING, APRIL 16, 2009/ADMINISTRATIVE/CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATIONS

Scott Robinson, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, gave a brief COO update. Councilor Harrington reviewed the April 16, 2009 Metro Council agenda. Councilor Hosticka presented the legislative update sent via email from Randy Tucker. Councilor Liberty asked about the Jobs and Transportation Bill regarding the percent of funds available.

2. METRO ETHICS LINE

Suzanne Flynn, Metro auditor, discussed the previous sixteen months of the Metro Ethics Line; she talked about reports that have taken place during that time and the process in which they were completed. Last year the Auditor's Office purchased an upgrade to the program which gave Metro staff greater capabilities. Councilor Burkholder expressed concern about this becoming a complaint line. Councilor Harrington clarified the response and also concern about it becoming an external system. Councilor Park asked about the whistle blowers statute and why it had a different influence on people making a complaint. Councilor Liberty asked about the meaning of the ethics line as it would be publicized as waste, fraud and misuse. Councilor Collette asked what the service cost was. Ms. Flynn stated the cost was, \$13,000 annually, based on the number of employees and size of the population served.

3. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Margo Norton, Metro director of finance and administrative services, presented the Budget Amendment packet provided to Council. She briefly covered an outline of what the submitted amendments were purposing financially, for the fiscal year and the subsequent. Ms. Norton gave reasons for the fully-loaded cost that were present in the budget amendment proposal. She then highlighted the upcoming timeline for the budget process. There would be a public hearing on the proposed budget, there would not be a presentation from the finance department but would be an opportunity for the public to comment on the new budget. Councilor Harrington asked when the Tax Supervising and

Conservation Commission hearing would occur. Ms. Norton explained this would take place on June 4th as the final proposed budget would be submitted to the TSCC by May 15th. Councilor Hosticka asked about General Fund Reserves and the Designated General Fund Reserves. Councilor Liberty asked about the regional revolving reserves fund that was passed in September, and whether or not it will last until the September of two years following.

4. HCT RECOMMENDED PRIORITIES AND DRAFT PLAN

Tony Mendoza, Metro transit manager, explained the purpose of the presentation to Council, what would be covered. Mr. Mendoza began by discussing the Detailed Corridor Evaluation spreadsheet and proposed changes to the scores for local corridors. Councilor Liberty asked why there were changes to the weighting of scores. Mr. Mendoza answered that it was due to the sub-committee; the subcommittee was comprised of members from TPAC and MPAC. Councilor Harrington asked for clarification of the new spreadsheet that was given to Council. Mr. Mendoza showed the types of projects and the framework for the timeline over the next couple years. Councilor Liberty expressed concern in regards to being asked to approve or check off on projects that the Council wasn't being able to give feed back or even understand what the projects were. Councilor Burkholder asked about the policy that was in place currently with the process being a 100 year plan. Councilor Park asked about the new update of Westside Express Service and how it went from the commuter rail to now a light rail update after already far exceeding budget. Councilor Collette asked if we could only feasibly complete 2 or 3 projects per phase, how come we have 4 in the first phase of the plan. Karen Withrow, Metro, explained the High Capacity Transit (HCT) tool had 4000 visitors online with 600 people commenting. Robin McArthur explained that yes the plan is to have the Metro Council, MPAC, JPACT, and TPAC all agree on the decisions. Councilor Harrington has proposed that May 12th High Capacity Transit group comes back to the Council for another in-depth discussion. Councilor Collette asked for individual briefings between now and the next meeting so the Council members can have an understanding of the changes that have taken place. Councilor Burkholder asked to have the Think Tank discuss how we can make multiple cheaper projects get finished as soon as possible as our economy gets stronger and there is a need for transit.

5. Break

6. WASTE REDUCTION STRATEGIES (INFORMATION)

Matt Korot, program director resource conservation and recycling, discussed the recovery, waste, and donation of food in the Metro Region. He said there was an inability to grow with expansion of capacity at transfer stations, compost locations. Currently Metro Central transfer station took 16,000 tons per year which was right at the limit of what they can take. Councilor Burkholder asked if there were local organic waste stations, why was there and issue with the transfer station capacity. Councilor Harrington

asked why there was an issue when cities such as Seattle presently did this. Mr. Korot talked about the different options that were available for the organic waste in the state of Oregon. Jennifer Erickson, Metro planner, answered Councilor Harrington's question about how Seattle was available to do this and the Metro region doesn't have that option. Seattle had one contract with a hauler which gets all of Seattle's waste allowing for the company to invest in land and in-turn pay the city to be active in organic waste. Ms. Erickson gave an example of food waste in local restaurants; one restaurant had 3 hauls a week at 900 pounds of iceberg lettuce, where only the top 3rd of each head of lettuce was cut off, leaving the other 2/3 in the garbage. Mr. Korot finished with a few upcoming parts to the waste reduction strategy.

7. RATE REVIEW RECAP

Jeff Tucker and Douglas Anderson, Metro finance managers, presented on fiscal year 2009-10 budget development. Mr. Tucker said the process started with a base budget which detailed the end of grant programs and the regional credit fees. Councilor Park asked about programs not visible to the budget and then programs that were. Councilor Liberty asked if there is a way to monitor the amount of waste that came from cities or even communities. Councilor Harrington thanked Mr. Tucker for the clarification on the 'tipping fee/disposal voucher.'

Mr. Anderson presented a clarification of the baseline rates so the Council would have a shared understanding. He explained what drove the rates up or down, the shrinkage of tonnage accounted for nearly half of the rate increase. Mr. Anderson discussed the Council's options as they moved ahead, and to consider rate management. A few options he proposed were, enhancing revenue, reducing costs, and using uncommitted fund balance; backfill budget appropriation, instead of rate revenue. Councilor Burkholder asked if there were other options discussed and proposed that had not been taken forward or brought to Council. Mr. Anderson explained the Solid Waste Fund balance status and where the budget would be if and when Metro returned the target waste recovery. He also covered the options for how to best use the fund balance. Councilor Liberty asked when the largest jump in history occurred. Mr. Anderson said that without a doubt last year had nearly a five dollar jump. Councilor Harrington asked if we still expected a trend of increase. She asked if it would be better to take 'a hit' now instead of expect an increase in the future and not reach it. Mr. Anderson presented comments from other local governments concerning limiting the tip fee. He also displayed comments that came from the Rate Review Committee. Councilor Collette asked if we don't pay it at this time, were we assuming that there would be 'better times' in order to make up the greater amount that Metro would owe at that time. Councilor Burkholder stated that he is not inclined to reduce costs further as there had already been substantial cuts. Councilor Harrington would like Council to think about renewal and replacement. Councilor Park asked if in following years Metro could return to historic tonnage.

8. COUNCILOR BURKHOLDER COMMENTS ON BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Councilor Burkholder discussed budget amendments he was carrying, starting with Burkholder #1, Connecting Green: Regional Conservation Education, showing what the objectives were and how they would take place. In the second amendment Burkholder #2, Metro Climate Initiative, Councilor Burkholder described the history of the need for this amendment and how it became an important issue.

9. COUNCIL BRIEFINGS/COMMUNICATION

Councilor Harrington and Councilor Burkholder would both be absent from the work session on Tuesday April 21st. Councilor Collette had been asked by City of Portland Mayor Sam Adams to co-chair a committee to raise money in the region for the arts. Councilor Park presented to Council the upcoming issues around the proposed Headquarters Hotel project stating that with an upcoming deadline there was a possibility of another deadline extension. Mayor Adams had asked Metro to go forward with the extension. Councilors Park and Burkholder explained other upcoming concerns and deadlines on the project. Councilor Harrington discussed the current situation, if the hotel did get built, Metro has a financial issue and if Metro doesn't build then Metro still had a financial issue of how to finance the Oregon Convention Center. Councilor Liberty asked for another study of public hotels in other major convention cities and how they had fared through the economic downturn.

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council, Council President Bragdon adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Prepared by,



Scott Hand
Policy Associate

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF
 April 14, 2009**

Item	Topic	Doc. Date	Document Description	Doc. Number
1	Agenda	4/14/09	Agenda: Metro Council regular meeting, April 14, 2009	041409cw-1
1	Agenda	4/16/09	Agenda: Metro Council regular meeting, April 16, 2009	041409cw-2
3	Memo	4/14/09	To: David Bragdon, Council President et. al. From: Margo Norton, Finance & Administrative Services Director Re: Councilor Amendments to the FY 1009-10 Proposed Budget	041409cw-3
4	Handout	04/01/09	Draft: High Capacity Transit System Detailed Evaluation 2 nd Draft	041409cw-4
4	Handout	04/14/09	Draft: HCT corridor chart To: Metro Council – Preliminary Ranking Based on All Criteria	041409cw-5
7 & 8	Handout	4/14/09	Rate Review Recap Presentation Slides	041409cw-6
10	Handout	04/14/09	Climate Prosperity Project framework	041409cw-7