



JOINT METRO COUNCIL/METRO EXPOSITION AND RECREATION COMMISSION (MERC)

WORK SESSION

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2015

Oregon Convention Center, Rooms C121-122

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes, and Councilors Bob Stacey, Carlotta Collette, Craig Dirksen, Kathryn Harrington, and Sam Chase

Councilors Excused: Councilor Shirley Craddick

Commissioners Present: Commission Chair Terry Goldman, and Commissioners Judie Hammerstad, Chris Erickson, Elisa Dozono, Ray Leary, and Karis Stoudamire-Phillips

Commissioners Excused: Commissioner Cynthia Haruyama

Council President Tom Hughes called the Joint MERC/Metro Council work session to order at 1:04 p.m.

1. CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATION

Chief Operating Officer Martha Bennett updated the Council on the following items:

- Ms. Bennett thanked MERC for providing lunch before the work session.
- With the departure of Metro's Sustainability Center Director Mr. Jim Desmond, Ms. Kathleen Brennan-Hunter will assume the role of interim department Director.
- Update on the Metro Parks and Natural Areas System Plan, which is moving into its next phase.
- Update on the work of Metro's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team, which is preparing to deliver a presentation to Council in February.
- Mr. Scott Robinson, Metro Deputy Chief Operating Officer, distributed a handout highlighting the early successes of Metro's DEI program.

2. FIRST OPPORTUNITY TARGET AREA (FOTA) INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

Mr. Robinson provided background on the joint work session. The MERC Commission originally engaged their staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the FOTA program. The effectiveness concerns are based on underperformance of the FOTA program, resulting from changing economics and demographics in the Metro region. Mr. Robinson presented three policy questions for the Metro Council and MERC Commission to address:

1. Do you agree with the policy recommendations?
2. If so, do you support staff developing an implementation work plan to bring back for our review in the coming months?
3. Do you support the formation of a task force to consider boundary and income eligibility updates?

3. RESEARCH PROCESS, FINDINGS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Steve Faust and Mr. Chip Lazenby, project consultants from Cogan Owens Greene, presented their Research Process, Findings, and Policy Recommendations on the FOTA program. The purpose of the presentation was to update and obtain direction from the Metro Council and MERC Commission on FOTA policy recommendations, in order for staff to begin policy implementation. Key elements of the presentation included:

- Project overview and objective: to review and recommend updates to the FOTA program.
- Legislative history.
- Demographic and economic research, highlighting:
 - Key changes from 1990 to 2010 in the distribution of poverty, as well as African-American and non-white populations. These characteristics were less present in FOTA in 2010 than they were in 1990.
 - Comparisons of FOTA and the Metro region in 2010. FOTA in 2010 had lower than the regional share of low income people, and the largest contiguous area of the African-American population.
- Best practices:
 - Well-specified equity goals and objectives.
 - Workable administrative procedures that institutionalize processes for achieving equity goals.
 - Effective use of intermediaries.
 - Strong accountability mechanisms.
- Stakeholder interviews, which have produced the following suggestions to prioritize FOTA:
 - Develop metrics.
 - Communicate progress.
 - Maintain a jobs-oriented focus.
 - Update income eligibility thresholds.
 - Modify the FOTA boundary.
 - Invest in a robust career ladder for FOTA hires.
 - Fund community engagement through formal and informal networks.
- Policy recommendations:
 - Restore historic focus on hiring.
 - Strengthen contracting and procurement.
 - Update FOTA boundaries.
 - Extend FOTA benefits.
 - Continue FOTA hiring program at MERC venues.
 - Convene task force to update FOTA boundary and income thresholds.
- Administrative considerations:
 - Create well-specified goals and objectives.
 - Implement administrative procedures.
 - Work with intermediary organizations.
 - Develop accountability mechanisms.

- Initiate and strengthen career advancement programs.

Council and Commission Discussion:

Councilor Harrington inquired about solving difficulties with the hiring timeframe. Council President Hughes spoke about analysis of socioeconomic status in FOTA hiring. Commissioner Leary spoke about ensuring sufficient inclusion of the African-American community in the FOTA program.

4. FACILITATED DISCUSSION

The Metro Council and MERC Commission began their discussion period, facilitated by Metro Councilor Sam Chase, MERC Chair Terry Goldman, and MERC Commissioners Eliza Dozono and Ray Leary. Councilor Chase thanked the group, and reiterated the key policy questions to be addressed. Chair Goldman spoke to the consulting team's thorough review and analysis.

Councilor Harrington spoke to process timeframe concerns, along with funding career support for FOTA hires, and utilizing intermediary organizations in working with relevant communities to implement policy recommendations.

Councilor Collette spoke to maintaining an ongoing interaction with the task force, and to developing legitimate long-term relationships and targeting specific outcomes in diverse communities.

Commissioner Dozono spoke to Council's ability to lead community outreach efforts in the FOTA community, and to her concerns regarding online-only employment applications.

Councilor Stacey spoke to preserving the intentions of the original FOTA boundary, while extending some of its benefits to disadvantaged areas across the region.

Commissioner Leary spoke to maintaining the commitment to the historical FOTA community, and addressed concerns regarding the separation of contracting and procurement from the hiring process. He also stressed the importance of FOTA employee retention, and spoke to the value of immediacy in FOTA's reassessment.

Councilor Dirksen affirmed that the Metro Council and MERC must retain the responsibility of reviewing the recommendations of a FOTA task force, and mentioned that moving back to a percentage base would be a useful income eligibility update.

Council President Hughes spoke to inquiring with FOTA's original founders and other stakeholders to determine how and where to target their communities.

Councilor Harrington inquired about the resources required for next steps in reworking the FOTA program.

Commissioner Erickson spoke to identifying outcomes that can be addressed in the next year, and to ensuring that the FOTA task force has a distinct sunrise and sunset.

Councilor Collette spoke to including a timeline in the task force's work plan, and to integrating the FOTA reassessment process with the work of Metro's DEI team.

Commissioner Dozono spoke to the importance of involving MERC venue directors in the FOTA reassessment.

Commissioner Hammerstad spoke to identifying the necessary resources for implementing a change in the FOTA boundary prior to undertaking the project, in order to ensure that the process can be completed and does not stall unnecessarily.

Councilor Chase spoke to adhering to an ambitious timeline, and to ensuring that underserved communities of color are targeted within legal constrictions.

Commissioner Stoudamire-Phillips spoke to the need for Councilors and Commissioners to make connections with stakeholders, in order to move the reassessment process along with support and ambition.

Metro Council President Hughes, the five present Metro Councilors, MERC Chair Goldman, and the five present MERC Commissioners, all gave their "thumbs-ups" to answer affirmatively to staff's three policy questions posed at the beginning of the discussion.

5. NEXT STEPS

Mr. Robinson summarized and synthesized the comments and general discussion of the present Metro Councilors and MERC Commissioners. He reasserted that the policy direction received by Councilors and Commissioners would be incorporated into the work plan for this project.

Council and Commission Discussion:

Commissioner Leary thanked the Metro Council for its prioritization of this issue. Council President Hughes thanked the MERC Commission for its service.

6. CLOSING COMMENTS

Seeing no further business, Council President Tom Hughes adjourned the joint work session at 2:21 p.m. The Metro Council held an executive session immediately following the public meeting pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e), to conduct deliberations with person designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions.

Respectfully submitted,



Joel Cvetko, Council Policy Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF JAN. 13, 2015

ITEM	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT No.
1.0	Agenda	1/15/15	Council Meeting Agenda for Jan. 15, 2015	011315cw-01
1.0	Handout	1/13/15	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Metro Snapshot	011315cw-02