



**METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
Meeting Minutes  
December 15, 2015  
Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

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

**Councilors Excused:** None

Council President Tom Hughes called the Metro Council work session to order at 2:05 p.m.

**1. CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER COMMUNICATION**

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

- Ms. Bennett reflected on her recent trip to Little Rock, Arkansas for the International City/County Managers Association convention
- Ms. Bennett and councilors discussed the December 14<sup>th</sup> Oregon Business Leadership Summit
- Ms. Bennett acknowledged the success of a new diversity program in the Human Resources department which includes a broader range of Metro employees on interview panels in order to bolster the skills of existing staff and diversify future Metro staff
- The Portland Business Christmas Luncheon is on December 17<sup>th</sup> at the Oregon Convention Center
- The Metro Regional Center will be closed on December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>
- Councilor Harrington shared a card she received from the Stafford GEARS group thanking the Councilors for allowing them to present at the Council Meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup>
- The Councilors discussed the success of the Oregon Zoo's Elephant Lands grand opening

**2. EXPO PROJECT UPDATE**

Mr. Scott Robinson, Metro Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Matthew Rotchford, Director of the Expo Center, and Mr. David Fortney, Metro Policy Analyst presented the Expo Project Update. Mr. Robinson, Mr. Rotchford, and Mr. Fortney discussed how Expo Project Team is working to identify solutions to identify solutions to the Expo Center's aging facilities and increased financial challenges that prevent its ability to financially sustain itself. Key elements of the presentation included:

- The Expo Center's current operational and financial dynamics including its event mix, occupancy rates, seasonality, revenue and expense trends, and capital expenses
- The results of the Internal Advisory Team process, which focused on analyzing the business case and return on investment of five proposed investment scenarios
- Several key recommendations that emerged from the October and November 2015 work sessions with the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission (MERC)
- Questions for Council consideration

***Council Discussion:***

- Councilor Dirksen suggested that several of the other investment scenarios proposed seemed to offer more financial return without as much investment. Councilor Dirksen also raised questions about better defining the proposed hybrid scenario
- Councilor Chase thanked the presenters on their continual work on the Expo project and suggested that the investment scenario that required no external funding would be the most logical choice
  - Mr. Robinson pointed out that there are issues with the timeline of that scenario and that altering the timeline would require an external funding source. Mr. Robinson, Mr. Fortney, and Councilors Chase and Dirksen discussed the complexity of the issue and the lack of one clear solution
- Councilor Harrington clarified the timeline of the project's next steps, including building a business case for the Visitors Facility Intergovernmental Agreement Intergovernmental Agreement Transient Lodging Tax request, and inquired about next steps for the Hall C renovation and hybrid scenario
- Councilor Craddick inquired about the projected need for these types of facilities going forward and about the possibility of requesting additional funding from the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT). Councilor Craddick also raised concerns that the Expo Center could lose its conditional use zoning under the hybrid scenario
  - Mr. Rotchford shared the results of the Hunden Strategic Partners report which found a need for a large facility with meeting rooms, ballroom spaces, connectivity to a lobby, and modern amenities
- Councilor Stacey conveyed his hesitation towards the hybrid model due to the difficulty of finding an alternative use that is complementary, rather than disruptive, to the existing use of the Expo Center
- Councilor Collette spoke to the complexity of the issue and the balance between keeping existing business and gaining additional revenue. Mr. Rotchford noted the importance of maintaining client relationships to the success of the Expo Center. Councilor Collette also spoke to the importance of maintaining good relationships with partners such as TLT
- Councilor Harrington requested additional geographic and background information about the Expo property, buildings, and historical information
- Councilor Collette inquired about the option of utilizing or leasing Levee E
- Councilor Chase spoke to the Expo Center's coordination with the Oregon Convention Center and thanked the team for their continuing work on the project
- Councilor Hughes noted that the new information raises more questions than it answers, and that each scenario almost has more downsides than upsides. If there was a clear definitive conclusion we would be doing that already, but it's a complex problem
- Mr. Robinson concluded the presentation by noting that the Expo Center is the only facility he knows of that does not receive public subsidies, and thanked the councilors for their time

### **3. 2015 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

Mr. Matt Korot, Metro Resource Conservation & Recycling program director, presented the 2015 Sustainability Report. In 2003, the Metro Council set an ambitious target for internal operations to be sustainable within one generation. To this end, the Council adopted goals in five key categories to reduce the agency's environmental impact: greenhouse gas emissions, toxics, waste, water and habitat (Resolution No. 03-3338). Metro's Sustainability Plan, adopted by Council in 2010 (Resolution No. 10-4198), outlines the strategies and actions and requires an annual report to Council on progress made toward the goals in the plan. Key elements of the presentation included:

- Progress to date toward Metro's Sustainability Plan goals including key projects completed in fiscal year 2014-15
- Priorities for the agency in 2015-16 and beyond
- Council consideration and discussion

#### ***Council Discussion:***

Councilor Craddick thanked Mr. Korot for his presentation and inquired about the possibility of restricting the use of food products that contain palm oil in all Metro facilities. Councilor Craddick also spoke to the need to update the irrigation system at Glendoveer Golf Course, and inquired as to the effectiveness of Blue Lake Park's new rainwater facilities during the recent storm event. Councilor Craddick also noted the high level of waste generated by the Metro building, and inquired about whether the total waste generated by a venue includes waste brought in by visitors, particularly for venues such as parks. Councilor Craddick spoke to the difficulty of changing people's behaviors. Councilor Collette spoke to the amount of paper used by the Metro Council and inquired about the possibility of going paper-free in the future. Councilor Harrington noted that it would be interesting to know how much of the total waste generated is something that we can reasonably impact. Councilor Harrington also spoke to the possibility of taking a second look at the initial sustainability goals to make sure they are still achievable. President Hughes spoke to assessing the sustainability goals in the context of each individual venue and then creating cumulative goals as a result of that process. President Hughes also discussed the success of an Oregon-manufactured laminate wood product and expressed his concern about the progress of Oregon's solar cell manufacturing.

### **4. FIRST QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT (UNAUDITED)**

Mr. Tim Collier, Metro Director of Financial and Regulatory Services, presented the First Quarter Financial Report (Unaudited). Mr. Collier discussed projections of both revenues and expenditures adhere closely to budget in most areas, with two exceptions. The MERC venues do show a significant year-to-year rise in revenues, which is projected to bring in more revenue than originally assumed. Construction excise tax is also projected to be above budget. Mr. Collier spoke to the positive effect that the uprising economy is having on venues including the Oregon Convention Center and Portland's Center for the Arts, as well as the construction excise tax. Mr. Collier also noted several things to watch out for, including the solid waste excise tax and the Oregon Zoo attendance.

***Council Discussion:***

Councilor Harrington inquired about the reason for the spike in revenue during August 2015 at the Portland's Center for the Arts and expressed her interest in seeing more context for the Portland's numbers in the financial reports. Councilor Craddick inquired about the minimal increase in the Transient Lodging Tax. Councilor Harrington spoke to her appreciation for the revenue charts for construction excise tax over course of time. Councilor Stacey noted that the benefit of the construction excise tax is not a new phenomenon. Ms. Bennett added that all jurisdictions are currently on track and that development is happening around the region. Councilor Chase spoke to the impact of weather conditions on the Oregon Zoo and Zoolights attendance. President Hughes shared the viewpoint of construction excise tax critics which says that Portland can't possibly sustain the growth it is currently experiencing. President Hughes also acknowledged that the policies that are in place ensure that most of the growth goes into Portland, with some benefits to surrounding areas as well.

**5. METRO ATTORNEY COMMUNICATIONS**

Ms. Alison Kean, Metro Attorney, provided Council with her regularly scheduled Metro Attorney Communications. Topics discussed included:

- Ongoing work on the OCC Hotel
- Regarding the most recent round of Community Planning and Development (CPDG) grants, working on Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) with the local governments
- Ongoing work with Multnomah County and the Stafford Area on Urban Reserves remands
- Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Milwaukie regarding the Transit-Oriented Development Program
- Working with HR to develop a more robust Workplace Violence Prevention Plan
- Recently appealed a ruling that Metro did not commit an unfair labor practice regarding the zoo buttons
- Received Multnomah County hearings officer decision
- Working on an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Clackamas County, the City of Oregon City, Metro, and the State of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department regarding the Willamette Falls Legacy Project
- Working with IT Companies regarding procurement cards with chips
- Working on ongoing natural areas transactions and capital grants
- Solid Waste System Plan update and changes to Title 5

**6. COUNCIL LIAISON UPDATES AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION**

Councilor Harrington followed up on her Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization meeting regarding the status of Sanctuary City. Councilor Craddick spoke to the efforts to garner support for better park facilities in east Multnomah County. Councilor Dirksen updated the council on Transportation Policy Group meeting including the Federal Active Transportation (FAST) Act, a preview of the 2016 legislative session, Connect Oregon, the Governor's Transportation Vision Panel regional forum, the State of Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan update, and coordination between Oregon Department of Transportation and Oregon Department of Human Services. Councilor Craddick raised questions about a Regional Solutions Team project regarding the development of transit options in the Columbia Gorge. President Hughes announced that he and

Councilor Collette will be attending a meeting with the Cities of Lake Oswego, West Linn, and Tualatin as well as Clackamas County on December 16<sup>th</sup> regarding the Urban Reserves remand.

**7. ADJOURN**

Seeing no further business, Council President Tom Hughes adjourned the Council work session at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Kyra Schneider, Council Policy Assistant

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF DEC. 15, 2015**

There were none.