



METRO

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Demister
Memorandum

Date: December 20, 1991
To: METRO Council, Executive, Interested Parties
From: Betsy Bergstein *JB*
Regarding: Charter Committee Meeting - December 19, 1991

Public Meetings Scheduled: The Committee is proceeding with its plan to have a Saturday public meeting on January 18, 1992 inviting Metro, the RGC, Tri-Met, Portland Chamber, Multnomah County and City of Portland to speak to them. They will have a working document on the functions of regional government discussed thus far prepared for their next committee meeting, January 2, 1992. They plan to ask for response to that document on January 18, 1992. On structure, they will outline the "major alternative approaches" and ask for comment on the different concepts. They made the point that no decisions have been made.

The Committee will then have a second evening public meeting either January 27, 1992 (Monday) or January 29, 1992 (Wednesday) to ask for comment from the public, the Boundary Commission and other parties.

The January 18, 1992 meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m., place not yet determined. The Committee has decided not to meet at Metro.

Committee Discussion. Committee discussion was exclusively on structure. The Chair outlined two variations: (1) the current structure with the exception of continuing a board of directors for Tri-Met; (2) a manager in lieu of an executive.

Mary Tobias questioned if the structure will define the relationship between the regional government and local government in so far as how they create and define a partnership. Definition of roles; identification of a process of transition from local to regional and back, etc.

Jon Egge asked if current structure accommodates her concerns? Tobias responded "off and on."

The Chair stated that one approach, apart from a "hybrid body" would require the regional government to structure involvement of local governments in the decision making process the way it does with JPACT.

Ron Cease responded to Tobias that the her issue is perennial. Where a mix of directly elected and locally elected was tried elsewhere in the country, it was fraught with difficulties; didn't work well.

Tobias stated not suggesting that but rather an elected governing body with an RPAC or JPAC debating the issues but leaving the decision up to the elected body.

Some discussion on JPAC/TPAC; Egge stated he was 4 years on TPAC; money and staff made it work so well.

Ray Phelps objected to the idea that advisory committees should be in the charter.

The Committee discussion then turned to commissions.

Jon Egge described why he thought the service delivery functions of Metro should be handled by commissions:

- o Regional government should focus on planning;
- o The public wants planning done in a pure environment;
- o Best and most effective way;
- o Meets people of this region's primary concern (growth management);
- o What regional government will do in service delivery in the next 20 years in already being done;
- o Prefers an appointed executive officer.
- o Appointment and removal authority and financial control to rest with regional government.

Ron Cease responded:

At no time do you create a government from scratch. Didn't create Metro from scratch --- CRAG was here, except for the Tri-Met marriage clause, already existed. Does it make sense to use a commission in all cases? No -- leave decision up to the elected process.

Give the elected body final responsibility. Accountability between them and the public. Do not allow professionals to run the show with no accountability.

Mary Tobias objected to staff costs associated with commission; grow over time. Electorate clearly don't want a proliferation of governments.

This ensures that Metro will not grow. (Egge) Power in government is measured by number of employees. Numbers drive power of government. Currently have overworked council; staff does what it pleases. Levels of power in Metro are 1)E.O.; 2)Staff; 3)Elected Council.

Tobias: Will lead to a proliferation of governments rather than efficiencies.

At this point, Committee went into a discussion on what they thought the Council does, how many hours councilors spend at work, if councilors spend enough time on planning, how the council is organized.

Egge's premise is that council is overworked with all service delivery functions.

Hales stated existing council spends very little time on issues of regional planning; does no regional planning; no oversight on local government planning.

Egge stated "precious little policy" at council level.

Frank Josselson: Important function is policy making, growth management. Worried about staff driven policy body. Commission form provides an insulation level; "ordinary citizens like us."

What would commission do different than the council responsibility?
(Hardy Myers)

In theoretical terms, they would be the executive in charge of operations (Egge).

(Hales) How would you solve the problem that the current council is overburdened and not getting to policy issues?

Mary Tobias asked Egge is his commission model was the corporate model or local government model?

Egge: Corporate model -- what is the mission of this government?

Cease: Regional planning body will not have any clout to do anything. We have more than other areas, eg. Seattle. Don't take away things related to it.

Hardy Myers --- commissions may be appropriate in certain situations. The issue is "will charter mandate all service functions under commissions or selectively allow?"

Frank Josselson-- not trying to limit regional government; trying to clarify role of regional government. Have not suggested elimination of any current function of regional government.

Ned Look - concerned about commission form; agree with Ray, Matt, Ron; there is a place for commissions but it should not be written in to the charter; council should make that decision.
Would like to see this question addressed in depth on the 18th.

Adjourn - next meeting January 2, 1991, Metro, room 440.