

## Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body Meeting  
Date: Wednesday, April 12, 2023  
Time: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM  
Place: Metro Council Chambers, 600 NE Grand Ave, Portland, OR 97232 and Zoom Webinar  
Purpose: The Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) will discuss goals and staff recommendations, review the meeting calendar proposal, and receive an update on the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Oversight Committee.

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### Member attendees

Co-chair Eboni Brown (she/her), Co-chair Matt Chapman (he/him), Zoi Coppiano (she/her), Mercedes Elizalde (she/her), Yvette Hernandez (she/her), Monta Knudson (he/him), Nicole Larson (she/her), Michael Ong Liu (he/him), Sahaan McKelvey (he/him), Cristina Palacios (she/her), Mindy Stadtlander (she/her)

### Absent members

Steve Rudman (he/him)

### Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her), Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her)

### Absent elected delegates

Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal (she/her)

### County staff representatives

Clackamas County – Vahid Brown (he/him), Washington County – Jessi Adams (she/her), Jes Larson (she/her)

### Absent county staff representatives

Multnomah County – Yesenia Delgado (she/her)

### Metro

Abby Ahern (she/her), Melia Deters (she/her), Liam Frost (he/him), Patricia Rojas (she/her), Valeria McWilliams (she/her)

### Kearns & West Facilitators

Ben Duncan (he/him), Ariella Dahlin (she/her)

### Welcome and Introductions

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, welcomed the Tri-County Planning Body (TCPB) to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

Mindy Stadtlander introduced herself as a new member.

The TCPB approved the March Meeting Summary.

### Public Comment

No public comment was received.

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### Staff Updates

Jes Larson, Supportive Housing Services Program Manager, Washington County shared that the Aloha Inn Project's grand opening will occur on Thursday at 2 pm.

*Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington shared that she would appreciate members of the TCPB attending the grand opening in her absence.*

Liam Frost, Regional Housing Assistant Director, Metro, shared that Metro has received a contractor proposal for landlord recruitment work, that Metro is meeting with Health Share of Oregon next week to discuss areas of alignment, including the Medicaid 11-15 waiver, and that Metro has been working to develop a work plan with deliverables for the TCPB to review. He also shared that all members whose terms were expiring have accepted their term extension.

### Employee Recruitment and Retention

Liam Frost, Metro, reflected on the process to develop the employee recruitment and retention goal language and the nuance of the topic.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, Facilitator, acknowledged that this is a complex topic and there have been several discussions around it. He shared that the goal language is reflective of these conversations and approval of the language will be the first step to moving work forward. Ben detailed the two goal options.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington asked how equitable pay was defined and how the distribution language would ensure correct wage values for service providers. She shared her experience in Washington County in improving the bilingual pay policy.

*Liam Frost, Metro, shared that the definition was in the meeting packet and that the details of achieving equitable pay distribution are in the recommendations.*

Nicole Larson asked how goal implementation would work and if the TCPB has funding to help with implementation. She noted that the approach for pay equity could be problematic for some organizations and that the recommendation language would need to be specific.

*Liam Frost, Metro, replied that Metro and county staff will determine and share best practices to actualize the goal with the TCPB in an iterative process. He noted that the Regional Investment Fund (RIF) is the funding source for TCPB priorities and that a consultant will be brought on to determine specific recommendations.*

Mercedes Elizalde stated that goal implementation lies within counties and their contracting processes. She recommended that the language specifically states, "achieve livable wages for direct service staff."

*Co-chair Eboni Brown agreed.*

Cristina Palacios noted that pay differential for bilingual skills and workload considerations should be included in the language.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reflected that specifics would be included in the recommendation.

Liam Frost, Metro, suggested that the TCPB review the recommendations and then work back to determine the goal.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, agreed and shared that during the iterative recommendation process, staff and the consultant would develop a workflow to be shared with the TCPB.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reviewed the employee recruitment and retention recommendations.

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Mercedes Elizalde shared that it's the responsibility of service provider funders, such as government partners, to ensure nonprofit providers can pay a livable wage, and shared a suggestion for goal language, but had no suggestions for recommendation language. She detailed experiences of late payments for contracts by government partners.

Sahaan McKelvey suggested adding a timeframe to the recommendations.

*Liam Frost, Metro, replied that a timeline is the next step after approval.*

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith shared that counties need to be able to pay living wage under their own established pay equity guidelines established through law passed by the Oregon Legislature.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington suggested that information about current wages and benefits should be shared between the TCPB and the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Oversight Committee.

Co-chair Matt Chapman stated that for the timeline, the TCPB should select an end date, then determine how much work can be done.

*Liam Frost, Metro, confirmed that staff can commit to clear timelines and deliverables.*

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reflected that there is a trust component regarding the process and asked if members trust the process for getting updates and responding to staff proposals.

Sahaan McKelvey shared that while he would like to trust the process, he can't. He emphasized that the TCPB should work towards an end date for goals, instead of working incrementally.

*Cristina Palacios agreed.*

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, asked if the SHS Measure had a timeline for completion.

*Liam Frost, Metro, said that the TCPB should deliberate and decide on the timeline for goal completion.*

*Patricia Rojas, Regional Housing Director, Metro, added that they are not ready to share timelines today, but could add timeline language into the recommendations.*

Cristina Palacios stated that if what Mercedes said about Metro being behind on contract payments is true, that should take precedence.

*Mercedes Elizalde clarified that she was talking about county contracts.*

Monta Knudson suggested adding 'Metro works with Tri-County leadership to address challenges with raising wages.' He shared that non-SHS contracts prevent wage increases, and because of this, his organization is focusing on moving towards SHS funding. He noted that the TCPB can lead the way for organizations to increase wages.

Sahaan McKelvey added that he doesn't want work to be delayed in addressing challenges if problems are created by other entities.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reflected that the group has brought up many topics in discussion. He asked if the workload conversation is a topic the TCPB would want to add to the recommendations.

Cristina Palacios stated that workload is separate from differential pay.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington clarified that she brought up workload as an example of a lesson learned, which is unrelated to SHS.

Mercedes Elizalde suggested adding caseload language.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, proposed that the TCPB review the recommendations one by one. He reviewed the first recommendation.

Liam Frost, Metro, suggested adding language around mapping wages.

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The TCPB approved “map current wage and benefit conditions and include previous and existing work.”

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reviewed the second recommendation.

Yvette Hernandez suggested adding contract language to the housing-worker wages framework.

Nicole Larson asked if the goal language would also need to be modified with the recommendations.

*Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, clarified that the TCPB is working backward to create the goal from the recommendations.*

Patricia Rojas, Metro, suggested adding evaluate contracting practices for equitable wages.

The TCPB approved “draft a housing-worker wage framework that provides guidance to counties and SHS-funded agencies and providers and includes contracting evaluation and alignment.”

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reviewed the third recommendation.

Zoi Coppiano suggested adding culturally responsive organizations.

*Sahaan McKelvey shared his hesitation around the inclusion of culturally responsive organizations as it could potentially move funding away from culturally specific organizations.*

*Zoi Coppiano stated that her organization hires staff to match the communities served.*

*Co-chair Eboni Brown suggested adding culturally specific programming in place of culturally responsive.*

*Sahaan McKelvey responded that a non-culturally specific organization hiring someone who represents the community served is still moving funding away from culturally specific organizations.*

*Cristina Palacios agreed with Sahaan and emphasized the need to be protective of culturally specific organizations to avoid appropriation and to remain equitable.*

Jes Larson, Washington County, stated that broad language allows for greater exploration regarding differential pay.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington asked for clarification on what the worst-case scenario would be with adding culturally responsive.

*Sahaan McKelvey replied that equating culturally responsive with culturally specific organizations can lead to potential loopholes in the types of organizations that would receive funding.*

*Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington suggested documenting this concern for prevention but noted that perfection should not get in the way of moving work forward.*

Mercedes Elizalde suggested leaving the language as it was since Zoi’s point would be covered under bilingual employees.

Zoi Coppiano clarified that she was not trying to divert resources from culturally specific organizations and only advocating for bilingual employees.

The TCPB approved “consider ways to allow for differential pay for lived experience, bilingual employees, and culturally specific organizations.”

The TCPB approved “consider ways to address challenges faced by organizations with multiple funding streams.”

The TCPB approved “assess reasonable scale of outcomes and caseload as it relates to compensation.”

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reshared the goal language options.

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A few members expressed a preference for option 1. Most members expressed a preference for option 2.

Mercedes Elizalde shared proposed language regarding county contracting for Goal A.

Sahaan McKelvey, Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington, and Mercedes Elizalde made clarifying edits to the language.

Cristina Palacios suggested adding in a timely manner.

*Mercedes Elizalde replied she thought it was okay if that stayed within the recommendations and not the goal.*

Sahaan McKelvey shared he didn't object to Goal A, but asked if any specific contractual language should be included.

*Patricia Rojas, Metro, replied that is captured in the recommendations.*

The TCPB approved Goal A "County contracts for SHS-funded agencies and providers will establish standards throughout the region to achieve livable wages for direct service staff."

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West shared Goal B.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington asked what would happen if an agency did work outside of SHS.

*Jes Larson, Washington County, shared that the counties are asking this question to firms at an organizational level, and not just the portion funded with SHS.*

*Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington asked if this information is used as a decision-making tool.*

*Jes Larson, Washington County, said not yet.*

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington stated that the risk management team would ask how this can be enforced and suggested taking out SHS language.

Co-chair Eboni Brown asked if SHS language would need to be included due to the TCPB's scope.

Monta Knudson shared that from a pay equity standpoint, only raising the lowest wages could cause pay compression and that executives are normally paid through their administrative rate.

Mercedes Elizalde asked if it's the highest and lowest paid staff throughout the organization or just the SHS-funded program.

Liam Frost, Metro, shared that the language was pulled from the Metro work plan and is required.

Nicole Larson asked if direct service staff language should be added.

*Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington said that should be a question for Metro's Legal Team.*

Liam Frost, Metro, replied that is true, but the TCPB can also add any language it would like to the goal. He added that the reason why this language was pulled out of the work plan was that the TCPB emphasized the importance of pay equity.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reflected that the language is not policy, and asked if the TCPB is okay with moving forward with Goal B.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington shared that the goal language will go to the SHS Oversight Committee and advocated for having a broad goal since the recommendations are detailed.

Nicole Larson asked if the Option 1 language could replace Goal B.

*Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reflected that Goal B was identified as a priority from the TCPB.*

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Liam Frost and Patricia Rojas, Metro, shared that Goal B language is in the work plan as a metric, not a requirement.

Cristina Palacios suggested changing Goal B language to close the pay gap between the lowest and highest-paid staff.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, noted that the TCPB meeting was at time, and asked if the group was okay with Goal B in concept.

The TCPB approved the concept of Goal B.

## Proposed Meeting Calendar

The TCPB did not address this agenda item.

## Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Update

The TCPB did not address this agenda item.

## Closing and next steps

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, noted that they were unable to go over the meeting cadence survey results and asked the TCPB to think about the pros and cons of having meetings monthly or bimonthly.

Co-chair Matt Chapman noted that today the TCPB didn't accomplish its primary objective and it can be difficult to accomplish meeting objectives in two hours. He advocated for bi-monthly three-hour meetings.

*Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington asked what Co-chair Matt Chapman meant.*

*Co-chair Matt Chapman clarified that he meant that the TCPB didn't complete the agenda. He noted that it's been a great conversation but would like to complete agendas in the future.*

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reflected that the TCPB must keep meeting monthly until July, but members should continue to think about meeting cadence and length for future discussion.

## Decisions

The TCPB approved the following goals and recommendations, with Goal B being approved in concept. The language for Goal B will be amended and redistributed for final approval.

### Employee Recruitment and Retention Goals

- Goal A: County contracts for SHS-funded agencies and providers will establish standards throughout the region to achieve livable wages for direct service staff.
- *Goal B [in concept, to be amended]: Distribution of pay from lowest to highest paid staff within SHS-funded agencies and providers is equitable throughout the region.*

### Employee Recruitment and Retention Recommendations

- Map current wage and benefit conditions and include previous and existing work.
- Draft a housing-worker wage framework that provides guidance to Counties and SHS-funded agencies and providers and includes contracting evaluation and alignment.
- Consider ways to allow for differential pay for lived experience, bilingual employees, and culturally specific organizations.
- Consider ways to address challenges faced by organizations with multiple funding streams.

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- Assess reasonable scale of outcomes and caseload as it relates to compensation.

The next steps include:

- May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, 4-6 pm.
- Metro staff to provide updated Goal B language.

### Adjourn

Adjourned at 6:00 pm.