

Tri-County Planning Body Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Tri-County Planning Body Meeting
Date: Wednesday, July 12th, 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 receive the 2022 Supportive Housing Services Annual Report presentation and provide feedback on the Regional Plan template categories presented by Metro.

Member attendees

Co-chair Matt Chapman (he/him), Co-chair Eboni Brown (she/her), 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), Cristina Palacios (she/her), Steve Rudman (he/him), Mindy Stadtlander (she/her)

Absent members

Sahaan McKelvey (he/him)

Elected delegates

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

County staff representatives

Clackamas County – Vahid Brown (he/him), Washington County – Jes Larson (she/her), Multnomah County – Breanna Flores (she/her)

Metro

Abby Ahern (she/her), Giovanni Bautista (he/him), Melia Deters (she/her), Valeria McWilliams (she/her), Patricia Rojas (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, facilitated introductions between TCPB members, and reviewed the agenda.

The TCPB approved the June Meeting Summary.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Staff Updates

Patricia Rojas, Metro, shared that Metro Council approved the addition of 22 full-time employees (FTE) for the Metro Housing Department. Included are staff who will work to implement a technical assistance and capacity support team for Metro's jurisdictional partners.

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Valeria McWilliams, Metro, reminded the TCPB that moving forward, each monthly meeting will be focused on one of the regional goals. She shared brief updates on each regional goal and stated that Metro is reviewing six TCPB member applications. She added that no further comments were received on the Racial Equity Lens and the latest version is in the meeting packet.

Steve Rudman asked when the TCPB would receive the Quarter 4 Regional Long-term Rent Assistance (RLRA) voucher numbers.

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, replied August 15, 2023.

2022 Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Annual Report Presentation

Presentation

Co-chair Eboni Brown recognized the SHS Oversight Committee for its work to complete the Annual Report.

Susan Emmons, SHS Oversight Committee, Co-chair, presented an overview of the SHS Oversight Committee process, values, and role.

Nui Bezaire, Metro, presented an overview of the SHS Oversight Committee annual review process and shared performance goals and results. She reported that highlights include building local and regional infrastructure, expanding regional coordination and partnerships, and innovating new approaches to programming. She shared that challenges included the time it takes to build out new systems, staff hiring and retention, and data misalignment.

Susan Emmons, SHS Oversight Committee, Co-chair, shared the five recommendations from the Annual Report, including a regional communication strategy, financial reporting expectations, workforce, cross-sector coordination, and data reporting and evaluation alignment. She highlighted that some of these recommendations overlap with the TCPB.

Q&A

Mercedes Elizalde asked if Nui and Susan could expand upon what types of data evaluations they are looking for.

Nui Bezaire, Metro, responded that the type of evaluation is to be determined in collaboration with the jurisdictions.

Monta Knudson asked if the communication strategy would include the history and systemic challenges that created the housing crisis.

Susan Emmons, SHS Oversight Committee, Co-chair, replied that there has been a loss of housing since at least 1978. She acknowledged previous efforts to communicate this problem and shared that there could be a narrative about this timeline as the housing crisis didn't occur overnight.

Monta Knudson added that lack of access to mental health services is another component of the problem.

Mercedes Elizalde stated that there is a misconception that the houseless community is static and suggested adding the daily population fluctuation to the communication strategy. She noted that businesses and the for-profit housing sector also have a role to play in solving the housing crisis.

Co-chair Matt Chapman agreed with emphasizing the in and outflow of those who experience homelessness. He noted that dramatic rent increases are creating a larger inflow and that certain transitions, such as someone leaving foster care or incarceration add to the houseless population. He stated that this is a complex issue to communicate since there is a diversity of causes.

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Cristina Palacios highlighted that homelessness looks different in immigration and other communities, such as multiple families living under one roof, and that should be included in the communications plan.

Abby Ahern, Metro, reflected that the inflow and outflow of the houseless population is an important point and noted that each jurisdiction is working with Built for Zero.

Co-chair Eboni Brown noted that Washington County made rapid funds available for outreach providers and her organization has been able to prevent homelessness by providing clients rent for multiple months or buying out their leases.

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington shared her appreciation to Metro Council, staff, and the SHS Oversight Committee for their work. She asked if stabilization reserves are being tracked and how racial justice is defined to measure success.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, confirmed that stabilization reserves are being monitored. She responded that racial justice is a goal to always work towards and noted that Section 5.3 of the Work Plan states that goals are driven by racial equity and will hopefully advance racial justice.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, noted that a future conversation could be dedicated to defining the notion of justice in implementing and designing the TCPB Regional Plan.

Susan Emmons, SHS Oversight Committee, Co-chair, stated the SHS Oversight Committee's notion of racial justice is that there is a place for everyone to live. She reflected that committee members need to believe in that goal to achieve it. She added that equitable wages and staff treatment are also steps towards justice.

Co-chair Eboni Brown agreed that it is possible and noted that this year her organization was able to provide a 60K salary for all entry-level staff and increased wages for middle management. She noted that as a collective, people need to demand more.

Co-chair Matt Chapman reflected that equity is a status and justice is a journey. He added that the energy the TCPB had during the equity lens exercise was inspiring and focusing.

Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal thanked Washington County Commissioner Kathryn Harrington for raising the question as it is often not defined. She added that justice is systems change and that to equitably change wages is a form of justice. She commended the SHS Oversight Committee for their Annual Report. She noted that the TCPB discusses data as an integrated strategy that underlines all work and asked for the data analysis and inventory work that's underway to be an agenda item.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, responded that will be discussed in August.

Zoi Coppiano reflected on her appreciation for discussing racial equity and for making racial justice a goal.

Nicole Larson asked if there are SHS funds to hire mental health providers and to utilize existing providers for cross-sector work.

Jes Larson, Washington County, deferred to the SHS Oversight Committee's findings and added that it is a combination of approaches. She noted that one staff person bridges health and housing to support housing planning, not for navigating the medical system.

Vahid Brown, Clackamas County, responded that Clackamas County also has a mixed approach with an overlapping position for health and housing programming and a few positions in the health center division.

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Co-chair Eboni Brown added that Washington County allows providers to add mental health support as part of their responses to County requests for proposals.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, noted that each county implements investments and that there are significant gaps in the behavioral health system that housing cannot fix.

Susan Emmons, SHS Oversight Committee, co-chair, stated that the SHS measure was never meant to fix the mental health system. She noted that permanent supportive housing (PSH) and SHS allow those who have a background in mental health and know how to access mental health services to receive support.

Steve Rudman shared his excitement about the communication strategy recommendation and that historical context is important. He suggested discussing what behavioral health systems integration and alignment look like.

Mindy Stadlander added that the behavioral health system has the same workforce issue and noted that while the 1115 Medicaid Waiver is exciting, there is no need to wait until the waiver is released to begin cross-sector alignment.

Jes Larson, Washington County, echoed Mindy's comment and noted that the Heartwood Commons has a behavioral health care provider funded by SHS. She added that Health Share of Oregon is working to identify how Medicaid resources can leverage PSH funding.

Susan Emmons, SHS Oversight Committee, co-chair, closed the discussion with a Martin Luther King, Jr quote: "Faith is taking the first step, even if you can't see the whole staircase."

Regional Plan Template Categories

Co-chair Matt Chapman reflected that the TCPB has co-created six areas of work and the next step is to develop the Regional Plan. He noted that today the TCPB will look at how the Regional Plan will be structured.

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, shared the Regional Plan chapter structure and asked for feedback.

Mercedes Elizalde recommended identifying who the responsible parties are for implementation.

Co-chair Matt Chapman suggested including measures of success.

Nicole Larson proposed adding pre-and-post-interventions to track metrics.

Yvette Hernandez suggested adding challenges to see where the TCPB was and wasn't successful for current and future work.

Valeria McWilliams, Metro, stated that TCPB will be monitoring progress and will have opportunities to provide amendments.

Co-chair Matt Chapman proposed adding a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis.

Closing and Next Steps

Co-chair Eboni Brown provided closing remarks and thanked everyone for meeting.

The next steps include:

- August 9th, 4-6 pm.
- TCPB to consider discussing and defining racial justice in implementing and designing the TCPB Regional Plan.

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- TCPB to receive information and discuss data analysis and inventory.
- TCPB to consider discussing what behavioral health systems integration and alignment looks like.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 5:40 pm.