

Meeting Summary

Meeting: Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee Meeting
Date: Wednesday, May 10, 2023
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.
Place: Virtual meeting (Zoom)
Purpose: Committee discussion and finalization of their findings and recommendations for the Affordable Housing Bond

Attendees

Kira Cador (she/her), Scott Greenfield (he/him), Co-chair Jenny Lee (she/her), Mara Romero (she/her), Co-chair Steve Rudman (he/him), Karen Shawcross (she/her), Nicole Stingh (she/her), Juan Ugarte Ahumada (he/him)

Absent Members

Brandon Culbertson (he/him), Ann Leenstra (she/her), Willie Poinsette (she/her), Andrea Sanchez (she/her), Trinh Tran (he/him)

Metro Councilor

Mary Nolan (they/them)

Metro staff

Melissa Arnold (she/her), Ash Elverfeld (they/she), Emily Lieb (she/her), Rachael Lembo (she/her), Alison Wicks (she/her), Patricia Rojas (she/her), Jimmy Oporta (he/him)

Facilitator

Ben Duncan (he/him)

Note: The meeting was recorded via Zoom; therefore, details will be focused on the discussions, with less detail regarding the presentations. Presentation slides are included in the archived meeting packet.

Welcome and introductions

Co-chairs Jenny Lee and Steve Rudman welcomed the Committee to the meeting.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, facilitated introductions between Committee Members and reviewed the agenda.

The Committee approved the April 19 Meeting Summary.

Nicole Stingh, Co-chair Jenny Lee, and Kira Cador shared potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Committee discussion: Committee findings and recommendations to Metro Council

Melissa Arnold, Metro, reflected on discussions to date and the process of the recommendation letter development. She noted that the transmittal letter is long, but that it reflects the length of the Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee discussions. She organized the recommendations into three thematic sections: convene stakeholders to regionalize best practices, focus on systemic integration, and planning and analysis for the future.

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Kira Cador stated that the letter was well done, easy to follow, and included challenges and successes.

Mara Romero appreciated how the length of the Letter was framed. She noted that the length didn't hinder her reading and that the sections cover both tenant and developer perspectives.

Nicole Stingham stated that the Letter was well organized and will follow up offline on minor edits. She asked if the projection of achieving 120% of goals includes the new average cost escalations.

Emily Lieb, Metro, confirmed that the projection is a conservative forecast that accounts for the impacts of cost escalation and project delays.

Karen Shawcross shared that the letter accurately captured the Committee's discussions.

Scott Greenfield asked for a clearer definition of proactive asset management.

Kira Cador replied that asset management is Andrea Sanchez's expertise and added that proactive asset management accounts for the rising cost of project performance.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, asked Scott Greenfield if he wanted additional language in the letter for more clarity.

Scott Greenfield reflected that now he understands proactive management is about awareness of cost trends and anticipating new gaps proactively and is open to whether that detailed language needs to be included or not.

Karen Shawcross suggested placing asset management under the convening partners section.

Co-chair Steve Rudman stated that it's important for Andrea Sanchez to weigh in on asset management. He stated that asset management should be clarified to include roles, responsibilities, and goals. He also noted that the Bond should be integrated with Regional Long-term Rental Assistance (RLRA) and will send language to Metro for inclusion.

Mara Romero stated that asset management should be discussed in the context of the long-term commitment the Bond has made regarding physical units built and the need for ongoing supportive services.

Melissa Arnold, Metro, stated that she will clarify and frame the roles of asset management and raise the success of building units.

Kira Cador reflected that as an affordable housing developer/owner for 15 years, the burden of asset management is placed on the developer/owner, and if they're committed to doing so, they will continue to invest in the project to prevent degradation and harm to residents.

Mara Romero reflected that some people will never think the Bond is good and that the Committee shouldn't consider that audience. She suggested thinking of social workers as an audience and the Bond's work is hope and good news.

Co-chair Steve Rudman stated that it's important to include that the Bond has produced 4,000 units which are public assets that will last for over 100 years and reflected on lessons learned and how the state of homelessness in Oregon has gotten better over the life of the Bond. He detailed that the Committee is clear about who needs to be housed and that housing operating costs, and service needs have the possibility to bolster operations. He also reflected on the importance of rental

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assistance, such as Medicaid, as a component of success. He noted that the investments made are going well and it's important to ensure it continues to go well and function systemically as a resource.

Melissa Arnold replied that she will expand upon this in the systemic alignment section.

Karen Shawcross suggested making Co-chair Steve Rudman's comments the conclusion to the Letter as it shares how the Bond has allowed development and how the Committee would like to continue the Bond.

Co-chair Jenny Lee stated that she was thinking of the media's tone and headlines from the Letter. She suggested adding a graphic to showcase where the Bond is in the process.

Juan Ugarte Ahumada reflected that he doesn't have anything to add at this point that hasn't been shared.

Metro Councilor Mary Nolan shared that they learned a lot from listening to this conversation and reflected that the Letter should include a message of successes while being mindful of challenges such as asset management, interest rates, and land availability.

Mara Romero stated that the Bond has built a patchwork of housing and the next step is to create linkages and move forward.

Karen Shawcross circled back to Co-chair Jenny Lee's comment regarding media and reflected that people will calculate the costs per person and unit. She stated that the Committee should be ready to talk about costs and the capacity built for nonprofit partners, affordable housing developers, and COBID workers.

Emily Lieb, Metro, replied that Metro has some informational materials they can share to help Committee members answer questions. She stated that the large costs were due to the complex financing structure of multiple funding sources.

Nicole Stingh suggested leading the next Annual Report with a tenant story to humanize the work. She added that the Bond units are providing a high percentage of permanent supportive housing (PSH) despite that not being a goal. She recommended including promising practices such as homeownership development under convening stakeholders.

Kira Cador suggested showing what units look like in the report.

Mara Romero noted that the accessibility of units is awesome and suggested pushing back on the fear-sells mindset of the media by highlighting unit amenities.

Melissa Arnold, Metro, reflected that there is a balance between respecting tenants' privacy and using their stories and will add the PSH units into the report if they are not in it already.

Co-chair Steve Rudman noted that the geographic distribution of units is amazing.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, reminded the Committee they have one week to give any additional edits to the Report.

Emily Lieb, Metro, acknowledged that the Annual Report is long as it contains all information requested throughout the year. She welcomed feedback on structure and content.

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Mara Romero reflected that her approach was to use the table of contents and review the sections where her expertise lies and stated that the report is a mark in time.

Kira Cador asked how the Annual Report is primarily used and accessed.

Emily Lieb, Metro, replied that it is posted online for public access, is delivered to Metro Council with the Letter, and is shared with jurisdictional partners. She noted that key data and graphics are pulled out and placed into the Story Report, a communications tool. She added that Metro is considering doing a road show and giving briefings on key findings.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West asked if there is a proactive media approach.

Emily Lieb, Metro, replied that a small communications team is moving several priorities and that the communications process is later.

Kira Cador stated that the table of contents is laid out well and asked if the Letter accompanies the Annual Report.

Emily Lieb, Metro, replied that the Letter is posted at the beginning of the Annual Report and as a stand-alone document.

Mara Romero shared that she had previously accessed reports from the website.

Karen Shawcross stated that she likes the Story Report and asked if there could be some addition of photographs of complete projects to the Annual Report to break up the text.

Emily Lieb, Metro, replied that when the Annual Report is presented to the council, there will be a slide deck with photos that can be shared with the Committee.

Melissa Arnold, Metro, asked if the Committee is comfortable placing their name on the Letter knowing that Metro will make edits that reflect the discussion and there will be a final review.

Mara Romero asked if there are any specific concerns.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West reflected that there are no large specific concerns and there are areas of specific follow-up for Metro, including connecting with Andrea Sanchez.

Kira Cador stated that the local affordable housing tools and incentives could be located under operating sufficient use of funds or under the looking ahead section.

The Committee stated they are comfortable placing their names on the Letter.

Alison Wicks, Metro, reminded the Committee to send any written comments by May 17th.

Staff presentation: Quarterly Report

Jimmy Oporta, Metro, stated that the Quarterly Report is available online and asked for any questions.

Mara Romero asked if the Quarterly Reports are more frequently updated than the Annual Report and noted that the numbers look good.

Jimmy Oporta, Metro, replied that the Quarterly Report has updated numbers that exceed the numbers in the Annual Report. He noted that since January there have been 15 project approval requests.

Emily Lieb, Metro, added that for documentation and transparency, all project approval documents are turned over in a month.

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Karen Shawcross shared her appreciation for Jimmy Oporta's work.

Kira Cadour asked for clarification on what expended versus dispersed expenses are.

Racheal Lembo, Metro, clarified that expenses are expended if the jurisdiction has spent the funds and are dispersed if the funds have been given to the jurisdiction, but they haven't spent it yet.

Mara Romero asked if there is a point where funds are committed but could not go through until they are dispersed.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, replied yes if a project concept was committed.

Rachael Lembo, Metro, added that cost impacts are occurring to projects, and so far, projects have been able to modify and adapt to cost changes.

Staff updates and next steps

Alison Wicks, Metro, shared that the Annual Report and Letter will be shared with Metro Council on June 13th and that Metro is coordinating the next meeting dates and topics for late summer or early fall. She asked for Committee Member suggestions for future meeting topics.

Karen Shawcross suggested convening stakeholders on best and promising practices on lease-ups, marketing, resident services, COBID workers, and internships.

Scott Greenfield suggested economic sustainability for project reserves such as long-term voucher programs and maintaining good property conditions.

Co-chair Steve Rudman stated that Karen Shawcross' idea of convening is important and suggested that convening cover three areas: asset management, supportive housing services, and workforce.

Nicole Stingh agreed with Co-chair Steve Rudman and noted that those three areas follow the Letter's main sections of analysis and planning.

Emily Lieb, Metro stated that the list of topics is great, and staff will bring updates as well. She added that Metro will fold the communications aspect from prior discussions into the list and share details by email before the next meeting. She shared that there will be 12 new Metro staff members, with 1 staff position focused on supporting data needs. She added that there will be staff integration between Supportive Housing Services and the Bond, and the audit team is conducting an audit and will look at the multijurisdictional structure.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, provided closing remarks.

Next steps include:

- Committee members are to provide any additional edits to the Letter and Annual Report to Metro by May 17th.
- Metro to share the Story Report and talking point materials regarding unit costs.
- Metro to follow up with Andrea Sanchez.
- Letter and Annual Report to be shared with Metro Council on June 13th.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.