



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee
Date/time: Monday, December 5, 2022, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Place: Zoom (Virtual)
Purpose: Metro tax collection and disbursement update; annual report presentations from Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties.

Member attendees

Co-chair Susan Emmons (she/her), Dan Fowler (he/him), Armando Jimenez (he/him), Jenny Lee (she/her), Seth Lyon (he/him), Carter MacNichol (he/him), Felicita Montebanco (she/her), Jeremiah Rigsby (he/him), Co-chair Kathy Wai (she/her)

Absent members

Roserria Roberts (she/her), Dr. Mandrill Taylor (he/him)

Elected delegates

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

Absent elected delegates

City of Portland Commissioner Dan Ryan

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Nui Bezaire (she/her), Ash Elverfeld (they/she), Breanna Hudson (she/her), Rachael Lembo (she/her), Patricia Rojas (she/her)

Facilitator

Ben Duncan (he/him), Kearns & West

Details for this meeting can also be found in the final meeting record due to the reliance on slide decks that are included in the record. Minutes may include portions of the slide deck material but focus primarily on discussion and questions not found in the slide deck. A summary of County and Metro staff responses to member questions are italicized.

Welcome and introductions

Co-chair Susan Emmons welcomed the committee to the meeting and thanked co-chair Kathy Wai for her service as a co-chair, noting that she will be shifting to a member role and no longer serving as co-chair after this meeting.

Ben Duncan, Facilitator from Kearns and West, facilitated a round of introductions of staff and committee members. He also provided details on how the Zoom meeting works and the day's agenda.

Co-chair Emmons asked for approval of the October and November minutes. Dan Fowler moved to approve. Armando Jimenez seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Conflict of interest declaration

Carter MacNichol is a board member at Transition Projects, they receive Supportive Housing Services (SHS) funding from JOHS.

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Jenny Lee works for the Coalition of Communities of Color and they have a contract with Clackamas County.

Dan Fowler is Chair of the Homeless Solutions Coalition of Clackamas County and they do not receive SHS funding but may in the future.

Public Comment

Cole Merkel (he/him/his), Co-Director at HereTogether, made a public comment in relation to the public comment he provided that was included in the meeting packet. The comment was regarding spend down plans from the counties and reporting templates.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, shared that annual spend down plans are coming.

Carter requested that the committee revisit the points in Cole's comment.

Metro tax collections update

Rachael Lembo, Finance Manager of Planning, Development, and Research and Housing Department, Metro joined the meeting to provide updates. She shared that Metro Council recently moved to create a housing department. The department was previously nested within the Planning, Development and Research department.

In her tax collection update, she presented her report that was also included in the packet.

She said that she hoped to revisit the cost of tax collection in January.

No questions were asked of Rachael.

Presentation: Metro framing for annual representations

Patricia introduced the members to this portion of the agenda.

Nui Bezaire highlighted that the first year was about building foundational structures in a lot of ways. IGAs were only signed in January 2022 and that set expectations for reporting. Because of that timing, each county's report formatting was very different through the fiscal year.

Patricia said that today they would be hearing about the areas that the committee wanted the counties to focus on in their presentations. There will also be time for questions after each county presentation.

Presentation and discussion: Washington County annual report

Jes Larson, SHS Program Manager, and Jessi Adams, Capacity Program Supervisor, Washington County, used a slide deck to provide an overview of their first year.

Questions and answers between committee members and Washington County staff follow.

Felicita Monteblando asked about page 14 on first page of financial report in regards to systems and grantmaking, sees \$4,200,000 budgeted but only \$200,000 went out. How is the other \$4 million going to be spent?

They still need to get the money out. They prioritized culturally specific organizations in getting initial funds out. They're actually having a hard time utilizing the capacity building grant. Working on building out a more substantive technical assistance program. She said they've delayed this and hope it comes in new calendar year.

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Armando also focused in on partner capacity building and long-term sustainability- of the parts of the partner matrix that was presented, what is represented as newly built capacity as part of this funding and how can we better represent that in reports in the future- it's important to see the expansion.

Some organizations have never had a contract with a public agency before and so this is a whole new process for them. In certain instances they didn't even have a bookkeeper on staff and so the first step may have been starting with helping them get a bookkeeper. About half of the organizations were experienced with government contracting but are also struggling with capacity building because of the influx of new funding in recent times. The kind of capacity is different between organizations listed, they all have individual needs.

Dan asked what it looks like to imbed someone in the health care system? And how do you access eviction information ahead of the eviction?

The Health and Human Services Department system has many programs and housing system experts have been placed within health care programs so they're working alongside folks who are used to getting folks into health services programs but not familiar with getting housing. Those staff collaborate.

They don't have access to a lot of data related to eviction or who leave just before eviction. Similar to folks doubled up and not necessarily having that number. No point at which we can access that data. Evictions recorded in court.

Carter said Washington County talked about sustainability as a limitation in the program due to money. In the future, he'd like to understand those financial limitations. Especially given the additional money received than was anticipated. Describe how there are constraints when there's so much money available.

In regards to the reserves of \$8 million, he is curious of the basis of the need for reserves given the strength of tax collection, what are you reserving those funds for?

Part of the IGA required that they ensure that there is a stability reserve because revenue sources are volatile. They need to be ready for any significant changes in the market. It's one time and managed by the regional body.

Program reserves allowed up to 5% for each county. Washington County had a flood in a shelter facility and was about \$400k in damages. They needed to get everyone out and into a hotel. That's the purpose of the two reserve accounts.

Jeremiah Rigsby referenced slide 15 talking about data quality assistance for partners, what's that going to feel like and what's the response from partners?

The work of collecting data is a challenge because of staff capacity typically. For example, after a long day of working with clients on the ground, navigating systems and getting folks housed, the data entry at the end of the day often gets pushed aside. The County is looking at a new approach to support the organizations to improve data quality that focuses on providing funding so they have a data focused position.

Jenny Lee was excited to see expansion and innovation in their presentation. She asked for more detail on emergency shelters and culturally responsive approaches, what are the barriers and how quickly can people access the shelters?

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They aren't at a place of population specific shelters yet and still have co-ed shelters. The expansion will better serve the community in the future. They're currently managing this through a high level of collaboration. With case conferencing, the housing navigators work together to better serve folks who may have behavior, mental or physical health challenges that make certain shelter setups challenging and so they will move people to different locations as needed to better serve them.

Dr. Mandrill Taylor asked what barriers they're anticipating with health system integration?

Jes said that the opportunities are endless, but they're two siloed systems. They have a staff member in recuperative care support who would help for example move someone from the emergency room to a shelter and also get assistance to attend to their medical needs while in shelter. The challenge is that they're both bureaucratic systems.

Co-chair Kathy Wai saw that SHS placement goals in year one was originally 500 and midway through it got dropped down to 300 and then saw that they were able to place 305. What does that mean in terms of year 2? How many cases are each case manager expected to carry?

They're adding another 500 housing placements in year 2 and will bring them to 805 placements hopefully. There are 300 households to go in year 2. Partners are having a hard time hiring and filling out their additional capacity. They need to keep hiring case managers, training and getting them on the ground. With supportive housing and rapid rehousing case managers, there is a 20:1 case management ratio. Those people getting enrolled are currently homeless, it will be easier to manage when they move into retention phase.

Co-chair Emmons commends them on the bridge shelter programs. She's excited about Aloha Inn and as they anticipate additional units, how do you find people who are right for that building, do you pre-approve them?

Jessi Adams said it will be a blended referral system, they have three service providers attached to the project and one is culturally specific. The service providers will send 27 people and the rest are filled through Coordinated Entry access.

Susan shared that Jes was a housing case manager in 2007 and was responsible for screening and placing 30 chronically homeless people into The Morrison. There are people in The Morrison, who were homeless for years and many are still living there. One person she worked close with has been there for 16 years and she is doing well. Susan saw her at Fred Meyer recently and heard her consulting with someone else at the grocery store and giving them information about the new funding influx into the system. In Jes, to have a program manager who knows how to do the work on the ground is such a benefit to the system.

Jes closed out by saying that supportive housing ends homelessness and thanked the committee.

Break

Presentation and discussion: Multnomah County annual report

Yesenia Delgado (she/her/ella), SHS Program Manager, Joint Office of Homeless Services joined the meeting to present on behalf of Multnomah County.

Joshua Bates (he/him/his) was also introduced as the Interim Direct of the Joint Office of Homeless Services.

Questions and answers between committee members and Joint Office of Homeless Services staff follow.

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Armando said they had a commendable report, that it was very easy to process with great readability. The data tables and pie charts on page 19, shows 21% of race ethnicity not reported- what were some issues or barriers identified that created that and what are plans to improve some of that collection in future years?

The main issue is capacity and Jes talked a bit about that for Washington County earlier. Funds went out quickly to organizations, but some data systems weren't in place yet and that takes time. This fiscal year they are launching technical assistance support for data capacity building so that organizations get the support they need around data collection.

Dan asked that when the City of Portland says they're injecting \$27 million more into housing services, does that money get coordinated through you or is that independent by them?

Josh said that they coordinate with the City of Portland on a number of initiatives. If it's housing investments, often that's through Portland Housing Bureau. Portland Housing Bureau is a partner of the Joint Office who are within the structure of Multnomah County. Housing investments are typically facilitated through Portland Housing Bureau.

Carter said he's not clear on the carryover funds that they have. He doesn't think the numbers he heard in the presentation match what he sees in the report. In the future he suggested it would be helpful to include total capacity of units and the unmet need. In local implementation plan and annual report there's a discussion of alternative shelter projects- is the JOHS considering using excess funds that came in last year to support Safe Rest Villages or sanctioned camping?

Ben said there would be follow-up on carryover numbers and capacity versus need.

Commissioner Jayapal said that there is an active discussion at the board around how to use underspent and carryover funds. A portion of that allocation may be addressed at December 15th board meeting.

Jeremiah thanked the staff and said his question had been answered.

Jenny asked about the success around legal services and eviction prevention?

They're successful in supporting households avoid evictions. They partnered with an organization that when someone got an eviction notice, they would go and knock on doors to speak with residents. Caseworkers were speaking their languages and providing information on getting legal assistance when they go to court.

Dr. Taylor thanked them for the report. Under the behavioral health focus and supportive housing section, you mentioned New Narrative- is that mental health services in addition to addiction/recovery services?

Yesenia needs to follow-up on the addiction services component. It's a partnership with behavioral health of Multnomah County.

Co-chair Wai said that for the one-time funding for capacity building for the culturally specific organizations that they're using for organizational infrastructure, wages, etc. Will you continue capturing their feedback and data from them about how those funds were specifically used?

They asked for narrative feedback in the first year. Some funds weren't able to be spent down due to constraints Jes talked about as well. This fiscal year they launched a culturally specific organization technical assistance survey asking what they need and how the JOHS can be more helpful.

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Nui asked a question on behalf of Felicita who wasn't able to be present. Related to capacity building funds, in the report you noted eligible activities that they could use funds for. What was the criteria you used to base those eligible expenses on?

In terms of who those funds were open to, it was anyone they were working with. In terms of how they went around framework for spending, it was based on feedback that they had been hearing about for years by providers and then responding with how they can implement that at this time.

Co-chair Emmons talked about Emmons Place and that it reflects the challenge of getting anything done. It was supposed to open in October, organizations lined up pre-approved people, then it was pushed to November and now out to January. There's one piece of equipment needed that they're waiting on and until then it's uninhabitable. That leaves folks who are chronically homeless and waiting. It reflects challenges today of supply issues and personnel, etc.

Co-chair Emmons said they listed all providers they contracted with in the first year and amounts distributed. Will you renew all contracts for second year to keep them going? If they're utilizing and have capacity can you give them more funds?

Contract management team works with providers and have regular check-ins. All the providers listed will likely be renewed.

Dan asked how they know when someone is getting evicted? How can they intervene? Is there any requirement by landlords to post evictions in the public realm?

Landlords don't have to post anything publicly. They file eviction notice request with the court and the Oregon Law Center gets information on the docket, weekly. All they have from that docket are people's addresses, no phone numbers, hence the door knocking.

Commissioner Jayapal said they've been digging into this. They're looking to see if policy can be created so they know earlier when people are getting evicted.

Break

Presentation and discussion: Clackamas County annual report

Vahid Brown (he/him/his), Housing Services Program Manager, Clackamas County, joined the group and used a slide deck to present.

Questions and answers between committee members and Clackamas County staff follow.

Armando asked if they could say more about the changes to encourage smaller organizations to respond and apply to work with the County?

One of the big pieces that opens up opportunities for smaller and emerging agencies is the RFPQ process which allows them to shorten the requirements to apply to work with the County to a two-page application.

Dan asked if they intend on working with Providence and their BOB Team?

Vahid said yes, they will continue to receive funding to connect folks to housing. Eventually that program will have case workers who can directly connect folks to housing rather than telling them to go talk to someone else in a different system to get access to housing.

Carter loved the notion Vahid made about not placing people on a waiting list but placing a set of keys in their hands. Carter would like to understand how they're going to spend unanticipated and

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underspent funds at some point. He sees that they had a lot of success and spent little of their budget and for Vahid to speak to that?

There are a lot of different parts to the answer. First, with housing navigation and placement outcomes for year one, they started with a leg up with COVID response hotel transitional program. There were a large number of people placed in PSH who had been in the hotel program, so that was an advantage. That's different than starting with folks coming from the streets with challenges to connecting with them on location or phone, etc.

Additionally, the backbone of the housing programs are the RLRA vouchers- the way we're staffed and balancing investments, 30-40 households can be served each month and that creates a natural limit within the system.

In regards to shelter outcomes, they were able to leverage mid-year with COVID funding allowed them to pivot and reallocate that funding to other programs and services in the third quarter.

Jeremiah asked what the capacity is at Serenity and Haven House for folks who are justice system involved or coming out of incarceration?

The Serenity and Haven House had served 20 households. Demand fluctuates and in the last year there was less demand. They have seen some vacancies at times where Serenity and Haven weren't fully subscribed. If there weren't enough people exiting State or County jail with mental health stabilization housing needs, they would work with partners at Central City and LEAD Program. Some of those program participants could then be connected to Serenity and Haven House.

Jenny asked about participation in Built for Zero and the equity impacts. Can you share how you're using that and the disparities and participation in that initiative?

There is a by-name list of everyone in the community experiencing literal homelessness. They take 100 people off that list and work it together, matching folks from that list to navigators. There are about 1,600 on that list but it doesn't represent everyone who is homeless in their county. BIPOC are more likely to experience homelessness and are coded as more vulnerable as they are reviewing that list and doing outreach.

Co-chair Wai asked about the McKinney-Vento Act and how they imagine that collaboration happening with schools or districts in Clackamas County?

There are a couple ways that they're integrating- case conferencing is happening and folks at the schools (the McKinney-Vento liaison from that district) are involved in those weekly conferencing meetings. Secondly, a Metro Bond funded project, Marylhurst Commons, will provide affordable and PSH in Lake Oswego with a focus on housing kids going to school in Lake Oswego who are currently homeless. The project is working with the McKinney-Vento liaison at the Lake Oswego School district to coordinate referrals into Marylhurst Commons.

Co-chair Emmons said it was helpful to see the number of households who were approved and utilizing the RLRA vouchers, 122. Wants to see those in the reports from the counties going forward. On page 14, you list Fuller Road Station opening, do you have families and individuals who are pre-approved?

Typically through Coordinated Entry but different Bond funded projects may have additional requirements for how folks come through.

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Nui asked a question on behalf of Felicita. Could you talk about landlord liaison or engagement activities that Clackamas is working on?

RLRA program team now includes Landlord Liaison position and it's filled. They've developed, deployed and are refining the landlord partnership agreements that they can sign up for and includes certain incentives. RLRA allows them to offer rent, case management, and in return they are expected to reduce barriers to applications and screening requirements.

Dan asked what their street outreach program will look like?

It's people out on the street meeting folks. There's a coordinator for this work as well and there will be monthly meetings to coordinate further. The ultimate goal is that they get folks into Coordinated Access who aren't already there. One of the other things they'll do is work to keep in touch with folks already on the list but not in a shelter or housing yet. It can also be them helping someone get their birth certificate, or new boots or a tarp based on need.

Carter encouraged Metro to work to speed up procurement at the Counties and consider regionalizing.

Next steps: New members, co-chair selection, and expectations for January

Nui said that there are four member vacancies to fill. Metro staff have worked with the Jurisdictional Leadership Team to review applications and make recommendations to Metro Council. A number of folks have been identified to be recommended to Metro Council for all four vacancies.

Co-chair selection is in process. The Metro Council President will appoint the new co-chair.

Will be sending survey out asking for key questions around what you want to see in the annual report. January 9 will be based on those survey results.

There's an additional meeting on Jan. 30, wrapping up the early Jan. 9 meeting with an early draft of the report and analysis.

There will be a Jan. report of Metro business as well.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ash Elverfeld, Housing Program Assistant