



Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Oversight Committee Meeting
Date: July 22, 2024
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual meeting (Zoom)
Purpose: Metro tax collection and disbursement; Multnomah County Corrective Action Plan (CAP) update through May; presentation and discussion on Metro's permanent supportive housing work; and discussion on the regional housing funding recommendation.

Member attendees

Mitch Chilcott (he/him), Jim Bane (he/him), Co-chair Susan Emmons (she/her), Dan Fowler (he/him), Cara Hash (she/her), Felicitia Montebianco (she/her), Peter Rosenblatt (he/him), Jeremiah Rigsby (he/him), Mike Savara (he/him), Co-Chair Dr. Mandrill Taylor (he/him)

Absent members

Margarita Solis Ruiz (she/her), Carter MacNichol (he/him), Jenny Lee (she/her)

Elected delegates

Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson (she/her)

Absent elected delegates

Clackamas County Chair Tootie Smith (she/her), City of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler (he/him), Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her)

Metro

Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Breanna Hudson (she/her), Yvette Perez-Chavez (she/her), Israel Bayer (he/him), Patricia Rojas (she/her), Liam Frost (he/him)

Kearns & West Facilitator

Ben Duncan (he/him)

Welcome and Introductions

Co-chair Mandrill Taylor provided welcoming remarks, thanked Committee members for their work, and reflected on Marissa Madrigal, Metro Chief Operating Officer (COO) Recommendations. He thanked Co-chair Susan Emmons for her contributions.

Susan reflected on the Committee's values, work, and Metro's COO Recommendations. She encouraged the Committee to keep the work centered on improving the lives of those served by SHS.

Ben Duncan, Kearns & West, facilitated introductions between Committee members and reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives. Ben asked the Committee if they had any questions.

Peter Rosenblatt noted that presentation slides were missing from the packet, making meeting preparation difficult, and asked to have a conversation about meeting preparation practices. He appreciated the recommendation tracker and asked to discuss it at the next meeting and suggested including due dates to increase accountability.

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Ben replied that meeting preparation can be discussed at the end of this meeting or at the next meeting.

Metro staff replied that they will present recommendation statuses in the fall. They noted that many recommendations are system building which requires many teams, that the recommendations are ongoing bodies of work, and that staff will continue to bring updates to the Committee.

Yesenia Delgado, Metro, announced that Mike Savara has been appointed as Co-chair as Susan has stepped down and that Metro staff are still filling Committee vacancies.

Mike reflected on Susan's legacy and reflected on his experience. He welcomed Committee members to share feedback with him at any time.

Israel Bayer, Metro, shared that Metro has been providing news and media coverage with the counties including joint press releases. He highlighted that Metro has met with media editors, earned Oregon Public Broadcasting coverage, and ran a social media campaign that received 11.4 million impressions. He noted that the Committee will receive monthly communications updates.

Mike shared kudos for the communications work and highlighted that the stories from individuals receiving services on Metro's website are a powerful tool.

The Committee approved the June Meeting Summary.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

Peter Rosenblatt declared that he works at Northwest Housing Alternatives which receives SHS funding and sits on the Continuum of Care Board of Clackamas County.

Dan Fowler declared he is Chair of the Homeless Solutions Coalition of Clackamas County which receives SHS funding.

Public Comment

Shaun Ireland, HIV Service Council Member, provided public comment.

Update: Metro Tax Collection and Disbursement

Rachael Lembo, Metro, shared that tax collections were up in June compared to past years. She noted that Metro has collected about \$320 million to date, and will likely reach \$350 million in collections, slightly below the forecasted \$357 million.

Committee members had the following questions and comments:

- **Question:** Can you clarify the difference between the budget amount, \$230 million, and the forecast amount, \$357 million?
 - **Metro response:** The budget was prepared about nine months before the beginning of the Fiscal Year (FY). Halfway through the FY, Metro had additional data that indicated collections would be higher, which created the forecasted amount. Collections will be under the forecast by less than 10%, which is a normal variance for this type of income tax.
- **Question:** One public negative narrative is that counties are not spending all their money. Are the counties budgeting based on the forecast or the budget? What has Metro's communications been like with the counties and the public?

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- **Elected Delegate response:** Metro has been communicating with the counties on this, and the counties do adjust their budgets based on Metro's comments. The budget adjustments are within a workable percentage.
- **Elected Delegate question:** What is the strategy around communication with the public and working with the counties going forward?
 - **Metro response:** Metro shares updated forecasts with counties and counties adjust their budgets to reflect that. There are many lessons learned from this process and tax type, and communication between Metro and the counties is key. There is a stabilization reserve fund to help fill any gaps. For public communication, it is hard to determine when to make an announcement due to monthly changes, which are normal and there is work to do to normalize these fluctuations.
 - **Elected delegate response:** It is important to signal to the public and media that we are in a different phase of the tax. We need to have a communication plan for the public to understand this.
- **Comment:** Language is important, it may not be statistically significant, but it is significant to the community to go from \$230 million to \$330 million. It is challenging for SHS staff and elected Commissioners to know how much to spend. I do not know how to get comfortable with the fluctuation. We would all benefit from a fluctuation plan.
- **Comment:** There is public perception and reality, and the reality is that there is more money. Metro should be honest when it communicates to the public between the budget and expected revenue. Perhaps there should be a policy adoption for communications if there is a deviance of 10-15%.

Ben asked if Metro would have the final collections calculation next month to build into the agenda on fluctuations and adjustments.

Metro staff confirmed they can do that next month.

Update: Multnomah County Corrective Action Plan (CAP)

Yesenia shared that Move in Multnomah is the only item at risk and that Metro and Multnomah County are working on finalizing and closing the CAP.

Dan Field, Multnomah County, added to the previous conversation that the challenge is a public framing and communications issue. He noted that when one county appears to be underspending it reflects on everyone in the region. He then reviewed the CAP items and noted that the FY will not close until late August, when the county will then provide their last CAP update.

Committee members had the following questions and comments:

- **Comment:** The report seems more concerning than the presentation. There are six items on track, with significant funds remaining to be met. Can you speak to this accuracy for the items that are yellow and the one item in red?
 - **Multnomah County response:** For the items in yellow, significant spending occurring in June is standard and we are seeing activity that supports meeting these targets. For the item in red, we have less confidence but there are many moving parts. We believe we will be close to the target within the limited spending date. We will meet the program goals whether it is in the CAP period or beyond.

Presentation and Discussion: Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Nui Bezaire, Metro, shared that PSH is a housing solution for Population A and that PSH was always planned as an intersection between the Affordable Housing Bond (Bond) and SHS. She presented an

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overview regarding recommendations related to PSH and reviewed Metro's work plan and progress to expand PSH in the region. Phase 1 of the work includes defining PSH, setting quality standards, and system mapping.

The Committee had the following questions and comments:

- **Question:** Has there been engagement in the field to look at buildings and programs to see what is working and what is not?
 - **Metro response:** Not yet, but we intend to especially once evaluation parameters are set.
- **Question:** Does this work feed into the Regional Long-term Rent Assistance (RLRA)? The Committee is interested in receiving RLRA evaluations.
 - **Metro response:** RLRA is part of PSH, but not only PSH. We have always contemplated that there would be monitoring and evaluation as part of the work after Year 3.
- **Comment:** There is not a clear delineation and connection between PSH and RLRA. The Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative at Portland State University (PSU) received an award for evaluating PSH for communities of color. I encourage thinking through their definitions as Metro develops definitions and thinking about how systems look and feel.
 - **Metro response:** Thank you for flagging that. Metro's engagement with the counties includes leveraging definitions where they exist.
- **Comment:** It would be great to have a visual like a Venn Diagram to showcase the differences and connections between PSH and RLRA.
 - Many Committee members supported this ask.
- **Comment:** Providers often put applications for individuals in for multiple programs, such as PSH and Rapid Rehousing, and whatever is accepted first is what will be used. It would be great to have guidance on program referrals for individuals. Additionally, it is hard to keep folks housed as post-housing engagement is based on crisis calls. It would be helpful to identify service connections across project-based vouchers.

Patricia Rojas, Metro, reflected that Metro is excited about PSH work and is currently working with each county's continuum of care to provide guidance and create regional and state alignment. She noted that Metro will work with PSU and fold in their research lens.

Discussion: Regional Housing Funding Recommendation

Patricia Rojas, Metro, shared an overview of Metro Chief Operating Officer (COO), Marissa Madrigal's, [housing funding recommendation](#) to Metro Council. The recommendation included allowing SHS funds to be used for affordable housing construction and developing one independent oversight investment board.

Andy Shaw, Metro, reflected on the recommendation process and values. He noted that the recommendation supports efforts to reduce housing production costs, re-negotiate intergovernmental agreements (IGA), index personal income tax thresholds, and would refer the measure to voters in May 2025.

Holly Calhoun, Metro, stated that the recommendation is now waiting for direction from Metro Council which has upcoming work sessions. She reflected on the specific feedback heard from the SHS Oversight Committee including comments on accountability, capacity, timing of reports and information, and regional metrics.

The Committee had the following questions and comments:

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- **Question:** Does the new oversight investment board consolidate the existing bodies or is it an additional body?
 - **Metro response:** It would consolidate the existing bodies into one single body and create role clarity while continuing the work underway. The new body would be thoughtful of its charge and membership. There is currently no direction to staff from Metro Council regarding the recommendation, staff is proceeding as normal.
- **Question:** The provider community sees this negatively and that money is being taken away. If the recommendation goes forward, it would be helpful to know when and how much money will move from services to housing.
 - **Metro response:** We will be transparent and clear as we can. This will require close partnerships with the counties.
- **Question:** Can counties share what this would look like in the next two to five years so voters can be informed?
 - **Elected Delegate response:** The counties need to understand from Metro what the potential impact to dollars is for us to share impacts and outcomes.
 - **Metro response:** Metro is looking at a variety of potential scenarios and is meeting with county staff weekly to identify different ways to meet needs.
- **Comment:** A decrease in personal income tax is not in alignment with the need. I am hearing that we need to do more with less. This timing is critical to get correct.
 - **Metro response:** We are still waiting on Council to make the final decision. The reason to decrease the tax rate is in connection with the potential to extend this measure out 15-20 years, and correct details that were missing from when it was first created in 2020.
- **Comment:** Slow down, I think May of 2026 would be the correct ballot time frame. This is critical to get correct and needs more involvement from county leaders. From a communications view, the public thinks housing is a part of the measure already, so would emphasize keeping the language simple like asking if SHS funding should be expanded to include housing.
- **Comment:** Some of these recommendations were discussed directly at the Stakeholder Advisory Table, and others were extrapolated. I am excited about IGA accountability. Is expanding funding for acquisition temporary or permanent? There needs to be clear outcomes and oversight with this approach.
- **Comment:** Metro should center county discussions when moving this work forward as they are the implementers.
- **Comment:** Our greatest accountability should be to those who are sleeping outside and any new governance structure should center those folks as the highest priority.
 - **Metro response:** The needs of Population A are at the center of our values and priorities.
- **Question:** Can someone email out the specific times and locations of the Metro Council work sessions?
 - **Metro response:** Yes.

Next Steps

The Co-chairs provided closing remarks.

Ben summarized that the next steps include:

- Metro staff to present recommendation statuses in the fall.
- Metro staff to share Council work session dates and times.



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- Next meeting: August 26th, 9:30am-12:00pm.
 - Discuss Metro tax collection.
 - Discuss meeting preparation practices.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 12:00 pm.