

Metro Policy Advisory Committee

August 11, 1993 - Meeting Summary

Members present: Gussie McRobert, Chair; Richard Devlin, Rob Drake, Judith Fessler, Jim Gardner, Judie Hammerstad, Gary Hansen, Bonnie Hays, Darlene Hooley, Gretchen Kafoury, Susan McLain, Rob Mitchell, Terry Moore, Chuck Petersen, Arnold Polk, John Reeves, Jean Schreiber, Sandra Suran, Loren Wyss and Jim Zehren.

Others in attendance included: Darlene Badrick, Lisa Creel, Dan Cooper, Andy Cotugno, Rena Cusma, Barbara Duncan, Dick Engstrom, John Fregonese, Sharron Kelly, Pat Lee, Gail Ryder, Bob Martin, Karen O'Dowd, Bob Peterson, Jennifer Sims, Dan Small, Mark Turpel, Ed Washington, Marrie Waylett, Mary Weber, Betsy Williams and Dan Zinzer.

The meeting was called to order at 5:03p.m. by Chair McRobert and a quorum was declared.

I. Introductions

II. Visitors Comments on Items not on the Agenda - None

III. Approval of Minutes of July 28, 1993 and By-Laws

Chuck Petersen stated that Bud Farm was not in attendance.

Motion: Councilor Fessler moved for approval of minutes and By-Laws, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kafoury and passed unanimously.

IV. Proposed Multnomah County Parks/Greenspaces Merger

Commissioner Gary Hansen introduced Betsy Williams, Director of Environmental Services and Commissioner Sharron Kelly. He stated that the genesis of the transfer is that the services provided by these facilities are of a regional nature and would be better served and managed by a regional government. They are part of a regional Greenspace vision. He stated that an Inter-Governmental Agreement is expected for Metro to operate the facilities for a fixed period and if successful, full transfer would follow including land. Commissioner Hansen stated that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been structured to give Metro full operating authority of the facilities.

Commissioner Kelly stated that a lot of work had gone into developing the agreement and she is proud of the relationships that have been built in the process.

Rena Cusma stated that the discussion on this subject started in October of 1991 and have been continuing since then. The Charter authorizes Metro to get into parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

Councilor Devlin stated he felt the Greenspaces bond measure failed due to concerns of Metro's lack of experience managing parks. Because the whole department will be transferred, the maintenance costs are far less than starting from scratch. Many of the facilities were mentioned in the Greenspaces Masterplan.

Jennifer Sims distributed a financial projections memo. It is assumed that excess revenue generated by the Expo Center and Glendoveer Golf Course would be available to fund the other non self-supporting facilities. The fund balance is assumed to be transferred with the functions. A fee increase is projected for July 1994 and an excise tax would be applied to these functions, which would go back into the operation as needed. Jennifer Sims stated that the analysis is that these facilities would be able to operate without outside support until the 1996-97 fiscal year, when there is a \$25,000 shortfall. Opportunities exist before then to

raise revenues. Other variables exist such as weather, competing facilities, possible impacts of fee increases.

Commissioner Kafoury stated that the City of Portland is entering into discussions regarding the one county golf course being brought into the city's program which already manages a number of golf courses.

Loren Wyss asked when excess revenues were expected to be available? What will the cost increases to users be? Can each facility be made self supporting? If not, is it necessary to keep all the facilities open?

Jennifer Sims responded that Expo annually creates excess revenues of approximate \$200,000 and Glendoveer has annual excess revenues of \$700,000. The proposed fee increases would be implemented every other year of a dollar increase in greens fees. Greens fees are currently \$6.50 for nine holes.

Loren Wyss stated that the proposal is to raise fees on a facility that currently is raising \$700,000 profit a year. Golf players are subsidizing cemeteries?

Rena Cusma stated that the current management contract for the golf course would continue. It is assumed fees would keep pace with the other golf courses. Currently under the county, the revenue generating facilities fund the other facilities. Community parks, like public transportation, probably never will be self supporting.

Commissioner Hansen stated that minimal entry fees are charged at some parks, but some programs like the cemeteries cannot generate enough fees. You could lock the gates on the cemeteries, but the maintenance is very efficient including using inmate labor, which would continue. It is similar to high ridership bus lines subsidizing the less used lines.

Loren Wyss stated that the analogy is incorrect as the bus lines provide benefit to everyone. The proposed charges will be to golf players only.

Councilor Devlin stated that this is not a change in how the system operates.

Commissioner Hammerstad stated that the Regional Growth Goals and Objectives (RUGGO) directed looking at regionally significant greenspaces, how do the neighborhood parks fit in? The capital needs information should have been included with the financial memo. What is the criteria for regional significance?

Rena Cusma responded that community (neighborhood) parks are also part of the discussion regarding transfer of some facilities to the city. The Historical Society has expressed interest in making better use of the pioneer cemeteries.

Councilor Devlin stated that the county has had more parks in the past, but has transferred parks to the jurisdictions most appropriate to manage them. The understanding is that this policy will continue. The facilities are being maintained but not operated and are in a dormant state. The transfer was presented as a package, the county could not run some facilities while transferring others.

Councilor Devlin stated Oxbow and Sauvie Island facilities are clearly regionally significant, Expo is a regional resource and could be run by MERC, Blue Lake park may be more active Greenspaces than Metro envisioned.

Commissioner Hammerstad stated that the cemeteries had a \$500,000 deficit in FY 92-93. A complete list

of the facilities to be transferred was supposed to be included.

Jim Zehren stated that he was skeptical that Expo could have excess revenue of \$250,000+.

Jennifer Sims stated the figures do not include outstanding debt, includes some life safety improvements and basic maintenance. There is a feasibility study for implementation of a masterplan. The numbers do not include any enhancements.

Commissioner Hammerstad asked what is included in the Expo Center Masterplan?

Betsy Williams stated that it explores alternatives for additions/improvements to Expo including an amphitheater, a marina with restaurant, cosmetic improvements and expansions.

Chair McRobert asked when this goes to the Council, and when is the final decision to be made?

Dick Engstrom responded that it goes to the Governmental Affairs Committee on August 19th, and no schedule has been set beyond that, but it is projected to go to Council in November.

Chair McRobert stated that the results of the Expo improvement feasibility study will be available by then. The last two items on tonight's agenda will have to be moved to another meeting as we've run over on time.

Commissioner Hooley stated that she takes exception to Councilor Devlin's comment that the Greenspaces measure failed due to concerns about Metro's inexperience at managing parks facilities. She stated that she is pleased that the City of Portland is in on these discussions. Some of these facilities are very different from the idea of passive, open space Greenspaces mentioned in the Charter, and they sound like a different function.

Dan Cooper stated that the question has been analyzed in a report looking at the authority in the Charter and some of the facilities, and that report is available but too long to summarize here.

Commissioner Hooley asked why the fund balance is larger in 93-94? Also was the Tax Committee looking at moving away from excise tax and how does that effect the projections?

Jennifer Sims responded that the rise in fund balance is due to a good year at Expo. An alternative to the excise tax is a rate increase.

Commissioner Hooley asked how can Metro afford the parks if Multnomah County cannot?

Commissioner Meyer responded that the parks department has been kept in a separate "Recreation Fund". The County has had to cut \$20 million from their budget in the last few years, the parks fund has not yet been touched but they are down to the bone and wanted to give the parks package to a group that can run them better than the County can.

Chair McRobert asked members if they wanted to have another meeting on this issue.

Members stated yes, but is there time to delay it to another meeting?

Councilor Devlin stated that the Council meets September 9th and again two weeks later. The issue will not likely be on the first meeting's agenda.

It was decided that additional questions on parks should be forwarded to Marrie Waylett at Metro to be included in the packet for the next meeting. It was requested the questions also be forwarded to the Governmental Affairs Committee.

Councilor Devlin stated the Tax Study Committee was formed due to the greatly increased planning functions of Metro because of the Charter. There is not an assumption that the excise tax will be eliminated.

Councilor Schreiber asked if the excise tax revenue would go into the general fund?

Councilor Devlin responded no, it would go back into the operation of the facility.

Commissioner Hammerstad stated that that is not what the MOU says.

Councilor Devlin stated yes, but it is assumed it would go into the facility.

V. Proposed Wilsonville Transfer Station

Bob Martin stated that the proposed transfer station would reduce the costs of waste disposal to the haulers. The cost of building the facility would be \$10.3 million, operating costs bring per ton costs up to \$24 per ton. The cost of the total life of the contract would be \$46 million. The question is do we need more solid waste capacity or are we concerned about the financial condition of the whole solid waste system. The Executive Officer has recommended not to build the facility. Financial concerns have led us to decide we should defer the building of the facility or not build it.

Mayor Drake stated that the Clackamas County facility is maxed out. A new site for a transfer station would be difficult to find.

Bob Martin stated that crowding at the Oregon City facility has been improved and yes, siting is difficult.

Commissioner Hays stated MPAC is the appropriate group to discuss the growth management aspect of this issue. East Washington County is growing, while the amount of waste is reduced due to recycling, population growth keeps the solid waste amount growing. Two Metro solid waste policies that we are concerned about are equal service and equal rates. Washington County needs to contribute to the regional solution of siting solid waste facilities. Also of concern are impacts on air quality, transportation and land use. Commissioner Hays responded to Bob Martin's comments: the need for increased capacity is not a change, the financial concerns are due to a projected increase in tipping fees of \$4 per ton.

Councilor Fessler stated that with NIMBY problems of citing, here is an opportunity in Wilsonville, if we loose this site, where will the next one come from? She expressed support for the facility.

Commissioner Hammerstad stated there had been a commitment in the IGA to reduce the tonnage at the facility to 700 tons/day by January 1992, it is currently at 1000-1200 tons/day. There is a conflict as this facility is across the street from Abernathy Green, an Oregon Trail tourism facility. We would like Metro to honor their commitment to reduce the tonnage.

Councilor Devlin stated that there may be other options, we are trying to make a decision on one option before knowing what the other may be.

Commissioner Hansen mentioned the question why would Portland ratepayers want to pay for Washington County benefit. He disagreed with that, stating that this is a regional system and should be a regional rate. Is

there a new rate system?

Chair McRobert stated that MPAC is not looking at the rate but the growth management issue.

Bob Martin stated that Clark County monthly rates are \$18.12, Multnomah \$17.54, Washington \$14.81.

Commissioner Hammerstad asked Bob Martin if there had been a response to John Houser's memo?

Bob Martin stated yes, it was done today and will be available after review.

Commissioner Hammerstad made a motion.

Motion: That MPAC support the building of the Wilsonville Transfer Station.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Drake.

Councilor Gardner stated that MPAC's concern and responsibility is the land use issue as has been mentioned, not rates. If MPAC takes a position it should be based on those issues.

Commissioner Hammerstad made an amendment to the motion.

Amendment, add: ...based upon the growth management responsibilities of Metro including potential reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled, air quality, the generation of additional solid waste because of population growth, and appropriate placement around the region of regional facilities to serve a growing population.

Councilor Gardner stated the Council will ask, in addition to other issues, does the region need this now?

Jim Zehren stated that he has not yet heard enough information to vote. Can't we recommend that they secure the sight but not build yet?

Commissioner Hammerstad stated that the zoning is conditional use.

Arnold Polk stated that today's discussion was mostly on financial information, there has not been enough information on the land use issues in order to vote.

Chair McRobert stated that the report from Commissioner Hays that was handed out at the July 14th meeting was very helpful and unfortunately was not included in this packet.

Commissioner Hammerstad reworded the motion.

Motion (final): MPAC recommends that Metro consider the Wilsonville Transfer Station based upon the population growth in the region and the needs for growth management in management of solid waste, potential reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled, air quality, the generation of additional solid waste because of population growth, and appropriate placement around the region of regional facilities to serve a growing population.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Fessler.

Jim Zehren asked if Metro had the authority to allow the site to be land banked as a future site for a transfer station?

Chair McRobert stated that Wilsonville is not willing to carry forward the zoning.

Councilor Gardner stated that in many cities, zoning has been added that allows these types of facilities, but

in some, they are only allowed with conditional use permits.

Bob Peterson, resident of Beaverton, stated he is concerned with the long range planning. Rather than feel the need to make a decision tonight or lose it, look at the whole system. Maybe Wilsonville is not the best site. Mr. Peterson stated that from what he's heard tonight the committee does not have enough information to make a decision.

Councilor Devlin stated that RUGGO addresses solid waste management system in objective 12. All the criteria are listed there.

Commissioner Hammerstad amended the motion

Amendment: that the motion reference RUGGO Goal 12, subsection 12i - 12iii.

Vote: Ayes. Nay, Arnold Polk. Motion passed.

VII. Other

John Fregonese gave an update on the Regional Design Images project. We are negotiating with the top candidate, Peter Calthorpe Associates. John Fregonese stated that DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) had received some grant money from CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality) to build some Transit Oriented Developments (TODs). DEQ is looking at building two TODs and they are interested in our program. The deadline for Area Nomination Forms is Monday August 16th.

Chair McRobert stated that some jurisdictions on the fringes of the UGB have expressed interest in participating on MPAC in the same way that Clark County and Vancouver will be participating. The cities we might want to include are Sandy, Newberg, North Plains and Aurora.

Jim Zehren echoed Arnold Polk's comment that we did not hear from our "own staff" on the (Wilsonville) issue. He also asked for a memo he wrote on descriptive indicator survey results be included in the packet.

Andy Cotugno responded that the "staff" to this committee is growth management staff. However, MPAC is an advisory committee to Metro on a variety of issues, not just planning issues. The Solid Waste staff should answer solid waste questions.

Chair McRobert stated that Bob Liddell had resigned as mayor of West Linn and from MPAC. At the next meeting we will need to elect a new MPAC Vice Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Duncan.

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