



Supportive Housing Services Oversight Committee Meeting Summary

Meeting: Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Oversight Committee Meeting
Date: January 13, 2025
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Place: Virtual meeting (Zoom)
Purpose: Vote on housing funding memo to Metro Council on behalf of the SHS Oversight Committee, discuss proposed recommendations for annual regional report, receive a housing funding update.

Member attendees

Co-Chair Dr. Mandrill Taylor (he/him), Co-chair Mike Savara (he/him), Peter Rosenblatt (he/him), Kai Laing (he/him), Cara Hash (she/her), Felicita Montebianco (she/her), Dan Fowler (he/him), Jeremiah Rigsby (he/him), Jenny Lee (she/her)

Absent members

Carter MacNichol (he/him), Mitch Chilcott (he/him) Dr. James (Jim) Bane (he/him), Margarita Solis Ruiz (she/her)

Elected delegates

Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington (she/her), Metro Councilor Christine Lewis (she/her)

Absent elected delegates

Multnomah County Chair Jessica Vega Pederson (she/her)

Metro staff

Patricia Rojas (she/her), Yesenia Delgado (she/her), Breanna Hudson (she/her), Yvette Perez-Chavez (she/her)

Kearns & West facilitator

Josh Mahar (he/him)

Note: The meeting was recorded via Zoom; therefore, this meeting summary will remain at a high-level overview. Please review the recording and archived meeting packet for details and presentation slides.

Summary of Meeting Decisions

- The Committee unanimously approved sending the Housing Funding Memo to Metro Council.
- The Committee unanimously approved the December 2 and 9 meeting summaries.

Welcome and Introductions

Co-chairs Dr. Mandrill Taylor and Mike Savara provided opening remarks and reflected on the purpose of building a functioning service system.

Josh Mahar, Kearns & West Facilitator, facilitated introductions between Committee members and reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives. He noted that once enough members joined to reach

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quorum, the Committee would vote on approving the housing funding memo written by the Co-chairs and the two December meeting summaries.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

Peter Rosenblatt declared that he works at Northwest Housing Alternatives, which receives SHS funding.

Kai Laing declared a potential conflict of interest as he works at Self Enhancement Inc., which receives SHS dollars.

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

Public Comment

Javonnie Shearn, Up and Over, provided public comment and shared statements from those who received services in Clackamas County. She stated it would be a tragedy for SHS funds to be reduced.

Recommendations

Yesenia Delgado, Metro, reviewed the FY 24-25 Annual Regional Report process and shared that Kris Smock, Kristina Smock Consulting, will support the Committee in drafting the regional report and transmittal letter. She shared that this discussion would help provide direction for Kris to draft the transmittal letter to discuss at the next meeting.

Committee members had the following questions and comments:

- **Question, Peter:** Last year's recommendation dashboard had many still in red and yellow. Are we adding to last year's recommendations? At what point are there too many recommendations? It is difficult to conceptualize this process while knowing Metro will move forward with a ballot measure that would change everything. This seems like an academic exercise.
 - **Metro response, Yesenia:** Last year's recommendations that were not accomplished will continue to move forward. Some of them fall under the Tri-County Planning Body's work. There will be some overlap between this year's and last year's recommendations. At this point, we do not know if any changes are happening, so it is important that this group continues to do the work to improve accountability.
- **Comment, Felicita Montebianco:** I agree with Peter, there is tension and frustration. The way I am approaching this is that we still have a job to do and that our work and the ballot measure are two parallel paths.
- **Comment, Metro Councilor Christine Lewis:** No decision has been made. There is an opportunity to reform the measure. Metro Council shares frustrations with the recommendations still in red and yellow, which is proof that accountability and oversight need to be improved.

Co-chairs Taylor and Savara reviewed the draft recommendation topics which are regional priorities, oversight and accountability, jurisdictional partnerships and decision making, data integrity and evaluation, and provider partnerships. Draft language for each topic area can be found in the [archived meeting packet](#) on pages 48-52.

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Committee members had the following questions and comments:

Regional priorities

- **Comment, Peter:** I like how this is worded. The overarching priority for next year needs to be around data. I am not sure if there is a willingness or ability for the jurisdictions to come to an agreement on data reporting. Consistent data across jurisdictional lines is needed to make data-driven decisions.
- **Comment, Co-chair Savara:** The country is at a key inflection point on how to address homelessness. These priorities will help jurisdictions make decisions from data and humane perspectives. There needs to be a conversation between providers and county partners. We need practices that align with the values of the SHS measure, not practices that are quick and easy. We have to prioritize approaches as there are not enough resources to do everything. I look forward to hearing from county leaders on this.
- **Comment, Dan:** I agree with Co-chair Savara. I have questions about what convening that conversation looks like and who is involved. I believe that key nonprofit providers and/or the people they are serving should be included. A bottom-up approach seems important for this critical work.
- **Comment, Kai:** It feels like we are addressing issues that are not formalized yet. We need to focus on the results of the report and address those results. We need to hear from the jurisdictions on their difficulties and priorities and ensure accountability rather than making and forcing decisions.
- **Comment, Felicita:** I agree with Dan's comments and want to elevate that providers are a part of that conversation.

Oversight and accountability

- **Comment, Peter:** The word "empowered" resonates as the key theme for this one. This language clarifies the role as oversight rather than advisory. Clackamas County never implemented its oversight committee for SHS and there is no accountability. Why was Multnomah County placed on a performance improvement plan for not spending money and Clackamas County was not for its failure to implement its oversight committee? Power is money; at some point, it seems that funding should be taken away for not implementing pieces. The contractual relationship needs to be evaluated.
 - **Response, Metro Councilor Lewis:** The relationship you are describing does not exist, which is one component of reform. As long as counties spend funds on allowed items, there is no accountability to certain components under the current intergovernmental agreements (IGAs).
 - **Metro response, Patricia Rojas:** Currently the IGAs charge Metro with oversight and accountability functions. Several functions are best practices, but there are questions for mechanisms to ensure local structures like the LIPs. The reason Multnomah County was placed on a performance improvement plan is that the IGAs require corrective action plans if there are material deviations from spend-down plans.
 - **Response, Washington County Chair Kathryn Harrington:** There are provisions in the IGAs for elected officials to get together for accountability. There will not be another IGA around SHS from the board I serve on with these gross generalizations.

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Elected bodies must be treated as partners. We have come together to do something that no other multi-county jurisdiction has done before.

- **Comment, Felicita:** I resonate with “oversight” and “empower.” I appreciate “funder best practices” as a critical piece of the work.
- **Comment, Dan:** Perhaps a specific oversight question can be, “Have you implemented your local advisory committee and other parts of your local implementation plan (LIP)?” to measure accountability and success.
- **Comment, Kai:** I suggest including “with service providers and partners” in the language to provide human-centered feedback beyond just data.

Jurisdictional partnerships and decision making

- **Comment, Peter:** I do not speak for the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners, but I do attend their meetings, and I feel that this would resonate with them. It speaks to the desire for clarification on process, decision-making, and what input means. I felt that lack of clarity as a provider and as a member of this committee.
- **Comment, Dan:** This is a hot topic and boils down to attitude. Counties have been doing social services work for years and are experts. Metro sees itself as the funder, but the funder is the taxpayers. The lack of trust and respect between the jurisdictions needs to be resolved.

Data integrity and evaluation

- **Comment, Washington County Chair Harrington:** I try not to respond to work in this Committee, however, I get frustrated with status updates and progress reports from Metro staff to Committee members. The draft data-sharing agreements in 2023 were put on pause, but during the second half of 2024, I pushed my staff to learn more about it. I got an update on Friday that there is just one last sticking point from county staff around data quality. I share this Committee’s frustration and intend to follow up on this. I hope before the regional report is released, this will be resolved. Thank you for advancing this need.
- **Comment, Peter:** This is the key goal and I would list this recommendation first. It is hard to make decisions without this information. Counties need to be able to count Populations A and B in the same way. This issue connects to empowerment.
 - Multiple Committee members agreed that this is a priority and should be listed first.
- **Comment, Metro Councilor Lewis:** This is key. Metro has operated in good faith and has given concessions. I do not want folks disparaging Metro’s team on this.
- **Comment, Co-chair Taylor:** Integrity is needed for trust. There is a lot of hard work to do. The intent is to not put down anyone’s efforts and ensure this remains a priority and value. This connects to the underlying issue of trust.

Provider partnerships

- **Comment, Felicita:** This is critical and important work.
- **Comment, Peter:** Multi-year contracts are important and are not exclusive to pilot projects. Multi-year contracts should include cost of living increases. This is hard to reconcile with the ballot measure and living wages could increase costs of services, while the ballot could decrease the amount of funds available.
- **Comment, Co-chair Savara:** I suggest changing the last bullet to “building on promising practices to expand” and striking pilot projects.
 - Committee members agreed to this edit.

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Josh asked the Committee if anything was missing or if there were any last reflections.

- **Comment, Cara:** The last two categories resonated a lot. Data integrity and partnership are consistent themes.
- **Comment, Peter:** Timelines and due dates are important and should be realistic and express urgency. How do we integrate last year's recommendations? Perhaps we can merge the recommendations to have a singular plan to work from.
- **Comment, Felicita:** I want to note there are things that we have recommended that are not done and I do not want to lose them.

Kris Smock, Kristina Smock Consulting, thanked the Committee for the discussion and confirmed she would incorporate the input into the next draft.

Yesenia confirmed that last year's recommendations will still move forward and supported Peter's suggestion of one singular comprehensive plan.

Co-chair Savara stated that a work plan and timeline for the recommendations would be helpful to receive from Metro staff. He reflected that the Committee does not have visibility on how some recommendations are moved forward. He thanked the Committee for their input.

Co-chair Taylor stated that when reviewing recommendations to form a comprehensive plan, it could be helpful to think about barriers to implementation to see if there is something systemic occurring that the Committee is not thinking about.

SHSOC Housing Funding Memo

Co-chairs Savara and Taylor reviewed the Housing Funding Memo to send to Metro Council on behalf of the Committee.

Dan noted that once the Committee knows the full recommendations of the ballot, they may have further comments.

Decision: The Committee unanimously approved sending the memo to Council.

Decision: The Committee unanimously approved the December 2 and 9 meeting summaries.

Housing Funding Updates

Metro Council President Lynn Peterson thanked the Committee for their work and shared that Council is preparing to consider a ballot measure and an accompanying ordinance. The ordinance will go to staff with specific deadlines. She shared that Council has heard from many voices and the Stakeholder Advisory Table and reflected that a difficult decision needs to be made when facing funding cliffs and public skepticism. She thanked the Committee for sharing the memo with Council and that she read the draft in the meeting packet.

She reflected on the group's discussion on themes of limited oversight authority, unclear decision making pathways, and barriers to data sharing and reporting. She stated that the measure would establish a more empowered Housing and Homelessness Policy Advisory Committee (HHPAC), allow for a negotiation of the IGAs, adopt outcome-based performance management practices, and support evidence based decision making.

Committee members had the following questions and comments:

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- **Question, Co-chair Taylor:** I appreciate your attendance and responding in real time to the memo. Elected officials are included in the HHPAC. When was that proposed and how do you envision their role complementing that of experts and providers?
 - **Response, Metro President Peterson:** Elected officials are where recommendations end up and they have the authority to implement. The structure will help regionalize programs and foster collaboration. Some groups have advocated for no elected officials, but they are trusted by the voters.
- **Comment, Peter:** Advisory and oversight are two separate roles. It seems that affordable housing has shifted from an allowable use to a mandated activity, why? Could a county not allocate funds to affordable housing and only allocate to SHS? It seems that voters would be voting on something where the details would be decided after the election. How many units of affordable housing would be built? How would PSH services be in place?
 - **Response, Metro President Peterson:** The affordable housing component you are speaking to was part of an allocation model to show how allocations can be made to provide stability for counties. The draft ordinance has HHPAC providing a recommendation to Council of an allocation formula that works for all counties and to define what they are trying to achieve on affordable housing. The allocation model work will move at the speed of trust if the ballot is passed. The ballot measure focuses on the extension, personal income tax reduction, and making affordable housing an eligible use. Each county's allocation will be a part of the regional action plan which has to be approved by Council.
- **Comment, Dan:** Can you speak more about the personal income tax reduction? Typically, counties have been the social service providers, and I support the idea of accountability and removing the city program. Providers have built out programs and hired staff, and they are now scared and worried about the change. Can there be a transition period over two to three years to give providers time to adapt to funding changes?
 - **Response, Metro President Peterson:** There will be a transition period. The personal income tax rate would include a 20-year extension with a 25% personal income tax rate. The Portland Metro Chamber and Here Together Coalition have agreed to an upfront 10% cut which would increase to 15% in 2031. There are still questions as to how, when, and who receives the tax cut. The SHS measure should not be the only funding in this region, and state funding will need to be considered.
- **Comment, Felicita:** I appreciate Dan's comments on each county's uniqueness and look forward to having conversations with cities to get their perspective. When can we read the ballot measure? We have stated that we want to invest in culturally specific providers and I am worried about them not having the resources they need and having to have conversations on program or staff cuts.
 - **Response, Metro President Peterson:** The Metropolitan Mayors' Consortium (MMC) has asked Metro for funding to not go through the counties as each county treats cities differently. Cities are using their general fund to support housing services and they are looking for support. The ordinance directs HHPAC to figure out what a city program could look like and if that should be incorporated into LIPs. The tax is volatile and cuts are already happening. We want to budget in a way that provides stability for providers. There is work to do in the ordinance and with pay equity issues between the three counties.
- **Comment, Co-chair Savara:** The State wants to be a partner in this work. Service providers need to be supported. It is hard to provide support if the expectation is for them to cut programs, lay off staff, and decrease their scope of work. The Stakeholder Advisory Table wants to see that balance.

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- **Response, Metro President Peterson:** There are larger societal issues, including a healthy economy. Some signs indicated that the economy may be going in the wrong direction, and we need to make progress and commit to solving these issues. Long-term stability could worsen if we do not make a change.

Next Steps

Yesenia stated that feedback on the draft report would be due on January 14 and the Committee will meet again on January 27, 9:30am-12:00pm.

President Peterson shared next steps for Council include sharing the draft ballot and ordinance language before the Thursday work session. January 23 there will be the first reading of the language with public testimony, which will likely lead to amendments.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.