

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

2:00 PM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

Council work session

2:00 Call to Order and Roll Call

Councilors Present: Council President Tom Hughes and Councilors Craig Dirksen, Bob Stacey, Shirley Craddick, Sam Chase, Carlotta Collette, and Kathryn Harrington

Councilors Excused: None

Council President Tom Hughes called the Metro Council work session to order at 2:05 p.m.

2:05 Chief Operating Officer Communication

Ms. Martha Bennett, Chief Operating Officer, noted that Metro had begun the process of hiring a new director of the Parks and Nature department. She stated that stakeholder outreach was being conducted in relation to this position and information from the job description would be finalized next week and would remain open for five weeks. Interviews for the director position would be conducted during the first two weeks of May and selection would be finalized in early June. Ms. Bennett also noted that Mr. Tony Pickett, Vice President of Master Site Development, would be the regional snapshot speaker for housing affordability and the equitable housing initiatives at Metro.

Work Session Topics:

2:10 Reclaiming Government for America's Future

Mr. Jim Middaugh, Director of Communications, characterized the Topos presentation as a national study with roots in the metropolitan region. Mr. Middaugh stated that Topos was not a typical firm, in the sense that it did not conduct partisan work between jurisdictions; rather it focused on engaging people in order to develop collective thinking. Mr. Middaugh introduced Ms. Meg Bostrom,

co-founder of the Topos partnership and guest speaker for the presentation.

Ms. Meg Bostrom, Co-founder of Topos Partnership, inquired Council on what the basic ideas were that influenced and shaped political discourse. Ms. Bostrom proposed that there should be a shift in political mentality; rather than focusing on talking points, citizens should have an opportunity to discuss political topics without a generalized mode of discussion that is typical to their experience. Also, Ms. Bostrom mentioned that the presentation would allow the Council to better understand mechanisms that may allow for better understanding between the government and the public. Currently, there is a sense of division in the United States, and Topos wanted to address this situation by making the dialogue between elected officials and the public more polished. According to Ms. Bostrom, people in the United States felt as if they were subjects and not active participants. Subjects in the Topos study also felt that members of the elite class of the United States made the most important decisions; this sentiment was prevalent in the broad range of ideological spectrum. Ms. Bostrom expressed that a cultural shift was needed in order to establish a civil society where collective interests led to the completion of goals and citizens participate in the direction taken by the country.

Lesson one, according to Ms. Bostrom, was meant to remind the general public about what the government is, and what it does. One step to accomplish this task was to displace political language from a conversation and instead replace it with language that would communicate what the government and the public may accomplish together. Ms. Bostrom noted that majority of people do not understand the principle of taxation, and how the revenue generated

was utilized to help communities and our infrastructure. Thus, Ms. Bostrom wanted the projects and programs that the government-in this case the Council-funds from taxes to be more visible in terms of presence in media and during conversations with constituents. According to 65% of participants in the Topos study, people felt that their tax dollars were wasted when government services such as roads and bridges were not maintained. Ms. Bostrom completed lesson one by providing examples of how elected officials can communicate their goals, intent, and vision with their constituents in order to provide a theme of collective accomplishment between the government and the public. Lesson two highlighted that citizen control is the most vital element in developing effective reform. An example of reform that citizens have worked towards is an attempt to clean up the tax code and get rid of the breaks the powerful have demanded. Similar to lesson one, Ms. Bostrom provided examples and context to particular language and phrases that may be used to communicate the efforts of the government to improve communities and generate effective revenue by deterring tax breaks and loopholes. In respect to effective communication, Ms. Bostrom emphasized the acknowledgment of reform. In lesson three, Ms. Bostrom showcased the need to provide a new image of the democratic experience. Furthermore, Ms. Bostrom indicated that without presenting new ideas about how democracy works, majority of people would view presidential elections as the only means of participation. However, Ms. Bostrom remarked that when people were made aware of success stories that modeled collective action, there was an increase in interest in regards to community engagement. Ms. Bostrom stressed that without forums and platforms for individuals to participate in, there would be a perpetual

disconnect between the government and the public. Starter kits to teach ways citizens or members of the public to engage with their jurisdictions were also mentioned by Ms. Bostrom. Lesson three was completed by an introduction of various ways public officials can communicate the democratic experience to their constituents.

In a video prepared by the Topos partnership, various individuals were asked about their thoughts on the government and how their experience may be changed. In that video, there were individuals who understood that active participation and taking ownership of the governing process would allow for more reform and a better understanding of what the government was doing with revenue. Ms. Bostrom also indicated that people are generally aware that tracking promises and the vision of elected officials was important to maintain consistency. Ms. Bostrom also indicated to Council that flipping the approach in communicating political endeavors was required.

Meaning, instead of simply indicating that there was a problem, there is a need to showcase what the capabilities of the agency or department are. Also, whenever a program was being introduced to the public, focus on how the community and the government agency responsible for the plan will work together to solve or complete a task. After completing the formal presentation, Ms. Bostrom provided examples of effective communication regarding political vision or program goals from Metro Councilors. She indicated that Council was already on track in making sure that they emphasize togetherness and illustrated how the community would benefit from particular programs and revenue generating schemes.

Council Discussion:

Council President Hughes expressed the need to continually

develop a strong relationship between the government and the public in order to reduce any chance of disconnect between the two entities. He also stated that an agency cannot assume that the relationship is strong just because certain projects are moving forward; responsibility must be shared and committed in order to engage communities at a consistent basis. Councilor Harrington expressed disagreement with using the phrase 'citizen' to refer to people engaged with their community and government. Because there were people in our region who are not naturalized or born citizens, we must be careful with the phraseology regarding who participates in the community; she wanted to avoid neglecting members of our region. Councilor Craddick noted that the use of social media had disrupted talks relating to the Troutdale 40-Mile Loop trail master plan. She noted that the spread of misinformation and fear regarding project development led to exchanges over social media that were not constructive. According to Councilor Craddick, she preferred engaging with community members face-to-face and believed that social media was a communication tool that did not provide a strong platform for meaningful dialogue. Councilor Collette noted that a lack of audience was why social media cannot be a primary mode of receiving feedback. Councilor Collette had attended a county meeting in Stafford where constituents were providing information from social media to justify their stance on the issue. According to Councilor Collette, the use of social media can alter the spread of misinformation and its influence can spread to events where face-to-face engagement is occurring. Councilor Chase stressed the use of proactive engagement of community members before major decisions are made. He noted that there will always be groups of people that have made up their mind regarding a project or issue; however, making sure that the people who are not yet convinced can be engaged via town halls or other platforms was important. Councilor Chase suggested that providing people with a platform that allowed dialogue between policy developers and constituents would allow

stronger clarity to be established. He also mentioned that having workshops and or townhalls during the development phase of a project would prevent misinformation from spreading during later stages of a project. Councilor Collette noted that the Safe Routes to School National Partnership was an ideal example of a national vision that was applied locally by engaging community members earlier in the development process along with staging events where the project had been discussed between policy developers and the community supporting that initiative.

3:10 Councilor Liaison Updates and Council Communication

Mr. Andy Shaw, Regional Affairs Manager, updated Council on the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Mr. Shaw indicated that the Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization had broken into four subgroups and they had been meeting regularly; the intent of the subgroups was to focus on particular sections of the transportation package. Mr. Shaw discussed that the budget for the RTP would be split 50-30-20 between state, local, and federal funds respectively. Mr. Shaw notified Council that his update for the work session would primarily focus on addressing the bottleneck portion of the RTP. In respect to bottlenecks, Mr. Shaw conveyed to Council that the congestion workgroup (part of the Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization) had sought justification on why focusing on the three primary bottlenecks in the Portland area would be most beneficial; the work group would then communicate the Council's reasoning to their legislators. Moreover, Mr. Shaw recounted that the concept of surcharges would be the primary mode of generating revenue to address the bottlenecks in Portland. In respect to the budget allocation of the RTP, Mr. Shaw highlighted that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) would match 50-60%

of funds for the three bottlenecks in Portland; ODOT would provide debt service to bond for the bottleneck portion of the RTP. For the remaining 40% of the funds required to address the bottlenecks in Portland, Mr. Shaw noted that a regional surcharge would be applied in order to raise revenue. Over a particular timeframe, an 8-10 cent gas tax and \$10-20 increase in vehicle registration fees could be applied in order to generate revenue on behalf of the region; Mr. Shaw acknowledged that ODOT was also pursuing several ideas in order to generate revenue as well. According to Mr. Shaw, Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon (TriMet) was expected to seek funding for the Southwest Corridor and some portion of the bottleneck projects associated with the RTP. Thus, Mr. Shaw expressed that funds raised by TriMet in order to address bottlenecks would essentially reduce the amount needed by the Metro to fund that initiative.

Ms. Alison Kean, Metro Attorney, conveyed to Councilor Harrington that the 2020 Active Transportation Plan could apply bike trails outside of the highway right of way via taxing mechanisms that are not tied to roads, cars or fuel. Furthermore, Ms. Kean indicated that funding for transportation projects in Oregon was under many legal constraints. According to Ms. Kean, revenue that is generated from taxes from vehicle, road, or fuel related operations may only be used for transportation projects. Also, tax uniformity is required under Oregon law; this principle relates to constitutional muster being met in order to approve surcharges. Ms. Kean noted that Metro staff had worked with Oregon legislative council to produce a taxing 'class' that could satisfy constitutional muster via a Metropolitan Service District. An MPO would have various challenges associated with it, and the service district would

allow Metro to have freedom in developing and imposing a taxing scheme according to Ms. Kean. Moreover, Ms. Kean recounted that a regionally proposed tax would have to be voted on by the public in that region. However, if the state legislature passes a bill imposing the tax, there is no requirement for a vote by the public; appropriation of the revenue would depend upon how the state wanted to spend that revenue. Meaning, Metro's goal of having control over state imposed tax of the region for funding the transportation plan would be challenged unless the bill itself stipulates the control belonged to Metro.

Mr. Shaw stated that House Bill 2095 had been postponed and a vote on the measure by the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee would occur next week. He also noted that there was a lack of movement in regards to reserves bills that were concerning to Metro. A Household Hazardous Waste bill proposed by Metro was undergoing amendments and certain phasing strategies were being discussed by associated committees. Mr. Shaw also noted that there were land use bills being proposed in the state legislature however they were still being amended.

Council Communication:

Councilor Harrington stated that Metro staff must continue discussions between the coordinating workgroups on the transportation plan and stakeholders who are monitoring the development of the project. She also noted that future discussions of the current plan on funding the bottlenecks may experience changes and that empowering a wide range of representatives would be important in communicating the scope of the project, especially the bottleneck initiative.

Councilor Dirksen noted that the Cleveland Street project did not pass a vote in the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) meeting. Councilor Dirksen stated

that there were members of JPACT who requested more information and background to the Cleveland street project before putting it up for another vote. Councilor Harrington stated that the public hearing was not documented in the meeting packet for a previous JPACT meeting. She wanted to emphasize that public hearings were crucial in developing and deciding upon regional issues; lack of participation would deter the region from working properly to coordinate regional projects. Councilor Dirksen added that the City of Gresham would increase their revenue in order to generate funding for the Cleveland street project. He also noted that there was a lack of representation from the City of Gresham during JPACT meetings; the lack of participation was a reason why the City of Gresham had to generate revenue rather than have available funding from the Regional Flexible Fund Allocation (RFFA). Councilor Craddick noted that the City of Portland had previously amended their funding request for a previous local project whereas the City of Gresham did not amend their funding request for the Cleveland street project. Councilor Harrington recounted the importance in communication and collaboration in making sure regional projects were fully developed and executed. Councilor Stacey noted that Jennifer Erickson, Principal Solid Waste Planner, would update Council on the Food Scraps Capacity project during a May work session. Councilor Craddick attended a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) meeting and noted that the board passed a resolution to the state legislature to designate the I-5 replacement bridge as a project of statewide significance (for Washington State).

3:20 Adjourn

Seeing no further business, Council President Tom Hughes adjourned the Metro Council work session at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amaanjit Singh". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'A' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Amaanjit Singh, Council Policy Assistant

ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF MARCH 14, 2017

ITEM	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOC DATE	DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	DOCUMENT No.
2.0	PowerPoint	03/14/2017	Reclaiming Government (Topos)	031417cw-01
3.0	Handout	03/14/2017	Congestion Project Estimate	031417cw-02