

Public Involvement Advisory Council (PIAC)
Meeting Agenda & Notes
February 4, 2014

Members Present: Claire Adamsick, Bill Beamer, Glenn Bridger, Donita Fry, Greg Greenway, Brian Hoop, Denver Igarta, Paul Leistner, Linda Nettekoven, Shoshanah Oppenheim, Marty Stockton, Mike Vander Veen, Christine White.

Members Absent: Mohamed Abdiasis, Kelly Ball, Mike Crebs, Bill Gentile, Tim Hall, Muna Idow, Carri Munn, Steve Pixley, Colleen Poole, Amy Spring.

Guests: Julio Maldonado (EPAP), Sean Green (SEUL), Maggie Tallmadge

Staff: Greg Greenway

Agenda

- A. Announcements & Business
 - 1. Announcements & Public Comment
 - 2. Approve January Meeting Notes
 - 3. Update on Hiring Process
 - 4. PIAC Member Recruitment
 - 5. Police Bureau Implementation of Justice Dept. Agreement
- B. Discussion Items
 - 6. Language Translation and Interpretation
 - 7. PIAC Annual Report
 - 8. PIAC Work Plan 2014
- C. Small Group Breakouts
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Notes

A. Announcements & Business

1. Announcements & Public Comment

Donita announced an open house for Cully Park on February 5.

Bill announced the last Fix-It Fair of the season at David Douglass HS on February 22 and spoke about the success of the last Repair Café at Rosa Parks Elementary.

Shoshanah announced a report on the African American Community in Multnomah County to City Council by the Coalition of Communities of Color on February 19.

Greg announced an upcoming meeting of the Public Engagement Network.

There was no public comment.

2. Approve January Meeting Notes

The meeting notes for December were approved (motion: Mike, second: Glenn) with one abstention (Donita).

3. Update on Hiring Process

Brian distributed a timeline for hiring a new staff person for ONI's Public Involvement Best Practices Program. He expects the hiring process to continue through March, with a new person on board in April. He asked for volunteers to participate on interview panels, and explained that ONI has to screen applicants on its own (rather than being done by HR) because ONI wanted to keep the position open longer than usual.

4. PIAC Member Recruitment

Greg summarized the outreach to recruit new PIAC members and asked the group whether to wait for more applications to come in or to start reviewing them now. Mike said to strike while the iron is hot. Linda emphasized the need to balance staff and community members. Glenn said we need to be fair, and we owe it to applicants to give a timely response. Greg said one applicant had been waiting since December (having just missed the last round of recommended appointments).

Glenn, Mike and Paul volunteered for the Selection Committee (Greg said he would ask Amy if she can continue to serve on the Committee, having volunteered for the last round of reviews in November).

Marty said it was important to acknowledge who is missing at the table and to do targeted outreach. If we review applications before we have filled those needs, we should make sure we can still bring new people to the group who do meet those needs and have energy to participate.

5. Police Bureau Implementation of Justice Dept. Agreement

Members received a handout with excerpts of the Police Bureau's agreement with the Justice Department (which has not yet been signed), along with announcement about a public hearing to take input on whether the agreement is fair, reasonable and adequate.

Members praised Assistant Chief Mike Crebs (a PIAC member who could not attend this meeting) for seeing the agreement as an opportunity to improve the Bureau's outreach and engagement practices. An update on the process will be a standing item on the PIAC agenda when AC Crebs is available.

B. Discussion Items

6. Language Translation and Interpretation

Members received a presentation on the City's guidelines for language translation and interpretation from Shoshanah, and on East Portland Action Plan's (EPAP) approach (which is considered practical and successful) from Mike. Paul pointed out that there is no formal City policy on the subject, and that this might be an opportunity for PIAC work.

Shoshanah said the contract with Language Fusion, the City's contractor, expires this year and that a request for proposals (RFP) will be created in April. The RFP will be developed with community input and will also be based on an evaluation of the current contractor to identify any gaps in service. The City has already identified a gap for American Sign Language, mostly for emergency interpretation for first responders. All services will be evaluated, including which documents are vital to translate, needs for in-person translation, the language phone line, etc.

Marty pointed out that language translation is now characterized as a goods/services mode.

Shoshanah said that translation/interpretation is a Title VI civil rights issue because it often is a way to address national origin discrimination.

In April there will be a baseline analysis of which languages are spoken where. The City is using Metro data for now, but the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability will ultimately do this work.

Shoshanah highlighted the question of what needs to be translated. Some examples are documents/services when there is jeopardy (ex: fires) or when there is a public benefit available to all (ex: free recycling services). These are the kinds of questions that will be addressed in the evaluation.

Donita said there are some logistical problems in providing these services. NAYA and EPAP do an excellent job, and these are her baselines for comparison. As an example of a challenge, she said that headsets are hard to round up and are expensive and don't always work properly. Shoshanah said the City will buy two sets. Donita said every bureau should have them and be trained in how to use them. Shoshanah thanked her for that feedback.

Shoshanah expects to see (a) translation of a Title VI complaint procedure and form, and information about how to access benefits (b) efforts by bureaus to pool their resources for language contractors and to bring this into their budgets, (c) translation of frequently asked questions, and (d) use of more images in communications. She gave a handout on suggested signature lines for City staff emails.

Paul said the City sometimes spends money on translation that is not relevant, creating the "activity" but not necessarily the "effect" of public involvement (ex: Bureau of

Development Services translating its extensive storm water regulations). He said there is an opportunity for PIAC to help with the effects of public involvement.

Mike asked if the guide has been adopted and Shoshanah said yes, by City Council as City policy.

Shoshanah said the Portland Public Involvement Principles do not address limited English proficiency (LEP). She suggested it is important to be intentional about this and that it should be included in PIAC's public involvement manual when it is developed.

Mike suggested that "LEP" is not particularly inclusive language and that it would be helpful to have a synonym or other word instead of "limited." Shoshanah said she (and the City) speaks the language of the agency (federal government) to which she reports. Paul said this language might be an example of unintended effects of a well-intentioned policy. Mike said it's a matter of the internal direction to City staff. Alternative language could be reviewed by the City Attorney but the point is to rephrase in other terms what the City is obligated to do by law.

Mike summarized EPAP's background and committee structure and talked about the organization's approach to translation/interpretation. Paul said it was a diverse group that originally created the Plan, and EPAP's work continues in that spirit. Donita said EPAP does a good job focusing on equity, including translating to English speakers at a meeting rather than the reverse.

Mike identified several aspects of EPAP's approach that make it successful:

- There is a written policy that locks into place the value commitment.
- Staff are overtly committed to the policy and put in a lot of work. He talked specifically about the diligent efforts of Lore Wintergreen.
- A two-pronged approach of making the services available and investing wisely in the community help people use those services.

Mike said one of the lessons from EPAP's experience is that the City should value highly these skills when it hires staff. Staff is key to translating desires into action, and you can't cut corners. For example, he said Lore calls people when they say they need interpretation services but don't show up to the meeting. He said this shows both the value of having the person in the room (we want you there and will invest in your participation) and the importance of being frugal and effective with expensive resources

Mike said another way to show people they are valued is a grants program to offer carrots to groups to participate.

Paul said it's important to ask "What are the barriers to participation?" EPAP allows people to fill out applications in their own language, and they have provided an Iraqi interpreter for a couple of people who need that service to be engaged. He said the City "opens its doors" but people don't always feel welcome.

Mike concluded by saying there is a huge population in the City that would benefit from translation/interpretation and that it's important to "strike while the iron's hot." Don't be afraid to build relationships because, based on EPAP's experience, those relationships will pay off.

Julio said he came to EPAP after working at the County Health Department. He said he was attending mostly to listen at this meeting and that he had interest in possibly serving on PIAC if he felt he could contribute to the group (he and Greg talked more about PIAC after the meeting).

Shoshanah mentioned a rescheduled training for City staff on public involvement tools.

7. PIAC Annual Report

Greg presented a second draft of the Annual Report. He suggested that the last paragraph about Afifa's contributions be changed to a dedication.

Glenn said it flows better, with crisper message delivery that captures attention. He said the last paragraph of the appended ASPIRE report should be "cleaned up."

Brian suggested under "Next Steps" to change the concept of a template for bureau public involvement strategies to the concept of identifying a strategy for bureaus to develop public involvement policies (and using ASPIRE's 20 practices as part of that strategy). Paul said strategies are broader than policies and that each bureau needs a strategy. Marty said City policies are adopted by City Council, and bureaus have plans rather than policies. She said a template means the City gives the framework for policy (along with State and federal governments). Linda concurred that each bureau does not have its own policy. Mike said he thought we agreed on this language, but "template" seems too much like one size fits all. Paul and Linda liked the term "guide."

Christine encouraged us to remember our audience. If the audience is City Council, then the goal of this is to tell Council what we do and to justify the work. Brian agreed, saying Council funds this work. Paul said there are other audiences within the public as well, including prospective PIAC members.

Linda said the language on page 7, sub-point 2 of the appended ASPIRE report is not clear. It says "implementing a consistent plan was a challenge," while Linda suggested it is intended to mean something more like "consistent implementation of plans across bureaus was a challenge."

Shoshanah said the release of the Annual Report should sync with the equity rollout. She said to check with Amalia about the timing and recommendations, especially on bureau strategies.

Marty said we can talk about coordination between the two. She would like to see the whole City Council filing for the Annual Report, including letter to the mayor and the FIPIS filing. She said the Report could be tweaked for City Council as audience.

Glenn pointed out that the letterhead needs to be corrected, changing Commissioner Fritz to Mayor Hales.

Marty said the overall direction of the Report feels comfortable and she expressed appreciation for the discussion.

8. PIAC Work Plan 2014

Based on January's discussion, the group identified the following potential focus areas:

- Bureau public involvement strategies
- Public involvement practices manual
- Digital engagement
- Boards and Commissions (standardized process, guidelines and practices)
- Budget (evaluate use of BAC guidelines and tools to support staff)
- FIPIS (evaluate effectiveness and issues, suggest changes as needed)
- Notification (existing and recommended policies and practices)

In addition, members expressed support for PIAC playing a "consulting" role with particular bureaus as opportunities emerge to assist with on-the-ground community involvement efforts (for example, the Police Bureau process).

Greg conveyed the Coordinating Committee's suggestion that there might be different kinds of small groups. For example:

- Work Groups that focus on a single topic/project for the entire year
- Task Forces that accomplish a specific task or one step of a larger project
- Exploratory Committees that outline the scope of work for a topic

Members engaged in a sticky wall exercise to put their names under work topics that interest them most, and to propose which kind of small group is appropriate for each possible work topic. The results of the sticky wall exercise were distributed to PIAC members as a separate document.

C. Small Group Breakouts

There was no time for small group breakouts. Greg said the Coordinating Committee would analyze the results of the sticky wall exercise and propose next steps for the March PIAC meeting.

D. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:00.