

City of Portland - Office of Neighborhood Involvement (ONI)  
Bureau/Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Summary Notes

December 14, 2015

**In Attendance:**

Katy Asher (SEUL), Barbara Bernstein (Elders in Action), Sylvia Bogert (SWNI), Lori Boisen (Division Midway Alliance), Claire Carder (Maplewood NA), Sophorn Cheang (IRCO), Jill Erickson (Wilkes Community Group), Donita Fry (NAYA), Jeff Hilber (Concordia NA), Moshe Lenske (Woodstock NA), Tom Lewis (Centennial, EPAP), Mary Loos (PDNA), Virginia Luke (APANO/MIC), Zack Mohamed (CIO), Rick Paul (Pleasant Valley NA), Antonio Ramirez Subiria (Latino Network), Mark Sieber (NWNW), Alison Stoll (CNN).

**ONI Staff:** Amalia Alarcon de Morris (Director), Amy Archer (Livability/Operations), Richard Bixby (EPNO), Michael Boyer (Livability), Jacob Brostoff (Crime Prevention, AFSCME Local 189), Celeste Carey (Crime Prevention), Polo Catalani (CNIC), Kathy Couch (Livability), Brian Hoop (CNIC), Ashley Horne (CNIC), Michael Kersting (Admin), Paul Leistner (CNIC), Eliza Lindsay (EPNO), Arolia McSwain (CNIC/Livability), Juliette Muracchioli (Livability), Stephanie Reynolds (Crime Prevention), Victor Salinas (Livability), Yolanda Sanchez (Crime Prevention), Doretta Schrock (NPNS), Lisha Shrestha (CNIC), Teresa Solano (I&R)

**Other:** Kristin Lensen (Facilitator), Commissioner Amanda Fritz, Jessica Kinard (City Budget Office)

**Welcome and Introductions**

General introductions, including introduction of Kristin Lensen as facilitator for the BAC meetings during this budget development.

Purpose of the meeting is to provide context for the full Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) to make FY 2016-17 budget recommendations that actualize our commitment to equity, regardless of required budget cuts. This is context setting for the rest of the BAC meetings through January while we develop budget.

Kristin reviewed the Agenda. We will have a parking lot available for things that we don't have time to discuss. Spend a few minutes with retreat overview. Slight change to printed agenda as we moved up an activity to introduce to ONI Budget guiding

statement section so can discuss some over the break. Also connect with retreat members during the break.

Amalia – provided a welcome again to past participants and to new participants. Facing a budget cut year, part of work we need to do is ground ourselves in our vision for where we are headed. Find where cuts can come from to least slow down momentum towards reaching that goal. Then where are we headed next and strategy moving forward as City moves through budget process. ONI back in Fritz portfolio and she will attend all our budget meetings to hear directly from us and so we can hear directly from her. End up with a much better product and she is only Commissioner we've had that has done that, participate throughout.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz –

- Thanks for being here and dedicating so much time. Honored to be commissioner again, and was paying attention even when not assigned ONI.
- Much better supporting it on Council when I understand and can whole heartedly support it.
- Had 4 yrs of budget cuts, then another bad year in 2013, okay in 2014 and 2015, but now facing cuts again.
- Several reasons of need to cut and CBO will provide more detail. 1) housing crisis. Mayor and 2 colleagues declared emergency for people who are living outside. In fall budget vote, Council said they would put \$5million ongoing into housing. The City in the past 7 years have tripled housing budget – from \$7million when she first started and now \$21million. That is more than ONI gets but less than we need for housing. Federal level cut 75% and not restored, continues to cut. All agree we should put more money into housing but leaves no ongoing for other needs. 2) DOJ settlement. Need to do a lot of work to make sure services are safe, mostly federal mandates. 3) Parks budget – for decades Parks has over 2000 employees, most make little over minimum wage and receive no benefits, and until recently didn't get even sick leave. Parks services we all enjoy but people doing the work not compensated appropriately. Judge determined that it is bargaining unit work and need to be paid and receive benefits properly. Parks needs to reach 5% cut and figure out how to fund change in employees.
- Clarify ongoing versus onetime funding – ongoing is when we expect the service to continue and be funded 5 yrs or more. One time is shorter term, special circumstances, ongoing need that started with just one time funding (what we did with housing for a long time).
- Last year we had \$49million but a lot was one time. Fritz introduced and Council passed an ordinance that 50% goes into infrastructure maintenance. The City has a terrible mess with deferred maintenance. Other half went to housing and other pressing needs.

- The City can't go into deficit. We balance the budget each year, and with a lot of public input. It was not squandered. During recession we dug into every pocket and there is not much waste to trim throughout the City.
- It is very likely that we will have to take 5% cuts offered. Police and fire make more than ½ of budget and both are short staffed. Cut 50 positions in 2009 and haven't added back. Fire, got some positions funded through a grant but that ran out. Last year we put 13 positions back in and plan to put the additional 13 back in this year.
- Many circumstances that challenge us this year. We are in it together. Know the values that we represent and in this process come up with a strategy that none of us will like but we can all live with and then come back in future years to advocate strategically. Keep eye on the prize as it will be hard to not be distracted by the pain of budget cutting.
- There is anticipated to be enough funds to cover \$5million ongoing to housing but not other priorities. Don't expect any new ongoing money. Challenge because we have things in our budget we hoped to turn into ongoing but it doesn't look like there will be capacity this year.

#### Questions for Commissioner:

- What is size of overall general fund budget? About \$490million discretionary
- Where did the extra come from? Property tax, business tax (come in April, guess now based on what anticipate)
- What about salem giving money? Short session this year, state does 2 year budget and won't be doing much this year since budget set. May be asking for some money relating to housing but won't be until 2017 that we will be able to lobby for funds.
- Do we need a bake sale? Will be looking at revenue productions. MJ is set for full cost recovery, weren't able to do that with other ONI programs so this is the first. Legislature said we can put 3% tax, and Council needs to decide whether we are proceeding but that is a potential new source of revenue as well.

#### Kristin provided an overview of some group guidelines for our meeting:

- Listen to understand rather than just to respond
- Each person's perspective is valid (for them) and valuable to this group. Say what is true for you while being respectful of others
- Provide feedback contextually..."As a Latino Network representative...", "a disability program staff mentor...", "a long time inner southeast district coalition person...". We all have different perspectives and can be helpful to understand that perspective

- Lean in- lean out – if have provided a lot of input the take a break and provide opportunity for others, and if you tend to be quieter then speak when comfortable so we can also hear your perspective
- Each person chooses their own level of participation and disclosure
- Honor the process. Have an aggressive agenda and want you to leave with enough info to prepare for the next meeting.

## **Retreat overview**

Purpose of retreat: Given ONI BAC's commitment to equity, discuss how to approach the budget development process of FY 2016-17, which requires budget cutting. Large part of day was spent developing recommendations and considering impacts. Also spent time increasing skills in talking about equity and being equity allies. How to talk to constituencies about equity. Participants all raised their hands.

Kristin provided a definition of systemic advantage. "Systemic advantage is the unspoken, unacknowledged and often invisible benefits that are available to a person through no action of their own. These benefits appear to those who have them to be available to any person who wants them. Systemic advantage is often more apparent to those who don't experience it." We all experience to different degrees, often don't recognize it. It isn't something you ask for, not something to feel guilty about. Just want to start thinking about those areas available and how do we use it to advance equity.

Example of Male Privilege – US context. The decision to hire me will never be based on the spoken or unspoken assumption about whether or not I might choose to have a family sometime soon. One way to use that privilege to achieve equity for others – As a person with male privilege, I will ask about the assumptions people are making about candidates (including my own) and the reasoning behind it. If family is raised spoken or unspoken, I will say "I wonder why we are concerned with "family" for this candidate and not the other candidate.

I don't have to worry as often about the threat of rape or violence due to my gender. It is never an undercurrent thought that impedes me from moving about freely in this world. I will use my male privilege to promote my male privilege to promote men working with boys and men to stop violence against girls and women.

Example of Class privilege – US context. People aren't surprised if they realize you are intelligent, hard-working or honest. I will catch myself "being surprised" and question my own assumptions.

Politicians pay attention to my class, and fight for my vote in election seasons. I can publicly advocate for individuals/groups/communities that do not share in my "class clout" and make support of their issues a requirement for my vote.

Example of white privilege – US Context. I can go shopping alone most of the time, fairly well assured that I will not be followed or harassed by store personnel or security. As a person with white privilege, I will pay attention to this dynamic and call it to peoples attention taking progressive action as needed.

I can go home from most meetings at organizations I belong to feeling somewhat connected...rather than isolated, out of place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance or feared. As a person with white privilege I can personally invite people of color to gatherings, make sure topics will be relevant & important to them, located in a space comfortable for them, and if and how they would like to be involved in planning and leading gatherings. \* add to that make a space for their voice to be heard.

Ability Privilege –US Context. When I leave my house I rarely think about whether I will be able to navigate sidewalks. I will use my ability privilege by leaving notes on cars obstructing sidewalks. If problem continues, I will call PBOT's Parking enforcement to request car to be ticketed/towed.

As a currently healthy person, I don't have to think about my daily pain level when planning or attending events and activities. As a facilitator with ability privilege, I will consider health factors in meeting design, room set-up and food.

Amalia provided some general context for retreat. We did it last year pulling ONI staff and partners and felt it was valuable for relationship building as well as getting started on budgets involving staff whose jobs could be on the line.

## **BAC Activity**

The participants paired off in twos and were given the following case scenario instructions:

**Case Scenario:** A “5% cut across the board” is being proposed to Council. Your task is to convince us why the program you represent should be exempt from cuts.

**Process:** Find someone from a different program. Each person takes turn as speaker and listener.

### Conversation 1, 15m

**Speaker:** provides critical information, key talking points.

What is the justification for your program to be exempt from cuts?

**Listener:** listen to understand, clarify meaning, advocate.

What does that mean?

Why is that important?

What are the most compelling reasons for program to be exempt from cuts?

This is what I heard...

**Feedback from exercise:**

- Great to talk to somebody you didn't know
- Shocked city has so many part time employees that don't have benefits
- All programs don't want to lose people, care about staff we have and also want communities we serve to get the service they need
- Found out about some amazing things EPNO has been up to that I wasn't aware of. Took some risk and made good decisions.
- A number of good ideas haven't heard before, different people with different perspectives.
- Commonalities with deep rooted interests. Easy to make assumptions about what programs are about, narrow our vision and don't have full vision.

ONI distributed recommendations from retreat to review over break, will discuss further later in meeting. Recommendations available at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/557869>.

**Guiding statements**

Amalia provided an overview regarding the goal of setting some guiding statements for budget development. The steering committee met and had a conversation about fact that every year we get together to do budget and set guidelines and each time reinventing the wheel, despite fact that our budget decisions have been pretty consistent. Amalia approached the steering committee with her hope that we could establish something to provide as a framework for multiple years, and came up with a recommendation for a framework. There is not a lot of time to go in depth but hope to see if we can reach some agreements. We have red/green/yellow cards for voting if we proceed with votes – green is no qualms or can live with it, red absolutely not, if have questions or aren't sure then yellow then we discuss further. Goal is to get to as many greens as possible whenever we have a BAC vote.

ONI provided a graphic explanation for the funding equity issue and goal not to make the gap any bigger. Visual available at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/557870>.

This is status quo and what we have heard from the BAC throughout past 7 yrs. Priority programs of Diversity and Civic Leadership and all District Coalitions are underfunded. Shows where we are and what we might get to. Do people want to vote on this? May not need to since illustrates what we have repeatedly agreed to during budget.

Commissioner Fritz stated that there are some things she just cannot support. She is not going to make the gap wider. Does not support cutting the inflation increases and COLA – City staff have to take them, so to have partners give it up is unreasonable. Don't want to do something only specific to ONI and/or our partners. Can't in good conscience go to Council and support something that forces ONI or partners to do something not being done Citywide.

The following values were provided visually for review, also available online at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/557872>

- All ONI partners are equally important and doing great work. All are inadequately funded.
- We will continue to hold moving towards and achieving equity as our highest priority.
- We are taking a phased approach to funding equity. First step is to reach base funding for both coalitions and DCL partners. This is not the end point, it is only the first step towards equity.
- In a cut year, it may not be possible to move towards equity. At a minimum, we will not increase the inequities.
- We will not take money from one organization to fund another.
- We will not increase the burden on our most underfunded partners.
- We will try to safeguard individual people currently employed doing jobs, whenever possible.
- Elders, Youth, Disability and Resolutions NW are part of our system, as well as coalitions and DCL partners. We will not disproportionately cut funding to any valued partner.
- We will make our recommendations based on lessons learned in previous cut budgets.
- We will not take cuts in ONI that are not shared by staff in other bureaus and other contracts.
- We may suggest cuts that ONI would be willing to take if shared by other bureaus and contracts, if those cuts would promote equity throughout the City.
- We will not allow adverse circumstances and a scarcity mind-set to pit us against each other.
- We will think of the good of the whole system, rather than only our own slice. We will advocate for partners before advocating for ourselves.
- We will strive to propose a Budget Advisory Committee recommendation that both community members and the Commissioner will support.

**Questions/Discussion:**

- What do you mean by equity? Everyone has service to achieve potential. Expansion on dcl, coalition, community beyond neigh boundaries.
- What does equity mean between Coalitions and DCL? Equity means each program has what it needs to do the best job possible to meet their constituency's needs. How we determine funding needs varies between programs and communities served. Have to get to baseline first to move towards equity. Example of EPNO – enormous population that wasn't there when we first started funding coalition. Unlikely to get there this cycle (phased approach). Elders, youth etc each have an advocate on council. Fritz is interested in recommendations for things we could be doing citywide. Want to get to point where we all agree and can support what is submitted.
- What about disproportionately cutting some programs? If we've learned that Elders for example has strong advocates then do we put up as strategic? Washington monument vs don't annoy your decision makers – if they just funded something then don't put up something that will antagonize.
- Amalia stated that she is not saying can't propose something contrary to these principles, but will have to explain how it doesn't meet but may still be a decision we should make. Discuss all options but want to have some agreement that these principles, which have actually been in operation for many years but not captured, that it will be a guiding principle this year and will be next year too. Avoid reinventing each year.
- A lot of principles – may have to fudge some in order to reach 5% cut because can't meet all of them. So when we decide to go against one of the principles then we know it and know why. Gonna do our best to honor
- Not having a printed copy make it hard to consider. Do we need time to think about them, especially if future year? Wanted to leave open for additions/subtractions before printing them. Important to have people hear them now before taking info home to recommend cuts and consider recommendations.

**ACTION-** Will send list out electronically. If questions in advance of meeting send to us. First order on January 4th meeting will be to get agreement on guiding principles.

### **Budget Basics**

Time was short, but Amy Archer quickly reviewed the budget basics presentation to give an overview of budget instructions and next steps. Presentation available online at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/557777>. Participants are also encouraged to review materials in the budget notebooks (will have more at the January meeting, and docs also available online at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/68976>. Please review the BAC Orientation and general expectations for participants at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/557776>.

ONI is looking at a 5% cut to our overall budget, which would require a cut just under \$400,000. The recommendations from the retreat were referenced as a starting point, but all participants are also asked to develop cut ideas and send them to Amy at [amy.archer@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:amy.archer@portlandoregon.gov) by December 29, 2015 (during meeting a different date of 12/30 was provided but it was adjusted in the notes to match the real deadline). A cut template is provided at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/article/557871>. Please complete a form for each idea, or a combination of ideas to reach a target. If you have questions or want to provide supplemental information please contact Amy.

Due to limited time, the City Budget Office presentation was put on hold and will be included in the January meeting.