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NOISE REVIEW BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date of meeting:	11/13/2024
Start time:	6:03 PM
End Time:	8:06 PM
Location:	Zoom - Meeting ID: 880 2876 6900

I. Meeting Attendees

	Participants	Attendance
Board Members	Mary Sipe – Chair	☒Present ☐ Absent
	Derek Trost - Community Member At-Large	☒Present ☐ Absent
	Alex Marine - Professional in Acoustics	☒Present ☐ Absent
	Michael Diltz - Community Member At-Large	☒Present ☐ Absent
	Reeder Rice - Professional in Construction	☒Present ☐ Absent
Nonvoting Members	Paul Van Orden - Noise Control Officer	☒Present ☐ Absent
City Staff	Beth Benton – Manager Property Compliance Division	☒Present ☐ Absent
	Juliette Olivella Lopez – Noise Program Coordinator	☐Present ☒ Absent

II. Introductions

The Noise Review Board Chair, Mary Sipe, started the meeting by introducing herself and conducting a roll call of board members. Mary read the City Attorney's statement on conduct during meetings, emphasizing decorum, public testimony limits (3 minutes per person), and rules against disruptive conduct.
Mary noted that two board members would be arriving late but proceeded since there was a quorum.

III. Review and approval of previous minutes

Mary moved to the approval of the meeting minutes from October. She asked Reeder and Michael if they had reviewed the minutes, and both confirmed they had but no edits. Mary noted that Derek and Alex were absent and deferred the approval of the minutes until the next meeting to allow them to review and provide feedback.

IV. Public comments

No public comments.

V. FY 24/25 Q1 Complaints Report

Mary turned the meeting to city staff updates, starting with the fiscal year 2024-2025 Q1 noise complaint report, which Juliette sent previously to the meeting to the Board members.

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Paul explained some particularities in the report and indicated that the numbers were in line with the previous year, with an average of 143 complaints per month for the previous fiscal year. He noted that they had approximately five complaints per day on average. He observed that recorded music and live music were still the main sources of complaints. Paul mentioned that the visual representation of the data was helpful in showing busy periods and noted there were periodic weekend spikes in complaints. He pointed out that alarm calls had increased slightly in recent years, and he was surprised there had not been more HVAC-related complaints as the city emerged from the pandemic. He also mentioned construction complaints seemed to be slowing down, and he suggested that this could be due to a decrease in construction activity in the city. Paul expressed he appreciated the heat maps, which showed noise activity across the city and provided insight into areas with the most intense noise levels.

Michael asked Paul if the trend of northeast and southeast having higher percentages of complaints was due to density, or if there were other reasons. Paul responded that it was partially due to density but also a socioeconomic factor. He explained that in wealthier neighborhoods, residents are more likely to raise complaints, while less affluent neighborhoods may experience similar issues but fewer complaints. He noted the combination of density and socioeconomic status contributed to the trend.

Reeder asked Paul to clarify what "HVAC" meant in the data, whether it referred to an established unit or an installation. Paul explained HVAC was a catch-all term for mechanical equipment such as fans, heating, and cooling systems and that it could apply to anything from restaurant roof fans to residential equipment like heat pumps or radon remediation devices.

Mary commented she had analyzed the PIR noise complaints, particularly in North Portland, and found complaints consistently ranked high among all noise complaints in the area. She felt this analysis helped with the subcommittee's work on understanding the impact of racetrack noise relative to other noise disturbances in the area.

There were no more comments regarding the report.

VI. Discussion: Title 18 Amendments - section 18.12 Noises Prohibited & 18.18 Enforcement and Penalties

Beth introduced the topic and explained some minor edits made due to the language, such as changing "shall" to "will," as per the city attorney's office.

She noted that staff had raised questions, and the Noise Advisory Workgroup had made comments, particularly regarding noisy animals. She mentioned the challenges in enforcing noise complaints related to animals, especially dog daycare centers, where it is difficult to measure and manage noise levels. The group had suggested that animal-related noise be handled by the county, which licenses daycare centers, rather than by the city.

Mary asked Paul if he ever received complaints about chickens or roosters. Paul responded that complaints about such animals were rare and usually referred to vector control, as there were no specific animal facilities for chickens or roosters anymore. Beth added that while coops were regulated based on

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property lines and the number of fowl, the noise from the animals themselves was handled by county vector control.

Beth said that most of the problems stem from roosters, as they are not supposed to be kept. Hens, on the other hand, can make some noise, but it is not that significant. She mentioned she has a neighbor with chickens, and she enjoys hearing them in the morning. She has been living in the area for 6 years and does not recall many complaints about rooster crowing, although there have been one or two. However, there are more complaints about dogs, particularly barking dogs. Beth suggested recommending that enforcement of the noise rule be the responsibility of Multnomah County animal control, making it clear that people need to control their animals or livestock to avoid noise. She noted that enforcement would not be handled by them, but they would refer complaints to the county.

Beth then addressed the issue of doggy daycares, which are permitted animal facilities allowed in commercial zones but not residential areas. Sometimes there are complaints from adjacent properties when a daycare is operating, but it is a commercial facility, which is a different situation compared to residential complaints about dogs barking.

Mary compared the current language with recent changes made to city codes due to charter reform. She mentioned that City Council had been going through all the codes and updating them to reflect changes like the replacement of "Bureau director" with "city administrator." She asked Beth if the changes made would be incorporated into their work. Beth responded that she would start with the updated version when finalizing the draft in 2025. She noted the city clerk would provide the updated version, and she would go through the draft, making the necessary changes.

Mary further explained her concerns about some of the changes made during the charter reform, particularly regarding the responsibilities of the noise officer. She noted that City Council had moved some of the noise officer's responsibilities to the city administrator, which raised concerns. She expressed the need to fix these changes. Beth clarified that the original wording was not meant to be taken literally, as the director was never expected to be in the field handling inspections and warrants. She explained that the city administrator is responsible for day-to-day operations, and the term "Bureau director" was just a placeholder. Mary agreed but mentioned the wording was misleading.

Beth explained that in government codes, it is common for roles to be delegated, such as city managers appointing program managers, supervisors, and officers who already have powers written into their job descriptions. She acknowledged the concern but stated the wording was technically correct, though they may fine-tune it during the final rewrite.

Beth then moved on to discuss amplified sound, noting that they cleaned up some wording and flagged the need to add the word "amplified" to the definition section. She mentioned amplification doesn't always require electricity, using a bullhorn as an example. They also included wording about the use of outdoor loudspeakers, stating that outdoor broadcasts, such as emergency sirens or outdoor events, would be allowed with proper permits. Beth provided the example of a parade, where an announcer could speak while discussing floats.

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Mary raised questions about outdoor speakers, particularly in restaurants with outdoor seating areas playing music for customers. Beth confirmed it would apply to such situations. Mary mentioned the issue with street closures and outdoor speakers, specifically on Northwest 13th, and how the City Council had directed her to the noise office to address outdoor speakers. She expressed happiness this might be a way to address the issue.

Mary also acknowledged that having outdoor speakers prohibited would make it easier to enforce noise regulations. Beth mentioned that it would be better to have a clear prohibition than dealing with enforcement. Mary added that if speakers were prohibited, they wouldn't have to handle the issue, and if someone wanted to hear the music, they could sit inside the restaurant.

There were no more comments on this topic and Beth then moved on to discuss parked motor vehicles making noise. She stated they decided to remove language that seemed counterproductive and unnecessary, as commercial construction equipment was covered in other parts of the code.

Paul explained that the philosophical change in this section was to address restaurants and food deliveries at night, where refrigeration units might be running during deliveries. He said they needed to find a way to word it correctly so that food deliveries, particularly for dairy and meats, would be allowed without causing issues.

Paul then proposed potentially renaming the section to "parked motor vehicles/ idling vehicles" to clarify the focus on idling trucks, which he thought might be more easily understood by the public. Mary agreed with this suggestion.

Mary shared her own experience with refrigerated trucks delivering food early in the morning, sometimes idling for 30-45 minutes and waking up her neighbors. She asked if removing this section would mean that such situations could be considered a violation of the noise code if someone complained but there were no specific answers and the Noise team would review that concern.

Mary also noted that trucks often idle early in the morning, which had been a problem during prior construction. She mentioned that this could be a violation of the noise code, particularly in the case of idling trucks.

Reeder expressed sympathy for the difficulty of navigating large delivery trucks in dense areas like the Pearl District. He acknowledged that sitting and idling are not necessary, but he was unsure how strict the rules could be for people working in those conditions. He mentioned that while the noise from trucks may be a nuisance, he agreed they shouldn't idle or play radios while waiting.

Derek remarked the issue seems to revolve around whether delivery trucks are actively engaged in construction activities or idling during large gaps of time and he suggested that during those gaps, there may be a valid case for considering the trucks as not engaged in activities, and the noise from unloading would then be a part of the process.

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Reeder agreed with Derek's point.

Paul added that in dense neighborhoods like the Pearl District, many construction sites pull noise variances for early morning deliveries. He emphasized that larger firms tend to be compliant, but without a system in place to enforce noise regulations, it might be challenging to manage the noise from smaller companies.

Mary commented that if every delivery required a noise variance, it would be a difficult and ongoing process.

Kerrie Standlee shared an experience from the past involving dairy trucks. Kerrie explained that these trucks would have auxiliary equipment running to pump milk, which could be a source of noise rather than the truck engine itself. Kerrie wondered if the current language in the document addressed this issue of auxiliary equipment or if removing that clause could help capture such noise.

Derek agreed with Kerrie's point and noted that delivery was not mentioned in the current document, suggesting that it should be included.

Beth responded that she added the issue of idling delivery vehicles to the list while the group was discussing the topic. She mentioned trying to capture different aspects of the noise concern in her notes.

Derek suggested rewording the term to clarify it should cover delivery vehicles not actively engaged in their tasks.

Beth agreed with Derek and emphasized that the issue includes auxiliary equipment like pumps used on delivery vehicles.

Reeder noted that larger companies generally comply with noise regulations and obtain the necessary variances for unloading. However, he raised concerns about the smaller companies, such as those doing curb work, which may not be as strict about safety requirements. He mentioned that smaller firms may not be required to follow the same regulations, but the noise remains the same.

Reeder clarified that he had heard that smaller companies might not be as strictly enforced, even though larger companies are closely monitored.

Beth confirmed that she believed OSHA applied to all companies, regardless of size, but noted that enforcement might be lacking for smaller firms.

Reeder shared his experience working on federal projects, where OSHA was strict about safety measures, including fines for minor violations, like missing a cap on an aerosol can.

Mary briefly raised a point about refrigeration, stating that she didn't think refrigeration units could be turned off, as they are essential for deliveries, and the noise is a necessary part of the process.

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Beth agreed with Mary but emphasized the key issue was whether the noise was audible inside a dwelling unit and setting appropriate times for when this noise could occur.

Beth also acknowledged the dense nature of downtown areas where large trucks make significant noise, especially when making deliveries at night, which may be necessary due to traffic during the day.

Mary said that the Pearl District is unique because there isn't daytime traffic anymore, which brings up issues with dB and zoning that need further discussion. She also mentioned that restaurants need to get deliveries early in the day to prepare for service.

Beth then introduced the next section regarding when the noise officer or an assigned noise inspector takes a reading or measurement. She noted that this section supersedes the previous one, and the reading information is used to determine if a violation exists. Beth also suggested rewording the section because it wasn't clear who was taking the reading, and she recommended adding that a noise officer or inspector should be specified. She raised a question about whether this section was necessary, since Paul typically decides on enforcement based on the complaint type and whether there is a variance. She pointed out that sometimes it's hard to separate ambient noise from the complaint noise, especially when Paul doesn't have time to capture a reading.

Paul agreed that it might be useful to keep the section in some form. He explained that it serves as a protection for the city when writing citations based on citizen complaints, using the audibility standards in the code for things like construction noise or amplified sound after 10 p.m. He mentioned that sometimes, even when he doesn't have time to calibrate the meter, he can hear noise from a distance that is too loud, and the meter can provide legal protection both for and against the business. If they can't capture a reading because the sound stops when they arrive, the officer can still testify that the noise was too loud.

Beth Benton acknowledged Paul's point.

Derek added that while the audibility standard is useful, it opens up debates about whether it's constitutionally sound and fair for enforcement. He pointed out that "plainly audible" sounds may not violate any ordinance, and such complaints could hurt businesses. Derek noted that even a complaint about a nightclub, regardless of validity, could result in marks on the business's record, which could eventually affect their liquor license.

Beth responded that she oversees the liquor program and that noise issues are only considered when violent crimes are involved, such as shootings, stabbings, or assaults. She emphasized that complaints about noise alone are not used to take away liquor licenses unless there is a violent crime tied to the business. She mentioned that there is a revision process happening within the program to focus on significant crimes, not minor noise complaints, and she believed this approach was more appropriate.

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Derek expressed his his excitement about the improvements being made and hoped the cooperative efforts would be successful. He also acknowledged that the city should not be targeting businesses for minor noise complaints but should focus on more serious issues.

Beth said that, so far, the process had been working well, with only violent crimes linked to businesses being pursued. She mentioned that there are ongoing efforts to revamp wording in the code for clearer language and more transparency. She also said that the process is still evolving, with changes expected next year to improve clarity and requirements.

Beth also stated she was not going to defend past actions but expressed her commitment to leaving the situation better than she found it. She emphasized the need to ensure that the code section addresses noise protection for the public and that the noise program should be validated by decibel levels.

Derek expressed optimism about the reform efforts.

Beth then mentioned she had captured Derek and Paul's points and needed to reference something for future understanding. She moved on, thanking Derek for bringing up his concerns.

Mary asked to revisit the amplified sound section, querying if it had been relied upon for street musician issues and how it would impact future actions.

Paul clarified that no matter the outcome of the discussions, the city would still be able to respond appropriately, ensuring that the audibility standard would not be abused. He assured that enforcement would still be possible for situations like loud street performances and that the DA's office would support enforcement.

Beth noted that had captured the discussion and moved on to the next section.

Beth highlighted the importance of differentiating enforcement on public property versus private property, especially for fines and liens. She explained that citations currently applied to all property types, but her proposal would separate enforcement for public and private property, following state law and existing enforcement protocols.

Beth clarified she had restructured the citations section, creating two types: citations for public property enforcement and notices of violation for private property. This change followed legal guidelines and improved clarity, especially for handling properties with repeat offenders.

Beth explained further about adding definitions for penalties, citations, and fines and elaborated on how violations would be verified. She stated that citations would be issued for public property violations and emphasized the need for police involvement to issue citations with court appearances.

Beth also proposed revising the section on civil penalties and adding new language to address repeated violations of public property. She outlined a process for reviewing these violations with the city attorney

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and submitting them to the DA's office for prosecution. This policy was meant to enhance transparency and accountability, especially for repeat offenders like street performers. She reflected on a previous case where this process was used, and though it took considerable effort, she believed it was important to formalize it in the code.

Paul expressed the main concern was ensuring clarity on who is issuing citations, whether it's the Noise Control Officer or the police officer. He noted that Portland's music industry was questioning the role of the officers involved in issuing citations. He clarified that the Noise Control Officer can ask for identification, but due to the lack of a lead system, the officer's presence was necessary to ensure proper handling of citations, especially in cases where individuals may have outstanding warrants.

Beth acknowledged the need for police involvement, explaining that without proper identification, they couldn't issue a citation. She mentioned that, legally, only police officers can ask for identification. She agreed with Paul's point about ensuring citations are issued correctly, noting that the presence of officers is necessary for safety and legal reasons.

Paul then mentioned that historically, they relied on the officer's help in situations where the Noise Control Officer may not have all the necessary information, such as checking for warrants.

Kerrie Standlee questioned why a police officer was necessary if the Noise Control Officer was already designated as a special police officer. He suggested the wording might need to be clarified to distinguish the roles and mentioned that there could be a need for deputies if the wording allowed for that. Beth responded, noting that she didn't have the information immediately at hand but would make a note to capture the comment.

Paul responded that their goal was to ensure citations were issued properly and highlighted the importance of having officers present in case there were additional issues beyond the noise violation, like outstanding warrants. He shared an example where street musicians had warrants unrelated to noise, leading to arrests.

The conversation then shifted, with Beth noting that Title 18 should provide clarity and suggested cross-referencing sections to ensure users can find relevant information easily. Derek emphasized the importance of making the code more accessible and suggested combining or cross-referencing relevant sections. Beth agreed with the need for cross-referencing to help users navigate the code effectively.

Paul introduced the idea of approaching noise enforcement in an ethical, equitable, and health-centered manner, especially considering changes in policing practices. He mentioned that tightening the code could offer the community comfort by ensuring actions are taken responsibly and with mental health and behavioral considerations in mind.

Derek mentioned the issue of fairness and enforcement related to plainly audible standards, referring to code section 14.8.30. He discussed the challenge of balancing what is advantageous for enforcement and what is fair.

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Beth likened the audibility standard to a symptom, comparing it to mold, something visible that requires further measurement to confirm if there is a real issue. She agreed with Derek's point regarding the need for a clearer code stating that adjacent sounds could be plainly audible and still be a violation.

Beth then addressed the topic of repeated violations, sharing an example of a couple protesting downtown regularly. She noted that the issue could apply to both residential and commercial properties.

Derek sought clarification on repeated violations, asking if they referred to multiple citations or documented events. Beth clarified that violations could be logged and documented, even if a citation was not issued every time. Derek suggested that clearer language, such as "repeated documented violations," would be helpful.

Beth acknowledged the complexity of enforcement. Derek expressed concern about the helplessness of the situation, questioning what to do if the DA's office doesn't take action.

Beth mentioned that the new District Attorney could bring a fresh approach, and she remained hopeful that they would follow through with enforcement. Derek shared his skepticism, having heard similar promises from the previous DA who failed to take action. He noted that Nathan Vasquez, the new DA, had made similar promises during his campaign.

Mary shared her confidence in Nathan Vasquez, citing her long-term involvement with him in community efforts. She felt he would take a different approach and pointed out that part of the issue in the past had been the failure to prosecute cases after police arrests.

Beth recalled how the previous DA had dropped a case despite having two years' worth of evidence, readings, and citations. Derek noted that the promises made during Nathan Vasquez's campaign echoed those of the previous DA, expressing doubts that they would be followed through on.

Reeder emphasized that actions speak louder than words, and while there was skepticism, it was important to give the new DA a chance to prove his approach.

Beth pointed out that the new DA had shown community engagement even before his campaign, which Mary also confirmed. Mary further emphasized that her confidence in Nathan Vasquez came from years of involvement with him, not just his campaign.

Finally, Beth provided clarity on how violations would be handled on private property, whether residential or commercial. She explained that property owners would receive a notice of violation or a warning letter if a violation occurred.

Derek expressed the transformation of the enforcement mechanism was positive and powerful, and it would work better.

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Beth stated she preferred property owners and tenants to work out their issues themselves and contact the office if they need guidance. She mentioned that Paul is available to educate and suggest options for compliance to avoid disturbing neighbors. She explained the legal process of issuing citations, which are either hand-delivered or mailed, and noted that the deadline for compliance is still to be determined. She highlighted that the Noise Advisory Workgroup believed 15 days was reasonable, but staff leaned towards 30 days, as other enforcement programs typically have 30 or 60-day deadlines. She asked for input on this matter.

Derek responded he believed a shorter timeframe was better, especially for noise-based issues, as they tend to be long-standing problems. He suggested that 15 days might seem long in some contexts and appreciated the thought of a shorter deadline. Mary confirmed that 15 business days was roughly equivalent to three weeks. Beth clarified that some sections of the code mentioned days, but it needed to be clear whether these were calendar days or business days. She favored using business days for clarity.

Derek pointed out that business days could confuse if they were tied to when the city is open, especially during holidays. Beth explained that holidays would be accounted for by extending deadlines. She shared her goal of showing in court that the city tried to work with the violators, even giving extra days due to holidays. Derek suggested considering 10 business days as a deadline, which Mary Sipe supported, equating it to two weeks.

Paul suggested that while a shorter timeframe was beneficial, there was a precedent in Portland for using multiple citations in a single day, citing an example with the Barrel Room, where repeated citations resolved the issue. Beth added that it was not ideal to offer such aggressive enforcement but mentioned that liens on properties could be an effective deterrent. She explained that the city could foreclose on properties with unpaid fines, although they wouldn't do so for occupied homes.

Derek realized that the deadline for compliance was trickier than a shorter engagement period. He proposed that the deadline for contacting the Noise Office be shorter, like five days, to encourage quicker resolution. Beth cautioned against five days due to postal service requirements and the time needed for legal notices to reach out-of-town property owners.

Derek reflected on situations like nightclubs where ongoing issues might lead to complaints and questioned whether there was a process to encourage owners to make improvements in response to complaints. Beth confirmed that this was part of the notice process and that tenants and owners could contact the office for guidance on compliance options.

Derek expressed he would like to see language in the code encouraging improvements or positive behavior changes from property owners, such as offering them an incentive for resolving the issue.

Beth acknowledged his suggestion and thanked him for the input. She then shifted to the next topic regarding civil penalties, fines, and fees, stating that if the issue is not resolved, citations and fees would be issued. She mentioned a published fee schedule that is adjusted annually to cover the cost of doing business and is approved by the city council.

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Paul briefly mentioned that this approach had been used when they last worked with BDS and PPD. He highlighted its effectiveness, especially with limited staff, as it offers an enforcement tool to ensure that problems are addressed by the parties involved.

Beth discussed the process for collecting penalties, noting that they send unpaid fines to revenue after 60 days, who then handle billing and place liens on the property. She explained that owners can contact revenue, but the conversation would be referred back to the Noise Office if necessary. She further explained that the legal wording had been updated to better align with other sections of City Code and that they had restructured the sections regarding private and public property. She also explained the appeal process for violation reviews, stating that anyone can appeal a violation, which now goes through the City Hearings Office instead of directly to the Council, as Council members are not experts in noise or zoning cases. The hearings office serves as a neutral, quasi-judicial body, and appeals from that office go directly to court. Beth also explained that, under the current process, Council is no longer burdened with hearing these appeals, allowing for more specialized and appropriate hearings.

Derek raised concerns based on his personal experience with variance applications through BDS, stating that the process had been a "nightmare" with unclear decision-making. Beth clarified that the situation he referred to involve a separate appeals board for building permits and plans, which was distinct from the hearings office. Derek then asked whether there were any fees associated with lodging an appeal, and Beth explained that there used to be fees but that they were removed during the pandemic. She clarified that while fees could be applied in cases taken to court, the hearings office does not charge a fee for lodging an appeal. She further explained that the hearings office can impose additional penalties, depending on the case, and that the office has the discretion to adjust the fees depending on the owner's actions.

Derek asked whether citizens engaging in the process had the same opportunities as city staff with lawyers, suggesting that City council might offer a fairer platform for appeals. Beth explained that the hearings office is a neutral body, and Derek acknowledged the clarification. Mary Sipe pointed out that Derek might be confusing appeals for noise variance cases with the broader appeals process that Beth was referring to. Derek noted that citizens might perceive City council as a fairer venue because it consists of elected officials. Beth clarified that the hearings office is a neutral third-party office separate from city staff, and that cases can be appealed to the Circuit Court if necessary. She further emphasized that council members were not equipped to rule on noise cases, as they lack the necessary technical expertise, and that the hearings office operates with a more specific legal framework, ensuring fairer and more specialized decisions.

Derek expressed he understood the logistical improvements made for the city process but felt that for a layperson appealing, it wasn't an even playing field. He pointed out that the process might be difficult for someone without the resources or expertise, even if they had a legitimate appeal.

Beth responded it was no different than navigating a lawsuit in the private sector without an attorney. She mentioned that when people involved in appeals have an attorney, the city also has one to level the playing field. She emphasized that the Ombudsman’s office is there to assist the public.

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Derek agreed but explained that his concern was more about the staff's interpretation of the spirit of the code versus how a layperson might read it. He expressed that he would prefer elected officials to be involved in making decisions based on the spirit of the code, rather than city officials.

Beth responded that these decisions were based on legal matters, and that elected officials set policy rather than deciding on enforcement cases. She explained how charter reform shifted these responsibilities, emphasizing that public officials should focus on larger policy issues, while the administration handles the day-to-day operations.

Derek agreed but pointed out that a shift toward stronger geographical representation in city Council might better equip elected officials to advocate for their districts. Beth agreed but emphasized that her perspective was more about policy change rather than legal decisions.

Derek noted his preference for a different process but appreciated Beth capturing his concerns, emphasizing the importance of healthy debate. Beth assured him that the ideas were not being set in stone and that the conversation was part of a larger discussion.

Beth captured Derek's sentiment and briefly mentioned that once all options in the code are exhausted, the city attorney could take a case to court for any final rulings. She added that the fees for enforcement were public and available on the applications, emphasizing transparency.

Mary interrupted to mention the importance of staying on schedule and said she had something to add later in the meeting.

VII. Work Plan Updates

Michael, one of the new Board members, asked about public comment time. He noticed that no public comment period had been allotted during the discussion and inquired whether it depended on the meeting type. Beth explained that public comments were typically addressed at the beginning, but no one had chosen to speak. Mary confirmed that one individual attending often for educational purposes had not spoken.

Mary further explained the process for public comment during agenda items, where public input is solicited after the board has discussed each item. She noted that the individuals who dropped off the meeting were likely there just to observe, as they didn't stay for the discussion on the Title 18 amendments.

Mary then clarified some confusion about the work session in January and confirmed that the joint work session with the PIR Subcommittee would be on January 22nd. This meeting would focus on presenting the final recommendations from the subcommittee.

Derek mentioned for the new board members, that the board is not bound to the recommendations from the PIR Subcommittee. However, a lot of time and energy was put into it, and all stakeholders were

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represented. The Board voted on who was part of the subcommittee, but it is up to the Board to consider those recommendations.

Mary agreed, stating that next meeting would be the Board's opportunity to accept, approve, or possibly make additional recommendations, and discuss the next steps.

Mary then asked if there was any new business or if anyone had questions but there were no more comments

VIII. Adjournment

NRB Chair Mary Sipe adjourned the meeting at 8:06 PM

Document Version Control Table

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