Government Transition Advisory Committee
Additional Recommendations Workgroup Meeting #2
January 22, 2025, 12:00 p.m.
Minutes

Attendance

Workgroup Members					
Name	Present	Absent	Name	Present	Absent
Amy Randel	X		Terry Harris	X	
Juanita Santana		X	Juliet Hyams	X	
Jose Gamero-Georgeson	X		Bill Kinsey	X	
Fred Neal	X				

Staff Present
Julia Meier
Guillermo Rebolledo Salgado

Workgroup Business

Julia reviewed the agenda.

Motion. Motion to approve the January 10 meeting minutes.

- Motion from: Committee Member Fred
- Second: Committee Member Juliet
- None opposed, meeting minutes approved.

Workgroup To-Date & Timeline

Juliet reviewed the workgroup timeline. The workgroup first met January 10th when it identified four recommendations for drafting. On January 14th, the workgroup provided an update on the work to GTAC and received feedback. Volunteer members have drafted the recommendations. Recommendations were distributed last week. The goal of today's meeting is for the workgroup to agree to recommendations to forward for the GTAC's consideration and vote at its February 11th meeting.

Discuss and Vote on Additional Recommendations

The four draft recommendations were distributed last week – cost savings, budget report, code commission, and advisory bodies. On Saturday, Juanita sent suggested edits to the budget report recommendation.

Discussion of Additional Recommendations

<u>Draft recommendation #1 – cost savings</u>

The draft recommendation was shared on the screen.

Fred – as a drafter – said he went through the meeting notes and discussion, and tried to make the recommendation less specific about how to find cost savings and to incorporate into a public process that involved the mayor, administrator, and council and how it could be incorporated into the budget process. He recognizes the city administrator has already talked about cost savings in a recent memo.

Terry – as a drafter – said he wanted to tie it to the transition and that was done.

Discussion

- Bill asked about whether the ask for the mayor, city administrator, and council to act reconciles with the ask for a council-specific work session. Is reference to the council session necessary?
- Fred said Terry recommended the Finance Committee, but Fred thought that was too specific. Fred wants to ensure the public is involved.
- Julia reminded folks that Juliet recommended in the first workgroup meeting that there should be a public meeting where this conversation takes place.
- Jose recommended adding an acknowledgement that this work has already begun, ask that it continue, and acknowledge that it may take a long time. We should show that we are paying attention to what the City is doing.
- Fred expressed concern about recognizing that it will take a long time because there is urgency and there won't be time for complete a strategic plan. He agrees it will take years to completely de-silo the government.
- Julia said that the group could say both – recognize the work won't be concluded in one budget cycle and there is urgency that savings is found in the current budget cycle.
- Jose shared that it's important the work doesn't stop after June 30th.
- Amy recommended adding "recognize the transition to de-silo . . . " to make sure it starts with a verb.
- Amy recommended "in public or with the public" in place of "council or appropriate committee work session."

Proposed Changes

1. Start with a verb. "Recognize the transition to a . . .."
2. Add an acknowledgement that the City has begun this work and that the GTAC is asking for the work to continue, recognize both the urgency to find savings now and that it may take time to fully realize the efficiencies.
3. Delete the end of the final sentence to something more general like "in a public setting or that includes public involvement."

Motion. Motion to move the recommendation as amended by the proposed changes and wordsmithed.

- Motion from: Committee Member Terry

- Second: Committee Member Bill
- None opposed, motion passed unanimously.

Terry and Bill volunteered to work with Julia to revise the recommendation as agreed.

Draft recommendation #3 – code commission

The recommendations were taken out of order.

The draft recommendation was shared on the screen.

Terry – as the drafter – said the change he made was in response to the GTAC meeting that noted this is not an urgent thing. He also rearranged a couple of sentences.

Discussion

- Jose asked why it should be a permanent commission.
- Terry said that in most jurisdictions the work is never done, and it requires ongoing maintenance. He said that some jurisdictions put responsibility for code maintenance on one person, but Portland doesn't have that.
- Juliet suggested adding a timeframe, so it isn't entirely open ended because otherwise the commission won't happen.
- Fred suggested adding the auditor or their designee as an ex officio member because they look at how bureaus administer the codes they are responsible for. Fred likes the city attorney or their designee be ex officio.
- Bill wondered whether some of the code changes are high priority.
- Terry responded that a code commission can figure that out.
- Bill noted that the sentence means the code commission ensures the low priority code work does get done.

Proposed Changes

1. Add a timeframe for formation, could be within the next year.
2. Add the auditor or their designee as an ex officio member.

Motion. Motion to move the recommendation as amended by the proposed changes.

- Motion from: Committee Member Terry
- Second: Committee Member Amy
- None opposed, motion passed unanimously

Terry volunteered to work with Julia to revise the recommendation as agreed.

Draft recommendation #4 – advisory bodies

The draft recommendation was shared on the screen.

Terry – as the drafter – said based on the discussion at GTAC and the fact there were multiple recommendations embedded in one big recommendation, he rewrote it to capture all the ideas. He captured who is responsible for what, centralization and standardization, etc. Now it one recommendation to review and reform the City's approach to advisory bodies.

Discussion

- Bill asked if the reference to defining the responsibilities of Civic Life was only in respect to advisory bodies.
- Juliet responded to Bill that was correct.
- Bill then suggested adding to bullet 3 clarifying language.
- Amy recommended a new bullet point: "Consider mapping advisory bodies to ongoing renewed community engagement plan."
- Amy suggested editing the title of the recommendation to "Review and reform the City's overall approach to advisory bodies in the context of the new form of government and districted City Council representation and a renewed emphasis on system-wide community relations."
- Jose suggested one of the first bullet points should note that advisory bodies is one of the main ways the City does community engagement and have the first bullet be less obtuse.
- Jose shared that there are some demographics who cannot take stipends b/c stipends are considered income and instead say stipends or travel/expense reimbursements.
- Fred said that based on the recent Civic Life advisory body report, the City has already begun to sunset some obsolete bodies and is working on a systemic approach and suggested we recognize those efforts are underway.
- Fred remembered there was some discussion at the GTAC about an advisory committee on advisory committee and he doesn't think that's necessary if the Engagement Officer does their job well and thinks we should delete the final bullet.
- Terry wants to keep the reference to advisory body on advisory bodies because folks who serve on them have good advice.
- Fred is okay with the final bullet because the language says considering assembling and refers to it as ad hoc.
- Juliet agrees with Fred because of the ad hoc language.

Proposed Changes

1. Clarify that the reference to define the responsibilities in bullet 3 is in reference to advisory bodies.
2. Add a new bullet "Consider mapping advisory bodies to ongoing renewed community engagement plan."
3. Change the title to "Review and reform the City's overall approach to advisory bodies in the context of the new form of government and districted City Council representation and a renewed emphasis on system-wide community relations."

4. Clarify the first bullet to recognize that advisory bodies are one of the main ways the City does community engagement.
5. Expand the reference to stipends to include travel and expense reimbursement.
6. Add an acknowledgement that there are efforts underway – see the Civic Life documents.

Motion. Motion to move the recommendation as amended by the proposed changes.

- Motion from: Committee Member Terry
- Second: Committee Member Fred
- None opposed, motion passed unanimously

Terry volunteered to work with Julia to revise the recommendation as agreed.

Draft recommendation #2 – Budget Report

The draft recommendation with the changes Juanita sent on Saturday was shared on the screen.

Julia shared that some of the changes are framing, some of the bullets don't start with a verb, and that a substantive change is the final bullet addition: "Budget office staff should only provide recommendations as requested or when pertaining to issue areas that the budget office has the authority to manage."

Discussion

- Terry shared that he rewrote a version of this, but Juanita didn't want her version rewritten. His issue is that the current version is too perspective and that the City is already doing a lot of this stuff but it isn't in an organized way. His preference is to simplify the recommendation to creating a plan to implement these things. The Report can stand for itself. He put suggested language in the chat but noted it's not Juanita's preference.
- Bill disagrees with the last bullet because he doesn't want to limit the budget office from sharing its opinion.
- Bill is concerned about the addition of "correct" in the recommendation's title. Correct what? Are we disagreeing with the Report? He favors deletion or explanation of what we are correcting.
- Fred said it doesn't make sense to say complete a strategic plan now. The current council doesn't have time to do a strategic plan on top of the current budget adoption. Have urgency but acknowledge that isn't going to happen in the next six months.
- Terry said that the bullets he put in the chat might help address Juanita's interests.
- Jose noted that a budget process is something that can be carried over through cycles vs. a plan. We want to focus on long-term processes. The process is more important to him than a plan that the City has very little time to complete. Jose disagrees with Juanita's proposed changes in the first bullet.
- Fred likes Terry's rewording and Terry's proposed first bullet.
- Fred asks about Terry's third bullet: "Commit to the specific process reforms in the Report and implement them in the current cycle." Which Report and what would happen in 25-26?

- Julia said that the whole recommendation is about ensuring the City acts on the Budget Report produced by a consultant last year.
- Fred thinks Terry's language is succinct and that a strategic plan should be prioritized and that what results should be integrated into the budget process with public engagement.

Proposed Changes

1. Simplify the recommendation.
2. Delete the last bullet about what the budget office should provide recommendations on.
3. Delete or clarify the word "correct" in the title of the recommendation.
4. Change "complete a strategic plan" to something like "begin a strategic plan or commit to doing a strategic plan."
5. Prioritize establishing a budget process that is not dependent on the creation of a strategic plan.

Motion. Motion to move the adoption of Terry's version of the recommendation with ensuring "correct" isn't in the title.

- Motion from: Committee Member Fred
- Second: Committee Member Terry
- None opposed, motion passed unanimously

Consider Changes to Priority Issues

Julia shared that at both the first workgroup meeting and at the last GTAC meeting, there were several references to whether GTAC needs to prioritize its recommendations. She reminded folks that in November GTAC members were asked to identify priority issues for current City leaders. A GTAC member summarized what members shared to draft a Priority Issues section in the draft GTAC Final Report. Julia shared the draft Priority Issues section last week – strategic planning, structure, communications, and community engagement - and asked whether the workgroup wanted to consider any changes to the priority issues.

Discussion

- Amy appreciated the reminder of the November work and volunteered to help with a revision. Her revision is temporal and wants to structure the section that way. The current iteration is just more information vs. a timeline of enacting the recommendations.
- Fred wondered if the structure bucket could include recognition of the need to be more efficient/less siloed. He is still getting feedback that the bureaucracy is winning and the current administrator isn't prepared to enforce efficiencies through any restructuring or eliminating any top management positions.
- Julia shared that the structure bucket doesn't currently address Fred's suggestion and that it is much more focused on council.
- Jose said that now that he has seen the new council, he may want to change his responses to priority issues in the fall. For Jose, process and structure is his priority now. Other GTAC

members may also have different thoughts now and he appreciates revisiting the priority issues. Jose wondered if we could do a quick poll of members.

Proposals

- Specific changes to the current version of priority issues
    - Revise the framing of the priority issues so that it's temporal.
        - Bill asked for clarification of the word temporal. Amy said it's to put things in order, e.g., January to June, etc.
        - Amy wants the document to be as functional as possible.
        - Terry noted that while a strategic plan is important for GTAC, it cannot be done during this budget cycle so maybe it could be a high priority over the summer. He doesn't want to lose track of things that are important but cannot be done right now.
        - Amy shared that the documents GTAC is leaving are also for activists and community members who want to stay engaged.
    - Add to the structure bucket Fred's suggestion around an administration side bullet that priorities efficiencies
- Poll members to revisit priority issues. Julia shared that she is hoping to survey members on several outstanding issues and could include the updated priority issues section and ask for member revisions.

Amy will help on the temporal revision and insert Fred's suggestion.

Next Steps

Julia will work with Terry and Bill on finalizing the recommendations. The recommendations will be distributed to the GTAC in early February for GTAC's consideration and vote at its February 11th meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

The last Voter/Candidate Education & Outreach Subcommittee meeting is January 28th. It's a critical meeting. The goal is to leave the meeting with voter education recommendations.

The next full GTAC meeting is February 11th. There will be approximately 30 minutes for this workgroup to share its work, and for the GTAC to consider and vote on the recommendations.

Meeting adjourned 1:15pm

Meeting chat:

00:34:57 Jose Gamero Cassinelli: representative from the Auditor's office

00:42:59 Amy Randel: add " Proposed Recommendation #4: Review and reform the City's overall approach to advisory bodies in the context of the new form of government and districted City Council representation and a renewed emphasis on system-wide community relations.

to bullet pointsadd: Consider mapping advisory bodies to ongoing renewed community engagemnt plan

00:46:16 Amy Randel: Yes! I agree about being explicit about this

00:48:40 Jose Gamero Cassinelli: +1 to keep

00:55:27 Terry Harris: Develop an Action Plan to implement findings and recommendations in the Budget and Finance Staffing and Budget Process Transition Report into the upcoming budget cycle. In earlier recommendations, GTAC endorsed, generally, the Report, its recommendations and its suggested implementation timeline. Immediate, concrete, and coordinated steps need to be taken – in both the executive and legislative branches of government – to move the implementation along.

00:56:38 Terry Harris: If we wanted to add some bullet points here are some:

00:56:41 Jose Gamero Cassinelli: +1 to Terry's, as written above

00:56:50 Terry Harris: Including but not limited to:

- Commit to a citywide strategic planning process and schedule; and begin work.

- Commit to early and meaningful community engagement during the strategic planning process; and develop detailed work plans and timelines for engagement opportunities.

- Commit to the specific process reforms in the Report and implement them in the current cycle.

- Develop the capacity and methodology to track and report consolidated metrics relevant to goals and priorities to be identified in the strategic plan

- Prioritize City Council leadership and attention to the strategic planning process, and to passing a budget consistent with the plan.

00:59:26 Fred Neal: Love your language, Terry!

01:13:31 Julia Meier (she/her), staff: There is this structure bullet: • Clarify roles and responsibility of budget staff, their deputy city administrators, the city administrator, and the mayor. Plan to create efficiencies and improve community engagement throughout the budget process (see the findings and recommendations from Budget and Finance Staffing and Budget Process Transition Report by Equilibrium Collaborative LLC)

01:17:52 Fred Neal: Has it really only been three weeks?!

01:18:00 Jose Gamero Cassinelli: +1 to ease and functionality