

**PORTLAND TRANSITION TEAM  
PUBLIC COMMENT REPORT**

*Date range March 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024*

From March 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>, the Portland Transition Team received a total of **11** public comments through our online comment form, via email and verbal public comment. **0** out of the **11** comments were submitted on behalf community-based organization(s). To date, we've received **2,658** public comments during the transition of Portland's city government.

**Raw public comments received during March 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Attachments are included at the end of the report. Replies from city staff are not included in the raw public comments. The \*\*\* indicates the commenter reply to a city employee's response.**

**Raw Public Comments**

I cannot find what I'm looking for. I would prominently put a link to the latest info about the changes to city government, on the Home page.

\*\*\*

I don't think I mentioned the org chart, but, ok. :-) Definitely, though, a link to what is up with the changes.

Don't know that the term "transition" is something most people would think of.

Best to put a link with a very clear phrase denoting the changes happening.

We want folks to easily find out about this and find things like today's listening session! All part of civic education.

Hello - Just watched the recording of Monday's Budget Work Group meeting (3/18) and have one observation and two recommendations related to Fred Neal's idea of talking with John DiLorenzo about the Anderson lawsuit and his litigation work regarding the Portland Harbor Superfund.

The observation is that the Anderson lawsuit pertained to the scope of what Portland's utility bureaus, BES and PWB, could pay for using ratepayer dollars. That lawsuit was settled in 2018 after a judicial ruling that provides BES and PWB guidance on allowable spending. Bringing up this topic 6 years later is odd given the Budget Work's focus and seems to imply that Mr. Neal believes that some utility spending is inappropriate. No evidence of noncompliance with the judicial ruling or lawsuit settlement, however, was cited but Mr. Neal suggested talking with

Mr. DiLorenzo. It may well be, however, that Mr. Neal does not have adequate background on the Anderson lawsuit and this possibility is addressed in my recommendations below.

My first recommendation is that before any conversation by any Budget Work Group member with Mr. DiLorenzo, the first step should be a conversation with BES, PWB, and the city attorney about the city's compliance with the judicial ruling and settlement. Given limited time by the hardworking GTAC Budget Work Group, the value of even having that conversation seems questionable. It seems totally inappropriate to only have a conversation with Mr. DiLorenzo, but if any such conversation occurs having a city attorney accompany Mr. Neal or other member of the Budget Work Group seems prudent. And to repeat, any conversation with Mr. DiLorenzo should really be preceded by a conversation with the city attorney.

The second recommendation is to have a discussion with the city attorney before any Budget Work Group member talks with Mr. DiLorenzo about his Portland Harbor Superfund litigation. Mr. Neal's suggesting a conversation with Mr. DiLorenzo on this topic seems to pertain to a 2019 lawsuit that is discussed in this OPB article.

<https://www.opb.org/news/article/portland-oregon-harbor-superfund-site-lawsuit-sewage/>

Note the comments by then-Commissioner Nick Fish and the city attorney about the compliance of the disputed city action with the resolution of the Anderson lawsuit. My understanding is that either Mr. DiLorenzo withdrew that 2019 lawsuit or the judge honored the city's request to dismiss that lawsuit, but the city attorney would know for sure about its status.

In general, the other stakeholders related to improving public education and input in how the City of Portland develops its budget should be a far higher priority than contacting large utility customers or having any conversations with Mr. DiLorenzo.

Thank you to the Budget Work Group for your efforts and consideration of these comments.

Even if you try to help someone in town who is in trouble or who is in a wheelchair and struggling to get up a hill, you will not be able to help them. Because you have to protect yourself first. There are too many drug addicted people in this city and they try to attack us. This city is not safe. Because of this, people who should be helped cannot be helped. Please do something about this problem. Please take steps to improve the mental health of

homeless people. Please help them work. All I can do is write this letter to you. Please, please make this city the way it was a few years ago. Peace to this city! ! Please do something with your help!

I have heard that there is talk that District 1 offices may not be located in District 1. This is not OK! The largest, most diverse, farthest from downtown, and traditionally most underserved district needs to have its offices in District 1. If it takes extra effort to make this happen, it still needs to happen. You need to break the pattern of discrimination and under-service in East Portland.

I believe that it is important that the District 1 counselors have an office in district 1. This is of the utmost importance because forcing both the representatives and the residents of East Portland to commute into downtown in order to meet their representatives in person is unequal and just another example of East Portland being underrepresented and underserved. According to the Civic Life profiles, District 1 residents, on average, live with more hardships than Portland as a whole. The time it takes to drive, transit, or bike to downtown can have an impact on people's livelihood. We deserve easy access to our representation! Thanks for your time.

Hello - my hope is that this submittal is timely enough to forward the attached memo to the Budget Work Group before their Monday evening meeting.

Since Zach was kind enough to chat with me about this topic, I am also including him in this email.

Thanks to all for your work.

Greetings....

I was wondering what the City was going to do to get folks ready to vote. I've seen the Portland Votes 2024 Grant Program website and information, but is that the only voter education that the City will be doing? Are other initiatives planned? Given the magnitude of the change in how we'll vote, is a commensurate effort being made citywide to ensure that everyone is up to speed on how the new system will work? Or, is the \$210,000 announced for the grant program the sum total of what will be offered?

Thanks.

\*\*\*

Thanks for getting right back to me. Yes, doing anything before the primary would be very confusing. I'm glad to hear that the City will be rolling out something extensive and comprehensive. People I talk to who should know about this seem mostly confused. Glad you guys are on it.

I cannot find what I'm looking for - What are the target or priority populations?

Following are my comments regarding GTAC's March 15th memo to CAO Michael Jordan re Onboarding Recommendations:

1. Recommendation 4 suggests the new Council should engage in a Goal Setting process to develop a road map with a short list of Council priorities for 2025 (as distinguished from the City's priorities). I AGREE. HOWEVER, it would be a mistake if the following are not early priorities:

a. Define/agree on Council processes and relationship with the executive (negotiated). See point 2.

b. Which Council committees there should be and how work flows with support of the executive.

c. While GTAC and Transition will be formulating their recommendations, the new Council needs to agree to applicable code cases and its own operating rules.

As full-time employees, without current executive/operational responsibilities of the current Council, the new Council members should have ample time to wrestle with the many organizational issues that need to be addressed. The Transition effort should have proposed and socialized a list of such matters during the interim for planning/ scheduling post Jan 2, 2025 and have prepared the appropriate collateral to assist the Council in such efforts.

2. Assuming the Council will need to function as a legislative body (e.g., passing ordinances) within a few days after being empaneled, it needs to have agreed to its operating process early on. The urgency for this can be mitigated somewhat by the current Council dealing with as many matters as possible before year-end so legislative action can be deferred a few days.

3. I have suggested on previous occasions that staff and external stakeholders should prepare a briefing that "level sets" the Council, providing context for their individual/collective deliberations and interactions with the public. For example: external factors/drivers,

interrelationships, trends, issues/challenges, etc. (e.g., population dynamics/migration, economic growth trends, etc). as well as the city's financial situation and multi-year sustainability projections.

Please add this to the public record and forward it to members of the Districts and Council Operations subcommittee.

One of my longstanding concerns with the current council and mayor is the lack of response to constituents. I do not know if it is due to lack of capacity or desire, or both. There certainly have not been systematic responses over the years to my inquiries to the mayor and/or council members. I do not know if they have a constituent management system; if so, it's not used and/or obsolete.

Whether elected to the council or not, I would like to see this change. When I worked for the U.S. Senate, I did a lot of constituent work using a Lockheed-developed system called IQ- for Intranet Quorum. They apparently separated their information systems business segment and merged it with Leidos in 2016.

<https://intranetquorum.com/iq-crm>

Their "flagship product", a CRM still called Intranet Quorum (IQ), "is used by over 65% of the U.S. Congress, 50% of U.S. governors and 100+ federal, state and local government offices in every corner of the country." In particular, it manages citizen requests and case work. I'm sure it has evolved since I last used it in 2015.

In simple terms, if a constituent contacts a council office by phone or email, their information and the broad subject matter is entered into the system. So if I wrote to councilor X about parks or streets, there would be an entry with my name, "parks" or "streets" and then a copy of my email (or specific concern taken over the phone). Depending on the size of staff (an issue currently for sure), the issue could be assigned to a specific staffer for a response. The response, when made, is automatically entered into the system.

Essentially this lets elected officials know who is contacting their office, what the issue is, and, importantly, when a response was made, as well as how many responses are still

outstanding at any point in time. It gives information about the subjects, categories and concerns of citizens, i.e. if 1,000 people are writing about streets the elected official would know there's a lot of concern.

I am not advocating IQ per se for adoption. I'm sure there are a number of other capable systems. A quick google search turned up CivicTrack, "Constituent Management Software for State and Local Officials." website: <https://www.civictrack.com/us>

Having a system for the newly elected officials will help assure that the intent of the revised charter to have increased constituent relations and services will be fulfilled.

I think it would be helpful if a process started to research various constituent management systems, participate in some demonstrations along with GTAC and other interested parties, and have recommendations ready for the new council.

Also, I might add that this is another reason why:

1. I told the Council in November that the proposed centralized council staff should report to the council, not to the city administrator. It's a separation of powers issue. The administrator should not be in a position of controlling how council staff perform their duties, especially in terms of constituent relations. There is not another example, including in the peer cities the transition team claims to have reviewed, the state of Oregon, and the U.S. Government, of legislative branch staff reporting to the executive branch.
2. the number of council staff (1) currently being proposed by the transition team is not sufficient, especially in terms of responding robustly to constituents.

Let me know if you have any questions. I'd be glad to attend a GTAC meeting or other to explain why a constituent management system is important.

Following are my comments on the **Portland Policy Process** described on pages 14-17 of the **Shaping Future City Council Operations presentation**. I will separately provide thoughts on how to leverage technology to address challenges implied by the questions on Page 7, Key Questions for Community to Shape City Council's Work.

Regards,

**Page 14 – Portland’s Policy Process**



To facilitate development and eventual agreement on a **Policy Process**, it is essential to have clarity across the legislative and executive branches on what fall under such a process. To that end:

- a. Define what is meant by “policy”
- b. Postulate examples of what would and would not be considered policies for the three classes presented; administration, council office, auditor’s office

I have previously commented on the need to understand what matters that go through the current Council will continue to go through the new Council and how they will flow. The Charter is very specific about the Mayor/City Administrator’s roles and provides limited articulation of the Council’s other than *“Legislative authority means the power to make appropriations, raise revenue and make laws and quasi-judicial authority means the power to apply laws and policies to a set of circumstances”* (Section 2-101). Net, the postulation of “Portland’s Policy Process” is only a part of the clarity Transition needs to provide regarding the PROCESSES that the new government structure will follow.

**P15 – Identify Policy Needs (Phase 1)**

STEP 1 Community and Partner Input	STEP 2 Potential Solutions Identified	STEP 3 Confirm Policy Choices	STEP 4 Refine Policy
<b>Administration</b> Community, Operational or Regulatory Need	<b>Bureau staff</b> Research, analysis, and policy drafting	Community, internal partners & attorney engaged on draft policy (as appropriate or required)	Refine policy based on engagement.  Policy advances to phase 2.
<b>Council Office</b> Community or Policy Need	<b>Council staff</b> Research, analysis, and policy drafting		
<b>Auditor’s Office</b> Community or Regulatory Need	<b>Auditor’s staff</b> Research, analysis, and policy drafting		

Row 1/Administration: Does operational include implementation (e.g., new project)

Row 2/Council Office: re Council staff performing research, analysis, and policy drafting:

- c. It is expected that council staff alone will perform these functions? Or is it envisioned it being more a coordination effort of staff across applicable bureaus/offices?
- d. Realistically, this activity will require Bureau staff (subject matter experts) in most cases. Or is it envisioned to have duplication of resources?
- e. Building consensus between the “city’s leadership” as well as understanding by the public, requires greater definition. My suggestion is to take an example policy and describe what roles, which branches/staff would conceptually have in shepherding the policy from ideation through to approval.

Column 3/Step 3 Confirm Policy Choices – I assume Council and Mayor concurrence on choices is implied by “internal partners” – if not, wouldn’t they (their senior staff) have a voice?



**P16 – Refine Policy Options (Phase 2)**

STEP 1 Draft Item	STEP 2 Refine Item	STEP 3 Review and Scheduling Calendar Creation	STEP 4 Ready for Public Discussion
 <b>Administration</b> creates item	Item refined by attorney (if required) and <b>mayor’s office</b>	Item(s) reviewed by <b>council clerk</b> and assigned to either committee(s) or full council by <b>council president</b>	Agenda posted by <b>council clerk/auditor</b>  Item advances to Phase 3
 <b>Council Office</b> creates item	Item refined by attorney (if required) and <b>council operations team</b>		
 <b>Auditor’s Office</b> creates item	Item refined by attorney (if required) and <b>auditor’s office</b>		

Referring back to point 1, are each class of policies (e.g., administration, council office and auditor’s office) mutually exclusive? For example, the diagrams give the impression that administration created items may not be socialized/reviewed with Council prior to being placed on the agenda.

**P17 – Debate Proposed Policy (Phase 3)**



STEP 1 Scheduling Calendar Approval	STEP 2, OPTION 1 Committee Meeting(s)	STEP 3 Council Decision	STEP 4 Permanent Record
<p><b>Council</b> approves the council president's assignment of item(s) to committee(s) or full council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Public Input</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul> 	<p><b>Council votes</b> (varies based on type of action and number of readings).</p>	<p><b>Auditor files item for permanent record.</b></p>
	<p><b>STEP 2, OPTION 2 Full Council Meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Public Input</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul> 		

If I understand this correctly, Council Committees ONLY get assignment of draft policies near the end, if the Council President refers an time to a committee; otherwise it goes to the full Council.

Some cities leverage their Committees earlier in the process to guide and review Council policy proposals and review/approve\* other topical matters per Council operating policy. Such polices enumerate subject scope of each committee and matters which they participate. One benefit of such an approach is building up subject matter knowledge among Council members on Council subject domains. Another is committees can draft\* priorities (e.g., budget, policy, etc) for their domains and first review the Mayor's budget proposal (distribute the work load).

*\*Committee passes its approval/recommendation to the full Council.*

Independent of the **Policy Process**, there needs to be greater specificity about committees. Not just which committees and their scope how the Council expects to use them. Not just as part of the Policy Process, but as operational entities of the Council.

### Attachments

March 28, 2024

To: GTAC Budget Work Group c/o June Reyes and Julia Meier  
From: Janice Thompson<sup>1</sup>  
Re: Education and Involvement of the New Council and the Public in Budget Development: Observations, Suggestions, and Questions to Consider

Page 1 Introduction  
City Budget Office – Transition/Current & New Roles/Placement  
Page 3 Broaden GTAC Budget Work Group Scope to Include New Council  
Proposed Future Budget Development Steps  
Page 5 Community Budget Advisory Board – Required? Needed?  
Page 6 Budget Advisory Committees and Lessons from Public Utility Board

### **Introduction**

Thanks to the hardworking members of the GTAC and their willingness to work in subcommittees. Creating the GTAC Budget Work Group is especially appreciated given the importance of how Portland’s budget is developed. It is great that this Work Group’s focus is on improving public input into budget development since it addresses a major weakness of Portland’s budget development process. My hope is that this memo will assist your work on this important issue. When I make suggestions, please know that I recognize that you may receive better suggestions. When I make observations, my hope is that they inform your thinking and recommendations. When I raise questions, I hope they are useful in broadening, refining, or changing the emphasis of your work. I appreciate your review of this memo and thanks again for your work on the vital topic.

### **City Budget Office – Transition/Current & New Roles/Placement**

#### Transitional Service Area Budgeting Signals Management Improvements

Thanks to the City Budget Office (CBO) for moving charter reform forward in the transitional process used to develop the FY 2024-25 budget. It is heartening to see signals of improved management opportunities due to the service area budget development approach. Improved consistency, consolidation, and efficiencies do seem more feasible with deputy city administrators focused on bureaus within service areas and a city administrator seeking improvements between service areas.

#### Shift to Outcomes Based Budgeting

Even before this year’s transitional budget development process, steps have been taken towards outcomes-based budgeting that should also facilitate management improvements under the city administrator and deputies. A brief history on pages 4-8 of the CBO slide deck<sup>2</sup> presented at the November 14, 2023 council work session could be helpful to the GTAC Budget Work Group.

---

<sup>1</sup> I have tracked Portland’s budget process for 10 years, initially with a focus on the utility bureaus as a staff person at the Oregon Citizens’ Utility Board, but then more broadly due to personal interest after I retired. I speak only for myself in this memo.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.portland.gov/cbo/2024-2025-budget/documents/2023-11-14-budget-priority-work-session/download>

Use of adopted city plans and the Portland’s Insight Survey and similar resources, were also discussed in the November 14 presentation and in the “Budget Function in the City of Portland”<sup>3</sup> report prepared by CBO in July 2023. However, a hypothetical example of shifting safety-related programs to neighborhoods that have a low feeling of safety on page 12 of last fall’s slide deck seems like a problematically subjective use of survey results. Continuing the Portland Insight Survey effort has merit, but it cannot replace the kinds of significant improvements in public involvement in the budget process that I anticipate are recommended by this Work Group.

#### Role Retention with One Exception

The roles played by CBO on pages 7-9 of CBO’s July 2023 should be retained with one exception. As noted above a major weakness in Portland’s budget development process is inadequate public input. To be clear, however, this weakness is not the fault of the CBO. Appropriately, their expertise is providing budget development templates, ensuring compliance with financial policies, providing analytical assessments, and all the other skills needed to carry out the roles outlined in its July 2023 report. Their efforts to gather public input are commendable and indicates their recognition of the importance of that step.

However, since public engagement is not the CBO’s forte, it seems more appropriate for public education on the budget and gathering input in budget development to be led by the Community Engagement Officer. The Community Engagement team would need to work closely with the CBO and with the Communications Officer.

#### CBO Administrative Branch Placement and Being Bridge to City Council

In the new organizational chart, the CBO is in the service area that handles both City Operations and Budget & Finance matters. This seems like an appropriate blend of two options identified in the CBO’s July 2023 report on page 11, placement within a Department of Finance or within a Department of Administration. Another option would be to have the CBO report to the City Administrator given the overarching importance budgeting with a citywide focus, though a drawback is possibly being more vulnerable to political influence from the mayor.

Regardless of where CBO is located in the administrative branch, it is important for it to be an informational bridge to the new City Council. For example, the CBO assessments of requested budgets provide background and analysis of key points that would be beneficial to Councilors.

#### Budget Development in Fall 2025: Information to Candidates and New Elected Officials

Nobody can control what candidates want to learn but any preliminary economic outlook information prepared by CBO at the beginning of developing the FY 2025-26 budget merits being provided to all city candidates before the November 2024 election.

---

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.portland.gov/transition/documents/20\\_23-budget-function-city-portland/download](https://www.portland.gov/transition/documents/20_23-budget-function-city-portland/download) In the rest of this document I will refer to this as the CBO July 2023 report.

A CBO presentation with financial forecast information and any budget guidance from Mayor Wheeler is recommended during onboarding of all new officials<sup>4</sup> elected in November 2024. If The GTAC Budget Work Group sees merit in this idea, it could be sent to your colleagues on the Council Operations committee for inclusion in its onboarding recommendations.

### **Broaden GTAC Budget Work Group Scope to Include New Council**

The vision, values, and objectives outlined at the March 18 meeting of the GTAC Budget Work Group are great. Their scope, however, should be broadened to include the ways in which new Councilors should be integrated into the budget development. That group also needs early and consistent education on budget and fiscal policies. The new Council should also play a critical role in gathering community input on budget priorities.

The following Measure 26-228 budget related provisions reinforce the need to include the new Council in budget development and the responsibility of the City Administrator to provide them financial information.

- The Council serves as the budget committee and adopts the budget.
- The May 5 deadline to propose a budget applies to the Mayor. This ensures that the Council can adopt the budget in time for it to go into effect at the July 1 beginning of the fiscal year. However, I have had people ask me if that means the May 5 deadline would be the first time that budget documents are provided to the Council by the administrative branch. As I know is understood by the GTAC Budget Work Group, that is not the case, but it still raises the question of what interactions with the Council before that deadline makes sense.
- The City Administrator is required in the charter to “prepare and submit to the Council such reports as it may require” and “keep the Council at all times fully advised as to the financial condition and needs of the City.”

Three critical elements to incorporating the new Council into budget, in my view, are:

- Budget meetings should include the full Council.
- District-based community education and input should be a priority.
- The Community Engagement Officer needs to be involved throughout the budget development process, but especially in regard to the district-based meetings outlined in the next section.

### **Proposed Future Budget Development Steps**

Based on the factors discussed above, below is an outline of possible budget development steps. I recognize that the timing may be challenging but your consideration is appreciated. One observation is that due to Commissioners no longer being involved in developing bureau budget requests, timing differences from current practices may be more feasible.

- 1) City Council requests and/or is proactively provided budget/revenue/economic overview/risk assessment session(s) from the administrative branch (Mayor and City Administrator). This would be akin to the November 7 and November 14, 2024 budget work sessions. These can be City Hall sessions but should be

---

<sup>4</sup> This should include the Auditor. More generally, it may be interesting for the Budget Work Group to interview the Auditor since information from audits and other work done by that office might also inform budget development improvements.

attended by the entire Council. This timing is early enough that updates would likely to be needed.

***Early September***

- 2) Public education briefings that begin with background and key points from the session(s) provided to the entire Council in step 1. These briefing must include Q and A and should be presented four times, once in each of the four Council districts, though they will have a citywide focus. A preferred approach is for entire Council to attend each of these initial sessions to hear how Q and As differ between districts. They must be attended by all three Councilors in their district.

***Mid-September – Mid-October***

- 3) The City Council determines its policy priorities for development of the upcoming fiscal year budget and, shares it with the administrative branch.

***Early November***

- 4) The administrative branch prepares the Mayor’s requested budget on a service area basis using applicable templates and other CBO procedures. A summary from the administrative branch on how and why its recommended budget aligns or differs from Council policy priorities identified in step 2 would be provided.

***Mid-November - January***

- 5) The entire Council holds public input sessions on the Mayor’s requested budget in each district. Administrative branch would provide educational background and present the requested budget. The entire City Council must attend each of these meetings so they hear public comments from beyond just their districts.

***February-March***

- 6) The Council would develop and deliver to the administrative branch its requests for changes in the Mayor’s requested budget in time for possible adjustment in the budget they present to the Council in May.

***April***

- 7) The Mayor presents the administrative branch’s recommended budget to Council no later than **May 5**.

- 8) The Council would hold a public hearing in city hall on the Mayor’s recommended budget and vote as per required procedures by the Tax Supervising and Conservation Committee (TSCC)<sup>5</sup> on a timeline that ensure the budget is enacted by July 1, the beginning of the next fiscal year.

***Between May 5 and mid-June***

---

<sup>5</sup> The Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission protects and represents the public interest, ensures Multnomah County governments’ compliance with Local Budget Law, promotes economy and efficiency within those local governments, and provides advice and assistance to them.

<https://www.tscmultco.com/about-tsc/>

## **Community Budget Advisory Board – Required? Needed?**

CBO's July 2023 report, citing ORS 294.414<sup>6</sup>, indicates that a budget committee, consisting of the governing body (in Portland this means the City Council both before and after 2025) and an equal number of people appointed by the governing body is required. The Community Budget Advisory Board<sup>7</sup>, five Portlanders appointed by the City Council, seems to be the "non-governing body" members of Portland's budget committee created under ORS 294.414.

The Community Budget Advisory Board attends council budget work sessions and, according to CBO's July 2023 report, delivers written recommendations to the mayor prior to that person's release of their proposed budget. My observations over the years, however, is that this Board is comprised of appropriate folks, but presumably due to time constraints on volunteers, they cannot always attend all meetings and do not always have the wherewithal to ask hard questions during work sessions. This dynamic seems to have worsened due to the pandemic. In general, the elected officials on the City Council overshadow the Community Budget Advisory Board.

ORS 294.414, however, begins with an "except as provided in ORS 294.423" provision. Turning to ORS 294.423,<sup>8</sup> it seems clear that it can be used by Portland. ORS 294.423 allows the governing body to be the budget committee, unless it adopts a resolution creating a budget committee as per ORS 294.414. Obviously this needs to be checked with CBO and the city attorney, but as I read these two sections of Oregon law it is possible for Portland to not adopt a resolution to create a budget committee with "non-governing body" members. The result would be that the City Council would be the only members of the budget committee and the current Community Budget Advisory Board or similar group of "non-governing body" members would not be required.

Which of these two options for the composition of the Portland's budget committee in 2025 makes sense?

If the ORS 294.414 approach is taken in 2025, the twelve Councilors on the governing body would adopt a resolution to appoint twelve "non-governing body" Portlanders to be on the budget committee. Though this is the current approach, it seems more workable now since the governing body is the five-member City Council comprised of the mayor and four commissioners, which means the Community Budget Advisory Board has five members.

If the ORS 294.423 approach is taken in 2025, the twelve Councilors that comprise the governing body would be the budget committee. That committee would not include any "non-governing body" members such as the current Community Budget Advisory Board.

Again, please check on all this with legal experts. But if this is an accurate summary of the two options, I suggest that the ORS 294.423 approach be used for the following reasons:

---

<sup>6</sup> [https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors\\_294.414](https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_294.414)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.portland.gov/cbo/cba/about-board>

<sup>8</sup> [https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors\\_294.423](https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_294.423)

- A 24-member budget committee would be unwieldy and the current dynamic of the Community Budget Advisory Board being overshadowed by the elected officials would be aggravated.
- The larger twelve-member Council elected from districts, especially if they are significantly involved during the budget development steps outlined in the section above, could more effectively meet the public input goal that seems to be the intent of ORS 294.414's allowing for a group like the Community Budget Advisory Board.

To be clear, not continuing the Community Budget Advisory Board is only appropriate if the new Council plays an active public education and input role during budget development. It also does not mean that the administrative branch should not seek targeted input from historically marginalized Portlanders. Such targeted education and outreach is vital.

### **Budget Advisory Committees and Lessons from Public Utility Board**

I look forward to learning from the GTAC Budget Work Group's survey of members of BACs. Recognizing that they are dated and limited to just two bureaus, my observations about Bureaus of Environmental Services (BES) and Portland Water Bureau (PWB) BACs before creation of the Public Utility Board (PUB) in 2015 are:

- a) BAC members seemed to have primarily been recruited by the bureau, though some members evidently proactively requested membership. This meant that several BAC members had particular knowledge or interest in the work of these bureaus, which can be valuable.
- b) Labor representation on BACs can be valuable.
- c) These PACs primarily met in the time window when these bureaus were developing requested budgets. This hindered consideration of capital improvement forecasting and budgeting which is a major budgeting factor for the utility bureaus.

The dynamics in points a and b are not inherently problematic, but they suggest the need for caution in describing BACs as a significant vehicle for community based public input. Regarding point c, the PUB<sup>9</sup> which replaced the BES and PWB BACs was designed to meet year-round, have staff, and is appointed by the City Council. As I suspect you are already planning, specific conversations with PUB members and staff would seem useful.

While staff support for the PUB is a strategy that might merit replication, that approach seems more suited to BACs focused on entire service areas and not individual bureaus. Coupled with points a and b, this could mean service area BACs that provide some level of input from the general public, but are primarily groups with knowledge about the specific work of that service area. However, how this approach would be reconciled with advisory groups that meet year-round like the Parks & Recreation Board is an important question.

I look forward to learning from GTAC Budget Work Group on this and other questions. Thanks again for your hard work on the important topic of improving public education and input regarding development of Portland budgets.

---

<sup>9</sup> In 2014-2015, I served on a Blue-Ribbon Commission on Portland's utility bureaus that recommended creating the PUB.