

**City of Portland**  
**2021-22 Budget Hearing**  
Tuesday, June 8, 2021 9:30 a.m.

**City Hall, Council**  
**Chambers 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**Avenue Portland Oregon**  
**(Via Zoom)**

**Present:**

TSCC:

Chair David Barringer, Vice-Chair James Ofsink, Commissioner Margo Norton, Commissioner Mark Wubbold, Commissioner Harmony Quiroz, Executive Director Craig Gibons and Budget Analyst Tunie Betschart

**Absent:** None

City of Portland Council:

Mayor Ted Wheeler, Commissioner Jo Anne Hardesty, Commissioner Mingus Mapps, Commissioner Carmen Rubio and Commission Dan Ryan

Staff: City Budget Director Jessica Kinard and Assistant Budget Director Christina Owen

Chair David Barringer opened the hearing on the City of Portland's 2021-22 Approved Budget. He gave a brief history and description of the TSCC, the requirements for counties to have a TSCC, their structure within Multnomah County and their obligation to hold budget hearings on all tax measures districts under their jurisdiction present to the voters and on large taxing districts' Approved budgets prior to adoption, acting as the public, asking questions about the budget and activities of the district.

Following the brief description of TSCC's duties and authority, Chair Barringer asked the TSCC Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves. He then asked if any Commissioners have business relationships with the City that could be perceived as a conflict of interest. There were none.

He asked the City Commissioners to introduce themselves and make brief introductory remarks about the budget, and then the commissioners would ask a few questions. Following the questions, testimony from the public would be taken.

After the introductions, Mayor Wheeler gave an overview of the budget, saying the Council approved the budget in mid-May. They worked on shared priorities five months ago when the new council members joined. The first shared priority the Council is addressing is houselessness. The approved budget continues and enhances houseless services in conjunction with partners at the Joint Office of Homeless Services. The agreement is fully funded next year, and resources have been added to continue the City-wide access to hygiene and

sanitation stations for people who are living outdoors, to increase support for the unsheltered community members, to continue promising alternative shelter models, and to increase and improve shelter facilities through one-time shelter capital funding.

Council shares a commitment to community safety. The budget reallocates internal resources and staffing in support of the new Community Safety Transitions program in the Office of Management and Finance. They recently filled the director position and are building internal capacity to build broad capabilities for supporting systems change, operational change, and identifying new strategies for community safety response. The Transition Director will help implement the immediate gun-violence plan as adopted by City Council in April. The Approved Budget also guides program evaluation, providing an unarmed response to calls for services where police officers are not required to respond. The budget funds the continuation of the Portland Police Response Pilot Program.

The Council's third priority is around equitable economic recovery. The Approved budget makes strategic investments in support of small businesses in the City. This includes resources to support the Ankeny Food Cart Project, the Portland Film Office, the Oregon Business chambers, Inclusive Business Resources network, small business repair grants, and streamline permitting at the Bureau of Development Services to advance this shared goal. In addition, resources are available to support new and emerging small businesses, especially those owned by black, indigenous, and people of color. Council agrees this is key to an equitable recovery.

The Approved budget considers investments in these priority areas and continues the efforts that are already in place. The budget continues and increases the pool of resources allocated for a Community Budgeted Project lead by Reimagine Oregon. The Approved budget adds equity-focused positions in bureaus, supports the employee infinity groups with resources for training and other actions. It directs the human resources director to improve recruitment, retention and promotion of black employees.

With that, the Commissioners moved to the prepared questions.

## **TSCC Questions**

### **Chair Barringer asked the following questions:**

There is no way of discounting the difficulties we all experienced this year. And the City of Portland has been through a lot. What have you learned from all that has happened? Have any of these lessons led to changes in how you are doing business? And what about the difficulties in the development and permitting office-how will that office change?

Mayor Ted Wheeler responded saying they have learned the following:

- Witnessed incredible social justice movement – Black Lives Matter, push for meaningful change
- They learned how to work remotely – and remote work has highlighted opportunities for increased accessibility. For example, many people who otherwise could not attend City Council meetings can now participate
- The pandemic tested many of the City's emergency response mechanisms, which has prepared the City for potential emergencies, including natural disasters. The challenges have pushed leadership to focus on the City's core programs and vital services and to do a better job of centering equity, diversity and inclusion in all their work

- They learned that Portlanders are resilient, dedicated, and passionate.

These lessons shape how the City will do businesses and guide leaders to do a better job of serving the constituents. The guiding principles are the City's core values, which Council approved last year. Those values are: Anti-Racism, Equity, Transparency, Communication, Collaboration, and Fiscal Responsibility. Those values were put into action in this budget cycle. In navigating and preparing for the lasting impacts of the pandemic, all bureaus, except the Joint Office of Homeless Services, identified essential programs in need of protection and cut programs and services that do not actively serve the community. This budget focuses on supporting the City's functions that support shared values.

These values are pertinent to the challenges of permitting office as well. Accordingly, the Council is actively working to improve communication and collaboration among bureaus involved in streamlining the system.

Then he asked Commissioner Ryan to speak more in-depth on those efforts.

City Commissioner Ryan added while the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) is the face of permitting bureau in Portland, development review and permitting are not one office's responsibility. There are seven bureaus involved in the development review. So earlier this year, he launched the Permit Improvement Task Force with directors and staff from the development review bureaus to decrease turnaround times for permits and increase efficiency in the permitting processes. The Task Force is currently building out a work plan for the first objective – improve the quality of submittals.

This work is in addition to the improvements BDS has already made over the last year. This includes software upgrades, switching from paper to digital plan review, automating inspections assignments, launching the mobile "Inspector App," performing remote video inspections, and creating virtual "15-minute appointments" for customers to ask City subject matter experts questions about projects and properties. Much of this work was started pre-pandemic but accelerated with the closing of the Permit Center.

He concluded by stating that BDS is assessing which new ways of working will continue in the future.

**Commissioner Quiroz asked the following questions:**

What about looking outward? What new responsibilities arose from the pandemic and how did you pay for them? What services emerged in the pandemic that the public has come to rely on and will need to continue? How will they be funded after the federal money goes away?

Mayor Wheeler fielded this question saying, the City acted quickly following Covid-19's arrival. The City Council responded by shifting the financial outlook and approach to budgeting, focusing on cost containment strategies and asking bureaus to partner with them to address the dramatic anticipated decline in resources. City bureaus, City staff, and partners have played vital roles in helping the City manage this crisis. Many employees have forgone pay increases, and bureaus have offered budget reductions that minimize impacts to service levels. Solid and disciplined financial management has allowed the City to weather the reduced resources. In addition, fiscal responsibility enabled Portland to allocate the vast majority of federal resources to the most vulnerable Portlanders and respond to

urgent community needs.

The pandemic has magnified the needs of the most vulnerable in the community. The City is fortunate to have a handful of new and increased revenue sources coming online soon. These revenue sources ensure they can strategically sustain enhanced service levels after deploying significant federal resources.

One clear impact of the pandemic is the increased needs of houseless Portlanders. The City will continue to use federal resources to invest heavily in addressing and preventing houselessness during this crisis. In addition, Portland is fortunate that the Joint Office of Homeless Services will receive funding from the voter-approved Here Together ballot measure to continue a significantly enhanced level of funding for critical houseless services.

The pandemic has exasperated mental and physical health needs. While the County is responsible for providing health services, the City plays a role here, particularly in the prevalence and availability of open space and parks programming. As noted in one of the later questions, the City is accelerating Parks Local Option Levy funding to provide critical summer recreational programming and opportunities.

In addition, the Council is pursuing new and innovative approaches to service delivery in critical areas that will cost-effectively provide better service. This includes rethinking the community safety system and providing more effective and efficient customer service through the new 3-1-1 system.

**Commissioner Wubbold asked this follow-up question:**

Can you please explain the 311 system?

Mayor Wheeler explained that before establishing the 311 number, there were in the neighborhood of 278 different customer service numbers in the City of Portland coming into 26 various bureaus. Many of those lines were going to voice mails that were not staffed. This is a single, easy-to-remember customer service number. The customer is then transferred to the appropriate party to help with their questions. The City then has a uniform platform to determine the needs and interests of the constituents. Each call is tracked as to who called, when the call came in, and the response to the call.

**Commissioner Norton asked the following question: (3)**

It's hard to stay optimistic about economic recovery when a local news station is running a series called "Is Portland Over?". We hear about vacant office space, permanently closed restaurants, still increasing home prices, arts venues shuttered. And the tents. And the garbage. And a city maligned in the national print and television. So after this tumultuous year, what is the City doing, specifically, near term and long term, to restore Portland's reputation as a vibrant community for business and investment, for affordable and safe neighborhoods, for diversity and inclusion?

Mayor Wheeler answered almost every big city in the country is facing the same problem. Every major media market has probably done a story on "Is fill in the blank, City dead, or dying?" He said he calls it misery reporting. It sells. People read it, watch it and unfortunately, too many people believe it. Unfortunately, Portland is not unique in that regard. What is

notable is how the City addresses these issues and setbacks.

Collaboration with businesses, neighborhood associations, folks in the neighborhood who are concerned and who want to see Portland's image restored – are coming together and getting involved. The action tables, which bring together community members and stakeholders, are focused on these issues.

He said they ask the difficult questions and do the hard work required to ensure the City comes back strong. They are reopening in a way that supports the businesses that had to close as well as new businesses waiting to open. Improving permitting, investing in neighborhood business districts, and cleaning up the City will drive this return and further growth within the community and from visitors around the world.

He went on to say they know the community wants the City to be cleaned up and have provided the funds to kick-start those efforts. In April, they launched the Clean and Green project, which responds to the growing trash problem by funding volunteer groups across the City to assist in the cleanup effort. On June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of this month, SOLVE will host two Pick It Up Portland events. In addition to the cleanup efforts, they are also addressing the need to increase sanitation staff and increase the outreach to houseless Portlanders.

Homelessness is a critical issue, but the response needs to be as humane as possible. This budget commits over \$11 million to homeless services, shelter development, hygiene stations, and job creation. Impact Reduction team offers resources to Portlanders experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity, including garbage removal, hygiene access, resource referral, and job training opportunities. The Shelter to Housing Continuum provides the City with more flexibility and options to ensure houseless Portlanders have safe spaces to sleep and live. The eviction moratorium combined with rental assistance and other supportive programs has helped keep people in their homes throughout the pandemic. The current demand for housing and the push to clean up and reopen the City demonstrates that people still want to move here and live here.

He continued by stating, as for public safety, they have completed 13 out of the 19 points of reform in his Police Reform Action Plan and the other 6 points are in progress. These actions focus on reinvestment in communities of color, community-led review, and reform of patrol services, pilots like Portland Street Response, responding to the gun violence crisis, and more. Each of these efforts contributes to the goal of more proactive and community-based police work. He added that they are doing all of this to not only restore Portland's reputation, but improve upon it.

Like all major cities, Portland has faced challenges but is emerging from the past year's difficulties resilient and determined.

He then talked about how busy downtown has been. You cannot get in restaurants without reservations! Last week when it was sunny, the parks were full of people. Open-house for homes in the Portland area are very well attended.

He said he is proud of the Council. They have had their differences but have supported the same values. In addition, they have supported the budget collectively.

Portland is not done. Portland is the Come-Back Kid.

**Commissioner Wubbold asked the following questions:**

How will you measure the success of the City's homeless shelter and trash removal programs? How confident are you that you will meet the community's expectation of fewer homeless camps?

Mayor Wheeler said the numbers are trending in the right direction. Work crews are removing a historic amount of trash from the City and have ongoing cleanup efforts in motion. Records have been broken every month this year. In March alone, almost 820,000 pounds of litter was removed. That's 410 tons and 60 tons more than what was picked up just last December. The Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program (HUCIRP) is now operating at pre-Covid levels.

He concluded by saying HUCIRP has established objective measurements to determine which sites need attention. Those are the campsites that create a public health, a public safety, or an environmental hazard not just for the people living there but also for the public. Given this good work and the investments of this budget, he is confident that they are on their way to meeting the community's expectations.

Houselessness is a very complex issue that overlays other issues. Substance abuse, domestic violence, youth trauma and neglect. The City is doing everything possible to broaden partnerships to work with people who can help with support services. The Here Together ballot initiative was approved, providing about \$100 million more in the community towards those services. It will take years to solve this issue. There is a lot of infrastructures that need to be put into place. But the City is moving with urgency and passion.

What about public sanitation and garbage piles? Do you have expectations for the reduction of these related public health hazards?

Mayor Wheeler tackled this question by saying at the onset of Covid, CDC initiated a "Hands-Off" approach to those living outdoors. The City set up 78 sanitation facilities throughout the City. The Council has added better housing by design, with sanctioned camps which will include access to portable restrooms and sanitation stations. Some of the business partners have been very helpful. For example, Starbucks has opened their bathrooms allowing anyone to use them. Other businesses have followed this example. The Parks Bureau invested more than they have ever invested.

City Commissioner Mapps responded by saying he follows two metrics very closely. They are:

- Seeing a reduction in people living in the streets
- Tracking tons of trash picked up and the number of citizen trash complaints

By July 1, 2022, the City will see a remarkable reduction in trash.

On the issue of houselessness, on July 1, 2022, he does not expect the problem to be solved. But has a lot of faith in Commissioner Ryan's developing new strategy for housing people and does expect substantial progress in one year.

City Commissioner Hardesty added the reasons she is not optimistic. The eviction moratorium will expire on July 1. That will result in 10,000 more homeless people in the City. It will not look any different then than it is now or was a year or two ago. There is no place

in Portland that African Americans can afford to live. She said she appreciates Commissioner Ryan's commitment but does not think that a year, two, or even five years from now, there will not be people camping and sleeping on the streets in the City of Portland.

She concluded by stating she is not sure the joint office is serving citizens well. Everything will not be rosy.

**Commissioner Ofsink asked the following questions:**

What is the City contributing to the Joint Office next year? What are the specific results you are expecting next year for your contribution? For example, has the Joint Office reconciled to your satisfaction the tension between emergency shelter beds and affordable housing, near term and long term?

Mayor Wheeler responded by saying that the City's Approved budget includes nearly \$43 million to the Joint Office of Homeless Services. This may be enhanced through the provision of additional American Rescue Plan Resources this summer.

This is not an either/or issue. It is a both/and. The City needs both emergency shelter beds and more affordable housing. The solution to homelessness is housing, but that is a long-term solution. The alternatives to housing for people who are still living outside is to provide safe, affordable housing. It is unacceptable to have people living in conditions in the community that are inhumane, substandard, and dangerous.

He supports longer-term solutions around housing, substance abuse and mental health. However, they can't wait four or five or six years for that housing and those services to come online. So leadership has an obligation to do something right now.

City Commissioner Ryan added that over the past several months, he and his staff have had scores of meetings with the Multnomah County Chair and her staff to discuss how they can coordinate their efforts. They have experienced healthy tension; however, through sustained dialogue, they have made significant progress in establishing a shared vision.

He says he is greatly appreciative of the work the Joint Office does to balance the need to create supportive housing services while also prioritizing a short-term response to the houselessness crisis. In the next fiscal year, he hopes that JOHS makes good on its commitment to get 1,300 houseless people off the streets while also supporting the City's emergency shelter strategy to establish six safe rest villages.

The dialog between the two entities is very healthy.

What about post-emergency pandemic responses for organized camps?

City Commissioner Ryan answered in late April, the Council was unified in code work around the work of going from a shelter to housing. Now they will be implementing that vision. The keyword is a shared managed village. It was essential to build resilience and empower those residents in the villages. At the same time, provide some baseline services such as sanitation and hygiene, and hygiene includes the body and the cloths. Working with the County to deliver case management to each of the villages will be significant. It is necessary to get to know people by their names and know their needs if they want to build resilience.

It is challenging for people with multiple diagnoses to go to service centers. The City needs to bring services to them where they are.

He concluded by stating he thinks they are adapting. It is an “and” strategy. The rescue dollars allow them to build the infrastructure to have standard services for all residents.

**Commissioner Quiroz asked the following questions:**

Now we need to take up community safety recovery. Among the Council’s top priorities for this budget is community safety, but there appears to be a divide between community expectations and what is seen on the street. It is going to take time to get Portland Street Response up and running. So now, while you sort this all out, what are the alternatives for a citizen who sees something that needs a non-police response? What is in next year’s budget to support that citizen? What does a citizen do in this situation and how is this being communicated to the public?

Mayor Wheeler fielded this question stating first citizens need to determine if it is an emergency. If not, they should call the non-emergency number, which is 503-823-3333. Second, community members seeking connections to social services should call, text, or email 211, a county-operated service for referral and information.

He continued, saying, all Commissioners are excited about the potential of Portland Street Response and are committed to expanding this program beyond the pilot. Right now, Council is ensuring that they have a suitable model – one that works. Success will require them to be methodical and ensure that the program’s services are aligned with the County’s mental health system and the private partners. Outside of Portland Street Response, the City is actively making the preparations and investments needed to meet community expectations and needs related to safety in a sustainable way. The new budget will support Portlanders by building a foundation for a police oversight board, increasing funding for the Office of Violence Prevention, ensuring adequate patrol officer numbers, and tripling the number of unarmed officers trained to respond to lower acuity events. That also frees the armed police to respond to higher acuity events.

City Commissioner Hardesty added that In 2018 The Oregonian published an article showing that 50% of arrests made by the Portland Police Bureau in 2017 were of a person experiencing houselessness, despite being less than 3% of the City’s population.

In 2019 when she took office, she immediately began exploring how to bring an alternative first response to the City, which resulted in Council including \$500,000 in one-time funds for a pilot program in the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget.

Over the next several months, her office, in partnership with the Mayor’s Office, would lead a stakeholder group growing to more than 40 individuals from the City, County, local advocacy groups, and peers. The stakeholder group was a working group, broken up into five teams focusing on:

- Community Engagement
- Call Transitioning
- Internal Logistics
- External Logistics
- System Mapping and Alignment



The Community Engagement group worked to ensure that the final proposal would uplift the voices of the houseless community. They did this in several ways. They helped set up listening sessions with houseless individuals with Members of Street Roots, Sisters of the Road, Right 2 Survive, Street Books, the Portland State University Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative, the Mapping Action Collective, Yellow Brick Road, her office. Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer's office interviewed 184 unhoused people in the community to get their vision for an alternative response model. This engagement culminated in a 33-page report entitled Believe Our Stories. This outreach was instrumental in the creation of the initial pilot vision.

She stated that her staff engaged with the Portland Police Bureau and went out to each of the three precincts to engage with officers to help understand their perspectives and participated in a ride-along.

In November 2019, the stakeholder group presented their final recommendation to Council to pilot Portland Street Response in Portland Fire and Rescue, and it was approved unanimously. Now that the pilot has launched, the program has contracted with the Portland State University Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative for ongoing program evaluation while the pilot is running. This approach ensures transparency to the community and a model that will help the pilot be successful in real-time.

Over the next year, the world changed radically. The murder of George Floyd became a catalyst for social reckoning, and Portlanders took to the streets by the thousands. As a result, council offices received tens of thousands of contacts, an unprecedented number, calling for changes to policing from reform to outright abolition, and Council ultimately divested \$15M from the bureau, reallocating \$4.8M ongoing for Portland Street Response to expand the pilot program's potential.

She continued, saying she believes that although there are many other achievements in the FY 2021-22 Budget, Council has walked back a commitment from the City of Portland to the Community by not continuing the planned expansion of the Portland Street Response pilot. The Community has been vocal about the need for alternative responses and has participated in creating this program every step of the way. Portland Street Response is the only true first response alternative this budget has to offer. Without this expansion, she believes that the assertion by TSCC that a divide between community expectations and services provided is correct.

City Commissioner Mapps added he connects the people of Portland with services they need. If they have an emergency that requires a police officer, fire engine, or ambulance, you should call 911. Half of the time, the caller is looking for alternatives to the emergency services. Portland has expanded services. As Commissioner Hardesty stated, Portland Street Response is working in Lentz. He said he believes Council is looking to expand it throughout the City.

There is also Project Respond which is operated by the County and offers many of the same services as Portland Street Response. You can get a Project Respond Team to respond to a mental health issue by calling 503-988-4888.

They also encourage people with non-emergency health issues to call 311. These are trained service officers who will help you connect with the services you need. They want

to have people call 311 rather than 911. They hope that this budget moves them to 311. It is a better service for people who need a non-emergency response. They will continue to educate Portlanders about this service.

There was some discussion among city commissioners regarding these resources. Commissioner Hardesty said many times Project Response will only show up after police officers have cleared the scene. When people are suffering from mental health issues, they are not happy to see a uniformed police officer or a weapon. It is not like Portland Street Response but rather a radically different approach.

Commissioner Mapps said this is not his understanding of the program. He said he would ask his staff to follow up and get the correct information to the TSCC staff.

Commissioner Quiroz said this exchange illustrates the problem citizens have when commissioners cannot differentiate where to call and how they will communicate this information.

City Commissioner Hardesty said that was a good point. They need to communicate the information and are developing that. It will be on the City's new website, too. It will be launched in early July.

**Commissioner Ofsink asked the following questions:**

Over the last few years, there have been proposals to use park rangers and community service officers to respond to public safety issues. We even hear of Transportation employees being used for traffic control. Is the Council actively weighing these alternatives and what are the tangible results?

Mayor Wheeler replied, saying he would clarify that these actions are not alternatives to policing. They are not using park rangers or PBOT employees, or others instead of police. Rather, they are using all available resources to accomplish the goal of keeping the community safe. Crises, including the current gun violence crisis, require a complete city response.

City Commissioner Rubio added that as Parks Commissioner, she would like to speak to the Portland Parks & Recreation Park Rangers role.

Recent investment in the Park Ranger program does NOT fundamentally change the Ranger program. Rangers will still have the same job and the same mandate:

- Make parks a positive place to be
- Educate visitors when they violate park rules
- Refer crimes and threats to Portland Police

The results are more Rangers in more parks, making more positive connections than ever before. As elected leaders, the Council considers different options to address community safety, and the Park Rangers have a role in a community safety continuum of service.

Park Rangers respond to calls related to violations of City Code Title 20, the code pertaining to park rule violations. This encompasses various livability issues, including but not limited to alcohol, drugs, fireworks, disturbances, permit problems, and animal problems, to name a few.

City Commissioner Hardesty added concerning the Portland Bureau of Transportation, PBOT, employees being used for traffic enforcement are not authorized by the State of Oregon to perform traffic enforcement. Through its legislative agenda, the City has supported a bill at the State legislature to allow PBOT employees to issue citations from speed cameras without involving the Portland Police Bureau. That bill did not pass, but City Council will continue to pursue its adoption in future legislative sessions.

**Commissioner Norton asked the following questions:**

The Council has directed the Police Bureau to enhance transparency around the Bureau's staffing and personnel expenditures. We appreciate that directive. In the past you have talked about changes in recruitment strategies like beefed up HR staff, salary increases, and enhanced recruiting, yet officers are leaving faster than they can be replaced. Why isn't recruitment working? What are you going to do about it?

Mayor Wheeler tackled this question, saying this problem is not unique to Portland. Recruitment and retention of police officers are low nationwide. Unfortunately, this is not a new problem for the City – the Portland Police Bureau was understaffed before he took office. This country is at a critical point of redefining what it means to “police” and how they can most effectively serve communities. It is also true that many potential officers are reassessing if the work that is being mapped out now is something they want to be a part of.

He said the Council is doing their best to retain the talent they do have. The goal is to retain dedicated officers who have shown that they are committed to being a valuable and trusted resource to the public. He said the contract is coming up soon, and they are bargaining in good faith with the police force to find a reasonable balance. He is hopeful those negotiations will lead to an amicable and agreeable solution.

Commissioner Hardesty said she does not believe there is an ideal number of police officers. She said what they experienced last year was a coalescing around the question “What is the role of Police officers in the City of Portland?” The audits show everyone does not experience policing the same. Some communities are heavily targeted. Homeless members of the community are over 50% of the people arrested. Last summer, those taking to the streets were very clear that they want to weigh in on how real community safety looks.

She said she is pleased that this budget starts to process a truth and reconciliation process. In addition, she is thrilled that Chief Lovell has agreed that he and his officers will participate in the truth and reconciliation process with former black and brown police officers who have agreed to participate.

**Commissioner Quiroz asked the following questions:**

The new parks local option levy funding comes online next year, and you are using debt proceeds in advance of that this year. What are the first things you are using the money for? Do you have benchmarks for the use of the funding next year? With the pandemic ebbing, when will the parks reopen to full use? How is the investment of those levy funds changing our park experience?

City Commissioner Rubio answered, saying since Portland voters overwhelmingly approved

the Parks Levy in November 2020, Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) has worked hard to restore recreation programming in a Covid responsive manner for summer 2021.

Due to the way property tax collection works, levy funding is not available until November of 2021. But the Council and community didn't want another summer to go by without programming in parks. So on February 17<sup>th</sup>, City Council approved a Supplemental Budget for this current fiscal year and an Interfund Loan to fund short-term needs related to Summer 2021 programming and building organizational capacity for future service expansion.

The bureau's budget for FY 2021-22 supports the aims of the Supplemental Budget in February and for the first year of the levy. The bureau will submit a detailed budget in early fall as part of the City's Fall Budget Monitoring Process.

As PP&R has learned from public health experts over the life of the Covid-19 pandemic, outdoor programming is the safest way to restore programming and improve and protect public health. With that knowledge, PP&R designed summer programs and created employment recruitment and training programs to restore programming in Summer 2021, focusing on outdoor activities.

The Parks Levy will allow the bureau to focus resources to meet the needs of underserved communities. The resources advanced from the Parks Levy are helping the bureau reduce cost as a barrier to public programs and prioritizing equity.

PP&R has focused on outdoor recreation and environmental programming for children and youth, including outdoor swimming lessons, summer camps, Fitness in the Park, Nature Day camps, and tennis lessons in the park.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made PP&R's role in preventing hunger during the summer break from school even more vital to the Portland community. PP&R expects to serve over 100,000 meals to alleviate hunger in the community by continuing a critical program of distributing free meals to enjoy in parks or take home.

In addition to providing meals to youth ages 1-18, PP&R will host pop-up arts/music/cultural events and small-scale arts clinics at some parks across the City during Free Lunch + Play. Lastly, summer programming means PP&R will hire many seasonal and casual staff to keep parks clean and provide public programs. PP&R is expecting to hire up to 1,850 staff members this summer. As a result, PP&R will once again be among the City's most significant summer youth employers.

She concluded by stating he wanted to thank Portland voters for their support of the Parks Levy so parks and recreation system can reopen to all Portlanders

**Commissioner Wubbold asked this follow-up question:**

Will the Parks programs be reopening for face-to-face operations in the fall for projects and classes?

City Commissioner Rubio said they are following the guidelines state-wide. It is a day-by-day evaluation but hopefully by fall.

**Chair Barringer said he would skip the following prepared question because only a**

**few minutes were left of the 90-minute hearing. He wanted to ensure the person signed in to give testimony at this hearing would have enough time. He asked that staff include the prepared answer in these minutes.**

Tell us about the Clean Energy Program. What speed bumps have you found with that program? What are the results so far, and how will you measure success?

*Following is the written response submitted by the City of Portland's Staff.*

*The Clean Energy Fund is an innovative grant program to provide dedicated funding for climate action that advances racial and social justice. The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and the Portland Clean Energy Fund grant committee worked hard, and with intention, to develop a program that is expected to address the previous failures at combating climate change while supporting our most impacted communities. The City needed to ensure systems and processes put in place reflected the intent of the community leaders who lead the creation of the fund by ballot measure.*

*Given the necessary intentionality put into program development, coupled with impacts from the pandemic, one roadblock was the modest delay in releasing the inaugural grant funds. That said, what at first was a perceived impediment was a benefit as the disruption caused by the pandemic allowed program staff to be more deliberate in creating this first-of-its-kind program. More than just a tool to combat climate change, PCEF is also designed to support the resilience of our Black, Indigenous and people of color communities in response to the climate crisis. So how we brought and continue to bring new communities to the clean energy table is an essential component of getting this program right.*

*In my eyes, and as reflected by my colleagues on City Council, the inaugural grant awards were a resounding success. We awarded \$8.6 million dollars of funding through 45 grants with 86% of funds going to organizations that both reflect and serve our priority populations. The process was thoughtful and included listening to community leaders along the way to ensure we were setting up grantees for immediate and future success.*

*As it relates to measuring success of the program as a whole, City staff and the grant committee have defined a range of measures relevant to each project and will be tracking project outputs and outcomes. The PCEF committee is working on developing longer term performance goals that reflect the vision of what Portland voters overwhelmingly pushed for – funding centered on climate justice. Overtime, performance measures that capture our equity and climate goals will be crystallized and refined as our collective ability to measure these complex issues evolves.”*

**Commissioner Wubbold asked the following questions:**

We have covered the first three highlights in your budget message, Mayor Wheeler, Economic Recovery, Homelessness, and Community Safety. How about the fourth highlight, Equity? What will we talk about in this hearing next year about how those investments paid off?

Mayor Wheeler said they are acting upon the mandates of an incredible social justice movement that they have witnessed this past year. Across all of the bureaus, they are beginning to sow the seeds of change. In his office he has asked Dr. Markisha Webster to work with him as a personal advisor on issues of equity and diversity. She is the Director

Diversity Director for the Bureau of Equity and Human Rights. Each of the bureaus has its own equity plan. The budget includes the directive put out and required equity and diversity to be front and center in each program offers.

In terms of the work going forward, thoughtful and deliberate change, particularly institutional and cultural change, is urgently needed, but it cannot be rushed. The change the leadership has begun includes reallocating funding from the Police Bureau to community-focused programs, creating additional equity-focused positions in City bureaus, providing more support to the employee affinity groups, and more.

The work done around economic recovery has highlighted and put employers that are owned and operated by people of color front and center of the City's recovery strategies. In addition, the household support provided was done with an intentional focus on equity and diversity-related issues.

He concluded by stating this past year has been an opportunity to reevaluate how the City lives out the values of anti-racism and equity in all aspects of City functions. They will continue to evaluate their progress and respond to the needs of the community and employees.

Chair Barringer said that's the end of our formal questions. Thank you all for contributing to this very important conversation. There is one person who has requested to give testimony at this hearing. He explained that the commissioners would like to hear that testimony, but they will limit it to two minutes in the interest of time.

*Citizen Edith Gillis spoke, saying about twice a year, the public is given too little time and information to analyze and advise you with too little or no influence because too much money was already in washed, ill-informed votes throughout the year. So, as a result, the public and the commissioners do not have the information or the time needed to make good choices.*

*Instead, use pie chart budgeting, in which the slices of the budgetary pie are sized by their importance and benefits to Portlanders surviving and thriving in the City. Then, make all funding votes throughout the year within specific pie slices. Have each commissioner rank 0-5 on each column for where it ranks in their professed values, clear air and water, safe housing for all, food, security, clean energy, climate, justice, disasters and pandemic resilience, reformative economy, social justice, racial justice, government policy, police transparency and accountability, safe transportation, communication, democracy and hope, ever stronger community with mutual respect and caring for livability for mental and physical health.*

*As a part of the document counting, each vote is promptly posted online for each funding and policy vote throughout the year. Each commissioner identifies how that choice fits the pie chart priorities and the grid of values and duties ranking.*

*Reverse the harm done. Address the underlying contempt for human life and rights that result in Police violence, tax refusal, homelessness, drug addictions, assaults, and suicides. Instead, document how each funding and policy choice fits into the pie chart of budget values and fits each grid ranking your values and vote accordingly.*

With no other speakers, Chair Barringer closed the public hearing and opened a regular meeting of the TSCC. He asked if any of the commissioners had any comments on the City of Portland's budget. There were none. He asked Executive Director Gibbons to give a brief review and

recommendations of the City 2021-22 Approved budget and budget process.

Executive Director Gibons said staff recommends that the commission certify the budget and budget process without any objections or recommendations.

Commissioner Wubbold moved to certify the City of Portland's 2021-22 Approved budget with no recommendations or objections. Commissioner Norton seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously (5).

There being no other business, Chair Barringer adjourned the meeting. (11:00 a.m.)

Minutes approved at the TSCC Regular Meeting 7/27/2021