

City of Portland

2025-26 Hearing Minutes

Tuesday June 10, 2025

9:30 A.M

1900 SW 4th Ave (2nd Floor, Council Chambers)

Portland, Oregon

Present:

TSCC:

Chair Harmony Quiroz,
Vice Chair Matt Donahue,
Commissioner Tod Burton,
Commissioner Allison Lugo Knapp
Commissioner Dr. Rita Moore,
Allegra Willhite, Executive Director,
Brittanie Abayare, Budget Analyst

Absent:

City of Portland Officials:

Mayor Keith Wilson,
Council President Elana Pirtle-Guiney,
Council Vice President Tiffany Koyama Lane,
Councilor Candace Avalos,
Councilor Jamie Dunphy,
Councilor Loretta Smith,
Councilor Sameer Kanai,
Councilor Dan Ryan,
Councilor Angelita Morillo,
Councilor Steve Novick,
Councilor Olivia Clark,
Councilor Mitch Green,
Councilor Eric Zimmerman,
Donnie Olivares, DCA of Economic Development,
Bob Cozzie, Interim Deputy City Administrator for the Public Safety Service Area

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Chair Harmony Quiroz opened the hearing, welcoming everyone and officially calling the Annual City of Portland Budget Hearing to order.

- The Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission (TSCC) is a community oversight commission established by the Oregon Legislature more than 100 years ago.
- The Commission oversees the budgets of all TSCC member taxing districts and annually conducts a thorough budget review and certification process.

- TSCC holds public budget hearings like this one to engage with district leadership and provide additional opportunities for public comment before the budget is adopted.
- Commissioners introduced themselves and confirmed no conflicts of interest.
- City Council members and staff introduced themselves.
- Chair Quiroz acknowledged the City's receipt of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget, noting it represents transparency and clarity for both the TSCC and the public to understand the City's budget.

Public Comment

Public comment was limited to 90 seconds per person, with an initial 20 minutes allocated, and additional time after questions if available. Written testimony was accepted for up to 24 hours after the meeting via the TSCC website. Tom Borden submitted written testimony related to the funding of the Police Bureau; the full written comment is available on the TSCC website: [City-of-Portland-Hearing-Public-Comment-from-Tom-Borden.pdf](#).

- **Alan Combs (Portland Resident and Taxpayer for over 25 years):**
 - Emphasized the TSCC's role as a watchdog for taxpayers, especially under the new form of governance. He stated the public process leading up to the budget was deeply flawed, rushed, lacked transparency, and failed to provide meaningful public input. He believed the presented budget did not reflect the actual budget Council would adopt and that deliberations continued without public knowledge. He also raised concerns about a "Progressive Caucus" of six council members meeting without proper public notice, which he considered a quorum.
- **Michelle Miller (District Four, Stadium Neighborhood):**
 - Echoed concerns about the flawed budget process, stating public comment time was severely limited (90 seconds instead of two minutes) at the full Council hearing, and hundreds were cut off. She contrasted this with the County's longer public sessions and also criticized the Progressive Caucus for avoiding transparency, saying it "walks like a quorum and that talks like a quorum". Miller mentioned Councilor Avalos's intent to control Police Bureau overtime, violating charter reform, and alleged misinformation from other councilors regarding polling data and a \$21 million police budget increase.
- **Tiana Tozer (District Two):**
 - Expressed concerns about misinformation from councilors and asked whose responsibility it was to correct it. She challenged Councilor Morillo's claim about polls showing Portlanders would cut police to save parks, requesting to see the supporting poll. Tozer also questioned Councilors Kanal and Green's assertion of a \$21 million increase in the police budget, citing conflicting information in the budget summary that

showed a much smaller increase or a decrease. She urged councilors not to "cheat and lie to win".

- **Loretta Guzman (Owner of Bison Coffee House, District Two):**

- Described running a business in Portland as discouraging and felt unheard due to time limits on public testimony. She found the new form of government worse than the previous one, feeling that as a taxpayer, her voice was not being heard. She criticized the Mayor's commitment to public safety as "just words" and recounted calling 311 for PSR with no availability, and 911 when her nephew was shot, only to get a recording, resulting in his death.

- **Ernie Munch (District Four, former Transportation Planner for City of Portland):**

- Thanked commissioners for their service and supported the Mayor's public safety budget, stating that community protection is the basic function of government. He also supported park maintenance as essential for Portland's brand and neighborhood livability, and infrastructure maintenance, noting that current spending is not productive for maintenance, which is being starved.

- **Karen Geary (District Three Resident, District Four Business Owner):**

- Expressed strong opposition to cuts to police and fire, believing robust funding is essential for safety, well-being, and quality of life. She highlighted challenges from rising crime rates and emergency response times, advocating for enhanced support, not cuts. Geary also called for proactive solutions to clean up streets and address homelessness, crime, and drug dealing, which discourage businesses. She urged the Council to reconsider taking \$2 million from the police budget and split funds between police and parks instead.

- **Talia Giardini (Portland Native, Registered Nurse):**

- Stated 90 seconds was insufficient for public opinion and that the public was misled about testifying at the hearing. As a nurse caring for victims of violence and a survivor herself, she affirmed the need for police. Giardini criticized the "Progressive Caucus" for ideological gridlock and violating the new charter by wanting to control the Police Bureau through the overtime budget, pushing for police abolition. She accused Councilors Green and Morillo of manipulating the public with false claims of a \$21 million police budget increase, noting the actual increase was \$800,000. She encouraged support for the Mayor's rational budget.

- **Ciatta Thompson (District Four):**

- Stated the push to abolish police is a "socialist objective" and a "thousand cuts" through amendments. She called the "parks versus police" dichotomy a "deceptive tactic" that misleads voters. Thompson argued that defunding police and "tax the rich" policies drive businesses out, deepening economic issues, and that smart spending reductions and innovative revenue strategies are needed.

- **Laura Curry (joined online):**

- Supported previous speakers' opposition to removing police funding, especially as her neighborhood (Stadium Hood) deals daily with needles, drug use, garbage, human feces, and camping. She noted police are understaffed and cannot address all issues. Curry expressed concern about new overnight shelters opening without enough services to support residents and taxpayers.

Commissioner Questions and District Responses

Question (Chair Quiroz): Both a new form of government and a newly elected council – this was a year of firsts for the City. We'd like to hear your perspective on how this is going in broad terms - as you work through major structural changes, what has risen to the surface in terms of what is working well with the transition? What areas do you see that still need to be addressed?

- **Council President Elana Pirtle-Guiney:**

- The transition process was heavily focused on the needs of the administration, leaving many details about how Council would operate undefined. The Council established a Governance Committee to address specific questions and continues this work through Governance and full Council meetings. The work is underway, but it will likely take one to two years of iterations to develop the final process for how Council operates. For the budget, there was extensive district-by-district engagement, including coordinated citywide and budget-focused town halls, which was a big win for Portlanders. The City expects to enter the FY2026-27 budget cycle with a schedule that better aligns with Council's work. Over the next year, committees will hear presentations from bureaus on new projects and program changes from this budget, allowing councilors to dive deeper into bureau budgets to prioritize funding for programs Portlanders care most about, especially if facing additional budget cuts next year.

- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked if work is being done to improve public engagement, especially around the budget.

- **Council President Elana Pirtle-Guiney:**

- Acknowledged that some councilors were frustrated with how budget engagement sessions went and that they are still working through "kinks". She calculated over 14 hours of official public testimony across various sessions, in addition to town halls set up by individual councilors.

Question (Commissioner Burton): Let's talk about the General Fund - it has a significant structural problem, which impacts city services like public safety and parks. This budget shows the City can make it through FY 26, but with the low projected economic growth, slowing property tax revenue, etc. - what do you see happening in the long-term? Do you predict that the structural problem will improve, and what tangible steps are you taking this year in the future to improve it?

- **Councilor Loretta Smith:**

- While the balanced five-year General Fund forecast shows a significant deficit for FY 2025-26, it also shows no other deficits for the rest of the forecast. In other words, if Council adopted no other ongoing expenses, and both revenues and ongoing expenses grew as expected, reductions would not be needed through FY 2029-30. However, the margins are slim, and if revenues don't grow quite as fast as projected that would likely cause another year of reductions. A significant amount of the total General Fund deficit is related to expiring one-time expenses that began during the COVID pandemic. This will continue to be a challenge, as some programs continue to be funded with one-time dollars and future Councilor may wish to continue these programs. As it stands, however, revenues are expected to grow in line with ongoing expenses through FY 2029-30.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Burton):** Asked what tools might be considered if the City cannot meet these slim margins and maintain sustainability.
 - **Councilor Steve Novick:**
 - The Mayor is committed to continuing to identify possibilities for consolidation and efficiencies within the city budget. Some discussions have occurred about tax proposals, though they have not advanced far. Ending unsheltered homelessness could reduce pressure on various parts of the budget. He stated that while they are hopeful about possibilities, they cannot currently provide exact mechanisms for maintaining a balanced budget over the next ten years.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Burton):** We're curious about Parks specifically - what is the long-term funding plan for sustainably funding parks, and can you tell us about your plans for the local option levy?
 - **Councilor Steve Novick:**
 - The City Council is committed to referring a Parks Levy to Portlanders for approval, as the current levy expires next year and is an integral part of funding the park system. Over the next three weeks, Council will determine what to ask Portlanders to support to maintain outdoor parks and recreational opportunities. While the idea of a parks district is not being ruled out, discussions on that front have not yet begun.

Question (Commissioner Lugo Knapp): In late May, Council voted to increase water and sewer rates, along with a number of other fees. How do you reconcile fee increases with what we are consistently hearing is an onerous tax burden and increasingly high cost of living for city residents? With likely increases to rates and fees in the future, do you foresee a breaking point for community members, and what's your plan to address this?

- **Councilor Olivia Clark:**
 - The Council debate directly addressed concerns about the onerous tax burden and cost of living. She stated the City needs safe, well-maintained infrastructure, and the cost of delaying regular maintenance or potential catastrophic failure is far higher than the

approved increases. She appreciated the Mayor's commitment to restructuring services for efficiency and cost savings across bureaus, including the "One Water" initiative. Council plans to consider ways to address the backlog of deferred maintenance (asset management) over the next year, which may relieve future cost increases. The Council is committed to finding cost-saving measures in every bureau. She added that the Water Bureau has an excellent program to assist individuals who cannot afford utility bills, which they would like to see replicated in other utility bureaus.

- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked if there is a short or long-term forecast for water and electricity rates, expressing concern for middle-income families who may not qualify for assistance programs.
 - **Councilor Olivia Clark:**
 - Confirmed there is a forecast for those increases over time, describing them as gradual and small. She reiterated the existence of a robust program for those who cannot afford utilities, which could be expanded if necessary.

Question (Vice Chair Donahue): Previous councils have made policy changes since the inception of the clean energy surcharge, and there have been public discussions about the practice of using these funds, as well as interest earned on PCEF funds, to plug holes in general funded programs. We again see the use of PCEF funds in bureaus across the City in this budget. And just last week, a proposal floated by Mayor Wilson and Governor Kotek would use PCEF funds to support conversion of office buildings to residences. What sort of stakeholder input did you use to inform these decisions, and how are you ensuring that the use of funds are within the boundaries of what voters approved?

- **Councilor Dan Ryan:**
 - The inaugural Climate Investment Plan (CIP), which included funding for City bureaus and Strategic Program 14, resulted from a nine-month process with extensive community engagement. This plan was recommended by the PCEF Committee and adopted by City Council in September 2023. When amended in December 2024, feedback from the original engagement process informed updates. The PCEF Committee discussed and recommended amendments in public meetings with public comment, and the previous Council held a public hearing before adoption. The amended CIP includes a transparent outline of expected bureau allocations over a five-year plan, and the FY2025-26 allocations are consistent with this.
 - For details on how the Mayor's proposal for office-to-residential conversions aligns with SP14, he suggested reaching out to his office as it is outside the scope of the FY2025-26 budget process.
- **Follow-up (Vice Chair Donahue):** Asked about future PCEF projections, how economic factors (tariffs, recession) might impact dollars, and if revenues decline, what would be cut first and how dollars prioritized for city bureaus.
 - **Councilor Dan Ryan:**

- The economic situation, especially regarding the tariffs and potential for a recession, is certainly a concern but could play out in a number of ways. Even a small, predictable tariff on a wide range of goods would have conflicting impacts for Clean Energy Surcharge (CES) revenue as consumers would likely pay higher prices (increasing revenue) but also buy less (decreasing revenue). The City Economist released a memo in April on how the Clean Energy Surcharge could potentially be impacted as well as a five-year forecast. We are still in a period of great economic uncertainty. Since that memo focuses solely on revenues, it should also be noted that the increase in prices caused by the tariffs makes it so that the revenue won't purchase as much even if it is unimpacted.
- If revenues decline, they may need to adjust allocations within the current 5-year Climate Investment Plan, which runs through June 2029. Any proposed adjustments would be initiated through a PCEF Committee process and reflect a reassessment of program priorities. While they don't have a predetermined order of cuts, they would prioritize maintaining funding for programs with the highest impact on climate impacts and community benefits, consistent with the intent of PCEF.
- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked what percentage of PCEF funds are available for "nimble, reactive responses" versus long-term grants or plans, given engagement with entities like Multnomah Education Service District.
 - **Donnie Olivares, DCA of Economic Development:**
 - Stated the CIP is made up of 37 strategic initiatives and the existing community grant program. Some initiatives are more defined (e.g., \$5 million to PBOT for planting trees along 82nd Avenue), while others are less prescriptive, such as the federal match initiative which sets aside \$20 million for opportunities to match federal grants. Community grants are open to the "ideations, hopes, skills and experience of our community groups". He offered to provide specific numbers later.

Question (Chair Quiroz): Portland has long had a formal cooperative agreement with Multnomah County regarding shared initiatives to address homelessness, first through the County's Joint Office of Homeless Services and now through the Homeless Services Division. Can you explain how the Portland Solutions program intersects with HSD and more generally the current status of the collaboration with the County?

- **Councilor Candace Avalos:**
 - Portland Solutions collaborates daily with Multnomah County through various staff and programs. The most recent Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the two jurisdictions created the Homelessness Response System, a collaborative effort to establish an integrated system that includes City and County programs, health systems, carceral systems, nonprofits, and private entities. Quarterly meetings established by the new IGA between the Council and Commission are used to identify differences,

overlaps, and areas needing more coordination, with ongoing efforts toward increased coordination.

- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked how the City balances immediate humanitarian crisis response (emergency shelter) with the long-term housing affordability crisis, and the "theory of change" guiding the City's actions on homelessness.
 - **Councilor Candace Avalos:**
 - Traditionally, the City managed safety and public space maintenance, while the County/Homeless Services Department was responsible for social/health services and shelter. In recent years, the City has invested in adult shelters to create meaningful opportunities to move unsheltered people off the streets and connect them to services and housing. The City is pivoting from a repetitive process of moving unsheltered people and cleaning up to using resources to move people indoors to address root causes. There is movement toward creating a unified housing plan to unify resources and strategies into a singular plan with shared objectives to address root causes more efficiently. This strategy incorporates existing work plans, including studying alternative financing and ownership models, seeking new resources (e.g., TIF dollars), pursuing acquisition and cost containment, exploring participation in a large cities acquisition fund model, and waiving System Development Charges for 5,000 new homes in 36 months.
- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked about the overlap and shared knowledge between the City and County to advance initiatives, referencing County's new dashboard and data evaluation tools.
 - **Councilor Candace Avalos:** Stated a commitment to solving the problem together and understanding the necessity of collaboration between the two government entities. She highlighted the movement around the dashboard, increased data, and renegotiation of the IGA as ways to demonstrate collaboration. With new leadership in both City and County, there's a reset in the relationship. As Chair of the Homelessness and Housing Committee, her work ensures the City understands its role, capacity, and responsibility to come to the table with partners (County, Metro, State) to fill gaps.
- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** What are the latest current sheltering program outcomes, in general terms? Overall, can you share what are your goals for these programs and in general are you meeting them?
 - **Mayor Keith Wilson:**
 - The current strategy is to maintain existing Safe Rest Village and Task sites, which has been the primary focus in this budget. The goal is to add 1,500 overnight shelter beds (24/7, recovery beds, etc.), with support from the County for a promised 1,000 beds through their Homes Response Action Plan. They have also asked private enterprises, through public-private partnerships, to bring

on 500 beds, and progress is being made on all three pillars. The goal is to stop the cycle of moving people from one block to another and instead welcome them inside to help them on their road to housing.

Question (Commissioner Moore): Portland Street Response has had an uncertain future since its establishment in 2019. So far, it has been housed in the Fire Dept, the Police Bureau, and the Community Safety Division. There has very recently been some discussion of making PSR a co-equal, independent public safety agency. PSR has also had considerable fluctuations in budget and staffing. The Mayor's budget proposal included funding to add 14 staff positions with an eye to expanding PSR into a 24/7 service. Can you give us a status update on PSR and plans for its future?

- **Councilor Sameer Kanal:**

- Upon separation from Portland Fire & Rescue, Portland Street Response (PSR) was and remains part of the Community Safety Division (CSD), within the office of the Deputy City Administrator for the Public Safety Service Area. PSR has grown by filling 12 of its 16 vacant positions, adding services like client shuttling and increased access to indoor spaces, policy development, and creating leadership paths for staff. These efforts focus on creating strong foundations and a sustainable path forward. PSR has a staffing plan to reach 24/7 citywide operation over two fiscal years. The 14 positions in the Mayor's proposed budget will help staff the current two shifts (8 AM to 10 PM) and likely allow a third shift, extending service hours from 6 AM to 11 PM. PSR and CSD leadership are working with Multnomah County, the Oregon Health Authority, and others to remove barriers to Medicaid billing for eligible services, which is a high priority. PSR has strong support from the Mayor, City Council, and the Public Safety Service Area as a whole.

- **Follow-up (Commissioner Moore):** We're hearing two competing conceptions in these answers about public safety. One is a more traditional, relatively narrow definition that is limited to law enforcement and first responders. A second view approaches public safety from a broader perspective, explicitly defining a range of elements like public spaces, housing availability, and economic development as crime prevention strategies. How are these different approaches reflected in this budget and how can they be reconciled going forward in an era of constrained resources?

- **Councilor Sameer Kanal:**

- Stated both conceptions are true, and finding the appropriate amount for each is the ultimate challenge. He said each step of the budget process (appropriation levels, City Administrator's proposal, Mayor's proposal) has tried to correct imbalances and ensure appropriate levels. He mentioned the Public Safety Service Area's strategic plan talks about prevention and response, indicating a "both/and" approach.

- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked how the City engages with the public about these differing perceptions of what the budget says about Portland's values and priorities, given heightened public attention this year.

- **Councilor Sameer Kanal:**
 - Thanked the Chair for her service. He noted with 13 council members, there are 13 different views, though with overlap, on communication. He highlighted individual councilors doing town halls and more engagement, leading to an astronomically higher aggregate level of engagement from City Council compared to previous forms of government, especially in districts. He emphasized councilors meeting with constituents, regardless of differing views. He added that the budget is both an internal document to guide spending and an external statement of values and priorities.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Burton):** Asked for an evaluation of PSR's success since its pilot in 2021 and its potential involvement with County deflection efforts.
 - **Councilor Sameer Kanal:**
 - Stated there hasn't been a recent evaluation, but previous evaluations through Portland State University showed strong success. He believed PSR has proven its success through specific examples, and the Mayor and executive branch have expanded its powers effectively, often supported by police.
 - **Councilor Eric Zimmerman (continued, regarding deflection):**
 - The County's Deflection Center is designed for any community partner, including family, police, PSR, or future county services (like the former CHEERS or CAHOOTS models), to bring intoxicated individuals for sobering services. It is open to anybody who senses it is safer for a person to go there for sobering than to be on the curb.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Moore):** Clarified if 24/7 PSR operation is not likely in the foreseeable future.
 - **Councilor Sameer Kanal:**
 - Believed it is a conversation for the FY2026-27 budget cycle, with the current budget making a "big step" (more than halfway) towards that goal.
 - **Bob Cozzie, Interim Deputy City Administrator for the Public Safety Service Area:**
 - Believed PSR is very successful but currently limited. He noted that only about 2% of the dispatch workload from the 911 center is attributed to PSR, but this could be much higher with more units. The intent is certainly for 24/7 operation. BOEC has created a special dispatch position for PSR units and has preliminary plans for a direct PSR telephone number (not 911) answered within the Bureau of Emergency Communications ecosystem.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Burton):** Asked if the low dispatch rate is due to PSR availability or a training issue in diagnosing calls.
 - **Bob Cozzie:**

- Stated it's not necessarily a training issue due to good protocols, but rather the bandwidth of Portland Street Response at any given time.
- **Follow-up (Chair Quiroz):** Asked if the deflection model's expansion across the system means more of a PSR approach (compassionate response) is being integrated into the police force, expanding beyond just PSR.
 - **Bob Cozzie:**
 - Stated that more PSR units would allow police to respond to more appropriate calls. When PSR units are not available, police are dispatched. He added that police are increasingly trained to navigate difficult circumstances and de-escalate situations.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Burton):** Asked if the City has looked at alternative funding models from other cities to support and expand PSR beyond traditional property tax revenue and general fund resources.
 - **Bob Cozzie:**
 - Stated he has not yet "dived into that" but knows there have been conversations about alternate funding.
 - **Councilor Sameer Kanal:**
 - Added that Medicaid funding for eligible services is a current pursuit.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Moore):** Asked about the impact PSR has had on police response availability.
 - **Bob Cozzie:**
 - Explained that PSR currently accounts for about 2% of the overall dispatch workload, visible on the Portland 911 website. He acknowledged that before PSR, most of these calls (welfare checks, non-emergency concerns) would have gone to police, so PSR does alleviate a number of police calls.
 - **Council President Elana Pirtle-Guiney:**
 - Noted the significant increase for PSR in this budget, marking its first substantial "jump" from a small pilot program. She stated that without a critical mass of units, it's hard to get quick results, and believed clearer answers on impact would be available next year after these investments.

Question (Commissioner Lugo Knapp): Last year we spoke with you about the Equitable Tree Canopy Program. A few months later, we were seeing and hearing reports of newly planted trees dying. What changes have you made to ensure something like this won't happen again?

- **Councilor Jamie Dunphy:**
 - Acknowledged that this issue was repeatedly brought up by East Portland residents.

- The City is increasing contractor capacity – starting this fall, four new contractors will join our planting and establishment efforts.
- Contractor understanding and compliance is essential. Street tree planting contracts include a three-year warranty: any tree that does not survive is replaced at the contractor's expense. They are learning and improving as we go, and recent changes include:
 - Enhanced contractor training focused on early-season planning and logistics for watering and care.
 - Earlier and more coordinated watering schedules beginning in May.
 - Improved oversight and communication between PP&R UF and contractors during the establishment period.
 - Increasing contractor capacity – starting this fall, four new contractors will join our planting and establishment efforts.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Lugo Knapp):** Asked about progress on a comprehensive street tree care and maintenance program that shifts care from property owners to the City, and if long-term funding has been identified.
 - **Councilor Jamie Dunphy:**
 - Confirmed there are plans to shift that responsibility from private property owners to the City. Development of the new service, including a pilot program to help inform the larger program, is underway. Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Funds (PCEF) is the initial and anticipated ongoing funding source.
- **Follow-up (Commissioner Lugo Knapp):** Asked about the line of communication for residents with issues, asking if they communicate with contractors or the City.
 - **Councilor Jamie Dunphy:**
 - Stated the City is moving towards a 311 system as the "front door" for answers about how the City works, consolidating many historical phone numbers.

Question (Commissioner Burton): This was the first year creating a budget with a new governance structure and new leadership - the City tried out new community engagement techniques, new processes, and new timelines - tell us more about this, how did the process go this year? What worked well, and what could be improved?

- **Council Vice President Tiffany Koyama Lane:**
 - The recent major changes in governance and leadership presented an opportunity to reimagine community engagement around the City's budget, including identifying priorities, shaping processes, informing funding decisions, and assessing service outcomes. For the FY2025-26 budget, the City increased opportunities for input at multiple points and via multiple pathways. While not perfect, they have a better sense of

necessary questions. Over 4,000 public comments were received through online forms, direct communications, and four community listening sessions in each of the four new districts. Many councilors provided opportunities for constituents to have direct conversations through constituent coffees and district focus sessions.

- The City Budget Office prepared preliminary "Budget 101" information and presentations. The Chief Financial Officer and City Budget Office will continue to improve materials and conversations and support the evolution of the budget process. City Councilors engaged constituents individually through town halls and other methods. The FY2026-27 budget calendar is anticipated to be discussed and available sooner, hopefully in Fall 2025. Discussions are ongoing to make the process clearer and engagement more accessible.
- She personally engages monthly with constituents through coffee sessions and has found increased access to councilors. She noted the need for a unified strategic plan for communications, engagement, sustainability, and equity work. She observed that some of the same people testified at every meeting and highlighted the need to be open to new engagement strategies, such as her team's door-knocking efforts in her district to gather data and engage with residents who hadn't attended sessions.

Vice Chair Donahue: Acknowledged the timing of the TSCC's review in the budget process this year, especially with the big changes, and expressed hope for future collaboration to make the process smoother, more transparent, and more engaged.

- **Council President Elana Pirtle-Guiney:**

- Replied that they will consider how to best engage with TSCC when planning next year's schedule.

Closing Remarks

Chair Quiroz closed the discussion, thanking everyone for joining and for their transparency, thoughtfulness, and willingness to engage. She stated that the Commissioners serve as public comment and are representative of the general public's comments, emphasizing the importance of community conversation around taxpayer dollars. She then closed the hearing and opened the regular business meeting of the TSCC.

Staff Recommendations & Certification

- **Allegra Wilhite (TSCC Executive Director):**

- Thanked city staff, budget and finance staff, and all other staff for their partnership, diligence in ensuring budget law compliance, and dedication.
- Staff found the budget estimates to be reasonable for the purposes stated and in substantial compliance with budget law.
- TSCC staff have no recommendations or objections.

Vote to Certify

- A motion was made by Chair Quiroz to authorize the commission to sign the certification letter as recommended by staff.
- Commissioner Lugo Knapp seconded the motion.
- All commissioners present voted "Aye".
- City of Portland's 2025-26 approved budget was certified by the TSCC.

There being no other business, Chair Quiroz closed the meeting.