



**TSCC Regular Business Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Wednesday, July 9, 2025**

**11:00 a.m.**

Chair Harmony Quiroz, Vice Chair Donahue, and Commissioner Moore were present, as were Executive Director Allegra Willhite and Budget Analyst Brittanie Abayare.

Commissioners Burton and Lugo Knapp were absent.

**Lunch & TSCC 2025 Budget Season Retrospective**

- The meeting began with lunch provided by TSCC staff. Executive Director Allegra Willhite opened the meeting by going over the agenda.
- Roundtable Discussion:
  - Although time consuming, budget season went well
  - Budget season time commitments - Commissioners and staff discussed:
    - process adjustments like weekly email approvals for small districts or having some hearings online or hybrid.
    - allowing Commissioners 1 – 2 hearings to not attend during budget season.
    - legislative request to add one or two “alternate” positions of commissioners so that not all commissioners would not have to attend all meetings but quorum could still be met.
    - Expectation setting is important, letting commissioners know it’s ok to read only budget review highlights.
    - At beginning of budget season, work together with commissioners to increase flexibility on what meetings need attendance, ID any quorum issues, offer hybrid option to accommodate schedule issues.
    - PPS should have direct questions for the board so the board members engage. For City of Portland, unscripted follow ups worked well. Feedback from staff to commissioners shared that hearings were useful, questions were thoughtful.
  - Commissioners requested that staff provide more detailed instructions and directions for hearing locations, especially ones that have historically been confusing like PCC and MHCC.
- Commissioners and Staff discussed planning potential Summer/Fall Field Trips to visit districts to learn more about their operations and what they do; Allegra presented the following options:
  - Headwaters Farm
  - Port of Portland – Terminal 2
  - Port of Portland – Terminal 6
  - Sauvie Island Fire
- The Commissioners indicated their preference for a Terminal 2 tour, and holding the next East Multnomah Hearing at Headwaters farm. Communications about field trips will be shared after staff work to organize them.



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### **TSCC Work Plan Updates**

- Allegra presented the FY 25 Work Plan Progress Report: The work plan for 2025 is on track, with good progress in several areas. The detailed work plan was sent out ahead of time.
- Work Plan – Existing Items:
  - Commissioner Recruitment and Chair/Vice-Chair: Board transitions will be a significant focus, with hopes of recruiting two new commissioners. The application deadline is mid-September, with some flexibility. The recruitment effort intensifies in late July and August, involving outreach to potential candidates.
    - Application Process: Applications are submitted to the state on the state's website, not directly to TSCC. The TSCC commissioners score applications and make recommendations to the Governor's office, who makes the ultimate decision, generally following TSCC's recommendations. The goal is to onboard new commissioners by January.
    - Potential Candidates: One application has been received from someone who has previously testified at hearings. Other potential candidates were discussed.
      - Efforts include emailing former city council candidates and reaching out to PPS Community Budget Advisory Committee and Metro's Bond Advisory Committees.
    - Succession Conversations: Discussions about Chair and Vice-Chair succession will occur in the fall.
    - Returning Commissioners: The Governor's office has indicated that former commissioners who have termed out and taken a break could return if recruitment is difficult.
  - Legislative Change for TSCC Fiscal Sustainability: This is identified as a multi-year project. The intent is to go to the legislature in January 2029, with initial planning for what to ask (e.g., alternate funding models, changes to number of Commissioners, etc.) occurring in calendar year 2026.
  - TSCC Office Space Planning: Initial stages involve inquiring about lease renewal and bargaining for a lower cost. A meeting with the county is planned for late summer/fall to explore other available spaces, though the county's reduced space makes this less likely. The need for some kind of physical office space remains, despite mostly working from home, due to the need for in-person meetings and accommodating visiting districts. TSCC also needs to keep in mind the needs of future staff members who may or may not have home office space.
  - TSCC Budget Manual Update: This is an ongoing multi-year project. Staff expect to take a step back on this to prioritize website updates, as other resources exist, and finance staff often email questions directly rather than accessing the manual.
  - TSCC Website: Prioritizing the website update is strongly suggested. The current website is very old and not accessible, failing accessibility checks. Budget Analyst Brittanie Abayare has researched accessibility requirements. The proposal is to use a TSCC intern in the fall to focus on research and content conversion for the website, working closely with staff. Commissioners agreed with this proposal.
- Work Plan – Potential New Items for Consideration:
  - Lunch and Learn Program for Commissioners: This program was discussed for addition to the work plan. It would likely be held during the off-budget season, perhaps September through March, and could involve external speakers on topics



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like school funding (including CSL calculation) and Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The Commissioners indicated their interest in having this program and asked that it be included in the workplan. They also suggested inviting new potential commissioners (those forwarded to the Governor for recommendation) be invited to lunch and learn opportunities.

- Convening Cross-Governmental Meetings: This item will continue to be discussed at future meetings. Discussion included the need to determine the intent and purpose of these meetings, desired outcomes, and impacts on relationship-building with districts. A first step would be to query districts to understand what cross-governmental work is already being done, then identify very specific topics for the meetings.

### **2025-26 Tax Hearing Schedule**

- Timing of Tax Hearings: Two pieces of public comment were received regarding the timing of tax hearings, expressing frustration that districts only need to notify TSCC of their intent to hold a hearing after sending the ballot title to the elections office (around mid-August for November elections). Critics suggested changing the statute to require earlier notification.
  - Current Practice: TSCC typically tries to time hearings around the ballot mail-out date, usually within a day or two of ballots hitting mailboxes, to ensure timeliness and relevance for voters. Holding hearings earlier (e.g., September for November elections) might result in less information from districts, as they don't provide materials until about a month before the hearing.
  - Proposed Adjustment: There was discussion about holding hearings a couple of days before ballots drop or within the five-day window around the ballot drop date, with a preference for before. This would ensure the information is in the news when people receive their ballots.
- Potential Fall 2025 Hearings:
  - City of Portland Parks Local Option Levy: Commissioners want it held close to the ballot drop date.
  - Riverdale School District Local Option Levy: This is a renewal and could potentially be an online hearing.
- Potential May 2025 Hearings:
  - Multnomah County Historical Levy: This is anticipated in the spring unless Multnomah County decides to bring it to voters at other time or to not renew.

### **Wrap Up & Other Business**

- Preliminary Year End Budget Report: A preliminary year-end budget report is not yet available because the county has not closed its books. However, estimates indicate that TSCC is on track to be under budget by the expected margin. The report will be sent via email when ready.
  - Portland Arts Committee Update: Vice Chair Donahue provided an update from his meeting with the City Council Committee on arts and economy.
    - Role of the Committee: The committee's purpose is to ensure funds from the arts tax are used responsibly.
    - Arts Tax: The arts tax is permanent (\$35 forever) and has no expiration date, unless the city undoes it. Its revenue has been leveling off, and compliance with payment is not high, despite enforcement mechanisms.
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## Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission

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- TSCC Representation: There is an official TSCC seat on the Arts Committee, and they heavily rely on TSCC's participation.
  - Upcoming Meeting Schedule: There will be no meeting in August. The next meeting will likely be in late September or early October to prepare for tax hearings and review commissioner applications received by the September 15th deadline. Two meetings might be needed due to timing on the applications and hearings.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned