

# Metro

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Metro

## Minutes - Final

Thursday, June 27, 2024

10:30 AM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber,  
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID:  
615 079 992 or 888-475-4499 (toll free)  
[https://www.youtube.com/live/fbeqRz5Xbx0?](https://www.youtube.com/live/fbeqRz5Xbx0?si=3PanvP6DRedmGxE)  
[si=3PanvP6DRedmGxE](https://www.youtube.com/live/fbeqRz5Xbx0?si=3PanvP6DRedmGxE)  
**Council meeting**

This meeting will be held electronically and in person at the Metro Regional Center Council Chamber.

You can join the meeting on your computer or other device by using this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or 888-475-4499 (toll free)

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Deputy Council President Hwang called the Metro Council Meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**Present:** 6 - Councilor Christine Lewis, Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Duncan Hwang, and Councilor Ashton Simpson

**Excused:** 1 - Council President Lynn Peterson

**2. Public Communication**

Deputy Council President Hwang opened the meeting to members of the public wanting to testify on a non-agenda items.

There were none.

**3. Consent Agenda**

3.1 **Resolution No. 24-5421** For the Purpose of Accepting the May 21, 2024 Primary Election Abstract of Votes for Metro

Attachments: [Resolution 24-5421 May 21 2024 Primary Election Abstract of Votes.pdf](#)  
[Exhibit A to Resolution No. 24-5421.pdf](#)  
[Exhibit B to Resolution No. 24-5421.pdf](#)

**approved**

**4. Other Business**

4.1 Metro Affordable Housing Bond 2023 Annual Report

Presenter(s): Patricia Rojas (she/her) Housing Director, Metro,  
Emily Lieb (she/her), Policy Director, Metro  
Alison Wicks (she/her), Affordable Housing Bond Program Supervisor, Metro  
Jenny Lee (she/her), Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee Co Chair

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Steve Rudman (he/him), Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee Co-Chair

Attachments: [Staff report](#)  
[Attachment](#)

Deputy Council President Hwang called on Patricia Rojas (she/her) Housing Director, Metro, Emily Lieb (she/her), Policy Director, Metro, Alison Wicks (she/her), Affordable Housing Bond Program Supervisor, Metro, Jenny Lee (she/her), Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee Co Chair, Steve Rudman (he/him), Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee Co-Chair to present on Metro Affordable Housing Bond 2023 Annual Report.

Emily Lieb (she/her) Housing Policy Director, Metro, Alison Wicks (She/her) Affordable Housing Bond Program Supervisor Metro, Jenny Lee (she/her) Affordable housing bond oversight committee co-chair, Steve Rudman (he/him), Affordable Housing Bond oversight committee co-chair, highlighted that the bond, passed by voters in 2018, was on track to exceed its original production targets, creating thousands of new affordable homes. She emphasized the importance of partnerships and infrastructure built over six years, which would provide long-term housing solutions. As of December 2023, funding had been committed to 57 affordable housing projects, resulting in 4671 new affordable homes. Emily also mentioned the bond's role in addressing homelessness, with many units designated for permanent supportive housing. She acknowledged the efforts of the Housing Bond Oversight Committee and the ongoing work to align affordable housing investments with supportive housing services.

*Council Discussion:*

Councilor Gonzalez commended the hard work of oversight and partnership that led to setting aspirational goals, which included building wealth in the communities and local

companies and highlighted the significant achievement of 24.9% of the ten projects built so far.

Councilor Rosenthal wondered how many more additional units will be needed in the next ten years.

Emily Lieb (she/her), noted that new urban growth report was expected to be released in the next week or two by the planning department, estimating a current need of 24,000 homes for affordable housing. She noted that the report also forecasted the need for 150,000 additional units over the next 20 years, with about two-thirds expected to be affordable, and emphasized aligning with these estimates.

Councilor Lewis wondered if there was more information on how policies were adopted to build necessary PSH units and how the three counties, through seven jurisdictional partners, delivered PSH.

Steve Rudman (he/him), explained that the PSH and SHS programs aided the bond program after the fact, leading to negotiations to include services in unoccupied projects. He noted the counties, especially Multnomah County, were major players in supportive housing services but not in housing development, making the process challenging and requiring learning on the go

Councilor Simpson was pleased to hear they were exceeding their goals and appreciated the efforts of Emily and Allison. He noted the positivity from small cities, especially in Gresham, and highlighted the impressive 24.9% involvement of COVID firms and the significant unit spread for equity, emphasizing the importance of stabilizing lives of historically marginalized people.

Deputy Council President Hwang as struck by the 21.4% figure in project funding from the metro housing bond and wondered how to interpret it. He asked if this meant they

would produce 21% fewer units as the source dried up or if they would face significant challenges in producing units due to a lack of funding.

Emily Lieb (she/her), explained that the Metro bond and the Portland bond brought additional funding into the existing affordable housing development system, which historically relied on federal tax credits and achieved only moderate affordability around 60% of the area median income. She noted that these additional funds helped to buy down deeper affordability by reducing the need for private bank loans, which would have required higher rents to repay. By decreasing the amount of bank loan needed, they reduced ongoing debt payments and achieved deeper affordability in the projects.

Councilor Lewis (she/her), wondered if Metro were taking full credit for the site acquisition portion since many sites listed had no acquisition dollars, often because they were repurposing a site already in public control or using Metro site acquisition dollars or other funds to support bond investments. She asked for more details on the site acquisition strategies.

Emily Lieb (she/her), explained that explained that 10% of the affordable housing bond funds were administered by Metro through the site acquisition program, managed by staff in the planning and development department, who also handle transit-oriented development grants. This funding was used to acquire strategically located sites across the region and support their development. In some cases, previously acquired sites were leveraged for development, such as those purchased through transit-oriented development funding.

Councilor Rosenthal emphasized the difficulty in securing the necessary funding to meet this goal and stressed the importance of being cautious with future promises. He

inquired whether the steering committee would continue to provide guidance, goals, and strategies for achieving these objectives, ensuring realistic commitments to voters based on past successes.

Emily Lieb (she/her), explained that the committee's role is to oversee the implementation of the 2018 affordable housing bond, a need that would continue as all funds were committed. Projects under construction would require ongoing reporting on contracting outcomes and demographic outcomes.

Seeing no further discussion on the topic, Deputy Council President Hwang moved on to the next agenda item.

#### 4.2 Presentation on the Financial Condition of Metro: FY 2013-14 to FY 2022-23

Presenter(s): Brian Evans (he/him), Auditor, Metro

Attachments: [Metro-financial-condition-report-June-2024](#)

Deputy Council President Hwang called on Brian Evans (he/him), Auditor, Metro to presented on the Financial Condition of Metro FY 2013-14 to FY 2022-23.

Brian Evans (he/him), provided an overview of the methodology for the biennial report, emphasizing that all figures were adjusted for inflation and focused on four key categories: financial revenue, expenditure, financial health, and the regional economic and demographic profile. He highlighted that Metro's revenue and expenditures had more than doubled over the past ten years, driven by new voter-approved taxes, although the pandemic had significantly impacted visitor venues. He noted that, at the end of fiscal year 2023, seven out of 25 financial indicators showed unfavorable trends, particularly in expenditures, which included rising costs for risk management, employee benefits, and increased debt.

Deputy Council President Hwang called on Brian Kennedy (he/him), CFO for a management response.

Brian Kennedy (he/him), CFO, Metro, noted that while Metro's debt had increased, it was mostly voter-approved general obligation debt, which did not constrain the organization's ongoing resources. He explained that the decrease in capital expenditures was due to the planned spend-down of bond programs, and he expected expenditures to rise again with new voter-approved bonds. He concluded by stating that despite financial challenges, Metro's overall financial position was strong, showing significant recovery from the pandemic.

*Council Discussion*

Councilor Hwang (he/him), wondered if both the auditor and CFO had a brief word to describe the favorable or unfavorable trends of Metro's financial condition.

Brian Kennedy (he/him), CFO, Metro explained that Metro comprised various legally separate entities, with some funds like the general fund and solid waste fund in strong financial positions. He noted that other funds, such as the Portland Five Fund, Expo Fund, and Oregon Convention Center Fund, were not as strong.

Councilor Lewis (she/her), wondered that while the growth over ten years was seen as positive, the increase in employee costs was viewed as unfavorable, indicating that some employees did better than others, with a heavier weight on benefits rather than take-home pay.

Brain Evans (He/him), Auditor, Metro acknowledged that detailed information aimed to address the points raised. He cautioned against directly comparing per capita personal income with employee costs, noting that the drivers behind these figures differ. He expressed surprise at the strong

personal income growth in the region despite the COVID-19 pandemic's impact, suggesting something unusual was happening. He highlighted the importance of monitoring employee benefits, indicating that while it's an area of concern, it is not as critical as Metro's overall revenue growth.

Councilor Rosenthal (he/him), suggested that future reports might benefit from comparing total expenditures to total revenue more directly and possibly breaking out non-pass-through amounts to clarify the data.

Seeing no further discussion on the topic, Deputy Council President Hwang moved on to the next agenda item.

## 5. Ordinance (second reading and vote)

5.1 Ordinance No. 24-1515 For the Purpose of Adding Members to the Regional Waste Advisory Committee and Adding Solid Waste Fee Review to the Committee's Purpose

Presenter(s): Rosalynn Greene, WPES Strategic Initiatives Manager.

Attachments: [Ordinance No. 24-1515](#)  
[Exhibit A](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

Deputy Council President Hwang stated that the first reading and public hearing for Ordinance No. 24-1515 For the Purpose of Adding Members to the Regional Waste Advisory Committee and Adding Solid Waste Fee Review to the Committee's Purpose took place on June 13th, 2024.

Deputy Council President Hwang called on Rosalynn Greene (She/her), WPES Strategic Initiatives Manager, Metro to present to answer questions.

### *Council Discussion*

Councilor Rosenthal (he/him), questioned how the new

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committee structure would align with Metro's advisory committees, noting that neither MPAC nor CORE had council members as chairs or included in state agencies as voting members.

Rosalyn Greene (she/her), acknowledged that this might differ from MPAC, JPAC, or CORE but emphasized that the goal was to strengthen the connection between RWAC and the council. She hoped this clarification made sense.

Councilor Rosenthal (He/him), stated that he did not consider the committee's structure appropriate and expressed concerns about its lack of representation from small cities. He suggested restructuring it more like CORE and MPAC, criticized the inclusion of council members and a DEQ member as voting members, and questioned the committee's ability to provide specific advice on fee structures and allocations. He decided to vote against the ordinance and did not propose an amendment, comparing the situation to trying to paint a car with a broken engine.

Councilor Lewis (She/her), confirmed that the current committee includes public agency representatives from various local governments and commended their strong participation and engagement. She was satisfied with the committee's structure and attendance record.

**adopted**

**Aye:** 5 - Councilor Lewis, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Hwang, and Councilor Simpson

**Excused:** 1 - Council President Peterson

**Abstain:** 1 - Councilor Rosenthal

**6. Chief Operating Officer Communication**

Marissa Madrigal provided an update on the following events or items:

- Suggested adding a message about properly disposing

of batteries by taking them to hazardous waste collection sites, noting that it's free and quick.

- Attended the P5 employee appreciation lunch, where she was impressed by the depth of experience among employees, many of whom had been with P5 for 15 to 30 years.
- Appreciated the diverse roles within P5, from project coordination to ushering, and commended the staff for their contributions to creating a welcoming environment and making community events successful.

## 7. Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- Councilor Simpson (he/him), visited the Recology composting site in North Plains, which he found to be the cleanest and best-smelling trash site he had experienced that year, highlighting its effective air filtration system. Additionally, He informed the public that compost is available for purchase at Recology North Plains, priced at \$30 per truck bed or \$3 per five-gallon bucket.
- Councilor Lewis (she/her), highlighted the opening of Watiaka Haas, a culturally specific shelter for indigenous families in Clackamas County, funded by Metro's supportive housing services and developed in partnership with the Native American Youth and Family Center. She noted that Metro has co-sponsored a three-part series on place-making, with Councilor Hwang and herself participating, and praised the well-attended webinar featuring national and international experts, thanking Dana and the planning team for their efforts.

## 8. Adjourn

There being no further business, Deputy Council President

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Lewis adjourned the Metro Council Meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anushka Kargathara, Legislative Assistant