

Portland Children's Levy
Allocation Committee Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2021 3:00 p.m.
Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

The full record of the meeting may be viewed on the Portland Children's Investment Fund website: www.portlandchildrenslevy.org or YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMKRrNNcEdU>

These minutes have been prepared as traditional minutes - differently from how PCL minutes have been prepared in recent years. For further detail, all are invited to reference the meeting video on YouTube, linked above.

Attending: Mitch Hornecker, Jessica Vega Pederson, Traci Rossi, Felicia Tripp-Folsom, Dan Ryan (Chair).

Welcome/introduction of Allocation Committee and Children's Levy staff

Joel Broussard, Grant Manager for Foster Care and Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention program areas was introduced. Joel began working at the Levy in May 2021.

Approval of Minutes of March 30, 2021 Meeting

Vote: All in Favor

Public Comment on non-agenda items

None

Small Grants Fund Allocation of Funds

The Small Grants Fund Design Team recommends **redistributing the unallocated \$144,000 among the existing grantees**. Their rationale was that robust investment in the grantees would fund all or most of the components that grantees originally proposed, would honor the intention to develop grantees' capacity, and would distribute funding among those reviewers had recommended.

The table below outlines the additional funding recommended for each of the SGF grantees. Amounts recommended account for: application score (listed in score order); total amount requested by applicant; and PCL policy limiting grant size to no more than 30% of organization's annual revenue. One grantee (Brown Girl Rise) was within \$717 of the total amount for which they are eligible, so staff did not recommend amending their contract for this small addition. Urban Gleaners and Elevate both had lower scores in the application process and had lower

percentages of their request awarded. The funding recommendations bring them closer to their original requested amounts, but do not provide their full request.

Grantee Name	Current 3-year Funding Award	Add'l Funding (distribution of declined grant)	Recommended Revised 3-year Total Funding	Original 3-year funding requested or Total eligible*
A.Y.C.O.	\$156,000	\$22,773	\$178,773	\$178,773 (total eligible*)
Camp Elso	\$157,000	\$23,000	\$180,000	\$180,000
Portland Tennis & Ed.	\$157,000	\$23,000	\$180,000	\$180,000
Brown Girl Rise	\$57,000	\$0	\$57,000	\$57,717 (total eligible*)
Elevate Oregon	\$144,000	\$26,744	\$170,744	\$180,000
Ethiopian & Eritrean Cultural Resource Ctr.	\$85,000	\$21,748	\$106,748	\$106,748 (total eligible*)
Urban Gleaners	\$100,000	\$26,735	\$126,735	\$180,000
TOTAL	\$856,000	\$144,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,137,273

The following representatives from Small Grants Fund Grantees testified in support of the proposal:

Wendy Soriano-Valencia from **Portland Tennis and Education**

Maricela de Jesus-Martinez from **Portland Tennis and Education**

Ashely Hess from **Urban Gleaners**

Vote for Proposed Additional Funds for Small Grants Funds

Vote: All in Favor

The proposal was approved as proposed. *The new grant amounts are shown in the table above.*

Grantee Partner Reflections

PCL’s Community Engagement report by **Empress Rules Equity Consulting**, and **PSU’s** report on improvements to PCL grantmaking process, encouraged PCL to help foster relationships between the Allocation Committee and PCL grantee partners. In response, PCL staff plans to dedicate a portion of each Allocation Committee meeting to hearing from grantee partners. Since FY20-21 created exceptional circumstances for grantees and they rose to the challenge, the agenda includes time to hear from four programs: hunger relief grantees, **IRCO’s** Hunger Relief Services and **Neighborhood House’s** Food Pantry; and after school grantees, **Oregon MESA** and **El Programa Hispano Católico**.

PCL staff will offer this opportunity to all grantees and will try to arrange for four to five grantee partners to speak per meeting.

The following representatives from grantee organizations addressed the committee:

Hunger Relief Program Grantees

Ginny Scelza, Program Supervisor, from the **IRCO SUN Initiative Hunger Relief Program**

Utica Abdulla, from **IRCO - P3 Resource Navigator** at Sacramento Elementary in Parkrose School District

Jacqui McDougal, from **IRCO - P3 Resource Navigator** at Ventura Park Elementary in **David Douglas School District**

Jim Cooper, Food Pantry Manager from the **Neighborhood House** Food Pantry program

After School Program Grantees

Dr. Tong Zhang, Executive Director of **Oregon MESA at PSU**

Sarai Rodriquez, Youth & Family Engagement Program Manager from **El Programa Hispano Católico**

Training and Technical Assistance for Grantee Partners

The authorizing language of Children's Levy includes at least 90% funds granted be in a competitive process, and up to 10% can be granted in a non-competitive process for 3 purposes:

- 1) Special initiatives addressing multiple program areas.
- 2) Quality improvement supports, training and technical assistance (TA) for funded programs.
- 3) Improving systems that affect children and the organizations serving them.

In November 2019 when decisions were made to apportion projected revenue toward program area allocations, the Allocation Committee agreed to set aside \$1 million toward training and TA for grantees. Staff intended to propose a training plan in the spring 2020 after grantmaking was done. The pandemic interrupted and we pause our training planning wanting to be cautious on revenue.

In March 2021, we briefed the Allocation Committee on updated revenue projections. We anticipate that revenues will cover grants as projected pre-pandemic and we can allocate \$1 million for training and TA.

The Levy staff is moving forward with planning by surveying grantees for training needs and priorities. Preliminary results so far with 61 of 85 large grantees responding and small grantees needs identified already.

Here are the priorities that have been identified in the survey:

- Trauma informed care
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion
- youth development practices
- evaluating program impact
- child/brain development and parenting
- role of culture in mentoring

Some specific mentions: anti-racism/anti-bias, youth mental health, navigating/understanding child welfare system including its history & inequities, supporting youth w/ disabilities, understanding & managing child behavior, and computer skills like Excel.

Priorities for training be culturally relevant, offered in Spanish; one-time workshop and series

Staff will dig deeper and do analysis of data, seek further input from grantees, and formulate plans. We will return to the Allocation Committee in the fall with topics, potential trainers/consultants, and estimates of costs.

Building Participatory Practices

In the Spring of 2019, there were recommendations from Community Engagement report and PSU Grantmaking Improvement report to create a community advisory committee.

The Community Engagement report framed their recommendation, “methods and best practices for Portland Children’s Levy to connect with the community and take concrete steps toward ending historical inequities.” That report suggested the committee’s role be to provide support with achieving outcomes, funding recommendations, and to hold the Levy accountable.

PSU grantmaking report similarly noted that Allocation Committee bylaws allow for creation of subcommittees, and for role, “to increase Community voice and representation in the Allocation Committee’s work.”

During March 2021 Allocation Committee meeting we shared feedback from Small Grants Design Team around need to create an advisory to guide that work. They piloted some key participatory elements around grantmaking process: application questions, scoring criteria, non-written interview component, balancing value of application/interviews, making funding recommendations.

PCL staff taking feedback to heart, looking at how committee could advise key PCL processes: reporting and performance, and PCL grantmaking.

WE know we are a few years out from the next grantmaking process, but we are interested in learning how we can improve our reporting and performance work. This fall, after grantees submit reports, staff will survey/consult them for feedback on what's working with reporting, what isn't, other ways to show impact. If we had an advisory committee, we could bring content like this with key questions about changes to make/why. We could then bring recommendations to Allocation Committee for consideration.

We are looking to other models like Portland Clean Energy Fund and Pre-School for All and their advisory structures. WE are trying to learn more about participatory grantmaking processes overall.

So, we are bringing questions to the Allocation Committee: What priorities you have for an advisory committee - its role, membership, relationship to the Allocation Committee?

Traci Rossi asked about how the staff selected the models (Pre-School for All and others) and what features were appealing in those selections.

McElroy: Preschool for All has created a participatory process and created an advisory committee. It was intentionally created. Portland Clean Energy Fund has four advisory subcommittees. We are also considering what we can manage as a small staff.

Commissioner Vega Pederson mentioned that the Preschool for All advisory committee is based on other existing advisory committees at the County.

Commissioner Ryan asked what problem is being solved by this process or what best practice is.

McElroy: This is a movement toward shared power and shared decision-making. Moving the advising beyond the staff perspective and seeking to be responsive to the community.

Bridgeman-Bunyoli: Participatory processes allow us to invite the communities who are served by the programs to help shape the programs.

Ryan: This process will lead to change. I just want it to be clear that it may be uncomfortable.

Tripp-Folsom: I think it is important to emphasize that this will be a participatory process. Similar to the Small Grants Fund process, participation and outcomes should be clear. It can be difficult to achieve. I believe that these types of committees can allow more engagement and support for the Children's Levy.

Vega Pederson: It is important to be clear on the role of the committee. Also, we need to be thoughtful about who is on the committee – appropriate level of closeness to the communities and services. Some kind of compensation or stipend will be important.

There is agreement among committee members that some compensation is important.

Hornecker: I want to be clear that we also have volunteer reviewers which adds a new layer of community participation. I agree we need to be clear on what we are asking the new advisory

committee to do. I am glad we are talking about it. We do need to keep in mind the constraints of the ballot measure as well.

Themes in Allocation Committee member feedback sessions

Staff met individually with each member of the Allocation Committee to gather input on: staff communication with members; members' perspective about Levy reporting/accountability, and about other large issues in long term. Will present summary and pose questions for discussion.

Overall, members each indicated **staff's communication** with them generally works.

- One noted wanting more discussion of staff recommendations prior to making decisions,
- another noted committee could work more on being comfortable disagreeing with each other.
- 2 noted wanting more visual info (pictures, videos) at meetings.

Committee role in oversight/accountability- more range of perspectives among members.

- 2 think AC should focus more on programs achieving intended outcomes, and less on outputs (less on # served, amount of service, participation).
- 2 think important assure grantees can comply with grant agreements and review data toward that end.
- 2 noted data important, but also want other ways to show impact like stories, and want to understand barriers to success.
- 1 wants to be sure not punitive in our oversight and accountability
- 1 wants to make sure we're working with grantees to create reporting requirements that they find useful.

Discussion: In light of these differences in members' perspectives, what common value(s) do you as a committee share about your collective role in oversight/accountability? What do your shared values suggest about your collective priorities for gauging Levy performance?

Vega Pederson: We want our grantees to be successful both in service delivery and in complying with our requirements. I love the suggestion that we should work with grantees to create reports that are useful to them as well.

It was nice to hear from multiple grantees in two areas at once today.

Rossi: Our nonprofits truly have much expertise. I agree that partnering with them to define what data is important and useful. Trust based philanthropy is a great model. The nonprofits can help inform us. I like lifting up the trust level in this process.

Tripp-Folsom: I see this as an opportunity to create collaborative partnership to serve our most vulnerable children. It is not an easy grant process to get funded by the Levy. We have to find

the balance of reporting and storytelling moments. Yes, we have data for contractual obligations, but we also have information to show creativity and resourcefulness.

I see us turning our wills to best utilize the resources to support the grantees to achieve their goals, which are in line with our goals. I would like to see us be creative coming out of this pandemic.

Ryan: Thank you Felicia for your comments. There is a shared value about taking that wall down. We all want to have accountability on our end as well. I appreciate that we are being adaptable in how to get impact.

I am interested in us knowing how deep and far you go with service. Understanding impact is a shared dialogue. Wisdom is on the ground. I think we are on the right track to getting access to that wisdom.

Priorities for PCL Change

Thinking ahead, 3 members noted as Preschool for All rolls out, it could open opportunity to reallocate funds that PCL currently spends on PreK. Different members had different priorities for the use of those funds

- 1 member was interested in supporting age 18-24 around career readiness and pursuits
- 1 member was interested in expanding small grants to provide more orgs access to Levy funds and build capacity to support communities
- 1 member wants to support emerging mental health needs and combat gun violence
- 1 wondered how PCL could connect w/ Metro Housing Bond for homelessness prevention.
- 2 wondered if PCL should pivot priorities toward homelessness, mental health, gun violence in response to pandemic
- 1 member wonders whether the Levy should focus resources more narrowly for bigger impact.

Discussion: What your reflections on this range of priorities? Any proposed next steps?

Tripp-Folsom: I was interested in focusing on the small grants fund. There are many organizations that will never be eligible for large grants funding unless they get capacity building to get there. I am happy that we are building capacity to serve our community through our small grants fund. In the past, they could not have accessed Levy resources.

Hornecker: There are some tensions. We have this unspoken obligation to scale. We have an impulse to serve as many kids as we can. There may be natural tensions with small grants or fewer grants. There may be no right answer. It is a good conversation to have.

Some of our programming is to keep kids safe. A ton of our program is focused on helping kids to be successful and successful adults. It means closing the education gap and the income gap. I feel like we do a lot of good in that area. With all the brain development studies, it does feel like we don't follow through.

The example is foster kids. If they leave the home because there is no funding for them, and they have lost support. Then, we lose touch with them and we have not given them the boost to a better life that our programs are designed to do. I am open to considering programs for foster children who are over 18. Even in other areas that could help to accomplish our mission as well.

Rossi: I agree with Mitch. Following the youth for longer within the same scope would be valuable. I am passionate about reducing gun violence. I am not sure we have the expertise to do that now. I am interested in making the continuum into the early 20's.

Ryan: I agree. There is a real deficit of services for youth age 18 to 24. Family systems tend to support folks in that age group. Government and philanthropy have not typically focused on that age group. With Early Learning and PCEF coming on, there may be opportunities for best practices and targeting of investments. I am happy we are having this conversation.

Vega Pederson: I want to note that the ramp up time for Preschool for All is years in the making. We are looking at opening the first classrooms in Fall 2022 with 500 to 1,000 seeds. It will grow from there. We will not get to true universal for about 10 years. There will still be a need for the Children's Levy to continue to serve preschool.

Mental health impacts are a huge need worthy of investment. I will continue to weigh in for that.

Ryan: Our state has had champions for early childhood for years and we are doing well there. We are not doing well in mental health. We are in a crisis there. My gut says that focusing on the 18 to 24 population would help with that situation.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, September 14 from 3 to 5 pm.

Adjourned 4:55 pm.