

**Portland Children's Levy
Allocation Committee Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2023, 10:00 a.m.
Location: fully remote meeting**

*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=sXkfry6gAu0>*

For further detail, all are invited to reference the meeting video on YouTube, linked above.

All presentation slides are appended to these minutes.

Attending: Julia Brim-Edwards (absent), Dan Floyd (virtual), Traci Rossi (virtual), Dan Ryan (absent), Felicia Tripp (virtual - chair)

Dan Floyd was introduced as a new member of the Allocation Committee. Dan is the City appointed business representative on the Committee.

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

Minutes of October 17, 2023, meeting – approved without revision.

Community Engagement Plan

Camille Trummer and Dr. Tanisha Woodson, community engagement consultants, presented the community engagement plan. The slides of their presentation are appended to these minutes.

Funding Process Overview and Timeline

Staff reviewed the funding process timeline and the planned Allocation Committee work for 2024 meetings:

- **March AC Meeting:** Draft application questions and scoring criteria ready for review and feedback.
- **May Joint Allocation Comm/Community Council Work Session:** Community engagement results and recommendations presented; questions and discussion.
- **June AC Meeting:** Review and final approval of application including questions, scoring criteria and funding priorities for each program area.
- **September:** Publish funding application.

- **December AC Meeting:** Summary of applications received; review staff and community council recommendation process/criteria and funding decision process.

Community Council Update

Community Council met in November to continue developing the grant application for the next funding round, with a focus on simplifying the application in response to reviewer feedback, and applicant and PCL staff experience. In September, Council brainstormed key topics related to *important qualities of organizations for PCL grants and information needed about program services that applicants want funded*. PCL staff cross-walked their brainstorming to sections from PCL's 2019-20 PCL grant application, and Council used that document in November to indicate what to change, add, or remove in the application. Their feedback resulted in a basic outline of the next grant application and some key overall issues for how the application functions.

Organization Qualities of PCL Applicants: Key topics for the next application

- Purpose/mission of the organization; its history and current goals.
- How its purpose aligns with and is reflected by clients served, staff, and board, and how community partnerships reflect its purpose. Request both qualitative and quantitative data.
- How the organization understands and responds to the needs of communities they serve. Methods organizations use for understanding their impact. Examples of impact so far. Staff/workforce training based on responding to community needs. Narrative and storytelling focus in this section.
- Fiscal responsibility of the organization.

Program Activities of PCL Applicants

- Overall program plan: need for program and how applicant knows the program is needed, who will be served and how the program will engage community to offer the program, program activities to be funded by PCL, staffing plan. Ensure applicants have clear way to indicate intensity of services so that reviewers can understand breadth vs. depth of services with number of clients to serve and costs.
- Equitable outcomes: intended impacts of program, and how program will engage with community to understand impacts of program.
- Program Budget- simplify budget form and instructions; consider whether 15% administrative allowance is too low.

Overall issues in the application

- Should ask for racial equity, diversity, inclusion considerations in all parts of the organization qualities and program activities sections of the application.

- Application should continue to have definitions of: “racial equity, diversity, inclusion; accessibility;” add definition of “being served”
- Careful with uses of tables. They help ensure information is “apples to apples” but may create barriers if too technical. Offer opportunities for narrative with tables.
- Want to know if program is “new” or “expansion of current work” or “continuing current work”-not as matter of scoring but as context for understanding program.
- Scoring criteria and point values still need to be developed and vetted with Council.

Next Steps: PCL staff are drafting a new application template and scoring criteria in light of Council feedback. Staff will send the drafts out to potential applicants during January with a short survey for feedback. The draft and public feedback will be provided to Council at its first meeting in 2024. They will consider proposed changes to the application/scoring in response to feedback and conclude by recommending an application template and scoring criteria to the Allocation Committee for consideration.

Application Review Process

After discussion of the application, PCL staff presented to Council on the past review process used to score grant applications. In 2019-20, staff recruited and trained 65 community volunteers to read/score grant applications. Volunteers received a stipend of \$200- \$250 depending on the number of applications they reviewed. Staff presented other details of the process, including satisfaction of reviewers with their involvement in the process, applicants’ satisfaction with the review process, and challenges staff encountered. The main challenges with the previous review process were score variation (e.g. 20+ points on the same application) and workload for staff to recruit and support 60+ reviewers. Council considered another option for application review in the next round: hiring a diverse cohort of 12- 15 contractors to read/score applications in lieu of recruiting community volunteers. Council discussed pros/cons of the two options.

Community Volunteers (with stipends): Council suggested pros for volunteer reviewers include:

- Builds awareness of PCL in the community
- Increases community investment in PCL
- Offers potential professional development opportunity to community members
- The stipend may attract people to participate who could use it and assure that the reviewers aren’t only people who can afford to volunteer their time

The main con Council identified is the high workload for staff in selecting and managing many volunteers.

Short-term Contractors: Assuming a diverse group of contractors could be retained, Council suggested pros for contractors include:

- Could pay reviewers for training time and require longer, more intensive training and thereby hopefully increase interrater reliability

- Paying regular wages to contractors may ensure a diverse, representative group of reviewers
- Easier to convene a much smaller group of contractors to address score variation
- Paying regular wages may ensure contractors complete the review work

Cons identified by Council included: potential biases of a small group of contractors with expertise in the youth/family services sector in Portland depending on people/organizations they know or have worked with; reluctant to have process that favors “experts” as reviewers rather than community voice and perspective.

A council member suggested considering a combination of volunteers and short-term contractors together. Pros noted included paid contractors more likely to complete the review process and to minimize relying on “unpaid labor.” Several members noted interest in this option. There was insufficient time at the meeting for Council to fully discuss this option. Staff has significant concerns that this option would double staff’s workload, create significant equity issues between reviewers around training and pay/stipends, and not necessarily address interrater reliability issues.

Council members also requested additional information for the next discussion of reviewer options including:

- Length of review period
- Training content and how it could reduce score variation
- Any suggestions/criticism of the review process offered by applicants in the survey after the 2019-20 funding round

Next Steps: At their next meeting, Council will revisit the review process for deeper discussion and begin developing a review process recommendation for Allocation Committee consideration.

Next meeting is March 11 at 10 am at temporary City Council Chambers at 1900 SW 4th Ave, Room 2500.

Adjourned 11:20 am.