

**Portland Children's Levy  
Allocation Committee Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2023, 10:00 a.m.**

**Location: 1900 NE 4th Ave – temporary Portland City Council Chambers**

---

*The full record of the meeting may be viewed on the Portland Children's Investment Fund website: [www.portlandchildrenslevy.org](http://www.portlandchildrenslevy.org) or YouTube at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdiR-k3n\\_34](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdiR-k3n_34)*

*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, Dan Floyd, Traci Rossi, Dan Ryan (chair), Felicia Tripp (virtual)

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

**Minutes of December 11, 2023, meeting – approved without revision.**

**2022-23 Performance Report:** PCL grantees report annually on the number and demographics of people served, service level, participation, and program outcomes. Staff presented 2022-23 results and themes.

*Slides of the presentation are appended to these minutes.*

**Funding Process Preparation:** Staff briefly reviewed the current status of plans for the fall funding process, including the draft application questions and scoring criteria developed with Community Council input. The Community Council provided further input at their February meeting, and the draft is currently out for review and feedback from grantees and potential applicants.

As discussed at the December meeting, staff is continuing to work with Community Council to create application questions and scoring criteria for the competitive grant round scheduled for fall 2024. Council input in fall 2023 focused on simplifying the application questions and asking for key information (listed below) about the organizations and programs applying for funding.

***Organization Qualities:***

- Purpose, mission and goals of the organization.
- How its purpose is reflected by clients served, staff, board, and community partnerships
- How the organization understands and responds to the needs of communities they serve.

- Organizational impact with examples that include quantitative and qualitative information.
- Fiscal responsibility of the organization.

*Program Activities:*

- 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.
- 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.

PCL staff worked as a team to draft application questions and review criteria that reflected this input.

**Service Provider Feedback on Draft Application Questions/Scoring Criteria**

In January, this draft was emailed to 300 people at over 160 organizations including current grantees, past applicants that did not receive funding, and other organizations that may be eligible and interested in applying for funding. A brief feedback survey was included with the draft application and scoring criteria. The feedback survey asks four Likert scale questions about whether respondents understand the questions and the scoring criteria, and whether questions and criteria are reasonable. Respondents could also provide narrative feedback on questions and criteria. The feedback survey will remain open through March.

To date, 36 people have responded; two-thirds of respondents work at grantee organizations. More than half of respondents identified as Black, Indigenous and People of Color, 36% identified as white and 8% didn't respond to the question. A majority of respondents agreed that they understand the questions and scoring criteria and indicated that application questions were reasonable. There was more variation in responses to the reasonableness of the scoring criteria with some respondents disagreeing or neutral.

Narrative comments included suggestions to reword or clarify specific application questions, sections and scoring criteria, positive feedback on questions and criteria, concern about the workload of responding to the application, and requests to include word count limits on responses.

**Community Council Feedback on Draft Application Questions/Scoring Criteria**

The Community Council spent a portion of their February working in three small groups to provide in-depth feedback on the draft application and scoring criteria. In some cases, feedback diverged between small groups. Feedback that was consistent between two of the three groups is summarized below.

***Feedback on application questions:*** Two of three small groups suggested further simplifying the language of the questions and criteria and revising the application question on community voice to better align with the scoring criteria. Council noted that the budget section of the application was improved in response to their previous feedback.

***Feedback on scoring criteria:*** Two of three small groups advised a careful review of questions and corresponding criteria to assure better consistency between them.

***Feedback on point distribution:*** Two of the three small groups advised increasing the point value of the section on the organization's purpose, goals and community collaborations from 16 to 20 points.

### **Next Steps on Application Development**

Staff will work to incorporate the feedback provided by Community Council along with the feedback provided by respondents to the survey after the survey closes this month. The Allocation Committee will need to approve a final version of the application questions and criteria at the June meeting. Staff is exploring using the Web Grants online grants management platform purchased by the City to conduct the next funding round. The platform provides a portal for applicants to submit their application, and for reviewers to score applications. Using that system will require further adaptation of the application format, process for applying and different reviewer training. Staff will have an update on implementation plans at the May meeting.

**Community Council Update:** Staff summarized the Council's February feedback on the application review process for the upcoming funding round.

In addition to providing feedback on the draft application questions and scoring criteria, the Council also gave feedback on the application review process. At their February meeting, all council members present suggested that PCL continue to recruit volunteer reviewers from the community to score applications rather than contract for paid grant reviewers. They recommended recruiting a diverse pool of volunteers with relevant lived experience, professional experience and experience in finance and budgeting.

Two of three small groups recommended providing implicit and explicit bias training to all reviewers. PCL provided this training to reviewers in the last large grant round (2019) and will do so again. To mitigate the impact of score variance among reviewers scoring the same application, council members suggested a number of possible strategies including:

- Appoint an additional volunteer or PCL staff to score an application with high score variation or add another layer of review to applications with divergent scores.

- Increase the number of reviewers scoring each application and drop high and low scores when calculating the average score.
- Create a scoring rubric that has clearly defined requirements for points to be earned
- Convene reviewers after preliminary scoring and allow reviewers to change scores after discussion.

### **Next Steps on Review Process Design**

Staff will consider the feedback provided by Community Council, create a plan and timeline for the application review process and bring the plan to the May Allocation Committee meeting for review and discussion.

**Community Engagement Update:** Staff provided an update on the community engagement process and presentation of results at the joint Allocation Committee/Community Council meeting in early May.

As recommended by the Community Council and adopted by the Allocation Committee, the goals for the community engagement process are:

- Learn from diverse stakeholders about the most effective and needed services for children, especially children most affected by historical inequities and disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- Identify community solutions to improve outcomes for children and families, including culturally informed emerging grassroots strategies and pandemic recovery practices in PCL's program areas.
- Build positive relationships with marginalized communities by incorporating the city's core values.
- Promote community understanding and awareness of Portland Children's Levy's work including the funding processes, services funded, and demographics of children and families served.
- Improve transparency in the community engagement process and ensure that community members who engage in the process receive ongoing communication about PCL and how it uses community feedback.

Priority communities to engage are youth, parents and caregivers who identify as LGBTQ2SIA+, low-income, single and teen parents, Black, African immigrant and refugee, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander, Latinx/e/o, Native American & Alaska Native, Russian and Ukrainian, and have lived experiences of trauma/violence, disability, housing instability, multigenerational homes, aging out of foster care, and/or teen parenting.

In September, staff contracted with Camille E. Trummer LLC (Trummer) to lead the community engagement process. PCL staff also contracted with Community Engagement Liaisons (CELS) to collect surveys from immigrant and refugee communities, and communities that speak

languages other than English. Trummer had survey instruments trans-created into 6 languages for community members who preferred to complete the survey in their language. CELs also verbally translated English surveys into multiple other languages including Chuukese, Tongan, Somali, Swahili, and Arabic and assisted community members to complete the survey.

At the December 2023 Allocation Committee meeting, Trummer presented their community engagement plan including a community survey, a service provider survey, focus groups, and interviews with key community leaders in priority populations. The work done to date on each of these components is described below. Trummer plans to conclude data collection by March 21.

**Surveys:** The community and provider surveys opened in early December and closed on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Trummer and the CELs worked to distribute the community survey to parents, caregivers, and youth in the focus populations described above. Trummer administered all provider surveys. All survey data was entered into an online database.

**Community Surveys:** Goal: 500; collected 531.

- *Languages spoken by survey respondents:*
  - English (includes Somali, Swahili, other African languages and Pacific Islander languages) 159
  - Spanish 48
  - Nepali 10
  - Russian 43
  - Ukrainian 6
  - Vietnamese 40
  - Arabic 15

**Provider Surveys:** Goal 100-150; collected 153.

**Focus Groups:** Goal was to conduct 10 focus groups of 8-10 participants in the focus populations described above. Trummer experienced a challenge with registered participants not attending the focus group. Staff are working with consultants to see if there are ways to increase focus group attendance.

- a. Low-income youth, parent/caregivers: Completed January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. 7 participants
- b. Youth and parents with disabilities: Completed January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 7 participants.
- c. Single, teen parents: Completed February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 5 participants.
- d. Foster care youth and parents and caregivers: Completed February 22<sup>nd</sup> 5 participants.
- e. LGBTQ2SIA+ youth: completed February 26<sup>th</sup>, 4 participants.
- f. Spanish-speaking: scheduled for March 4<sup>th</sup>, 24 registrants.
- g. Youth in Grades 6-12 Rescheduling for March 11<sup>th</sup>
- h. Asian American and Pacific Islander youth, parents, and caregivers-Scheduled for March 14<sup>th</sup> recruitment in process

- i. Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrant and refugee: Scheduled for March 21<sup>st</sup>, 39 registrants.
- j. Houseless youth, parents, and caregivers: Scheduled for March 21<sup>st</sup>, location TBD.

*Key Stakeholder Interviews:* All key stakeholder interviews (11) are complete. Of the 11 interviews; 4 participants have lived and/or professional experience with LGBTQ2SIA+ youth and adults, 3 have experience with foster youth, 2 work with youth impacted by systems, trauma and violence, 1 works with families of children with disabilities, and 3 work for an agency such as a children's advocacy, educational organization or a foundation.

The Community Council and the Allocation Committee will meet jointly on May 6<sup>th</sup> to hear the key findings emerging from the community engagement process. After this meeting, the Community Council and will recommend funding priorities within each program area to be approved by the Allocation Committee at the June 2024 meeting. These priorities will be included in the applications which will be published in fall 2024.

**Next meeting is May 6, 2024 in Portland City Council Temporary Chambers at 1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.**

Adjourned 11:20 am.