

## **NON-DEPARTMENTAL CITIZEN BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**TO:** Chair Wheeler and Commissioners

**FROM:** Multnomah County ND Citizens Budget Advisory Committee

**DATE:** April 15, 2007

**SUBJECT:** ND CBAC 07/08 Report

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### **PROCESS:**

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The Non-Departmental Budget Advisory Committee (NDCBAC) gained a new member this year and has met twice a month since September. During the course of our research we reviewed and vigorously discussed goals, priorities, and plans for maintaining services in light of the County's difficult budget issues. We studied the maps, strategies, and criteria for offers. We also met with: Auditor Lavonne Griffin-Valade to discuss her offers as well as how her office approaches performance measures; Julie Neburka from the Budget Office to get a handle on how our recommendations fared during the last budget process and to gain a better understanding of the Non Departmental one time only funded offers; Chair Wheeler to discuss the focus of his office as well as several concerns we had relating to Non Departmental issues and programs; Matt Leiuallen from Com Naito's office and Marissa Madrigal from Com Cogen's office to review their offers focusing on performance measures; and Gina Matteoda, Public Affairs, and Brad Mclean, Citizen Involvement Committee, to determine the relationship between the internal county voice and external citizen voice. We also met with Commissioner Maria Rojo De Steffy and as well as Elders in Action. Julie also briefed us on all those other funds that fall into the Non Departmental portfolio. We also reviewed FY 06/07 funded offers and the 07/08 submitted offers for the department. We reviewed the BCC and Outcome Team rankings prior to finalizing our report in early April.

The Non-Departmental CBAC is responsible for reviewing the budgets of various offices and programs, including centralized administrative functions of the County, e.g., the Chair and Commissioners' Offices, the Auditor, the County Attorney; independent agencies within the County (the Citizen Involvement Committee, the Tax Supervising and Conservation Council, the Public Safety Coordinating Council); and some other areas in which the funding is essentially nondiscretionary, e.g., the Business Income Tax pass through to the East County cities, facilities costs for the State Courts, and accounting costs for various sinking funds outside the County's General Fund. The remainder of the Non-Departmental Budget is in the form of allocations to the following non-County

Agencies: Elders in Action, The Regional Arts and Culture Council, and The Food Stamp Program.

As a committee, we are again most thankful for the efforts of all who provided us with all the materials needed to make well-informed recommendations regarding the use of County resources.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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1. **CIC Staffing Level:** the current level of staffing in the smallest of Multnomah County Offices tasked with direct contact with the public is inadequate to insure strong and informed citizen participation in County government. Support for the CBAC Program is provided by this office. When the staffing level was cut the support for independent citizen involvement efforts was effectively curtailed. Verbal support for independent citizen involvement is welcomed and appreciated but now is the time to provide tangible support as well. We strongly recommend the approval of both of the CIC's offers which will bring the staffing level back to 2 FTEs. This represents in our judgment the minimum level of staffing needed to achieve any realistic level of effective independent citizen involvement.
2. **Fund the County First:** County mandated functions should be funded before all others including school programs, initiatives, or non-county pass through agencies such as Elders in Action or RACC. The Committee realizes that this is unfortunate but the reality is that the County does not have the funds to continue funding programs and projects that are not directly in line with its core mission particularly if such programs only provide services for select groups and not County wide.
3. **District Performance Measures:** The performance measures for the County Commissioner's need to be strengthened to highlight goals and accomplishments countywide. We are available to assist with suggestions that would strengthen these measures considerably.
4. **Association of Oregon Counties:** Annual membership in the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) for Multnomah County is \$100,000. We recommend that the County research and discuss to what extent the county utilizes the potentially valuable resources of the Association of Oregon Counties? The discussion should also include what the consequences are of not belonging?

## **CONCERNS/EMERGING ISSUES:**

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- **Imbalance of Citizen Voice vs. the Public Relations Arm of the County:** The County should increase the capacity for additional citizen involvement. Over the past several years we have observed that the resource imbalance for citizen participation vs. the public relations arm of the county has continued to grow. The PAO was very clear when she met

with us that her office does not overlap the program or services that the CIC provides. The PAO provides public involvement that is project specific where the CIC provides avenues for citizens to be heard in a much broader and ongoing way. We are concerned that if this imbalance is allowed to continue at the current rate many more opportunities for the public to participate in policy roles and in general will be lost, which is contrary to the County Charter.

- **Intergovernmental Agreements**: The County should review intergovernmental agreements on a rotating basis. Some of these agreements have been in place for quite some time. Are all of these agreements in line with current County goals and are they saving money or providing the best efficiencies
  
- **Boardroom Expenses**: We were glad to see that facilities and internal expenses were taken out of this offer and placed where they are used. This was a small adjustment that illustrates that the county is truly embracing transparency in government.

#### **MEMBERS:**

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Len Freiser, Chair  
Helen Ellison  
Kate Hummel  
Dr. Ron Schutz  
Tom Weldon  
Scott Seibert