



Community Involvement Committee



Community Involvement Committee

Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 6pm-8pm

Location: Google Meets

Attendance:

Present (14 members, 8 for quorum): Brian Romer, Jenny Shadley, Frank Stevens, Renai Bell, Jen Mair, David Hoang, MacKenzie Jones, Angel Brophy (partial), Nina Gallo (late - flight delayed)

Absent: Anand Jain

Excused: Quay'Roenel Matthews, Chase Landrey, Pau Thang, Diego Martinez,

Staff: KellyAnn Cameron (OCI)

Guests: Alexis Ashby (DCHS - emergency operations center unified command)

Materials:

- [Agenda](#)
- Subcommittee Folders
- [FY26 Community Agreements](#)
- [Membership Timeline](#)

Agenda:

6:00-6:10: Introductions and review the agenda

6:10-6:40: Discussion: Community Engagement in emergencies - incl. Current federal impacts emergency

6:40-7:00: Ad Hoc Subcommittee Updates

7:00-7:05: 5min break

7:05-7:45 Subcommittee Topic Updates

- Infrastructure (15min)
- Charter (15min)
- Discussion (10min)

7:45-7:50: Public Comment/Reflections

7:50-8:00: Closing

DRAFT Minutes:

Welcome & Introductions

Renai welcomed everyone and asked folks to share their names, pronouns, anything else they want folks to know,

- Renai had an elderly neighbor in his 70s, named Jim, who looked like a leprechaun and had a tiny 3 pound chihuahua - they became unlikely friends and got him to try a cherry tomato for the first time

- MacKenzie - complicated family with grandparents who died in infancy, childhood, and college who were the classic grandma/grandpa energy. She also had a step-grandma who taught her a lot of things about swimming, painting, about cats - their relationship is strained now but that doesn't change the good things!
- Jenny - Nana and Grandy were her mom's parents - Grandy was one of the most important people in her life - they used to sing a song my Grandy is a dandy and he's filled with candy. I miss them both!
- Jen - I didn't grow up next to my grandparents, but one of my grandmas, I found out later, was in the military before she married my grandpa. She was a homemaker while married but when my grandpa passed away she blossomed into this badass woman!
- David - my family is from Vietnam and we call our grandparents Ông Bà Ngoại = mom side and Ông Bà Nội - one side lived in Portland and we'd go to Gregory Heights library together which we thought was just called the "Multnomah County Library." They're both healthy now, especially the grandfather! This is the only way we refer to them - never by their names.
- Brian - I had one grandmother who was alive when I was born, who I wasn't very close to. My dad's birthday is Today - he is 96, his sister lived to 101, his mom to 99.
- Frank - grew up in New England so I grew up with my grandparents doing care 3-4 days a week - Gramps and Gramie. They did a lot of outdoor stuff with us, they've passed but we have a lot of fun memories with them.
- Alexis - maternal grandparents passed before I was born and paternal grandparents lived in Nigeria. My mom is the youngest of 13 kids so one of her older sisters acted in a grandma capacity for me my whole life, and really inspired a lot of what I do. She taught me a lot of family recipes, and I loved sleepovers with her all the way up to 18.

Renai reviewed the agenda

- Everyone approved the agenda with 5s on the chat or using their hands

Guest: Community Engagement in Emergencies

Jenny introduced Alexis, interim director of DCHS and is part of emergency management. Alexis shared a little background - back in October 2025 the board decided to adopt a resolution responding to several issues impacting the community and partially activate across the county to discuss how to respond to issues happening at the state and federal level impacted folks locally. At the time there was the SNAP reductions due to the federal shutdown, impacts to eligibility of benefits, and increase in ICE activity in our area causing fear, trauma, and detentions in the community. We decided to go into a partial activation, which stands up an EOC, or emergency operations center, to coordinate a county-wide response. That is where unified command comes in - right now the team is emergency management and DCHS, though we think across the county. One of the key issues is communication - how do we receive information and return it back to the community: how do we get good information and return

accurate, clear info. There's a lot happening through the activation as well as through commissioner Singleton's office where her staff are working on policy changes. EOC- we have field liaisons, whose role is to do outreach in the community and receive feedback from the community about what is happening, how we can respond, etc and share that info with unified command. At the start we focused on the most emergent issue around the SNAP reductions - we worked with the commissioners to get emergency funding, emergency comms pages (multco.us/food). The other piece was responding to ICE and immigration enforcement in the community - which there is also a site for Liaisons: call volumes from 211, what do community partners share about what is happening in the community. Working with partners like PIRC, ASSC to support families and understand the detentions. We also put out information in our community spaces around private spaces, rights and education. We also look into how to get people access to services. Our liaisons collect this information, we discuss it weekly in unified command, and send it up to our Board of County Commissioners to help make quick and educated decisions about federal impacts.

Questions:

MacKenzie: I'd be interested in whatever support is needed around protecting neighbors from ICE and getting them information they need.

- Alexis: I'd direct you to the information on our website. We're also focusing on translations and information sharing through our networks. We also have Community Action Agencies that are surveying families to identify high priority needs, what are families asking for support with etc. The last survey was in late February with 359ish families - those surveys are shared with us and leadership so we can make decisions. They're also working with the Multnomah Public Defenders for legal - food, housing, and other resources. In DCHS we also have the Newly arrived families program which has gone through a lot of iterations, but we've been able to place newcomer families in shelter and housing when they are making their lives here.

Jenny: One thing we are tasked with is seeing how community involvement comes into play in decision making - I heard that you have CBOs, surveys of clients, are there any other groups you consult to make decisions or share information to the board for making decisions?

- Alexis: there have been a few engagement activities - there was a Sanctuary town hall presentation a few months ago held by the board to hear from the community broadly. We've also reached out to partners in other jurisdictions to see what they are up to and learn from their work. There was a sanctuary board hearing on March 12th - and one of the goals of that was to report back on who they have heard from. They have been hearing from the Employee Resource groups, CBOs and leaders, Immigration legal services, and county service providers who help them decide what to do.

Jenny: there are so many kinds of emergencies and they can come at once, or many times - how are these prioritized?

- Alexis: each activation has very specific scopes. In general we have emergency operations plans for the county for different types of events. Extreme weather, mass shelter care (for weather, fire, other things) has a specific team. Departments also have 'continuity of operations' plans to keep working in the case of an emergency - like if all the power lines go down - which looks different for each department.

Renai: We often talk about how community members don't know who is responding to something or providing a service - city, county, state, federal - how do you all communicate that?

- Alexis: That is a great question for Chris Voss our emergency management director - it depends on the emergency type and the type of service. Right now if there is a weather emergency in the city of Portland they already have overnight shelter capacity, and the county could end up adding capacity if needed but it is pretty case by case. Often on smaller emergencies, like a fire in a neighborhood, the comms and activity will be more targeted.

David: I'm curious to hear how the protocol is different - for emergencies the first thing I think of is extreme weather, but for something that affects programs like the SNAP benefits that is different so I'm curious how you work to solve those issues and the differences with other kinds of emergencies.

- Alexis: The protocols change because of the types of emergency. The Board is able to declare a state of emergency and they will share the scale and scope. I don't think we can solve all the challenges for this kind of activation, but our goal is to align with the resources and services that the community needs. For something like SNAP that is a state and federally impacted program - as a county we can investigate how we can preserve access, and how we can fill gaps caused by changes. For SNAP we work closely with the state to navigate that, though for other types of emergencies we may work with other agencies more.

Jen: Thank you for the links! I'm looking at the slides on the [community groups](#) - that is great to see you're working across so many groups. Is that the same for other kinds of emergencies? What kinds of outreach are part of the plan?

- Alexis: Yes, we do continual outreach and education with communities when we have emergencies. Anything that happens with a public meeting is public record! KA can share the past meeting materials as well. One thing we do is identify where there are vulnerable groups, like for example community members who rely on electricity for medical care, and do outreach there to both share information and do surveys, listening sessions, town halls etc. We try to balance

Jen: Do you have staff dedicated to outreach?

- Alexis: We do in the FS16 - they do ongoing outreach through the year, not waiting for the emergency to happen, but talking to people in the community about emergencies in general, and can be activated on specific things. ADRC team also helps for emergencies to contact folks directly

Jenny: Are there any pitfalls or successes you've learned doing this work?

- Alexis; the most important thing I've learned is to always engage the community first before making plans - you'll get more ideas, a better idea of what is happening, etc. The main challenge is getting a diverse group and always trying to reach people we may have missed out on. We have such a diverse community and it can be hard to reach every group - we are constantly thinking about what opportunities that we haven't tapped into yet. We can also

Jen: I feel like emergency preparedness probably focuses on engagement more than most projects across the county - I wonder how other county departments can learn from your practices in emergencies, if their engagement was seen as as critical as it does in emergencies.

- Alexis: I agree - and one goal in the Unified command structure is to try to bring people across the county together to engage communities at a high level, so we're not making decisions in a vacuum, and that the departments are all engaged in how to train their staff for different situations. For example supporting them in training on what to do if ICE shows up at a building. One collaboration that is happening now is between DCHS and the Library - both large and can work together to get DCHS services out to Library patrons. Libraries work with community members from all walks of life and we want to make sure that those folks are connecting with other county services.
- Jen: it is so heartening to hear the capacity building and connecting happening - to increase county capacity for engagement!

Jenny - thank you so much for sharing with us! If someone thinks of a question KA can share with you. Thank you!

CIC Ad Hoc Subcommittee items

Membership (10min)

KA gave a quick update on membership-

- We have only 1 applicant - please keep sharing
 - Target for Districts 1 or 4!

The CIC has a minimum of 7 members, (we expect to have 12 next year), so we can decide if we want to move any forward. We haven't been doing a very strong recruitment this year due to the small number of seats - neighborhood associations, libraries, social media and newsletter on the OCI side, plus the member outreach. Still have half of March to apply, so send reminders to your community!

- CIC Review: Frank, Chase, Jenny, Nina, Angel (flexible in case someone wants to duck out!)
- Interviews: Renai, Chase, David

KA will reach out to those who have volunteered for membership roles in the coming weeks!

Document Review (10min)

KA shared Document Review (5min) items that we didn't get to in January.

- Review changes to [Policies](#) - all clarifications or bringing the document up to date with current practice.
 - Approved by everyone using fist to 5, all 5s except David was a 3.
- Review Changes to [Bylaws](#)
 - Approved by everyone with 5s in the chat or over video

KA update the policies in the CIC documents and [on the website here](#)

5min break

Subcommittee Updates

What we thought when we started; what we've learned; what we're doing now; what our plan is going forward; what can the larger group support with/help us answer (if anything)

Infrastructure Subcommittee

Jen shared an update - Frank, Nina, and Jen went to the monthly community engagement community of practice meeting that OCI has been involved in coordinating for around a year. Our subcommittee is focused on figuring out what is going on with engagement around the county with engagement. The presentation today was really cool - emergencies have to have great communication and engagement, I'm sure Amara has already tapped them and thought about how they would have well developed engagement. We put together a survey and pitched it to that group - we got 31 responses from across the county - we feel good about the response rate! We meet this week to crunch that data but we're going to take what we've heard and make some recommendations about how OCI, other engagement practitioners across the county, could be more supported by the Board. We'll come back to this group in May with some draft recommendations.

Frank: We had the goal of 30 responses so that is great! We're going to be analyzing the data in the next few weeks. That CoP meeting was very enlightening - I got to hang out a bit and it was very interesting to meet with people.

- Jenny: Did you meet anyone who could be interesting to bring to the CIC meeting?
- Frank: Um, all of them? The discussions were very poignant - it was a safe space so people were saying things that were really spot on, that they may not have said in other spaces. I have a list in my head though - we can bring it to Amara and KA.

David: Was this an internal county meeting?

- KA: It's an internal group - the OCI supports a few "communities of practice" for county staff who work on engagement issues. The one this group attended is the largest, newest, and most general - it is for all county employees who work on community engagement in any way. The other two are for folks who work with volunteers and for those who staff advisory committees.
- Jen: maybe it could be an ongoing practice to invite CIC members to that meeting and have an ongoing relationship -
- Frank: like a Liaison?
- Jen: or just a learning experience for CIC members to meet people, to hear about engagement at the county from the engagers- I think we'd all benefit from attending a meeting like that. If that group would have us we could send 2 of us a quarter.
- Frank: yeah I was sensitive to not wanting to stifle the conversation, just be listening.

Charter Subcommittee

Brian was unavailable at the last meeting so Renai jumped in with an update! This group is meeting Thursday of this week. Last meeting we reviewed how other jurisdictions used their website to share about their charter review, application, stages, and community engagement. One thing that jumped out to me was how much the internet has changed - we were looking at some sites from 2018 and they looked very dated. We're thinking of how to not only inform people but also how to engage people using the website. We've also been talking a lot about recruitment and how to find people who will be good fits - both interested in the project and interested in hearing from the broader community throughout the process. We've also been

talking about videos and other ways to share information in creative and accessible ways. The content can be very verbose, complicated and confusing.

- Jen: We're going to start looking at applications soon, application questions, and scoring systems.

Jenny: the charter is like the legal guiding document of the county, right?

- Brian: it's like the constitution
- Jenny: Could we ask past charter review members about how they can understand it, that the charter is something that our community CAN understand - that it can be legal, official, and simple and easy to understand. The document is meant to put up barriers - how do we make it more understandable and accessible. If not everyone can understand it, that is a barrier - the language should be simple enough for people to understand - that may be something to ask. As part of the criteria for someone who gets on the committee?
- Brian: does KA or Amara know if the charter has to be in legal language?
- KA: I don't know - it could be interesting to ask legally what it would look like to get the charter into plain language.
- Jenny: Yeah, like a 9th grade reading level.
- Renai: do you mean the charter itself (yes)
 - Jenny: yes - we are coming to understand that plain language is acceptable, we don't need Therefore whence the day etc etc
- Frank: I see this in a lot of meetings I go to where Robert's Rules are a stifle more than a communication tool. It seems like conversation with some facilitation is a better tool. I'd love to see it
- Renai: I think a complication is the whole thing is messy]
- KA: two different asks: could the County create a version of the charter that is official and more understandable, and then it would be a charter review committee decision possibly to actually alter the charter.
- MacKenzie: My pitch is a system like that Genius site for music - you mouse over lines and it "translates" them for you, so it maintains the original text but you can get clarification on whatever's confusing
- Renai: They sort of do that on the ballot? legal terms, then they have a descriptive paragraph of what it means for the rest of us.
- Brian: I think it's great to re-write it, but I think having 2 versions could get into interpretations, rephrasing, and potentially miscommunications. Maybe a puppet version, or a video would be fine
- Jenny: in policy we often have a brief 2 page version - maybe we request a brief, 2 page version that is very easy to understand. That could be a recommendation for any county document.
 - Brian: yeah like an abstract or a summary
- Jenny: yeah if the people who work at the county can't understand it that isn't very helpful either.
- KA: Sounds like the next step is bringing this to the subcommittee - brainstorming how we make this text, county texts, more accessible to the public without causing more confusion.

- Renai: I like that as a general thought for our work - how do we make these complicated things more accessible?

Renai asked: Any other updates, questions or comments?

- Great to see Nina!

Public comment and attendee comments

No public comment submitted

Do any members have other advisory committees, for the county, cities, or states, to share about?

Jen: I'm on the Non-D CBAC, which covers 8-10 offices (fast and furious!) - we just [submitted our recommendations](#) last week and had to work a bit to get some recommendations. It was very timely to hear from Alexis as one of our recommendations was that Central Communications dedicate some staff time to the day to day county business. For example this charter committee, OCI will have to do all the outreach and comms for this on top of all of their responsibilities. So one of our recommendations was to add capacity in comms to manage day to day county business. Another thing was looking at emergency preparedness programs - along the Willamette we house all the fuel for OR, WA and ID - in the event of the Cascadia earthquake that will have a huge impact. They had to cut their climate resilience coordinator but need to shift that work to others. We listened between the lines to understand what the offices need and where the gaps are.

Renai is on the DA's CBAC and it's a lot of challenges, though very different. Much of their budget is personnel, so cutting is picking between a homicide vs domestic violence DA on what you cut or gain. The DA's office is a bit downstream, but one of the programs they have is MAPPS, where they have attorneys in specific neighborhoods engaging with their communities there to get legal advice and understand what is going on. It seems like a good preventative program - but it's one of the things always considered to be cut. That and the 'evidence management' which is like reviewing footage from Portland Police body cams. We propose cuts and prioritize revisions we want back in. It's a very tight timeline - April 16th is when the Chair does her proposed budget then we have our comments in our presentation a week or week and a half later. ([more on the county budget process](#)). It's been good to have a diverse group of folks who also have a lot of experience.

- Jen: We heard from [LPSCC](#) - which does a lot of prevention, though a lot of those programs rely on grants so we recommended they hire grant writers (they cut them in past years). I think the CBAC for the DA should also hear from LPSCC, since you have a bigger picture on the cuts.
- Renai: yeah my assumption is the other areas are cutting, so at the very least we need to support people going through these situations, even though it isn't as proactive and forward thinking. But I will bring this to my CBAC.
- Jenny: I highly recommend folks sit in on the LPSCC meetings - I sat in on one when the recriminalization was happening which was very interesting. How many people are on your CBAC?

- Renai: 6, a lot of people have a lot of experience in advocacy, one worked there for many years and totally understands what is going on. Despite our differences there has been a lot of consensus on what to prioritize - especially a focus on east county.

Jen: two years ago the CIC recommended a learning academy where people can learn about the county and how it works. I realize now serving on an advisory body can also serve as a learning opportunity for understanding how the county works. ([more about CBACs](#))

- Renai: It's very compressed - it's mostly work in December through the spring.

Next Steps

Jenny: We have a few closing items.

Next meeting:

May: moved to the 26th

- Anyone have feelings about hybrid vs remote? No comments - so we need to do a poll!
- Any ideas of who you'd like to hear from in May?
 - Renai: Has LPSCC come to one of our meetings? Could they come to us?
Jenny: It's pretty high level like judges and the chair, it's probably more worth just going. Since it's an inter-agency group it has a lot of jurisdictions etc.
 - Co-Chairs will work with KA on the agenda!

Board presentation

- August or early September - no update yet
- Confirm in May

Comments/Feedback/Ideas for next meeting?

Shout-outs

- Lots of appreciation for the guest speaker today, Alexis!
- Lots of appreciation for MacKenzie's cats! We got an appearance of 2/4!
- Frank: The ranked choice folks mentioned OCI as supporting their outreach - so shoutout to OCI!
- Jenny: I loved learning about people's grandparents and especially David's sharing about never calling his grandparents by their first names.

KA will send the follow-ups and a note for the next couple days!

Chat Record:

Alexis Ashby

6:03 PM

I was stuck in ORD until yesterday

David Hoàng

6:12 PM

Ông Bà Ngoại = mom side

Ông Bà Nội = dad side

Renai Bell

6:18 PM

Agenda: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zx09lxVuu7M3pGnAtCedNJZxSMweHlo49I039hRHlrk/edit?tab=t.0>

Jenny Shadley

6:19 PM

5

Jen Mair

6:20 PM

5

Renai Bell

6:20 PM

5

David Hoàng

6:20 PM

5

MacKenzie Jones

6:20 PM

5

Alexis Ashby

6:30 PM

<https://multco.us/programs/federal-impacts>

Alexis Ashby

6:32 PM

https://multnomah.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=3400&meta_id=187037

David Hoàng

6:53 PM

Can I sign up to be a backup on the interview panel?

Yay!

6:57 PM

approve updates to policies:

Jen Mair

6:57 PM

5

Jenny Shadley

6:57 PM

5

MacKenzie Jones

6:57 PM

5

Brian Romer

6:57 PM

5

Renai Bell

6:57 PM

5

Angel Brophy

6:57 PM

5

Frank Stevens

6:57 PM

5

David Hoàng

6:57 PM

3

Renai Bell

6:58 PM

5

Jen Mair

6:58 PM

5

Frank Stevens

6:58 PM

5

Jenny Shadley

6:58 PM

5

MacKenzie Jones

6:58 PM

5

Brian Romer

6:58 PM

5

David Hoàng

6:58 PM

5

Angel Brophy

6:59 PM

No I voted up there

7:10 PM

Frank and I also cleaned up with the human BINGO activity haha

Renai Bell

7:11 PM

i'm left handed too!

7:11 PM

we didn't win though, alas

7:12 PM

definitely share that list!

MacKenzie Jones

7:24 PM

My pitch is a system like that Genius site for music - you mouse over lines and it "translates" them for you, so it maintains the original text but you can get clarification on whatever's confusing

Renai Bell

7:26 PM

they sort of do that on the ballot? legal terms, then they have a descriptive paragraph of what it means for the rest of us.

7:26 PM

I suspect legal would have the same concerns

7:32 PM

CBAC letters! <https://multco.us/info/community-budget-advisory-committee-letters-recommendation>

Brian Romer

7:35 PM

critical energy hub

Brian Romer

7:36 PM

Critical Energy Infrastructure hub to be precise

7:39 PM

more on the county budget process:

<https://multco.us/info/learn-more-about-multnomah-county-budget-process-and-how-participate>

Local Public Safety Coordinating Council (maybe?)

7:40 PM

<https://multco.us/events/local-public-safety-coordinating-council>

7:45 PM

more about CBACs: <https://multco.us/info/about-community-budget-advisory-committees>

7:49 PM

I appreciate our Co-Chairs for facilitating!!

nina g

7:50 PM

Yes! Thank you co-chairs!