

## **Multnomah County**

### **Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Innovation**

#### **Charter**

##### **Treaty Obligation**

We should never forget that the land that we now call Portland, OR and Multnomah County, indeed this entire area of the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette rivers, is the traditional homeland and fishing and gathering range of tribes throughout the region. Its wealth of resources sustained Indigenous people who lived here both year-round and seasonally. These tribes have honored, protected, and stewarded these resources for thousands of years and continue to do so today. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the peoples who have cared for it since time immemorial. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we all call home.

The governments that now occupy these lands have a government-to-government responsibility to honor and fulfill treaty obligations. Today there are nine tribal nations in Oregon representing diverse cultures and peoples, and other Tribes outside of Oregon who access the lands and waters of Multnomah County as their usual and accustomed places. While not every tribal nation has Federally recognized treaties, all tribal nations are owed the right to help shape the future of this community, particularly with respect to water, gathering of traditional foods, the management of natural areas, the protection of the environment, and other issues that are deemed important by those tribes.

##### **Vision**

The Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Innovation (ACSI) believes in an equitable, healthy, low-carbon community where every person has what they need to thrive. Moreover, ACSI members believe that the life sustaining power of the environment, including rivers, forests, and all the diverse ecosystems of our region are deserving of their own rights.

Due to the institutional history of colonialism and racism, however, many people in our community suffer from environmental injustice. This includes not having access to safe and affordable places to live, the means to safely travel, being subject to disproportionate burdens of pollution, and increased exposure to the impacts of the climate crisis. Actively redressing these inequities is vital to addressing the climate crisis and protecting the natural

systems that sustain human lives and spirits.

### **Purpose**

The advisory committee was established by the Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners, Ordinance Number 1171 (MCC Chapter 3, 3.450 - 3.470), to advise the Board of County Commissioners and the Office of Sustainability on issues regarding sustainability and innovation. ACSI members are community delegates who bring their diverse viewpoints to help advance the committee's vision.

### **Roles**

- Investigate and make recommendations to the county board of commissioners and the Office of Sustainability on policies and initiatives that enhance equity, environmental justice, environmental stewardship and inclusive-prosperity within the communities of Multnomah County, or within the operations of the County government.
- Provide feedback and input on major initiatives within the Office of Sustainability.
- Serve as a voice of Multnomah County's diverse communities when providing input and advice to the Board of County Commissioners, or the Office of Sustainability, on matters pertaining to sustainability.
- Make a regular report to the board of county commissioners on the activities and recommendations of the advisory committee.

### **Membership**

- The advisory committee is composed of a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 13 members appointed by the Multnomah County Chair upon the approval of the Board of County Commissioners.
- The advisory committee represents residents of Multnomah County interested in sustainability issues from diverse geographical and occupational interests. County employees and employees of any organization contracting with the county or bidding on county contracts are not eligible for membership.
- Each member is appointed for a term of two years, except the Multnomah County Chair retains discretion to stagger terms of appointment as necessary to ensure rotating terms. No member may serve more than three consecutive terms.
- Should an advisory committee member choose to resign prior to the expiration of their appointed term, they should notify the advisory committee chairperson and vice chairperson, and the Office of Sustainability director in writing. Email is a sufficient

means of communication for this purpose.

## **Duties**

- Evaluate and analyze current and future plans and practices related to sustainability, and offer strategic direction on issues that include energy, carbon emissions, pollution, transportation, and public outreach and education.
- Evaluate and recommend innovative technology and practices.
- Review progress and recommend updates on sustainability plans and practices to the board.
- Adopt rules consistent with the County Code and all state and federal laws for its operation.

## **Staff Duties**

- The Office of Sustainability shall provide support for advisory committee meetings, subcommittee meetings, and to the chairperson and vice chairperson. This may include: printing relevant documents, booking rooms, coordinating among advisory committee members, and coordinating with other county departments.
- The Office of Sustainability shall post meeting agendas, and meeting minutes in compliance with all applicable open meeting rules and regulations.
- The Office of Sustainability shall take meeting minutes and make those available in a timely manner.

## **Voting**

- All current advisory committee members shall have one vote on each issue during attendance at any meeting. No proxy votes shall be allowed.
- An advisory committee member is considered to be a participant in the meeting if participating in-person, by phone, or over the internet.
- Decisions shall be determined by a majority vote of all advisory committee members in attendance, when a quorum is present.
- A committee vote taken by email (or via online poll) must be ratified by all active members.
- A quorum shall be 51% of currently appointed advisory committee members.
- Members are free to abstain from voting on a given issue if they so choose.

## **Meetings**

- Meetings shall be held quarterly and there shall be a minimum of four meetings of the full advisory committee membership every year.
- All advisory committee meetings will be open to the public.
- Additional meetings can be called by the advisory committee chairperson, the director of the Office of Sustainability, a member of the board of county commissioners, or by any two (2) advisory committee members.
- The chairperson shall prepare the agenda for the meetings and the agenda will be subject to the approval of the membership.
- Members can participate in a meeting in-person, by phone, or over the internet, and advisory committee meetings can be held exclusively over the phone or internet, so long as the meeting is open to the public.

### **Chair and co-chair selection and responsibilities**

- Chairperson:
  - Shall preside at meetings.
  - Shall develop the agenda for all meetings.
  - Shall be elected at the advisory committee's last meeting of the calendar year.
- Vice chairperson:
  - Shall, in the absence of the chairperson, preside over meetings.
  - Shall assume and exercise the duties of the chairperson in cases of incapacity, resignation, and removal from office, and in instances when the chairperson is not available for timely decision when needed.
  - The vice chairperson shall be elected at the advisory committee's first meeting of the calendar year.

### **Subcommittee formation and functions**

- Subcommittees are formed at the request of any advisory committee member and the purpose of the subcommittee must be consistent with the advisory committee's assigned duties.
- Subcommittees focus attention on a specific topic, policy, or issue.
- A subcommittee may only be formed if an advisory committee member agrees to take an active role as the chair of the subcommittee
- Subcommittees should be limited in number based on the availability of staff support from the office of sustainability.

- Subcommittees should be proposed at the first meeting of the year and advisory committee members must vote to authorize a subcommittee, ad hoc subcommittees can be formed, however, as needed with a majority vote of advisory committee members.
- Subcommittees may solicit input from outside experts, and outside experts may be members of subcommittees.
- Subcommittees must submit recommendations to the whole committee for approval and may not make recommendations to the board of county directors directly.

### **Changes to the charter**

The charter may be amended by a majority vote of the advisory committee membership constituting a quorum so long as the content remains consistent with the rules establishing this committee (Multnomah county code chapter 3.455-3.470) and all applicable laws and regulations.

### **Conflict of interest**

Whenever an advisory committee member may have or has a financial interest in any matter coming before the advisory committee, the affected person shall fully disclose the nature of the interest. If a member has a financial interest in any matter coming before the advisory committee, they must withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter. Any transaction or vote involving an actual conflict of interest shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested advisory committee members determine that it is in the best interest of the county and the advisory committee to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record such disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.