

**Attendees:**

**In-person:** Peter Fry, Jens Knudsen, Richard Harrison, Rick Johnson, Carolyn Holcomb, Christine Walter, Hayden Miller, Alicia Temple, Kisun Peters, Josh (?)

**Virtual:** Lexie Gordon, Marc Harris, Adam Lyons

**Absent:** Commissioner Meieran, Susan Lindsay, Angie Garcia, Mike Zupan

**AGENDA ITEM: Business**

- After introductions, Hayden walked the group through the proposed meeting agenda and purpose. No objections were raised.
- Hayden asked if anyone had any edits or corrections to the 8.19.24 meeting minutes, one GNAC member noted that they felt that the minutes did not adequately reflect how much transportation concerns were a topic of discussion.

**AGENDA ITEM: Deflection process**

- A discussion was held regarding why the County was pursuing a site-based deflection model.
  - Staff noted that the deflection center was one pathway into the deflection program but that peer-based and mobile deflection are also being offered.
  - GNAC members noted that they felt the County was approaching this topic from an academic or policymaking perspective that did not adequately represent the experiences of those impacted by the situation on the streets on a daily basis.
  - GNAC members asked staff why they felt this model would work. Staff responded that this was one pathway into deflection with a relatively narrow group of populations that are eligible, by the design of the legislation. Staff noted that this model of utilizing a law enforcement encounter to connect people with addiction treatment is a proven model in other communities, and that we have heard clearly from law enforcement that they need a place to bring people. Staff noted the comments from Mayor Wheeler that day regarding the importance of opening the Deflection Center in October.
  - ~~○ GNAC members noted that their fear is that people will be displaced from downtown to the Buckman neighborhood and that is why the transportation topic is so key to them.~~
  - GNAC members noted that their fear is that people will be more rapidly displaced from downtown to the Buckman neighborhood than is already the case and that those dealing drugs will soon follow, preying on those walking out of the deflection center after refusing transportation. This is why that transportation topic is a main focus of their discussions.
- Marc Harris and Alicia Temple walked through the deflection process using a slide deck.
  - A GNAC member noted that Marc said that law enforcement would not enter the facility. They asked if they would be able to use the sallyport at the building. Marc said that they will not due to concerns over carbon monoxide.
- ~~● A GNAC member noted that they felt it was not trauma informed to put people in handcuffs, transport them via law enforcement to the center, and then demand that they accept transportation out, as they may experience trauma during their transportation to~~

~~the center that would make them wary of accepting transportation away or which may be exacerbated by being transported away.~~

- A GNAC member noted that the only way to be deflected through this center was to be subjected to one of two traumas, force transportation by ambulance or forced transportation handcuffed in the back of a police car. This member expressed concern that the forced and traumatic nature of this transportation would likely make many of those individuals resistant to the idea of accepting transportation away from the facility, even if it was not forced or traumatic. Because of this, they advocated for transportation to be mandated to satisfy the need for neighborhood security.
- A GNAC member noted that the graphic did not clearly state that individuals would be identified prior to being transported to the center.
- A GNAC member felt that this policy had not been developed with input from people with direct or intermediate contact with people on the streets.
- A GNAC member expressed that they did not feel it was important to discuss what happens within the deflection center, as they were focused on what the impact outside the center would be.
- A GNAC member expressed that they did feel there were important topics around what happens in the center, but that they were focused on the external management plan. They noted that tracking individuals was an important topic for them and their community, and asked whether individuals with criminal records would be identified before being brought into the center.
- Alicia confirmed that after the 8.19.24 GNAC meeting, a policy decision had been made that individuals must be able to be identified by law enforcement before being brought to the deflection center in order to be eligible for deflection.
- A GNAC member noted that many people experiencing homelessness do not have documentation, and asked if there were plans to help people who do not have documents obtain them.
  - Staff said they would ask the Department of Community Justice how they help people obtain documents after being booked.
- A GNAC member asked how success would be measured and what metrics would be looked at to determine if the center was successful or failing.
  - Staff noted they can share the data metrics that would be tracked, but that additional metrics could be included in the GNA. Staff shared that the leadership team has committed to reevaluating the center every 30 days and that metrics would include the number of people being brought to the center, whether law enforcement was utilizing the center, and if it is resulting in people getting connected to treatment.
  - Staff noted that the entire state is watching Multnomah County to see if this deflection model is successful.
- A GNAC member noted their concerns that the leadership team meetings have not been public and that County Commissioners have said they don't know what is happening and that they're hearing different things from different members of the leadership team.
- GNAC members noted that the way someone enters the facility will impact their mentality and how they exit the facility.

- GNAC members noted that even if there is a small perimeter around the facility, people will just move beyond that perimeter and may engage in problematic actions.
- Hayden acknowledged that the transportation question is key to these discussions and that a discussion around mandating transportation is taking place at a higher level than this table, and that Hayden and Alicia do not have decision making authority on that point.
- Hayden asked Kisun from Tuerk House to talk about how their organization has managed transportation and neighborhood outreach in other facilities.
  - Kisun noted they had a process to log every person and their outcomes at their facilities, and that they track where someone is referred and log if there are any points of contact at that agency. Kisun noted they see people with high levels of medical acuity but that that is a different scenario than people coming from a law enforcement interaction.
- A GNAC member asked if anyone can drop someone off at a Tuerk House center, Kisun said yes.
- Marc noted that we are not planning on allowing self referrals during phases 1 or 2 of deflection, unless we see a serious lag in capacity and need in the system, in which case that could be discussed.
- A GNAC member asked why this site was being renovated for \$2 million for a temporary use and speculated that the County may end up deciding to use it as a permanent sobering facility. Staff confirmed that the property owner has development plans and that the level of construction needed to turn the space into a permanent facility was not financially feasible.
- A GNAC member noted the limited time available before the center opens and expressed a desire to begin working on a GNA. They also asked if there can be any consideration of prioritizing people in the area around the center for engagement, and requested that the County advocate for an increased police presence in the area.
  - *Follow up comment from this GNAC member provided after the meeting:*
    - “While not incorrect, the points below also don't capture what I was trying to convey. Within two blocks of the center, we have a massive multi-block encampment and open-air drug market that has been moved and relocated several times, but even when moved, it stays within a few blocks of the 900 SE Sandy site leaving a trail of havoc in its wake with illegal activity that needs to be thoroughly managed and mitigated. To assess the impact of the DC (positive or negative), we have to remove this activity (not just push it to the next street) so that we can develop a baseline. I'd want to see something like what we did with the City take (attached) and it should happen before the site opens. This should be an ongoing assessment and included in the overall metrics that the County and GNAC use to assess success.
- A GNAC member noted that they observed more people experiencing homelessness in the neighborhood in recent weeks.

- A GNAC member noted they'd seen a range of estimates of the number of people who will come through the center and asked if there had been any updates to those estimates. Staff said there have not been any updates.
- A GNAC member noted that they felt the Buckman neighborhood had been targeted because of the number of buildings providing services that have been sited recently in the area.
- A GNAC member asked if there are enough downstream resources to accommodate all the referrals that will come through the deflection system.
  - Staff noted that there is not currently enough capacity in the treatment system, and that this system is being built in partnership with BHRNs and other treatment system stakeholders.
  - A GNAC member noted that it would be helpful to know how many of those treatment partners are located in the Buckman area.
- A GNAC member asked staff if they have given leadership a clear message that the GNAC members will not sign a GNA without a clear plan for transportation out, and if that would change the leadership team's thinking. Staff said that the message had been delivered.
- Alicia noted that There is a difference between the question of how we ensure people are transported out versus mandating that people accept transportation, and that we share a broad agreement that the goal is to make sure everyone accepts transportation out.
- A GNAC member suggested that the GNAC begin work on drafting a GNA next week with the assumption that the transportation issue will be resolved in a way that meets their needs, and continue working until the transportation issue is resolved.
- Discussion was held between GNAC members about whether they can draft a GNA with that assumption.
- A GNAC member noted that they were not sure if the community agrees that people not accepting transportation should not be considered to have failed deflection and said that the group needs to identify what assumptions we've been on a different page with.
- Kisun said that one of the things Tuerk House can do is engage treatment organizations to see if they can create commitments to have them send transportation to pick people up.
- Marc said that the County has been working closely with Gresham around the field based model, they prefer to keep folks in Gresham. He wanted to underscore that the center will not be the only inflow that comes into the deflection system, we're doing the work to stand up the referral pathways. People don't want to be moved out and into their community.
- Adam asked for a very clear description of what makes a person eligible or ineligible for deflection. Alicia said we can create that.

**AGENDA ITEM:** Meeting format and structure discussion

- Hayden shifted the discussion to the topic of open and closed meetings, and noted there had been confusion over whether meetings would be open or closed, and that there have been requests to allow some people to listen in to meetings. Hayden said that it

was not equitable to allow some people who know somebody on the committee to be able to listen, but not others, and that the group needed to decide if meetings would be open or closed to the public.

- A GNAC member noted that there are stakeholders near the location that are channeling questions through them, and that they understood how the access point Hayden raised could be inequitable.
- The group had a discussion about open and closed meetings and recording of meetings. It was noted that even if the County does not record meetings, if they are open to the press then meetings may be recorded.
- A GNAC member said they were concerned that if the meetings were open, the County would use the opportunity to fill the room with people who have different points of view about deflection or who do not live in the area.
- A GNAC member noted that they felt public meetings would slow the process down.
- A GNAC member noted that the Buckman Community Association had a committee designated to create a GNA for a different program and he hoped to include that person on the GNAC.
- It was agreed that the group would vote by email on the question of adding one more representative of the BCA to the GNAC and on whether meetings should be open or closed.

**Identified next steps:**

- Staff to send email with:
  - Draft meeting minutes
  - Survey regarding the two votes the GNAC agreed to take via email
  - A scheduling survey for next week's meeting, because it is a holiday week.