

Attendees:

In-person: Peter Fry, Richard Harrison, Christine Walter, Hayden Miller, Dorothy Elmore, Angie Garcia, Lt. Brent Maxey, Commissioner Meieran, Natalie Amar, Anthony Jordan,

Virtual: Lexie Gordon, Jens Knudsen, Rick Johnson, Carolyne Holcomb, Kisun Peters, Maud Aryee, David Watnick, Susan Lindsay,

Absent: Mike Zupan, Rick Johnson

Agenda item: Business

- Staff acknowledged they had not had time to incorporate feedback from a GNAC member into the previous meeting's minutes, and that they would be incorporated after this meeting.
- Feedback was provided by a GNAC member that they had trouble understanding the meaning of "open" and "closed" meetings in the minutes.
- Staff reviewed the results of the two survey questions that had been sent to the group regarding open or closed meetings, and adding a member of the GNAC.
- A GNAC member who had proposed adding an additional member to the group withdrew their proposal due to a lack of consensus.
- Discussion was held on the merits of open and closed meetings.
- Commissioner Meieran expressed that in general her work was conducted in open settings and with an awareness of public meetings law; but that understood that having meetings with community members be open may hamper sensitive discussions. She said that the group should consider how to ensure that information is conveyed through the public such as by posting meeting minutes publicly.
- A member of the GNAC said they felt the process should be made as transparent as possible.
- A member of the GNAC noted that they were concerned about how video from open meetings may be manipulated. They noted they had been posting the meeting minutes on their organization's website and expressed appreciation for how staff anonymized community members' remarks in the minutes.
- Another GNAC member said they are a big proponent of public meetings and they felt the previous speaker had articulated their position well.
- Commissioner Meieran shared she finds it problematic that leadership team meetings have not been public because the majority of attendees are public officials.
- It was agreed upon by the group that meetings would remain closed based on the results of the survey and discussion.

Agenda item: Update on first week of deflection

- Staff from the Health Department provided an update on the first few days of deflection since beginning on September 1st.
 - The County has partnered with two community based organizations providing deflection in the field when dispatch is requested by law enforcement.
 - There had been six deflections total at that time since September 1.

- Reports from people in the field are that it's been going very well, has been smooth, going well all things considered, especially considering how quickly they needed to stand up services.
 - Two individuals requested immediate transportation to services after a care plan was developed. Other individuals opted to act on their care plan within thirty days.
 - A GNAC member asked who provided transportation. Staff said that they were transported via cab.
- A GNAC member asked if the two people who were taken directly to referral partners had peer mentors assigned to them and if someone would follow up to ensure they engaged with services.
 - Staff said that when people are engaged in the field their contact information is collected and they are asked if they want a follow up. Staff clarified that some individuals may want a peer connection but others may need or desire a different form of service depending on their situation and needs. Staff noted that they only had a few days worth of data, but that what we know now is that people who have been deflected have been wanting to stay engaged. Staff noted that they have been meeting with service providers to continue to refine processes for continuing to ensure that people engage with the services they are referred to, and that as the first 30-day mark approaches staff will be evaluating the status of people's engagement with services.
- The same GNAC member noted that they felt peer connections are an important component of a successful deflection process to ensure a non-legal accountability mechanism.
 - Staff responded that the person they meet in the field is a peer and everyone who is deflected gets that connection, but that individuals may get referred to different types of services based on their needs and desires. Staff are learning from peer organizations what their interactions are looking like so they can continue to refine processes. Staff reiterated that the six individuals who had been deflected so far had expressed a desire to remain engaged in services.
- A GNAC member expressed that they respect we're learning as we implement HB 4002, and that from their perspective it seems that the program is focusing primarily on the population of people living on the street, and asked if HD staff agreed with that characterization.
 - HD responded that referrals come in from law enforcement.
- There was a discussion between a GNAC member and the HD about how many of the people who are engaging in deflection services are experiencing homelessness and if they are being released back to street conditions. HD staff made clear that some individuals identified as unhoused but others did not. Some were offered access to shelter as part of their unique care plan, and that those providing deflection services are making a determination about a number of a person's needs and best next steps based on their interaction.

- Staff provided an example of a person who was successfully deflected and experiencing homelessness, but chose to engage in the services they were referred to within 30 days because they were not prepared at that time to leave their dog.
- A GNAC member recommended that the GNAC write outstanding questions and acknowledged there are certain things we won't know for some time. They suggested the group focus on their charge of developing a GNA that's focused on doing the work well.
- Comm. Meieran asked about the levels of intoxication of people who were deflected.
 - Staff shared that it had been a mixture of intoxication levels and that a good number of people were able to engage with the screening, answer the questions and get through the process, and others were not in that state. Feedback from the providers had been that the people they encountered were in a state that allowed for engagement.
- Comm. Meieran said she would expect that to change as the hours of services go beyond daylight hours.
- Comm. Meieran asked law enforcement how their workflow would have been affected if they had brought those individuals to a deflection center.
 - PPB responded that they already had to transport people ineligible for deflection to jail. They said that it is easier for their officers to do a warm handoff, and their current protocols for mobile deflection have them keeping two officers waiting for up to 30 minutes. The ease of transportation will depend on where the interaction takes place. As long as the handoff is a warm handoff at the door it will be pretty easy. They said the current system of mobile deflection is the biggest draw on their resources because they are required to wait at the site of the interaction.
- A GNAC member noted that HD staff had said that deflection was "going well" and asked how the HD defined "going well", and noted they felt that definition should be a priority of the GNA. They also asked PPB if the estimate of seven individuals being deflected in the first four days aligned with their expectations.
 - HD staff noted they were not speaking formally about metrics, but that the system did not get overwhelmed or have any major failures or pressure points. They noted it was not perfect but did match expectations.
 - A GNAC member asked if the contracts for mobile deflection would continue. HD staff noted that the two organizations currently providing mobile deflection were utilizing existing outreach contracts, but that Tuerk House would be operating the deflection center. The two organizations currently providing mobile outreach are 4D recovery and Volunteers of America.
 - PPB acknowledged that they had limited data but that since M110 went into effect they had seen people using drugs more openly around law enforcement. They expected a significant number of contacts where deflection can be offered and so far that had not occurred. It was noted that most PPB officers are going call to call and driving by these issues, and that teams like the Central Bike Squad will continue focused missions. They noted that they expect once the initial kinks are worked through the volume of people being deflected may increase.

- Members of the GNAC discussed balancing their desire to have questions answered with the need to develop a GNA.

Agenda Item: Review draft GNA framework and discuss GNA

- Staff began walking through the draft GNA framework that had been previously shared with the GNAC, beginning with the first section to the first dividing line on page 1.
 - A GNAC member noted they felt the document lacked a purpose statement and needed to have something that defines what the deflection center is and what we're talking about.
- Comm. Meieran asked Tuerk House if they had any existing GNAs that could provide suggestions as to what may be missing.
 - Tuerk House said that they didn't have anything to add and usually try to include the things mentioned in the document, and engage in strong community engagement through neighborhood and community events.
- A GNAC member noted they had heard Tuerk House say that they had previous success with neighborhood engagement and that they do not open new programs without having a GNA in place, and asked if all the elements of their other GNAs are included in this framework.
 - Tuerk House clarified that there had been a misunderstanding and that they do not typically create written GNAs because they are usually not requested, and instead they partner with community organizations to address their questions and concerns. They noted they had one program that experienced strong opposition from the community so the program was not sited in that community. They noted there is one community where they wrote a binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that they treat like a contract with deliverables and expectations.
- A GNAC member asked who the MOU was with, what accountability looked like, and if the MOU was legally binding.
 - Tuerk House said that the MOU was with a community partner, that it had an escalation process, and was legally binding with remediation and arbitration sections.
- A GNAC member said they felt that the draft framework was coherent and concise, particularly the communication sections, which were the most important to them, in order to ensure there is a way to communicate on a regular basis.
- A GNAC member said the first bullet is great, but that when they think of a mitigation plan they see the GNAC as having a role in defining what that is.
- A GNAC member noted they felt more clear definitions were needed.
- Another GNAC member agreed that the framework needs more definitions of terms and that it should specify the specific laws and regulations that the GNAC expects the County to hold Tuerk House accountable to, because in their opinion the County had already violated the law.
 - Another GNAC member said they didn't feel that level of specificity was necessary because it's safe to assume the County and Tuerk House will follow the law or they will be in trouble.

- Another GNAC member agreed with that comment.
- Another GNAC member noted that including that language allowed the community to escalate the GNA if the law was violated.
- A GNAC member noted they believed that responsibility for law violations would fall on the property owner not the lease holder.
 - Another GNAC member disputed that.
- A GNAC member said they read that section as saying that Multnomah County will hold their provider to the law and clearly articulates the County's responsibility.
- Another GNAC member agreed with that comment.
- Commissioner Meieran noted that there is benefit in leaving the language vague because if they include specific legal language it may limit them if anything is missed.
- A GNAC member suggested using language like "included but not limited to".
- Commissioner Meieran noted that regarding the point around holding Tuerk House to the standards of their contract it would be helpful if the GNAC could see the contract to understand those standards.
 - Staff said they would discuss with the Health Department if the contract could be shared.
 - *Note: following the meeting the contract was shared with the GNAC via email.*
- A GNAC member noted there is a difference between safety and security and that the draft framework only discusses security and not safety, and said that there are levels of safety that do not involve the police. They noted that there is a big issue downtown right now around the degrees of security being put in place, and there seems to be pushback against having police on the streets. That GNAC member then noted they expected the safety and security discussion to take a whole meeting and, noting the time, requested that the group table further discussion about the draft framework for the meeting.
- The GNAC agreed to table that discussion and move on.

Agenda item: information sharing: process updates and feedback

- Staff shared that due to the amount of time and resources the GNAC process required, the County had made a determination to hire an outside facilitator who will facilitate future meetings and manage the administrative components of the GNAC work. Staff shared that they were in the process of finalizing that facilitator and meeting with a potential facilitator the following week.
 - A GNAC member requested that the facilitator's contract clearly state that they will be neutral and not advocate for the County's position in their role as facilitator.
- Discussion was held around the timing of meetings.
- A GNAC member noted that they had not received any updates from Tuerk House and that they don't have an update on the plan for opening the site and if it's still expected to occur in mid to late October.

- Tuerk House provided an update on their hiring and shared that they were taking over the deflection call center that week.
 - A GNAC member noted that they had flagged that advertised wages were relatively low and asked if there were any impacts in the Portland market on their hiring because of that.
 - Tuerk House said that some position's local market rate was significantly higher than what they pay in other markets, and other were slightly lowered. They said they've offered competitive wages to try to address each employee on a case by case basis.
- A GNAC member noted that based on the County's stated timeline for opening the center they had about six weeks to meet weekly before opening. They also mentioned that the group needed to acknowledge that the GNA will not be legally enforceable.

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