

## BAC meeting #5: Monday, February 6, 12-1 p.m.

### Attendees

- Eric Engstrom
- Fritz Johnson
- Julie Ocken
- Love Jonson
- Svetha Ambati
- Calvin Hoff
- Brian Romer

### Review of Phase 2 budget instructions

Eric: We received the Budget Memo 3 last week and have more clarity on the rest of the budget process:

- There is about \$6.5M the Mayor will allocate, but bureaus are not invited to submit new requests. Largely in public safety and houselessness. Graffiti is mentioned, so there may be some small amount of funding added, but we are not submitting a request.
- There won't be a cut request as part of this.
- Confirms that bureaus will make presentations with their commissioners' portfolio of bureaus.
- Commissioners have the flexibility within portfolios to ask their bureaus to make money available for priority programs within their bundle. We don't anticipate any major moves in that regard.
- Reminder that BPS is with Prosper Portland, BDS, and Housing.

So there is much less to talk about here – we aren't preparing additional requests.

Anthony: It's not totally clear if there will be a formal process to set conversations about livability (trash pick-up and graffiti), but it won't request a BAC follow-up at this point.

Calvin: I feel like the content of the first letter was partially based on having a Phase 2 – so is there a possibility of the BAC making a statement about this expectation?

Svetha: Process-based things such as participatory budgeting would be applicable to share too.

### Items raised by BAC members

See [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hvxnE35V3LBsmGvfRCfkCoZAh5rYyQqMCiID9\\_-oGX4/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hvxnE35V3LBsmGvfRCfkCoZAh5rYyQqMCiID9_-oGX4/edit) for comments by BAC members.

Eric: We are in a unique moment – the budget process is currently under way with Charter Reform and a new structure being set-up for the new government format. So BACs may not look the same going forward, and it may not be effective for BPS to share about the BAC process since we don't know what this work looks like next year.

## Participatory Budgeting and BAC Functioning

Eric: Charter Commission forwarded recommendations to Council about participatory budgeting, so there are other processes going that will look Citywide. We assume this will play out more this year. Within BPS, we don't anticipate the same budget process next year since we don't know what the structure will look like.

Calvin: With the changes, we can have an opportunity about how these bodies function – so I think there is potential value in members on this group to help BPS think about some recalibration. There are lessons learned in just my short time on this group about how the BAC might operate more effectively.

Love: It is outside the control of BPS, but what we are advocating is Citywide and how BACs are likely currently functioning. After we talk today, it seems like we could submit a second letter (testimony) about the BAC and budget process more generally.

Brian: I am supportive of a second letter that could incorporate our thoughts and have it reviewed in the future of the process.

Eric: The Charter Reform work may be another opportunity to engage, but they haven't yet announced a specific set of public meetings about this. There are several silos of work – implementing the district-based elections and ranked choice voting; and what it looks like for bureau structure and decision-making processes.

Calvin: For the length of time we have been on this BAC, there are some differences. E.g. PBOT goes year-round. What are decisions around the BAC processes versus other things other bureaus are doing or that BPS does/not have control over? This was a lot to take in over a short period of time, and that didn't support our work strategically about our options and collaboration.

- Eric: We have talked about if it's worthwhile to have the BAC be more year-round. PBOT has other pots of money, so their decisions are more year-round. The other dimension in having a conversation about the role of the Planning Commission in terms of ongoing work planning and budget. We typically have had a member crossing over from the PSC to the BAC, so this is another component.

## Longer-term funding cycles

Love: Last year was the first year we had some 2-year funding. I see Eric's comment about BPS lobbying for funding like this. 2-5 years would give more bureaus more certainty. There is also the question of limited-term positions versus ongoing.

Brian: I don't have enough experience/knowledge to really offer an opinion here – it sounds fine and smart, but I'm not sure I have experience to offer an idea.

Calvin: I'm also supportive of thinking of longer budget cycles. If we can reduce administrative burden on people to let them do the work instead of budget processing, but I'm like Brian and may need some support on language.

Eric: The challenge is that when we have a 1-time project, they usually take 18-24 months, so when we get one-time funding, we have a problem to finish it within the same fiscal year. But the politics and amount of money can change year-to-year. We are very sympathetic to this for programming and staffing of course.

Svetha: With limited term positions, there is lots to hire great staff... and then we have to push to keep them on and retain them, so having more certainty for positions and people is important.

Eric: Bureau leadership does prefer to orient our budget to on-going things – we don't want lots of staff on one-time money of course. But things come up, and when one-time money is available, things happen. We try to be as clear as possible on this, and we hope that in the current bundle of money that we can transition some of our new positions that currently are limited duration to be ongoing in the future. BPS in particular in the early 2000s had lots of staff on one-time. We spent about 10 years working to get funding from other avenues and getting off one-time funding. We have external sources (e.g. grants) that may always be one-time in their nature.

Love: We can be much more efficient when we don't have to retrain new staff. We want to point out that the issue of limited-duration positions have racialized impacts too. Lots of newer career and younger planner are most impacted.

Eric: This is true at BPS as we've had to make cuts over the years.

#### Equity Narrative

Svetha: I did have questions about the equity tool, particularly about funding portions that are highlighted (e.g. digital inclusion work). If we have things that we're pointing out in the equity assessment tool, is there a possibility to explore if we had more discretionary funding in the future, how could we allot funding to these programs that have largest need? Is there a way this response, for example, doesn't fall off the list?

- Eric: The tool's components includes content from individual managers. As an example, we couldn't ask for funds like this for this current year. The writing of the analysis was confined by not being able to ask for more money. Accountability exists in a couple ways: program managers have provided this input and are aware of their program needs; we also start this analysis for the equity tool with the previous years' tools, so we will review. The bureau's strategic plan is also a key place to review ideas (though this example is newer than our current strategic plan).

#### Next Steps

City Budget Office Technical Review is happening now.

#### Upcoming Council work sessions

- Throughout the month of March. The public is welcome to watch these.
- BPS will present with Prosper, Housing, BDS on March 23.

### Council listening sessions

These are all slated as hybrid – in-person locations TBD.

In past years, the public has been able to register to provide testimony via Council Clerk. **We will keep BAC members apprised of the system for this year as information becomes available.**

- **March 21, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**
- **April 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**
- **April 15, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

This is when the BAC could submit a (second) letter with content and next steps noted below.

### Mayor's Proposed Budget

- Published on May 4
- May 9 Work Session
- May 11 Proposed Public Hearing 6:30-8:30 p.m.

### Adopted Budget

- June 14 hearing 2 p.m.
- Adopted for FY 2023-24 budget starting on July 1.

BAC members are interested **in scripting a second letter to submit as part of the community listening session testimony.** BAC members will work with Julie about some of these topics to share a letter at one of the Community Listening Sessions. **Love will start a draft to share.**

Decision-making around how we structure the BAC is something members can certainly share with Eric/Julie to discuss at a BPS Executive Team meeting. **BAC members will work on scripting this message about the bureau's work with the BAC.**