

Portland City Council Agenda  
 Written Testimony - Item 621/588/546

Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
1 546	Anonymous	Oppose	I am asking that you please oppose renewing the contract with the county and STOP funding the JOHS. Chair Vega Pederson has repeatedly failed to be a good steward of taxpayer money by her misguided and reckless use of the millions intended for increasing shelter and housing. Continuing to provide thousands of tents and tarps discourages people from seeking indoor shelter and perpetuates the millions spent on the city cleaning up the camps and our city's live ability and safety. Please use the millions towards shelter and humbly admit that this partnership is a failure. This is the time for a truly clean slate as we start a new chapter of government. Stop funding the JOHS	No	06/14/24 12:31 PM
2 546	Cathy Miller	Oppose	I am voicing my opposition to agenda item 546 (providing tents/tarps). I have testified before you previously about being unable to walk through my neighborhood because I have a mobility issue and tents were blocking public access in many places around my house. I have seen some improvement in being able to ambulate without obstructions recently and I don't understand why we would go backwards. We do need to care for people who are houseless but providing more tents and tarps is not the answer. Instead, we need to spend our tax dollars on shelter beds and affordable housing, not tents and tarps that will be thrown away by the city when they obstruct the public right-of-way. It is a colossal waste of money that helps no one. Put our tax dollars where it will actually help people, not on more tents and tarps.	No	06/14/24 1:57 PM
3 546	Candee Wilson	Oppose	I strongly oppose the continued funding by the City of Portland JOHS as long as they continue to compound the problem of homelessness by procures and tarps to people who continue to block our sidewalks and public rights of way with impunity. The problem of homelessness control grow daily as more and more people are encouraged to camp on our sidewalks. Our tax dollars are being flushed down a toilet and no one seems to care as homelessness continues to spiral out of control. Old Town is again the dumping ground for this continued onslaught of mentally ill and addicted humans who cannot rationally live in a civil society without constant supervision. Yet they are allowed to roam free on the streets of Old Town, defiling and destroying daily life for law-abiding tax payers and their homes and businesses. Old Town is the rug where the City has swept its problems of poverty, racism and injustice for decades and so it continues. Stop the insanity and put our money to use providing treatment facilities instead of enabling more homeless.	No	06/17/24 7:40 AM
4 546	Joe	Oppose	I urge Council to STOP supporting the Joint Office of Homeless Services. We have given them more than enough support financially over the years, yet they continue to fail our City/County in addressing the homeless situation. And the current County Chair has failed us in managing this organization time and time again. And if Council is still convinced we need the JOHS then we need to amend the agreement as passed by County Commissioners to: 1. Make it clear that the County needs to STOP distributing tents / tarps / etc. as proposed in their budget and use those funds towards additional shelter that we so badly need! 2. Managing the JOHS needs to be taken away from County Chair and appoint an independent person to oversee the budget and report to both Council and County Commissioners. But again, I think it's time we sever our relationship and address our issues directly. Thank you.	No	06/17/24 10:42 AM

Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
546	Chris	Support with changes	If the Council chooses to continue to support the JOHS, then we need to make sure the following happens: 1. We need to demand that the County refrain from distributing tents, tarps, etc. and dedicate those dollars to adding more shelters. 2. Appoint an independent party to manage the JOHS that is accountable to both the City Council and the County Commissioners. It is evident that the current County Chair is not equipped to manage this organization effectively.	No	06/17/24 10:45 AM
546	Anonymous	Oppose	You're losing the trust of your constituents. We need accountability when it comes to the homeless industrial complex. Stop enabling illegal camping and expand outreach and services. No more tents or "reduction harm" supplies- this doesn't work and research proves it. We have had enough. It's time to provide adequate services and for those who refuse, consequences. Citizens want accountability and our Portland back. We will vote to prove it. We want a safe, clean, and livable city for all and are watching each and every move.	No	06/17/24 6:56 PM
546	HereTogether Coalition	Support with changes	Please see the attached written comments in the uploaded PDF file.	Yes	06/18/24 2:29 PM
546	Eric Fruits	Oppose	The attached is testimony for Agenda Item 546. I apologize if this is submitted twice. It seems to have been placed under the wrong agenda item the first time I submitted it.	Yes	06/19/24 7:20 AM
546	Austin Heitzman	Oppose	The distribution of tents by the county shows how little "joint" effort is in the Joint office of Homeless Services. The distribution of tents only compounds the problem of homelessness in Portland, encouraging the many who are reluctant to go into shelters to remain outdoors, costing the city millions in clean up, and pitting residents against the campsites that so often breed crime, drugs and other issues for our neighborhoods. The county reasoning of severe weather protection does not hold up, tents do little to insulate those inside and more often than not lead to deadly fires and other incidents. Indoor shelters must be prioritized. The city should make the renewal of the Joint Office contingent on the county stopping the distribution of tents and tarps, without collaboration this office will never work and the distribution of tents and tarps shows that collaboration is not possible with the county's current approach to the problem.	No	06/19/24 8:19 AM
546	Mary Powell	Support with changes	Multnomah County must be banned from distributing more tents and tarps. The city is making progress making our streets safe and clean again. Multnomah County's \$250,000 budget to provide more tents and tarps is incentive for individuals who choose to live on the streets, aside roadways and in park and wooded areas, and it is fiscally irresponsible. The city and county have a mandate to provide a safe and clean community for all citizens. It is imperative that officials serve the majority of citizens in Portland and Multnomah County. The exodus of tax paying business and citizens is a threat to our future economic viability.	No	06/19/24 10:02 AM
546	Steven Rebischke	Oppose	NO on the Ordinance - UNLESS the Amendment is passed along with it.  My name is Steven Rebischke, I am a member of the ADA Lawsuit against the City.  The quarterly reports show that the city is complying with our settlement agreement. That should have been enough to keep all the sidewalks clear throughout the city.  But, the County is thwarting our settlement by continuing to add tents and tarps which the city, in turn, has to clean up.  Giving out tents and tarps is not only a colossal waste of taxpayer money, but it is inhumane because it encourages those who should come indoors to remain outdoors.  The city should require the county to have to adopt the same policy on tents and tarps that the city agreed to in the ADA settlement.	No	06/19/24 5:12 PM

June 12, 2024

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Portland City Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of HereTogether, a coalition of service providers, business leaders, and local experts dedicated to solving the homelessness crisis in the Portland region. We have closely reviewed the final Homelessness Response Action Plan (HRAP) and are encouraged by the incorporation of many of our recommendations. The plan reflects the community's input and commitment to addressing this critical issue.

We also want to voice our support for the Homelessness Response System Intergovernmental Agreement (HRS IGA). This agreement provides the legal framework and commitments necessary to implement the strategies and achieve the goals in the final HRAP. The alignment between these two documents demonstrates a unified approach to addressing homelessness in Multnomah County.

We commend the emphasis on collaboration through the establishment of a comprehensive governance structure, the focus on prevention with clear, actionable goals, and the commitment to continuous improvement and data-driven decision-making. These elements are crucial to the plan's success and demonstrate a proactive approach to tackling homelessness.

However, we must stress the urgent need for concrete action regarding fair compensation for service workers and contract reforms for nonprofit providers. While the HRAP acknowledges the importance of this issue, there is no sense of urgency. The time to act is now. The current system has several glaring flaws:

1. Unequal pay: Nonprofits are compensated differently for identical work. This blatant injustice demands swift correction.
2. Delayed reimbursement: Nonprofits often must underwrite the cost of delivering services, as reimbursement can take months.

In addition to addressing these issues, the final HRAP commits to adopting a continuous quality improvement (CQI) framework to drive enhanced performance and system transformation. This is a critical step, as a proven CQI framework will be essential for delivering improved operational performance and ensuring the plan remains dynamic and responsive to emerging needs and challenges. However, CQI must become an overarching strategy, not just a side project, to be truly effective. Elected officials and agency leaders must prioritize adopting this framework, training

personnel, and making continuous improvement an integral part of their operational playbook. Robust data and analytics will enable measuring progress and making timely adjustments. We strongly advocate that our region's leadership follow through on this CQI commitment. Doing so will be essential for meaningfully improving service delivery, driving system transformation, and achieving the plan's goals of reducing homelessness in our community.

The final HRAP represents a significant step forward in addressing homelessness in our community. The near-term goals, such as ending homelessness for youth aging out of foster care by 2027 and preventing discharges from hospitals and corrections to the streets by 2025 and 2026, among others, are ambitious but achievable. We appreciate the incorporation of our feedback and look forward to continued collaboration to ensure the plan's success.

As a community coalition-based watchdog, HereTogether will actively monitor the progress of these goals and provide regular updates to keep our coalition members and the public informed and engaged. We believe that everyone has a role to play in achieving these objectives and working toward a future where homelessness is rare and brief.

We urge you to adopt the final Homelessness Response Action Plan and the Homelessness Response System Intergovernmental Agreement, prioritize the implementation of fair compensation for service workers, and ensure the successful operationalization of the CQI framework. Together, we can significantly impact the lives of those experiencing homelessness in our community.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela Martin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Angela Martin

## Testimony of Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

Submitted to Portland City Council  
June 19, 2023

### Re: Agenda Item 546

### **Authorize Three-Year Homelessness Response System Intergovernmental Agreement with Multnomah County**

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I am a Portland resident, business owner, and nonprofit board member. **I urge you to vote note “no” on adopting the proposed Intergovernmental Agreement** between Multnomah County and the City of Portland (“2024 IGA”) governing the Joint Office of Homeless Services.

After carefully reviewing the existing 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement (“2016 IGA”) and the 2024 IGA, I believe the new agreement is not in the city’s and its residents’ best interests.

### **The City loses nearly all of its bargaining power under the 2024 IGA**

The 2024 IGA is a radical departure from the 2016 IGA. While the current IGA reflects a rough balance of power between the City and the County, the proposed 2024 IGA is almost entirely one-sided in favor of Multnomah County at the expense of the City, its voters, and its taxpayers.

- **Indemnification:** The 2016 IGA had mutual indemnification clauses where each party indemnified and held the other harmless. The 2024 IGA adds a new clause where both parties indemnify Metro, but the mutual indemnification between the City and County appears to have been removed. This puts more liability risk on the City.
- **Termination:** The 2016 IGA allowed either party to unilaterally terminate with 60 days notice with a “break-up” fee of only \$250,000. The 2024 IGA requires 90 days notice and obligates the terminating party to pay wind-down costs if they terminate because they failed to meet baseline funding. This penalizes the City more if it needs to terminate due to inability to fund at the required level. Even worse, the 2024 IGA obligates the City to take back and fund certain homeless service programs upon termination without a reciprocal obligation on the County. This locks the City into funding these programs even post-termination.

## **No accountability under the 2024 IGA**

More concerning is that the 2024 IGA does not include sufficient new accountability measures to improve the Joint Office's historically poor performance in reducing homelessness. While both agreements have reporting requirements and performance metrics, the 2024 IGA adds no new enforcement mechanisms or penalties if the Joint Office fails to meet its goals.

The proposed governance structure centers around advisory committees without real decision-making authority to drive needed changes if the Joint Office underperforms. Improved data collection requirements are a step in the right direction for assessing performance, but there are no provisions empowering the City to audit or investigate the Joint Office's activities. Only the County auditor has that ability. And, to make matters worse, the Multnomah County Commission has a history of subverting the County Auditor's Office from doing its job.

The 2024 IGA puts the City in a worse position—accepting more downside risk in terms of potential liability and obligations, without gaining any meaningful new control or oversight over the Joint Office's outcomes. The structural changes are unlikely to move the needle on performance without real enforcement teeth behind them.

## **No acknowledgment of the City's obligations under its ADA case settlement**

Last year, the City settled a lawsuit, *Tozer v. City of Portland*, filed by several disabled residents regarding homeless camps and debris denying residents access to public sidewalks. The lawsuit resulted in a settlement agreement with the City and now provides benefits for our neighbors with disabilities who can now navigate many city sidewalks. Since the settlement, many sidewalks have noticeably improved accessibility for all residents.

Nevertheless, the County's policy of widespread distribution of tents and tarps has frustrated the City's attempts to abide by its obligations under the settlement. In testimony before City Council, John DiLorenzo reported, "Since our settlement agreement last June, the Joint Office has distributed another 6,554 tents and 24,172 tarps. Certain groups and direct recipients have, in turn, placed these tents and tarps back on our sidewalks and neighborhood streets where the clean-up cycle repeats and millions more dollars are expended."

Under the terms of the 2024 IGA, the City will be obligated to fund the Joint Office, which will use some of that money to buy and distribute tents and tarps, only for the City to expend more funds to clear the tents and tarps from public sidewalks. At a

minimum, the 2024 IGA should require the County to pay its fair share of the cost of cleaning up the mess associated with its tent-and-tarp distribution policies.

Given the Joint Office's long history of underperformance in the face of our homelessness crisis, the City Council should demand an agreement that provides more balance between the parties and critically, real accountability for outcomes. Until that is achieved, **I strongly encourage you to vote "no" on adopting the 2024 IGA** in its current form.

Ideally, **the City should sever its relationship with the Joint Office altogether** and use the \$42 million it pays each year to the Joint Office to provide a more compassionate response—sheltering people rather than allowing them to languish on the streets.

Portland and its residents deserve better.

Respectfully submitted by,

Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

[eric.fruits@gmail.com](mailto:eric.fruits@gmail.com)

Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
12 546	Peggy McDaniel	Oppose	This IGA does not have enough detail of transition planning. I have been very involved in the GNA development and TASS oversight committee at the Clinton TASS. As neighbors, this plan seems very vague and the TASS has been very successful for the most part because of the city's management and allowed input and involvement by the neighborhoods. Without strong guidance, transparency, and forward thinking our local site will fail, as will others. Please vote no on this IGA until more community input is provided and agreed upon. Thank you	No	06/20/24 3:36 AM
13 546	Mark Booth	Oppose	Multnomah County, in spite of obvious public concern over its lack of proper attention to the crisis of homelessness and drug abuse, its waste of taxpayer dollars and its astonishing enabling of the root problems, continues to double-down on what is at best failed policy. The City, already a party to at least one lawsuit, should stand firm in its role in maintaining public safety and stewardship of tax dollars and Not authorize the continuation of this relationship without substantial changes and accountability by the County.	No	06/20/24 9:09 AM
14 546	Anonymous	Support	Mayor Wheeler and City Council members and esteemed colleagues,  It is my duty to testify on behalf of folks experiencing the incredible levels of systemic injustices and poverty based upon a predatory rental market within this city that has raised major concerns for the wellbeing of all of us over the past decade, we saw this coming and as people in the rental Industries have been allowed to boost the rental market revenues as a strategic platform over a decade ago.  You have seen the information I provided to you 2 years ago as I was undergoing this process after pandemic after an issue with governmental services formatting errors after harassment and intimidation from property rental management, and since then this issue has become exacerbated because the general public, while affected by the issues around systemic violence in this region are secondaries affected but rarely have the altruism to gather together to help their neighbors. As you know, \$52 dollars an hour or \$110K per year to live in Portland is incredulous.  We have allowed the tourism, rental and realty industries to kill our residents in mass numbers while also harming our region by instigating the fight between neighbors who could easily become homeless and seeking shelter themselves, and we have allowed it and nurtured that form of revenue.  I certainly hope we can find this a valid means of rehabilitation in a world where we continue to remove means of sustainability independence and true equality, as being discriminated against as a person is poverty is the easiest way to sweep our growing pains under the rug.  Be aware that the communication between professional workers and those needing services grows more crucial as all of our workers risk the potential of becoming homeless and experiencing disparities and if you want a healthy workforce, you need to house them.  Concentration camps of homeless people is a bad look for Portland and I thank you for your support.	No	06/20/24 9:58 AM
15 546	Anonymous	Oppose	I strongly oppose the City continuing to invest in JOHS. Taxpayers are tired of Multnomah County mismanagement and lack of oversight over JOHS it's a absolute train wreck. Revolving door nonprofit executive directors who have ties to local politics who make big money off letting this crises get worse. No outcomes, no KPIs, no central tracking system for clients and services. Just so disorganized is our local government.	No	06/21/24 6:46 AM



Agenda Item	Name or Organization	Position	Comments	Attachment	Created
16 588	Anonymous	Oppose	COP needs to sever all ties with the JOHS. They are NOT getting people off the cruel streets rather enabling inhumane street camping. Don't give them MORE money to make our community more inhumane and less livable.	No	06/24/24 11:33 AM
17 588	Jesse Cornett	Oppose	<p>Mayor Wheeler and Portland City Commissioners,</p> <p>As a candidate for Portland City Council, I haven't been speaking up on some of the issues before council that I don't agree with because frankly it doesn't seem like we would be fun to be in a role where 75 people who want your job constantly criticize you. This is intended less as a critique and more in the hopes I can change your thinking. It is a plea to stop making decisions that will bind the hands of the new city council.</p> <p>Over the past year the public who voted for such sweeping changes has seen you make decision after decision to add costs to what the new form will cost that neither the charter commission nor the voters ever intended. You are currently in the middle of negotiating a contract with the county over the operations of the Joint Office of Homeless Services. You've kicked the can down the road the past two years. I would encourage you to do the same for one more year.</p> <p>How the office is funded, how the partnership works, and who will run facilities on a lasting basis should not be decided by the outgoing City Council and Mayor with a soured relationship with the partners at the County. Frankly, the most frequent question I get on the campaign trail next to homelessness and addiction, is how this relationship can be improved. It must be but that cannot start until the new council takes over.</p> <p>I ask that you work toward a one-year agreement. Please leave rebuilding the relationship and the specifics of the JOHS contract to the new council.</p> <p>Thank you for your service to our city.</p>	No	06/25/24 9:56 AM
18 588	Anonymous	Oppose	The relationship with the county regarding homeless services has been a boondoggle for years. We've for years stated we are unhappy with direction. Listen to the voters and end the JOHS arrangement. The county isn't doing enough and Jessica Vega P is incompetent.	No	06/25/24 10:09 AM

Thursday, June 20, 2024 - 9:30 a.m.

Verbal Testimony

Agenda Item	Name
546	John DiLorenzo
546	Tiana Tozer
546	Cody Hermeling
546	Angela Todd
546	Loretta Guzman
546	Steve Jackson
546	Chris Kleronomos
546	Daniel DeMelo
546	Tiffany Hammer
546	Ted Pyle

Portland City Council Meeting  
Wednesday, June 26, 2024 - 9:30 a.m.  
Verbal Testimony

	Agenda Item	Name
1	588	Sharon Meieran
2	588	Jared Essig