

**Portland Children's Levy  
Allocation Committee Meeting Minutes  
October 17, 2023, 2:30 p.m.  
Location: City council Chambers – hybrid via Zoom**

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*The full record of the meeting may be viewed on the Portland Children's Investment Fund website: [www.portlandchildrenslevy.org](http://www.portlandchildrenslevy.org) or YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYaDybmR8v8>*

*For further detail, all are invited to reference the meeting video on YouTube, linked above.*

*All presentation slides are appended to these minutes.*

*There was a one hour delay in the meeting starting due to technical difficulties.*

**Attending:** Julia Brim-Edwards, Traci Rossi (virtual), Dan Ryan (Chair), Felicia Tripp (virtual)

**Welcome/introduction of Allocation Committee and Children's Levy staff**

**Minutes of June 13, 2023, meeting – approved without revision.**

**Presentation by Grantee Partners**

*Two grantee partners providing early childhood home visiting services provided reflections on service delivery.*

**Mariana Bonham** from Impact NW presented information about their early childhood program.

**Sara Bazan** from IRCO presented information about their early childhood program.

**Small Grants Renewal Decisions**

I will begin by giving you an overview. First, I wanted to review the steps that we took over the summer to reach these renewal recommendations. On June 13th, this body approved the renewal period and funding formula for the small grants. I will review that formula on the next slide. The fiscal review process wrapped up with the end of the fiscal year on June 30th and John will talk to you about that part of the process in one moment.

Fiscal Process for small grants:

The Children's Levy engaged the independent CPA firm, Merina & Co. to review the finances and financial processes of 6 of the 7 the SGF recipients. One grantee received such a small amount of funding that they were not required to participate in this process.

The goals of the review were:

- to understand the financial health and fiscal infrastructure of the SGF organizations.
- to help grantees understand their financial strengths and weaknesses;
- and to build capacity at grantee organizations. We have a long-term goal of helping the grantees be ready for a full financial statement audit.

Merina & Co staff reviewed internal documents and processes considering 10 metrics of financial health. These included:

- Review financial practices around accounts payable, accounts receivable and bank reconciliations.
- Review 3 years of financial statements, current budget, and financial forecasts.
- Review internal processes used to create 2 quarterly invoices and expense reports for PCL.

Overall, results were positive: 1 grantee with no concerns, 4 grantees with 1 minor concern, and 1 grantee with 4 minor concerns. There were no major concerns, and no concerns surfaced in the invoice/expense report preparation process for any grantees.

Merina made suggestions for improvements based on the individual reviews and will lead two training sessions for grantee financial staff: 1 on preparing for a financial statement audit and 1 on internal controls. Additional follow up is planned to address concerns that surfaced in the reviews.

Annual reports came in on July 31st, providing us with a second full year of data about program performance and spending. In August, staff reviewed the annual reports and held grantee meetings to clarify any data points in the report that may be needed, and to explain the steps in the renewal process to the grantees.

Once all of this was completed, we sent performance summaries to each of the grantees on September 11th so that they could provide written comment on the performance summaries if they wished to do so. Then, on September 15<sup>th</sup> we sent the renewal recommendation amounts out to the grantees with the opportunity to provide written comment. Two grantees provided comment on the performance summary, and one provided comment on the renewal recommendation. Both the performance summaries and renewal recommendations were transmitted along with the memo for this meeting.

The approved renewal period for the small grants is 2.5 years, ending on June 30 2026. This renewal period brings small grants into alignment with the same fiscal year as the large grants and accommodates running two separate funding rounds for large and small grants. First, large grants, starts in the fall of 2024, and then small grants in the fall of 2025.

This funding formula is consistent with the recent renewal of PCL’s large grants. Staff used the same approach of calculating up to renewal amounts for small grants using 40% of the 3-year grant total with a 4% COLA compounded each year to support inflation and staff retention.

Overall, data for the entire portfolio is positive. (Read first two data points on slide). Typically, we get outcome data for mentoring and afterschool programs from the Multnomah Educational School District. This allows us to get reliable data on behavior, attendance, and graduation outcomes which we can provide to grantees. We don’t have those data for the 2022-2023 school year yet, so we are only able to report on 7 of 10 outcomes right now. Grantees met 7 of 7 of the outcome goals that they were able to report on and that last year for the 2021-2022 they were able to meet 7 of 10 total goals.

Small Grants Grantees also set disability inclusion goals, typically 1-2 goals per year per grantee. In fiscal year 2023, there were 8 disability inclusion goals across the SGF portfolio. Goals could be marked as not started, in progress, or complete. 4 of the 8 were complete and 4 were in progress. It’s of note that sometimes the timelines for disability inclusion goals may have shifted over time. For example, when they created the grant contract a grantee may have thought that they would reach out to disability-led organizations first to form relationships and then revise the curriculum they were using with youth, but later realized that it was important to train the staff and revise the curriculum or program activities and then form relationships with disability-led organizations from a place of greater disability inclusion. This sometimes caused disability inclusion goals to be completed out of order so a goal for Year 3 may have actually been completed before a goal for Year 2 causing the Year 2 goal to still be marked as in progress.

**Staff Funding Recommendations**

<i><b>Organization</b></i>	<i><b>Program Area</b></i>	<i><b>Staff Recommendation</b></i>	<i><b>2.5 year Maximum</b></i>
<b>African Youth Community Organization (AYCO)</b>	Afterschool	Full Funding	<b>\$194,967</b>
<b>Camp Elso Incorporated</b>	Mentoring	Full Funding	<b>\$196,305</b>
<b>Portland Tennis and Education</b>	Mentoring	Full Funding	<b>\$196,305</b>
<b>Brown Girl Rise</b>	Mentoring	Full Funding	<b>\$62,162</b>
<b>Elevate Oregon</b>	Mentoring	Full Funding	<b>\$186,212</b>
<b>Ethiopian and Eritrean Cultural Resource Center (EECRC)</b>	Mentoring	Full Funding	<b>\$116,416</b>
<b>Urban Gleaners</b>	Hunger Relief	Full Funding	<b>\$138,216</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$1,090,583</b>

**Vote: All in Favor. The Committee voted unanimously to adopt the staff recommendations for renewed funding for the Small Grants Fund grantees.**

## Community Engagement Process Update

As discussed at the last Allocation Committee meeting, before beginning the next competitive funding process in FY2024-25, the Act that governs Levy operations requires that we create program area goals and strategies for funding that are informed by a community engagement process. The Act further requires that the engagement process include a range of engagement strategies such as surveys, focus groups, key stakeholder interviews and meetings open to the public.

In June, staff began looking for a contractor to lead a community engagement process. Staff also began conversations with City contracted Community Engagement Liaisons (CELs) with the goal of working with these liaisons to reach out to a large range of cultural/language groups that are often missed in public engagement processes. Staff interviewed three COBID-certified contractors to lead the community engagement process, and selected Camille Trummer to plan and implement the process over the next 6-7 months. Camille and her team have strong experience engaging with tribal and indigenous communities, Black and communities of color, youth and families. PCL's contract with Camille's team includes the following elements:

- Survey Design and Trans-Creation: Finalize draft survey for community members and trans-creating the survey in 6 languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Nepali, Russian, Ukrainian). Trans-creation includes native speakers working to assure that the meaning of survey questions is accurately conveyed into other languages rather than relying on word-for-word translation.
- Outreach and Survey Implementation: Create and host online and paper surveys for completion by community members, including community members engaged by Community Engagement Liaisons. Collect 250-300 surveys from community members in focus populations.
- Focus Groups: Conduct 8-10 focus groups.
- Interviews: Conduct up to 10 interviews with key stakeholders.
- Analyze Data and Report Results: Synthesize data collected from surveys, focus groups and interviews; report findings and make recommendations; report to the Community Council and Allocation Committee.

Staff has also finalized an agreement with the CELs to collect 300 surveys from the following language groups:

- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Karen/Burmese/Mon/Zomi/Rohingya
- Nepali

- Samoan/Chuukese/Mashallese/Tongan/Hawaiian
- Russian/Ukrainian
- Arabic
- Swahili/Amharic/Tigrinya/Sudanese
- Somali
- Lao/Hmong/Mien
- Khmer/Cambodian

CEs all speak English as well as at least one other language and are able to engage people in their community in their home language. They will assist community members in completing the survey, including providing oral interpretation of the questions for people who may not be literate in their home language. The lead contractor will analyze all survey results.

Staff will provide regular updates on progress as implementation moves forward.

### Community Council Update

Membership: Community Council met in September and welcomed two new members bringing total membership to 13. The two new members are Catherine Pedersen and Deian Salazar.

Community Engagement Process Update: At the meeting, staff reviewed Council's recommendations for goals, priority topics, and priority communities for PCL's Community Engagement process. Staff provided an update on the community engagement process including the timeline and information shared with the Allocation Committee above. Staff also outlined the Council's future work to use the results from community engagement to shape PCL's future funding priorities.

Funding Process Timeline and Input: Staff reviewed the overall timeline between now and July 1, 2025, and explained the 3 major steps to the funding process: application, review, and recommendations. Staff also provided background on past funding process feedback received by PCL including the goal to simplify the application. Council spent the rest of the meeting working in small groups to consider the following two questions related to the application stage of the funding process. Council input is summarized after the question.

What are the most important qualities of an organization that should receive PCL grants? Why?

1. Has a compelling mission statement.
2. Is the mission statement actionable? Does the community agree that the organization has the qualities we're looking for?
3. Is the staff and community they are serving representative of the mission? Do their values align with PCL values and with community served? What evidence/information do they offer to back this up?

4. Do they have data to back up their work? Is there an evaluation or self-evaluation process? Balance that against the fact that under-resourced communities often lack data and capacity to gather/report it; especially small and grassroots organizations; consider distrust of data among people of color due to historical abuse, misuse, and bias.
5. Organization seeks feedback, and shows they can grow from feedback. How do they course correct? How do they adapt and ensure they continually improve their model/program?
6. Demonstrates fiscal responsibility.

What important information is needed about the program (services) an applicant wants funded to decide whether to fund it?

1. Explanation of who will be served. What is the experience, and capacity of the organization to serve the focus populations?
2. The need for the project is demonstrated through narrative and quantitative data. How did the organization come to understand the community needs these services? What informed the choice to do those services?
3. What is the overall program plan? What does the program look like? What is the community outreach plan? What is the staffing plan/caseload and how does that connect to the budget?
4. Is this an expansion of current work or funding to continue work that is already happening? Is the program new?
5. How does the program create equitable outcomes? How do they define success? What impact is the program having? How do clients understand the impact? How do you engage with clients to understand whether your services have the intended impact? Does the program have an evaluation plan that includes reaching out to community members about service delivery overall?
6. Demonstrates how the program is culturally specific, responsive or relevant; prioritize groups that are doing work for specific communities.
7. Sense of fiscal responsibility: budget for project, organization budget.

Staff will use this feedback to begin drafting a funding application and criteria for Council to review at their November meeting.

**Next meeting is December 11 at City Council Chambers**

Adjourned 4:25 pm.