

**Legislative/Nominating
Committee Meeting 01.03.23
Agenda
January 3, 2023**



MEMBERS
Mayor Kate Snyder, Chair
Councilor April Fournier
Councilor Pious Ali
Councilor Regina Phillips

REMOTE ACCESS INFORMATION:

This meeting will be conducted remotely via Zoom pursuant to the Remote Meeting Policy adopted by the Portland City Council. Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience. If you are not able to attend live either in person or via Zoom, a recording will be available in the [Agenda Center](#) following the meeting.

For public comment via Zoom, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be unmuted by the host when it is time for public comment.

To join the meeting, click <https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/87377216395>

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Meeting minutes

- a. Draft minutes from the November 29, 2022 Meeting

III. Legislative Update

- a. Review of Legislative Priorities, adopted by Committee on September 20, 2022
- b. FYI: In-Progress General Assistance Legislation
- c. Recap of policy work by Maine Mayors' Coalition and Metro Regional Coalition (GPCOG) (Kate Snyder, Mayor)

IV. Other Business

- a. Discussion: 2023 Committee Work Plan

V. Adjournment

**Legislative/Nominating
Committee Minutes**
November 29, 2022



MEMBERS
Councilor April Fournier, Chair
Mayor Kate Snyder
Councilor Pious Ali

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I. Call to Order

Chair April Fournier called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM.

Councilor April Fournier (Chair), Councilor Pious Ali, Danielle West (Interim City Manager), Dena Libner (Chief of Staff), Senator Ben Chipman, Senator-Elect Jill Duson, Representative Rachel Talbot Ross, Representative Michael Brennan, Representative Sam Zager, Representative Ed Crockett, Representative Ben Collings, Representative-Elect Matt Moonen, Kate Knox (Bernstein Shur), and Chris Feeney (Bernstein Shur) were present. Mayor Kate Snyder was not present.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. Minutes from the November 1, 2022 Meeting

Councilor Pious Ali made a motion to Approve the minutes of the November 1, 2022 meeting, seconded by Councilor April Fournier, vote (2-0)

III. Delegation / Committee Topics of Discussion

a. Update on status of challenges related to asylee access to shelter/health services (City staff)

The Committee and Delegation discussed ongoing efforts to locate funding and resources from Federal and State sources to assist individuals needing assistance.

b. Review of proposed amendment to GA statute

Dena Libner provided an overview of this proposed amendment, which staff have reviewed and are generally supportive of. It is also being reviewed by the Maine Municipal Association's Legislative Policy Committee.

The Committee discussed the proposed amendment with input from Danielle West and the Portland Delegation.

IV. Other Business

The Committee and Delegation also discussed meeting prior to cloture to discuss any legislation that is important to the City.

a. HR 6707, H.R.6707 - Advancing Equality for Wabanaki Nations Act (Councilor April Fournier, Chair)

Councilor April Fournier expressed an interest in asking the full Council to support this legislation. Chair Fournier also asked the Delegation if they would be interested in supporting this legislation.

The Committee agreed to propose sending a resolution to the full council. The Delegation will discuss this further as well.

V. Adjournment

Councilor Pious Ali made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor April Fournier, vote (2-0)

City of Portland | Executive Department

Danielle West, *Interim City Manager*



To: Legislative/Nominating Committee

From: Dena Libner, Chief of Staff

Date: September 26, 2022

Re: 2022 Legislative Priorities

The following recommendations were developed by staff, and reviewed by the Council's Legislative/Nominating Committee on September 20, 2022. The items on this list represent the shared priorities of both staff and Committee members.

As always, the Legislative/Nominating Committee and City staff intend to provide regular feedback on proposed legislation during the session, once it is released by the Office of the Revisor of Statutes.

- **Local Option Sales Tax**

Approximately 38 states allow for the collection of local sales taxes. Arguments in favor of this – other than creating alternative sources of revenue to support a growing demand for municipal services and oversight – include the relative transparency of retail sales taxes to members of the public.

In 2019, the Legislature considered LD 1110, which sought to allow “a municipality to impose a local option sales tax if approved by referendum of the voters in that municipality.” This proposal died in the Committee on Taxation.

- **General Assistance**

- **Amending General Assistance Statute to Clarify Municipality of Responsibility**

There is staff interest in addressing the requirements surrounding “municipality of responsibility.” We recommend a thorough review of the statute in order to better balance responsibility among municipalities and make support more regional in nature.

- **Establish Department of Refugee/Asylum-Seeker/Resettlement Services**

We recommend that this Department be charged with strategically connecting this population to services and housing, as well as the administration of any programs that serve the purpose of GA for this specific population. We also believe this

Department would be a natural home for a centralized GA application process (see below).

The creation of a centralized administrator is key to moving forward on these issues. The services required by this population are unique, and cannot be accomplished effectively within the current shelter system.

- **Establish Centralized GA Application Intake Process**

The current process contributes to a dysfunctional system that leaves individuals underserved, and some municipalities overburdened. Centralizing the GA application intake and review process may help ensure the program is administered more fairly across the state.

- **Increasing the General Assistance Reimbursement Rate**

Staff recognize legislators' hard work in pursuing increases to the reimbursement rate for general assistance costs. In 2021/2022, Rep. Brennan sponsored LD 910, which originally sought a 90% reimbursement rate for municipal GA costs; the chaptered law included a one-time expenditure of \$10 million toward unanticipated fiscal and operational costs, distributed proportionally to municipalities.

Staff strongly support the reconsideration of the original language of LD 910. In the absence of any additional funding, Portland faces a \$10 million annual budget gap.

- **Funding for the Portland Harbor Dredge Project**

Rep. Michael Brennan has been a committed advocate for this project, and we are grateful for his leadership in securing \$10 million toward its completion. Given the economic importance of this project to the City, region, and State, staff feel it is important to continue to advocate for the additional funding needed to undertake this project. (Currently, there is an \$8 million gap in funding.)

Legislative/Nominating Committee 2022 WORK PLAN -DRAFT

Committee Goals

My hope for this committee this year is to have close collaboration with the state delegation to help align our actions locally and at the state, have good conversations around how we can best support each other, and ensure our meetings are productive and efficient for all of us.

- Review Committee goals in context of Council goals (I have listed my priorities based on discussion with council members and our council goal setting workshop)
 - Housing
 - Homelessness
 - Public Safety
 - Racial Equity
 - ARPA Funding
 - Pandemic Response
 - Refugee/Asylee Support
- Review interview questions and process for nominating activities
 - Kathy has reviewed all board and committee interview questions and will begin outreach to chairs on reducing questions to 3 the nominating committee will ask during interviews.
 - Kathy has outlined nomination and interview timelines to help with crafting our annual workplan and help us prepare well ahead of time in setting aside time for interviews and ensuring good public notice and outreach.
- Revise City of Portland website to reflect process and timing regarding all Boards and Committees
 - Would like to explore this further with Kathy and Jessica Grondin on what's coming up for the city website
- Develop strategy to engage and collaborate with Portland delegation to Augusta
 - Conversations have begun with how we best collaborate. Considering more frequent meetings at the beginning of the session and exploring an in-person outside coffee/breakfast event to work on relationship building
- Finetune work plan / communications / organizational process re: nominating work
 - Would like a procedure documented for how the nominations process works,

roles and responsibilities, timelines and best practices to prepare for the transition of this work when Kathy retires.

- Establishing support and focus of City Clerk, City Manager, and Corporation Counsel
 - Clarifying roles and responsibilities for who is involved with which activity this committee works on
- Connect with policy stakeholders (Portland delegation, school board)
 - Would like to amend this to more focus on creating or refining procedure which the legislative portion of the committee review a policy position, craft testimony, testify, submit testimony and work with the city staff to ensure we are not contradicting each other on behalf of the city. How do we ensure that the city is speaking with one unified voice?

Committee Activity by Quarter (this looks ok, we can review in committee)

Q1 (January through March)

- Review State legislation and plan any priorities for testimony
 - Plan council/delegation coffee/breakfast, need outside location with heaters and masking required
- Review/interview applicants to boards/commissions (Jan call for noms/Feb interviews)
 - Consider how to diversify the committees and boards, what type of outreach to community groups is possible to explain what these positions do?
- Review nominating work scheduling and process (begin work on procedure documentation)
- Ensuring legislative priorities align with Council goals (bi-weekly or 2x/month meetings during this quarter)
- Is there a potential to meet or invite congressional delegation to join and talk about their work, hear our priorities and just build relationships?

Q2 (April through June)

- Special Election for school board & school budget elections in June
- Any open board/commission seats and nominating work (are there any openings that we need to interview for mid-year or can we plan for winter and fall interviews and appointments?)
- Committee meets with City Clerk to plan nomination work process
 - Kathy will be retiring (and we will miss her!!!), what do we need to know, document, clarify, or complete before she is done?

Q3 (July through September)

- Committee meets with City Clerk to plan nomination outreach process

Q4 (October through December)

- New clerk or Interim Clerk onboarding

Q4 (Oct-December)

- Staff develop State priorities memo for Committee review (November)
- Committee requests councilors' input on State/Federal priorities (November)
 - Should we have a specific invite to the council to attend a special meeting to review staff priorities and add any council priorities
- Staff develop Federal priorities memo for Committee review
 - We have not had much engagement with our congressional delegation. Can we explore this, but look at Q1 or Q2 engagement