

**Minutes**

**Remote Housing and Economic Development Committee**

**October 7, 2025**

**NOTE: This meeting was held via Zoom and can be viewed at this link:**

**<https://portlandme.portal.civicclerk.com/event/8321/media>. These Minutes provide a record of those in attendance, general discussion taking place, and motions made.**

A remote meeting of the Housing and Economic Development Committee (HEDC) of the Portland City Council was held on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. Present from the HEDC were Chair Pious Ali, and members, Sarah Michniewicz, and Kate Sykes. Also present were City Council members Mayor, Mark Dion, Anna Bullett and Wesley Pelletier. Present from the City staff were Housing and Economic Development Department Director Greg Watson, Housing and Community Development Division Director Mary Davis, Corporation Counsel Michael Goldman, Assistant City Manager Dena Libner, Parks and Recreation Department Director, Ethan Hipple, and Director of Public Assemblies Division, Andy Downs.

Chair Ali experienced technical difficulties and asked Mayor Dion to Chair the meeting.

**Item #1: Public Hearing: Review and recommendation to City Council Agreement for 2026 Back Cove Festival**

Director Hipple introduced the item and outlined the revisions made as a result of guidance received from Committee members during the meeting on September 23, 2025. Revisions include an increase to the escalating fee schedule, organizers hosting two neighborhood meetings each year (60 days prior and 90 days post event), provision of financial

records to verify accuracy of payments to the City and agreement by the organizer not to transfer or assign contract rights.

Mayor Dion opened the item to questions from Committee members. Councilor Sykes inquired about how the engagement with the community would work; it should be proactive and include the community in planning. Councilor Michniewicz asked about the no transfer clause without prior city manager approval and suggested that be changed to without prior city council approval and also expressed concerns about the noise fee. Councilor Sykes also inquired about the ticket fee and suggested that include not only tickets sold by comped or donated tickets; also suggested that the financial records should include a full audit of each type of ticket (sold, comped, donated, etc.). Councilor Bullett mentioned receiving lots of positive feedback and was concerned that councilors should not stray into the operational aspects of the agreement. Councilor Bullett also raised concerns about seeking monetary compensation for comped or donated tickets which could result in fewer ticket donations being made available to the community. Councilor Pelletier indicated he was happy with where the contract is at now, heard a lot of positive feedback regarding the festival and doesn't want disincentive donated tickets. Councilor Sykes indicated she is looking for more transparency about where the comped tickets are going and that staff should not be receiving comped tickets.

In response to Councilor Michniewicz's concern regarding the noise deposit, Mr. Downs indicated the fee is determined by city ordinance and he believes the promoter responded quickly to any noise concerns that were raised during the festival.

After continued committee discussion on the above mentioned topics, Mayor Dion opened the item to public comment.

Devin Green talked about her concerns and the concerns of the Friends of Payson Park which have been shared with the council. While there may have been a lot of positive feedback, there has also been negative comments too. Ms. Green believes full transparency by the promoter concerning finances is important and the city should be making a better deal on the revenue share model. Ms. Green also indicated that there needs to be more community engagement by the promoter.

Seeing no other public comment, Mayor Dion closed the public comment period.

Councilor Michniewicz made a motion to refer the item to the City Council which was seconded by Councilor Ali. Councilor Sykes made a motion to amend the agreement to a 1 year term; seconded by Councilor Michniewicz. After a lengthy discussion regarding how to move forward, both motions were withdrawn. Councilor Sykes made a motion to postpone action to a Housing and Economic Development Committee meeting to be scheduled for the week of October 13th; motion was seconded by Councilor Michniewicz and approved by a 3-0 vote of the committee.

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Sykes, seconded by Councilor Michniewicz and approved by 2-0 vote (Councilor Ali exited the meeting prior to the motion). Meeting was adjourned at 7:09 pm.

A followup meeting will be scheduled for next week on this same item.

Respectively submitted, Mary Davis