

East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) Civic Engagement Subcommittee Meeting

December 19, 2017

Meeting began at 6:30pm.

Purpose:	To organize cultural + language specific civic engagement workshops, share curriculum, advocate for ongoing funding, and advise on East Portland cultural + language specific issues and projects.
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Attendees: lore wintergreen, Zinha Mudhafar, Adriana Govea, Layla Assem, Humberto Marquez, Victor Salinas, Galina Nekrasova, Andrea Valderrama and Natalya Sobolevskaya.

Layla welcomed everyone and each attendee introduced themselves.

Next month's (January 16th) meeting:

Facilitator: Layla

Notes: Humberto

Food: Zinah

General EPAP Report: ???

Next month Adriana and Victor will be at the Office of Neighborhood Involvement Budget Advisory Committee down town.

Priority E: Engage ethnic communities in neighborhood activities; provide overhead funding for translation/language services and childcare services to remove barriers and improve messaging and invitations.

Andrea spoke about the Mayor's support for this overhead funding mechanism. He sees it as an equity issue. She is the Mayor's liaison on establishing the overhead funding model with the Office of Equity and Human Rights as the bureau providing administration. She projects that the commitment from each bureau will be near .5% of each budget. This is to be targeted at providing childcare, translation, and interpretation.

Natalya emphasized that it is important to use some of the money to make sure that people are informed that the services are available and how to access these services. This does NOT mean to hire new outreach people, just to include this responsibility in to the job description of existing outreach employees.

Andrea thought that perhaps this could be added by City Human Resource (HR) to staff job descriptions. Perhaps Andrea can arrange for HR to come to the Civic Engagement Subcommittee to better understand the suggestions.

Will this fund be available at the beginning of the 2018 – 19 Fiscal Year? Andreas says we should know in a few weeks. Hopefully by our next Civic Engagement meeting.

Is there a way to ask for more? Always ask for more, but it looks like you may get your original suggestion of .5%.

Will this be voted upon? Each bureau submits their own budget and the Mayor makes a budget recommendation. He can instruct the to include .5% for the overhead funding of the accessibility fund in their budget requests.

EPAP needs to advocate with other offices and City Council members. We can make calls, have meetings, and help people send postcards to support the work Andrea is doing with the Mayor. It always helps to have EPAP members provide testimony at town halls, either spoken or written.

The Mayor was happy to see this brought to his attention and he makes the final decisions on the budget. Andrea will also start talking with the other offices, as he would like their support, but he makes the final budget decisions.

EPAP Civic Engagement Grant Project Sharing:

Zinah – The Iraqi Society applied for an EPAP grant this year. They do not yet know if it is funded.

Galina – It is hard to get grants. In 2016, the Slavic Festival did not get an EPAP Civic Engagement grant, but did get a \$5,000 EPAP General grant. They also got an \$800 grant from the East Portland Neighborhood Office. She is a leader with the Slavic Festival and has experience and knowledge of how to prepare for the event.

In 2017 the Slavic Festival did get an EPAP Civic Engagement grant for \$13,828, so they could invite more professional performers and have performances all day and night. They rented a wonderful stage that included a light show. This increased the influx of youth to the event in the park. They had a rock group: “Freeway” and showed two movies (one each night).

In the daytime, they focused on working and playing with children aged 5 – 12 (over 80 children). Russian librarians offered various types of activities: on the stage and under the trees. Children were involved all the time.

There was also a lot of sport events during the day: 34 volleyball teams, including teams from California, Washington, and Nevada.

The Slavic community has recognized the festival as part of their life here. Even when the festival was over, people came by to say: “Let’s prepare for the next festival.” People look forward to the festival, where they can really relax and be with community comfortably.

Honestly, it takes a whole year to prepare. There is a Slavic Festival board. Galina goes around to involve different groups from the community and to have them contribute what they each can do. The community doesn’t pay for the stage or entertainment, but they work together to make it all come together.

Adriana – She is from a group called “Ambassadors” at Earl Boyles. The group includes people who speak Vietnamese, Cantonese, and Spanish. They are looking to expand and to include people who speak Somali, Russian, and Arabic.

They held a festival on July 22nd. They are putting on a festival for about 500 people. The festival will include a health fair. They have not budget,

everything comes for the organizers own pockets. They realize that they need to apply for a grant. She thanked everyone, because now she understands that they can get help.

Victor gave her a copy of the East Portland Neighborhood Office grant application and invited Surya, from EPNO, to explain: This “Community Building and Advocacy Grant” is due on January 12, 2018 at 5 pm. The criteria are explained on pages 4 & 5 of the application. They have \$24,600 total available and are giving small grants from \$300 - \$3,500.

Advocacy to establish the ability for minor traffic violations to allow for skyped attendance, as a protective factor for City/County sanctuary commitment. How do you think this could be done?

Recommendation that traffic court let people skype with the court from their home computers.

Library's will be no safer than the court room.

Important to keep this low-tech, as ICE could get the home computer IP address and arrest people that way. Telephoning the court could be safer.

The question is whether the court would allow this.

We need some organization to represent this.

If we agree, maybe we can ask our EPAP Advocate (lore), to see if the court would allow phone calls for minor traffic violations.

It is not the job of the Advocate to do the research, but to support the community to learn how and to do the research.

We need professional experts to give us more information.

People can already plead guilty to small traffic violations and respond to the ticket with payment and a letter requesting that the fine be reduced.

Why are we talking about this?

People in the community are undocumented, they cannot get a driver's license, and thus when stopped for a minor traffic violation, they get an additional ticket for driving without a license. When they come to court, ICE can be waiting to arrest and deport them, taking them from their family.

The issue of homecare workers regularly needing background checks with finger prints was raised. When these background checks are done, the care givers may not be able to renew their work license. They don't even know why. We will discuss this further in the future.

ACTION: Victor said that he will do the research about phoning into the court and will report back to the February Civic Engagement meeting. He may invite State Representative Diego Hernandez to speak on this topic.

Next Meeting:

January 16, 2018
6:30 – 8:30 PM
East Portland Action Plan office
1017 NE 117th Ave.