



AGENDA

GOVERNANCE GROUP

June 23, 2021 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Facilitator</u>
11:30	Welcome	Michael Brown
11:35	Grounding Moment	Michael
11:40	Consent Agenda <i>Objectives: review and approve the June 23 agenda and May 21 Meeting notes</i>	Michael
11:45	COO Governance 2.0: Discussion and decision <i>Objectives: Review proposed changes to Governance Group structure. Reach consensus on proposed recommendations to Best Starts for required Governance Report to Council and for required legislative changes.</i>	Marguerite Ro
12:40	Staff Updates <i>Objectives: Highlight issue of interest and follow-up actions</i>	Andrea Akita, Blishda Lacet, Aaron Robertson
12:50	Announcements	All
12:55	Adjourn	

Governance Group Members

Lydia Assefa-Dawson
Michael Brown
Vazaskia Crockrell
Deanna Dawson

Ubax Gardheere
Matelita Jackson
Paola Maranan
Jenn Ramirez Robson
Yordanos Teferi

Marguerite Ro
Sili Savusa
Tony To
AJ McClure

COMMUNITIES OF OPPORTUNITY GOVERNANCE FOUNDING

RESULTS STATEMENT

Create greater health, social, economic, and racial equity in King County so that all people thrive and prosper, regardless of race or place.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Consistently demonstrate the values of equity, respect, and partnership.
- Ensure low-income communities and communities of color affected by inequities develop and own the solutions.
- Advocate for and change institutional policies and processes to support equity goals.
- Encourage investments (both funding and in-kind resources) in long-term community capacity building and in systems, policy and practice changes that lead to greater racial and economic equity throughout King County.
- Catalyze alignment of funding streams and partner across issues and sectors to seek preventive strategies that address root causes of today's inequities.
- Be transparent and show how data and community expertise inform initiative strategies.
- Continuously learn, improve, and share work publicly.
- Focus on geographic communities with the greatest needs, while simultaneously sharing lessons learned and building relationships across King County – *We are one King County.*

VALUES

We commit to guide Communities of Opportunity using these values:

Equity: work intentionally to eliminate racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and geographic disparities in health and well-being

Process Equity: an inclusive, fair, and open process

Community Engagement: authentic community engagement that involves listening to and understanding the unique histories of communities

Driven by quantitative and qualitative data: Data will track and report progress, as well as support given for promising and evidence-based practices

Innovation: Recognize that change involves risk and value an adaptive approach that views failure as an important part of the learning process

DECISION MEMO: *Communities of Opportunity Best Starts for Kids Advisory Board*

Communities of Opportunity Governance Group Meeting – June 23, 2021

Governance Group Action Needed: Consensus approval for Governance Group proposed changes on composition, structure of the *Communities of Opportunity Best Starts for Kids Levy Advisory Board* (“Advisory Board”).

The Governance Group meeting on June 23rd will be dedicated to discussion and decision of recommendations for changes to sections of the King County Code and applicable ordinances that describe the composition and duties of COO Advisory Board.

Proposal for Governance Group consideration: Staff recommend making the following changes to the existing Advisory Group structure (outlined in [King County code](#)). Rationale for these changes come from feedback and discussion with Governance Group members (described on page 3).

1. **Increase number of members to 19 minimum, 24 maximum.** Establish directive that a majority of members are representative of community. Currently the board is 14 minimum, 18 maximum.

Add members (a) through (d), specifying:

- (a) 2 members representative of systems and policy change entities.*
- (b) 2 members representative of learning community representative.*
- (c) 1 non-voting member, the Initiative Director as representative of staff implementation team
- (d) 4 general members representative of COO result area: one member from each sector of affordable housing, health, economic prosperity, and civic engagement/community connection.

The members (a) through (d) would be in addition to the *existing composition*:

- (e) At least 20% who reflect demographic characteristics of communities that qualify for funding and who are grassroots organizers or activists in such communities and who live or have worked in such communities.
- (f) At least 2 members designated by entities that have been awarded COO funding for geographic or cultural community-based partnerships.*
- (g) 1 member appointed by King County Executive
- (h) 1 member appointed by County Council
- (i) 2 members appointed by Seattle Foundation

2. **Term limits would remain unchanged:**

- Members appointed by county and Seattle Foundation each serve until replaced by a new appointee.
- *Community representatives for geographic/cultural community partnerships, systems and policy change, and learning community, would hold terms of at least one year and no more than three years.
- All other board members shall have three-year terms that may only be renewed one time.

3. **Add: All board members possess commitment to dismantling racism, have respect for community wisdom and agency.**

Emphasize: **Membership will reflect lived experience and deep connection to communities with whom COO partners.**

The above, will be in addition to current requirements that all members possess:

- specific context or content experience related to improving health and well-being outcomes in communities with the greatest need for improvement
- a commitment to the principles of equity and social justice
- a commitment to evaluate and make potential decisions through the equity and social justice lens

Members shall reflect the diversity in King County and shall reflect a range of backgrounds, including living in or working in affected communities, working in a community-based organization, nonprofit agency, intermediary organization, business, or institution. And members will have experience in the relevant subject matter areas of housing, health, social and community connection or economic prosperity.

Questions to consider:

- Does the proposed, mandatory structure encourage diversity of perspectives needed to successfully guide COO in the future? What other mechanisms may be needed to be put into place to ensure success of governance?
- Do you support the proposed increase in number of members and composition, as proposed?
- If not, what's missing? What would you proposed to change?

BACKGROUND

The King County Executive will transmit the *Best Starts for Kids Governance Update Report* to Council on October 1, 2021 as mandated in Section 6 of [Ordinance 19267](#) placing the Best Start for Kids Levy on the ballot.

History: In 2014, the Seattle Foundation and King County were each laying the groundwork to address economic and racial inequities through place-based work and systemic change. Rather than proceeding on independent tracks, King County and the Seattle Foundation came together to create COO. With the passage of the Best Starts Levy, COO joined the portfolio of Best Starts investments.

COO is governed by a group which includes members who are representative of communities most impacted by systemic inequities, the Seattle Foundation, and the County. The predecessor to the COO Governance Group, the "Interim Governance Group," were the architects of the current governing group and set the stage for the creation of the Advisory Board, when the Best Starts was approved by voters. The COO Best Starts Advisory Board has a County mandate to provide oversight and make funding decisions regarding Best Starts COO investments.ⁱ

The structure of the Advisory Board and its duties were adopted by Ordinance in 2016 and added to [King County Code, Section 2A.300.520](#). *It is important to note that should the Levy renewal fail, the "COO Best Starts for Kids Advisory Board" will not exist beyond December 31, 2021.*

GG Input in proposed changes to King County code for Governance 2.0: In May and June 2021, GG members are discussing and making recommendations to the Executive. Input from the GG members from May 17 working group session and [May 21 GG Meeting](#) included:

- **The size and composition of the board constrains decision-making processes**, particularly when members need to recuse themselves, due to potential conflict of interest related to funded strategies or program activities.
- **The composition of the board does not reflect a diversity of COO representative groups.** Funded community-based partnerships collectives for geographic or cultural communities are currently the only “representative groups” that hold dedicated seats on the board.
- **More clarity on roles and expectations for Governance Group members is needed**, particularly with regard to accountability, authority, and individual responsibilities as ‘representatives’ of particular groups or sectors.
- Board members should possess **commitment to dismantling racism**, eagerness to assess and rebuild processes so that they are anti-racist and racially equitable.
- Members should possess **commitment to systems and policy change** as mechanism for sustainable, long-term change
- Importance of members’ understanding of intersectional work, **system knowledge, and sector expertise** in affordable housing, health, economic opportunity.

This feedback has been incorporated into the proposed changes which would represent formal recommendations to the Executive. Staff are taking additional input provided to support the GG with on-going board development, member outreach and engagement, community building, and the redefining and clarification of roles and expectations for both GG and staff.

Note: the terms “Governance Group” and “Advisory Board” are used interchangeably at times. The members of the Governance Group also serve as the COO Best Starts for Kids levy advisory board. The COO Advisory Board is a term used to describe the body created by King County Ordinance, with specific responsibilities for Best Starts for Kids levy revenue dedicated to Communities of Opportunity strategies. The Governance Group is a term used to describe a body with broader responsibilities to the overall COO Initiative, in part through its partnership with King County, but also through its relationship with Seattle Foundation, with responsibilities for guiding funding private resources dedicated to COO strategies and activities.

2_Governance Group Meeting Notes

May 21, 2021

via Zoom

Attendees

Governance Group Members: Lydia Assefa-Dawson, Marguerite Ro, Sili Savusa, Yordanos Teferi, Tony To

Staff: Andrea Akita, Dan Bernard, Kalayaan (Kai) Domingo, Cristina Gonzalez, Whitney Johnson, Blishda Lacet, Jose Camacho Martinez, Aaron Robertson

Facilitator: Alessandra Zielinski Notetaker: Valerie Garza

After **grounding and equity moment breakout** groups, Andrea provided a **recap of the Governance Group (GG) retreat**: hearing loud and clear for participating in tough conversations, importance of relationships we hold, and the vision for what our County can be. She acknowledged needs for initiative and consistent follow-up with actions around unresolved conflict for our group, as whole. With regard to specific conversations about conflict between two partner organizations and potential for legal action between parties, Andrea stated that as a policy, GG and COO would not discuss the issue further in any public meeting or COO-sponsored event. This general rule would apply for any groups where there is known or pending legal action.

Because of what we heard about the importance of having ways to deal with conflict, staff has been working with Vision Change Win (VCW) to develop workshops for Governance Group, COO consultants, staff, and for partners to be introduced to concepts and tools for generative conflict. GG members are encouraged to attend June workshops where foundational framework that COO stakeholders can all share. The VCW workshops are a next step in helping to strengthen the skill set and working towards processes for accountability.

Discussion: The announcement regarding conversations on specific conflict issues felt abrupt to some. The issue of addressing accountability to issues that are brought to GG was raised. Marguerite offered to work with members interested in holding space to talk through issues and questions around conflict resolution and accountability.

Best Starts Implementation Plan 2.0-

Andrea reviewed the GG **decisions on recommendations for implementation of COO strategies**, should voters approve the renewal for Best Starts.

- There will be open Request for Proposal processes in mid-2022 in which current partnerships and organizations and new applicants may apply for a multi-year commitment of funding, beginning January 2023. There will not be any new awards until 2023; this time will provide opportunity for focus on: existing funded partnerships, increase ability to align funding, and take lessons learned and apply that strategic thinking.

Specific to PBCC is prioritizing funding by socioeconomic and racial inequities where there is a confluence of indicators. Data continues to guide decisions and we acknowledge there may be limitations for isolated rural and identity-based communities.

- There are 20 current systems and policy grantee organizations that would be eligible for extension awards through December 2022. This cohort was awarded multi-year funding (2020-2022, pending funding availability). This does not include the COVID19 resiliency grantees and Black-led partnerships awarded one-year funding awards last year.
- The existing nine place-based and cultural community partnerships are eligible for contract extensions and may submit a proposal for one-year of renewed funding, January through December 2022.

COO strategy area funding

Staff proposed revised percentages for funding of COO strategy areas, based on feedback from the GG (shown at right).

Best Starts – COO Current Strategy	% of total	Proposed	Implementation Plan original estimate
Place-based and Cultural Community Partnerships	57%	40% to 45%	40% to 50%
Institutional, Systems & Policy Change	27%	35% to 40%	25% to 35%
Learning Community	17%	15% to 20%	15% to 25%

As starting points, percentages

were applied to the \$39M dollar amount; the projected amount for COO is estimated.

Discussion:

- During 2020, COO made funding available for Systems and Policy through COVID19 resiliency grants and to change through partnerships led by black organizations. These awards were for one-year funding and were not included in the extension eligibility. There were significant dollars pulled from the Learning Community funding strategy to do make these and COVID19 grant awards possible.
- GG members asked if there were ways to extend funding for black-led organizations. COO staff will review options for continuing funding.
- The question of whether there could be other (non-Best Starts) resources that could be aligned or leveraged. The Executive’s Office and County Council is looking to identify federal funds available; with all needs across County, funding is oversubscribed. Multiple strategies that are overlapping with the intent of supporting our Black, Latinx, and Pacific Islander, and other communities.
- Federal funds are not low barrier resources. The County wants to be pro-equity, yet federal restrictions and requirements on funding are pulling the other way.
 - Place-based and cultural community percentage allocation should be increased.
 - Learning Community, particularly resources for research and pilots like Commercial Affordability, are important and shouldn’t be reduced.
 - One of the challenges is the intersections in the work and how the people interpret the focus of the strategies. For example, there are systems & policy change awardees whose work is based in culturally based communities, as well as in place-based communities; furthermore, these awardees are also operating as partnerships or coalition groups.
 - Staff proposal is designed to move toward greater alignment and connection with the systems/policy change and place/cultural community work.

- A GG member pointed out that there is a math problem with allocations. Essentially, there is less money to do the same work, let alone more to fund new groups. Unless more funding is identified only can continue to fund what is currently being funded. There are also other needs that haven't been addressed in over seven years.
- It is in the best interest to determine how GG wants to see allocation to the strategy areas, otherwise there is a risk that allocations will be determined for COO.
- Identify need for additional funds to be allocated to PBCC South King County sites.
- If the levy is not renewed, funding will not be available from King County, there may be funding available from the Seattle Foundation.
- Governance Group requested revised numbers based on feedback given.

Future of COO Governance:

King County Executive will transmit a Best Starts Governance Update Report for CYAB and COO in October, which will include recommendations for any changes to the composition and structure of these governance boards that will be outlined by Ordinance to update the King County Charter. Staff need to draft a report with recommendations from the GG by the end of June. The Vets, Seniors, Human Service levy board and [governance report](#) is being as example for the Best Starts' report.

Marguerite reviewed initial feedback gathered from GG members who participated in a workgroup session last week. She walked through [slides](#) highlighting current code and potential changes to the code for: (a) member composition; (b) expertise and values that board members shall possess; and (c) representation of members.

In comparison to CYAB's 40 members, COO has a small governance group, 18 maximum members. Through a formal recommendation, the group can indicate what changes they want to propose.

Group Discussion: Governance Group recommends formalizing values related to community leadership (i.e., community wisdom and agency, lived experience, majority of members are from community and reflect diverse perspectives. Distinguish between the members representative of geographic and cultural communities in the member composition.

GG will issue a formal recommendation.

3_ Staff Report to Governance Group: June 23, 2021

I. VISION CHANGE WIN WORKSHOPS - UPDATE

The Generative Conflict workshops originally scheduled for June with Governance Group, as well as the Vision Change Win (VCW), cohort with COO partnerships were postponed. *Rainier Valley, Replanting Roots-Rebuilding Community, Seattle Urban Native Nonprofits and, Snoqualmie Valley-A Supportive Community for All* were participating in the cohort learning sessions.

The decision to postpone came after VCW team asked to meet with COO staff to gain a better understanding of the dynamics working with COO partners. The VCW facilitators were picking up on tension with some cohort participants. VCW realized that more work was needed to create a more cohesive group. VCW felt that before the cohort could truly benefit from the training workshops, the group needed to move through existing conflict and increase communication.

COO's team also determined that our staff needed to be more engaged in the process and make sure the facilitators would be setup for success. VCW expressed that pausing the workshops to meet the needs of the cohort participants is modeling the concept of a generative response.

In order to create a more successful learning environment, VCW and COO are initiating:

- Drop-in Sessions: A voluntary drop-in information session was set up, providing an opportunity for cohort participants to gain clarity about the purpose of the COO Generative Conflict Cohort, ask questions, and connect with COO staff around COO's vision for cohort's experience. COO staff will offer more Drop-in information sessions as needed.
- Conduct more intensive assessments with cohort participants: The four COO cohort partnerships will complete a more detailed assessment survey. The survey results will provide VCW facilitators with information about the partnership's current baseline knowledge of the Generative Conflict topics and allow VCW to realign content as necessary.
- Set up meeting times with each partnership: After reviewing the assessment survey, VCW will meet with the partnerships to discuss the results of the assessment and The VCW facilitators will also determine other underlying factors that are relevant to the success of the program.
- Schedule and facilitate redesigned sessions: Once VCW team redesign the sessions to meet the needs of the participants and ensure participants are clear on expectations, they hope to resume the cohort next month (July 2021).

In the meantime, VCW will continue to work with COO staff on understanding key concepts as well as on planning out next steps. With the modification currently taking place, the COO Governance Group cohort will postpone until early 2022. However, COO staff will continue to update GG members on the progress of the cohort as well as lessons learned and recommendations for next steps.

II. COO SPEAKER SERIES

Communities of Opportunity is excited to announce our six-part ["Cultivating Community" Speaker Series!](#) The Speaker Series is designed to amplify and learn from the efforts of our community-driven partners. Journey with us as we explore community-led transformations and engage our imaginations to cultivate abundance, healing, and new possibilities.

The first event, '**Cultivating Community Transformation**' will take place on June 24 from 6:00 - 7:30 pm via Zoom. [Register here!](#)



What does it mean to cultivate transformation? How do cross sector partnerships and collaborations support transformative work?

Join us for Cultivating Community Transformation where panelists will share reflections about the start of Communities of Opportunity, how this work came to be, lessons learned and opportunities for growth.

About the speaker series:

The six-part Cultivating Community Speaker Series is funded by the COO Learning Community and designed and produced by [La Roxay Productions](#) and [BDS Planning](#). See below for a snapshot of our other upcoming events (event dates to be announced):

- [Cultivating Community Imagination: The New Economy](#) | July
What are the ways in which we may engage our imaginations to reimagine land ownership and our local economies?
- [Cultivating Community Imagination: Culture Shifts](#) | August
In what ways can we actively envision and create culture shifts in our organizations, Communities, and our region?
- [Cultivating Community Abundance](#) | September
What does philanthropy mean to a society that has been deeply impacted by a global pandemic?
- [Cultivating Community Healing](#) | October
Communities transform, imagine, are abundant, and heal. What is a journey without healing? Join our panelists as they reflect, share, and offer the ways in which they have navigated and worked through conflict and the hard days.
- [Cultivating Community Possibilities](#) | November
Join us for the finale in the Cultivating Community series! Our speakers will be looking to the future and sharing what is next in the world of Community driven partnerships.

III. STAFF TRANSITIONS

Congratulations! Aaron Robertson will be leading the democracy reform work at [Advancement Project California](#) (APCA) as their new Director of Political Voice. He's really excited for the opportunity to continue to build cross-sector efforts to create a more just democracy, and there is not a better place to do that in California than Advancement Project.

It's beyond bittersweet for COO, not only because Aaron has helped to create and sustain our vision since its inception, but also because of his keen ability to build trust and strengthen the relationships that have been at the core of our success and growth.

Aaron has been working with the COO team to plan a thoughtful transition of his duties as he works towards starting with APCA after the 4th of July holiday. Cheers to Aaron! Cheers to just democracy!

Special Thanks to Valerie Garza who jumped on board last fall to provide administrative support to our team on a temporary assignment. We're happy that she'll have a new, more-permanent position at King County in the Transit Division starting in July. We'll miss all the skills and talents she's shared with our team. Three cheers for Valerie!