

Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) Grants Committee
June 17th, 2020 - MEETING MINUTES

Committee members present: Andrea Hamberg, Jeff Moreland Jr., Michael Edden Hill, Ranfis Villatoro, Robin Wang, Faith Graham, Maria Sipin, Shanice Clarke, Megan Horst

PCEF staff present: Sam Baraso, Cady Lister, Jaimes Valdez, Janet Hammer

MEETING DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS

- Committee accepted May 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

Shanice gave the opening inspiration, an excerpt from The Combahee River Collective Statement, beginning with the following: "Above all else, Our politics initially sprang from the shared belief that Black women are inherently valuable, that our liberation is a necessity not as an adjunct to somebody else's may because of our need as human persons for autonomy." Notes the many layers to process related to coronavirus and racism and the pain to families and loved ones - from air to water to education and more - the harm passed across generations.

Staff Update on Public Comment Period

Sam provided update on public comment which has been extended.

- In recognition of the large volume of information that was released, created a document/guide to assist folks in navigating the material. This has provided some relief to the initial reaction regarding the amount of material.
- Staff have hosted two webinars, with more than 40 attending each. The recordings are available on our website. One more will be held next week. One was co-hosted. The format is that we walk through the criteria and open for questions Thus far there have been more than 100 folks participating. Staff are also holding 1-1 conversations with priority to BIPOC.
- Committee listening session will be held next week. This session should hold no more weight than any other input opportunity. The comments made will be summarized and included with all the other feedback.
- Asks to clarify if there are any other agenda priorities for next meeting.
 - Faith – can we prioritize those at the listening session to those that have not provided feedback in other forums?
 - Robin – it would be helpful next week if we provide a revised timeline of the next few months and any updates on recruitment of the other Committee member.
 - Megan – Will we be able to present on success hearing from folks? Can provide a summary level update, knowing that the period won't be closed.
 - Sam – Pushed the RFP from August 3 to August 10 to accommodate that extended comment period.
- Council today approved the application support grants funding and shared appreciation for Committee.

Public Comment

Jose Mikalauskas - Verde. Climate Justice organizer. Representing the PCEF coalition. Explained the Coalition's process to provide feedback – split up the sections among steering committees, will then combine and submit as a coalition. Will provide concrete suggestions. Understanding barriers that can be associated with government grants though want to be workable for frontline communities. Appreciation.

Angela Crowley-Koch – OSEIA. Appreciation. Comments from her members include one regarding environmental benefits section: they wonder if there could be resources for applicants and the contractors/subs for how to figure out their carbon footprint. That would be much appreciated. Folks are excited to look into different subs and how they procure materials - is there a resource list or something, like a list of m/w/esb that folks can look to diversify their supply chain.

Bylaws Committee Report

Update from Bylaw Subcommittee. Draft Working Agreements has been created, driven by Guiding Principles.

- Commitment to Equity and Anti-racism – this section will provide recognition of past and PCEF's role in addressing/remedying. Working on this section.
- Commitment to Community Engagement – Elements include reciprocity in partnership, clarifying expectations and commitments, action, participation (re service on Committee), safety and well-being, reflection and evaluation, humility, accountability.
- Commitment to Equity in Governance – how we live our values in decision-making. What it means to make a decision, work through conflict, etc.
- Principles and values of committee decision making processes. Values based, grace, curiosity, open to conflict, honest participation, space and time, transparency.
- Processes in Decision-making. State code of ethics in combination with conduct among Committee members that acknowledges different ways of knowing and expression. Discussion of co-chair model.
- Other items being developed: role of staff liaison and staff, regular evaluation of how staff is serving Committee's needs, and how the agreements will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Summary of discussion:

- Faith – appreciation for subcommittee work, impressed by how well thought out.
- Robin – Ditto to Faith. How should full committee give feedback and when? Some of the things written borders on guiding principles and wonder where the GPs fit with this. And there are a few sections that talk about commitment; is that of the committee as a whole, individuals to each other? Clarify who is commitment from and to whom.
 - Jaimes – somewhat intentional that reflect and reference the GPs because they inform. There should be alignment, including if GPs are changed.
 - Robin do they supersede or is it equal?
 - Andrea – GPs guide and supersede in her opinion. This is how we describe how the Committee interacts with each other and how we handle interactions day to day and in the work process itself. It is a commitment to the committee and GP as commitment to community as to how do the work.
 - Michael – as Andrea said, commitment from us to ourselves as to how we will engage with ourselves and the community.

- Sam – full committee can email feedback to staff and they will bring to subcommittee. Ideally by the end of next week.

Presentation from Home Performance Guild

Presenters: Kris Grube, Robert Hamerly, Brian Denne and James Metoyer.

Kris Grube: Key takeaways to share.

Small business is important. Most residential contractors are medium to small; few are union. They are familiar, comfortable, and fond of high road standards. Strong businesses are built with strong employees. It is part of our ethos. As PCEF develops and grows folks will come out of the woodwork to develop small businesses. This can be a wonderful thing. Business ownership provides opportunities for security and wealth generation in communities. From an equity lens, creating successful small businesses and sustainable pathways for success can be equal to job creation. Important to know the personal financial risk that small businesses carry. People tend to fund their businesses with personal savings, retirement savings, loans against their home. We need to care for small business. Urge you to prioritize proposals that show recognition of the risk that small businesses take and have structures to protect and truly value collaboration with those entities.

Second, consider jobs training to jobs to retention as a continuum. For them to have a job, employers need to be hiring, which requires adequate and consistent project funding. Businesses will be nervous to hire if funding is only for a year. Will be looking for some security to back up the increased expenses of the new hires. As folks come out of job training programs and join our teams – each employee will need to participate in on the job training – that is an expense to that company and needs to be factored in. A variety of positions needed to scale up; beyond trades but also specialized training as auditors and assessors, project management and administration. Take all of this into account when thinking about workforce development. Our industry is very diverse but not diverse throughout. The construction side is quite diverse but skilled trades, auditors, sales, project managers, and others - those need to grow. As you evaluate proposals – prioritize those that account for the full process, the continuum. Provide workforce training to a wide range of skills and business training.

Third, when doing residential energy efficiency work, there is the potential for a lot of unintended consequences. It is important to know what you are doing; without the right training and knowledge you can leave a home with mold, poor air quality, suck carbon monoxide in, trap radon. As you evaluate proposals, prioritize those that specifically identify a solid building science perspective

James Metoyer: Provided a presentation of home performance (HP), the energy audit role in HP, and how the guild can be a resource. The full presentation is posted on the PCEF website. Key takeaways include:

1. Important to use building science perspective, seeing how the home operates as a system, including the role of people. A skilled energy auditor/assessor will listen to client, analyze home and identify best solution based on those together.
2. City has the Home Energy Score (ES), mandated in 2017. Could be a great tool to track and assess. Suggests ES on front end, and after. Benefits to contractors and PCEF – trained assessors to document savings and ensure up to standards, information provided to owner on savings, and documentation of savings. Audit is first step to id where currently at (diagnose) and recommend.

Kris Grube: Shared some real-world examples. Ductless heat pumps as a powerful tool to reduce the cost of heating in homes (~1/3 cost reduction). Through weatherization, also improve comfort and air quality. Adding

insulation and managing air flows including proper ventilation is complex process. Notes that big benefits can accrue but problems can arise as well. E.g., air seal too tight can bring carbon monoxide into house, replacing only windows can miss very valuable components, over-insulating can result in issues such as fire danger, radon. Industry has learned a lot over time, we want to share those lessons learned.

Comments

- Ranfis – appreciate question of who benefits and including safety and comfort. Asks how we can help small businesses and how they define small business. Acknowledge construction business failure rate, and high rate of wage violation. How to reward the high road contractors that do quality work and pay well. And they are stable and financially solvent. How we can promote this within PCEF. Reiterates the importance of verifying quality of installation.
 - Robert – in regards to protecting small businesses from going out of business, one of the biggest things is consistency, whether the business is sole proprietor or 10 or 20 people. You get hit with a lot of work out of the gate, you ramp up and the work dries up and you are left with the investment and people and trying not to lose their shirt. Consistency with workload is important. The other is building process that allows for folks to do business inside and outside the program. Other programs build a lot of dependence on contractors for just their program and if a hiccup came along then the contractor is stuck.
 - Kris – you listen. Open dialogue to hear what people need and respond. If I was evaluating a proposal, look at how they are going to flex and adjust their assumptions to the needs out there.
- Michael – for on the job training, are those costs you built into bids? Thinking about how this works with PCEF design of grants to nonprofits and not to contractors.
 - Kris – yes, need to build it into the job costs. CEWO and Worksystems have given certain amount of money for each month a trained person was retained. Helped offset the cost.
 - James – I was part of that program, had certifications but was pretty green. They were required to pay high wage; funding helped cover those costs. Would like to see something like that here.
 - Brian – The question early re whether apprentices are part of the quote. It's a flow through – so need to allocate something to the new hire which eases the burden on the contractor.
- Jeffrey – Question about small business cash flows.
 - Brian - yes, that was a big issue with CEWO as well. Required Craft3 to be able to fund 50% of project before the start of the project. Sign contract and could get 50% and use that for materials and even some payroll and get remainder after project complete.
- Ranfis – hope this is beginning of a longer conversation. Really want to dig into how to make this work. Kris noted diversity in construction but less in skilled trades. Need to ensure diversity across different trades. And how we track and course correct. We are learning and hope we continue to learn together.
- Megan – Similar question to Ranfis; how grant program can help incentivize.
 - Kris – Intention is a piece of it. Articulate the goal. Guide the training programs and let them know what you are looking for. If we get a bunch of people coming out of pre-apprentice program to no jobs we will have a problem.
 - Robert – one area ripe for improvement. HVAC trade is not white collar but is a skilled trade where you can make up to 6 figures and that trade is not very diverse. And there are not good training programs for HVAC trade.

Meeting adjourned 7:30 p.m.