

Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) Grants Committee

August 4, 2022 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Committee members present: Michael Edden Hill, Megan Horst, Jeffrey Moreland Jr., Robin Wang

Committee members excused: Maria Sipin, Faith Graham, Ranfis Villatoro, Shanice Clarke

Staff present: Sam Baraso, Cady Lister, Jaimes Valdez

Members of the Public: Gayle Palmer (East Portland Resilience Coalition), Jeni Hall (Energy Trust of Oregon), Barbara Byrd (BlueGreen Alliance)

Public Comment: one written comment from James Swyter sent to Committee & included with minutes.

Program Updates

- Heat response program
 - Now over 1300 units installed, pace increasing. On track to meet goals.
 - Onboarded 5 new housing partners in July. (bringing total to 12 community distribution partners)
 - Have worked on messaging and media framing/ managing expectations – our program is not first response/immediate. We include emergency resources in our messaging.
 - We provide education, not just drop-off, making sure people know how to use units.
 - Webinar next week with CDPs and Portland General Electric to incorporate info on signing up for PGE bill discount program into our install appointments for PGE customers. Pacific Power will likely have a similar program launching later summer/fall.
 - Other related programs include Oregon Health Authority, Multnomah County
- Committee member and staff recruitment
 - Committee: Will need to do more outreach for applications from those with experience elevating women and minority contractors and connection to Native American community. Plan to reopen recruitment. Will keep current applications in consideration.
 - Staff:
 - Interviewing for general project manager positions (hopefully bring on 1-2).
 - Recruitment open for permanent Communications Strategist.
 - Reviewing applications for Data Analyst.
- Hybrid meetings, meeting frequency, and small-group briefings
 - Might send survey to gather preferences and what works for folks. Ideally gather in-person in September. Will need to work out hybrid logistics.
 - Aim to move frequency to once/month, shift to small-group briefings in between

Audit follow-up updates, structural change timeline, and RFP #3 timeline

- RFP #2 lessons
 - Want earlier conversations with Council to brief them on recommended projects
 - Will be incorporating additional knowledge for RFP #3
 - Comments/reflections

- Robin: there is political risk in everything we do. Need to acknowledge it and incorporate it in how we move forward.
 - Megan:
 - integrate financial review into the rest of the review process, making sure we collect all the info needed in applications
 - consider Committee seeing the actual project descriptions during deliberation
 - Refine the criteria to be clearer (a few not clear enough, most worked)
 - Reviewing was enormous load on staff and Committee – any streamlining ideas welcome
 - Glad we'll be looking at structural changes – saw projects that didn't fit current criteria but were great (e.g. coming from public agencies)
- Audit response commitments
 - Defining performance metrics (July 2022 – DONE!), next step is *goals* (by July 2023)
 - Can develop goals in conjunction with RFP3 (how many houses, trees, etc)
 - PCEF alignment with City Climate goals (December 2022). Defining/articulation needed
 - Provide clarity on admin vs. other costs (December 2022)
 - Continue to assess the Committee's governance structure (July 2023)
- Program Updates & Structural Improvements – 4 goals
 - Identify changes to enable accelerated funding of carbon reduction projects
 - Draw clearer, more relevant connections between PCEF & City's carbon reduction goals
 - Address staff and committee identified needs, incl. staffing capacity & admin cost cap.
 - Address remaining audit recommendations, incl. clarity around capacity building, which we see as integral to PCEF, but audit did not.
 - Example path ahead:
 - Foundation of being responsive to community projects will remain at the core.
 - Strategic solicitations – targeted solicitations with RFPs on 3-5 year interval for programs requiring long-term & ongoing investment (example tree planting)
 - Responsive solutions – responding to new things that come up with solicitations on 2-4 year interval. Leveraging PCEF support.
 - Coming back to Committee with more well-defined concepts on RFPs, process, underlying changes to structure/code.
 - Questions
 - Eligibility of different types of organizations beyond nonprofits? We are exploring this, will examine roles and what makes the most sense; there may be instances where contracts are a better fit than grants too.
 - We are meeting with bureau partners (e.g. in transportation, housing, tree planting work), identifying gaps and opportunities.
 - Staff will be refining proposal and sharing with stakeholder groups for feedback and aim to bring to Committee for review/approval and public comment in October.
 - Questions posed to Committee re priorities, concerns, what members will need to be engaged and informed, what opportunities they see.
 - Megan: Priority to maintain PCEF intent of GHG reductions and benefit to priority communities. Making sure funding is additive, not taking pressure off other agencies to take climate actions. Opportunity for explicitly targeting East Portland, with simultaneous need to mitigate gentrification risk.

- Jeffrey: important to show success stories proactively and how PCEF is unique, demonstration of benefit going to the people, fighting narrative that publicly funded programs don't get things done, don't benefit the most vulnerable. Our continued investments in workforce are important to mitigating gentrification.

Meeting Adjourned

From: [James Swyter](#)
To: [Clean Energy Fund](#)
Subject: Committee Public Comment — PCEF Committee Meeting — August 4, 2022
Date: Tuesday, August 2, 2022 4:16:58 PM

Hello PCEF Committee Members:

Please accept my written public comment into the record. I would also like to provide oral public comment at the August 4 meeting (the sign-up page does not have an [option](#) for testifying at the August 4 meeting).

I would like to follow up on a **public records request for the quarterly progress reports** for all grant recipients from the 2021 inaugural round of funding (RFP #1). All grant recipients should have progress reports, according to the PCEF website and city code.

- [PCC 7.07.050](#) mandates the PCEF Committee, “Adopt a methodology to measure, track and **report to the public**, the Mayor, and the City Council the effectiveness of the programs **All fund recipients shall file a report** tracking their success in meeting the stated objectives.”
- “We hold our grantees accountable for expenditures, outcomes, and more through **mandatory quarterly reports.**” ([What you haven't heard: The truth about PCEF and its bright future](#), March 24, 2022).

I believe this is a fairly straightforward request, since the reports should be in the public record. However, I haven't heard anything from the PCEF Committee or BPS staff since I submitted the request two weeks ago.

This is a matter of public interest, as demonstrated by a recent Oregonian editorial ([Scrutiny begets progress in Portland Clean Energy Fund](#), July 24, 2022):

[Commissioner Carmen Rubio] should press the clean energy program to release a report showing the progress and outcomes of the program's first round of recipients, announced in April 2021. Did they meet their promised objectives?

I am asking that you provide the records, or make them accessible to the public. I believe this would help build the fund's accountability and make it easy for the public to see the progress so far.

In addition to my public records request, **I also urge you to change your public comment policy.** The PCEF Committee website [indicates](#) written public testimony must be received “by 12 p.m. two business days before the meeting.” As of two days before the meeting the

Committee has not yet posted an agenda for the meeting. It is impossible to provide meaningful public comment on an agenda item if the agenda is published after the deadline for submitting written comments. I urge you to revise your comment policy and/or make public the agenda sufficiently in advance of the comment deadline.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully submitted,

James Swyter

Cascade Policy Institute

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