

Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) Grants Committee
July 29nd, 2020 - MEETING MINUTES

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

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

MEETING DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS

- Committee accepted July 22 Meeting Minutes.
- Committee approved staff to move forward with finalizing large grant application questions and scoring. Substance of application questions and scoring will not change. Staff will increase accessibility through language and design improvements. Committee will have opportunity to review and approve final version when they approve the Request for Proposal.

MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

No public comment

Large Grants: Continuing from last week, staff outlined where changes were made to the draft large grant application and scoring in response to public feedback – this time with special attention the workforce benefits section of the application. Committee member feedback on the three options for addressing workforce composition section was not unanimous, however, the most support was for option B.

- Megan – thinking about feedback from Randy Ramos (member of public who is a minority contractor and gave public comment at the last meeting), we can include tables requesting demographic detail, but people may not be able to accurately forecast, what do we do with that? I do like asking for specifics and goals but want them to be based on something real.
 - Sam – other community members said the same. We will be checking with several folks to see what does it mean to answer this question. These are things that we want people to be accountable to.
- Ranfis – Worth listening to feedback from community, feedback from contractors is where this can feel nebulous, many contractors sit on joint apprenticeship training boards, contractors play a role in the process of how we diversify this industry, without goals/north star there is no strategy for getting where we want to go.
- Sam – looking for committee approval of the content, words/structure/style is to come, what you saw is not what an applicant would see, there will be visual design for accessibility of language and ease of use. Bring back final RFP for approval. At that point, not a content question.
- Faith – are there threshold points or certain questions that need to be answered in a certain way in order to be awarded? Project description – scoring criteria – realistically result in intended outcomes, what if a brilliant application had unrealistic anticipation of results?
 - Cady – the Committee didn't set any thresholds that the scoring panels will deal with, though the technical feasibility screen will eliminate applications that are not feasible and these will never get to scoring panel. Also, if the project scope is unworkable, it is likely that the same application will score poorly in other sections as well.
- Jeffrey – The criteria about apprentice utilization rate, are we getting rid of that? Did that get resolved?
- Sam – reached out to stakeholders, no reply, clarified question and left the question in but are no longer asking about ratios, and instead focusing on the percentage of work hours to apprentices, 2 points.
- Jeffrey – do we want to explore further or is committee fine with 2 points? Michael/Ranfis?

- Sam – heard that the criteria was important for some and not for others. The push for inclusion came from workforce advocates in the apprenticeship space. We are going to leave it in for now and see how it plays out this first solicitation; tried to reconnect with that person but they were out of town.
- Ranfis – workforce pieces, there is a lot of room to improve, feedback from public, consideration around the quality of install, research shows that insulation install, shows a true difference in the outcome of savings, important, ETO has some measurement tools, something we may want to consider through RFP, workforce agreement or technical review, we want to ensure quality installation of any measure we are funding.
 - Cady – we have our eye on protecting safety and health of occupants; anticipate dealing with that through requirements and verification on backend.
- Faith – GHG calculation, love the solution, staff will do that calculation, based off of information in project scoping through Appendix A.
- Andrea – has staff thought about when the survey of applicants will happen?
 - Sam – experience for applicants is just as important as program outcomes, what is the appropriate timing, need to check in with team, open to thoughts and comments, how we make this better is important, we haven't sketched it out yet.
 - Andrea – might be some benefit in doing it before the review of the applications. If we have missed something critical for our core organizations in this process and we get feedback in the survey that could help us understand how to review applications better.
 - Sam – there will be QA, public sessions, answers published publicly, we anticipate we will hear from people in real time.
- Ranfis – recognition that there will be applicants that shine on paper, for others this way of communicating may be harder, we are leaning towards good writers in this, thinking through the limits of written apps. Want to build transformative relationship with prospective applicants and know that we all have inherent bias that comes out when we read different writing styles.
- Megan – want to be more inclusive in defining women – all women – all people who identify as women, it reads very binary. Also want to make sure that disability is not defined too narrowly.
 - Ranfis – support Megan's suggestion on being more inclusive on gender.
 - Sam – we can do that; we would be clearly calling out women = anyone identifies as women.
 - Cady – at one point the table had a lot more detailed demographics, it was changed for different reasons multiple times, became unwieldy and was eventually reduced to identities in code. Will make sure to be inclusive in language in RFP and guidance but would like to leave the table as is noting that, as with all of the demographic categories woman is defined as woman identifying, is that ok?
 - Megan – thumbs up
- Cady – temperature check, is there comfort with moving into final drafting phase? Call on each:
 - Ranfis – personally would spend more time on workforce if I could, but don't want to be the barrier, there will be mistakes, first year, lets continue to move forward.
 - Jeffrey – ok with moving forward, we have gone through thoroughly, we will make mistakes.
 - Megan – good with progress we have made; confident moving forward and learning from our first round.
 - Maria – I don't feel strongly about any one direction, we may still be distributed on a bell curve. Do we need a consensus and then a proposal, some of us may say, yeah this is good enough, I still want to hear strong feelings but people may not want that.
 - Robin – generally good with things, first pass, year 1, largely there, not perfection.
 - Andrea – first year, good improvements, happy to move forward.

- Faith – feel really good about where we are, we can't achieve perfection, love that we have been responsive and adapt to unexpected comments that we are not serving community as we should, good with where we are, and our commitment adapt.
- Michael – best thing out of 2020 so far for me, appreciate the work, I've learned a lot, I have my concerns about ease of use and accessibility, I am hoping you will have a glossary of terms. Workforce and contractor equity has had a lot of input from contractors and not a lot from workforce, I'm pretty warm on this for our first go.
- Shanice – journey to here, a lot of significant detours and improvements, I'm in alignment with it, it being our first year, thinking about what we want this work to accomplish, even in the first year.
- Cady – general agreement on the committee that the substance is ready for staff to move to final draft, the one area with bell curve distributed opinions is the workforce section, this is a reflection that we have Committee members that bring unique perspectives to the table, what we landed on feels like a compromise, not a consensus, not sure we would get closer with more discussion, if we are warm to good with us moving forward, I suggest that we do that now.
- Ranfis – I agree with your assessment Cady and to Michael's point, the voice that is less heard, when we think about our north star, it needs to include workers, the part we see and don't see every day, that's the voice that we don't hear, what are the barriers to get into the trades, what are their every day concerns, what does living wage mean to them, ideally this process would have started 1-2 years ago.
- Robin – I move to accept the substance of the large grant document (application and scoring) that was shared with us
 - Ranfis – second
 - Jeffrey – I agree
 - Megan – I agree
 - Maria – I agree
 - Andrea – I agree
 - Faith – I agree
 - Michael – I agree, we will vote again on final RFP? (Cady -yes)
 - Shanice – I agree.

Small and Planning Grants:

Staff provided an overview of the differences between small and large grant applications and scoring noting that small grant development gave additional attention to removing barriers for new and emerging organizations, that at the lower dollar cap we will probably see less construction, more one-offs, provide services to priority populations, organizations that don't work in this space normally but might do a one-time project, etc. Planning grants are substantially different in application and scoring. Staff walked through these draft documents with Committee. Staff requested comments on small and planning grant drafts by Sunday evening.

- Ranfis – as you remove the historic record of work with priority populations criteria, you might be creating incentive for non-profit social enterprises, send market signal to form off-shoot?
- Megan – Eight points seems low for future project climate and social justice benefits, we want all projects to do those things, if there is another funnel happening somewhere, I like that they are together but am also wondering if there is benefit to pulling apart.
 - Cady – acknowledge uncertainty around future projects, not too many points on future/uncertain, want space for planning to discover what they intended may not be best.
- Faith – eligibility says this needs to be climate action/social justice – these are not necessarily social justice outcomes.

- Ranfis – like social justice question around organization description, scoring framed around knowledge of priority communities, PCEF guiding principles – is that enough? Additional criteria could look at an organization’s analysis around systems change, how to transform lives for the population(s) they serve, add thoughts to criteria about root causes of oppression or systems change.
 - Ranfis – why this might be worth considering, a lot of groups could get additional social justice points, real work doers will shine in the analysis, good intentions can lead to bad outcomes, asking a question around analysis and lived experience.
 - Sam – theory of change can be hard to understand, is there a simple way to describe this? Doesn’t have to be now. Any suggestions on what that could look like for next week.
 - Maria – the ways to break it down, ask how are you shifting power to those that didn’t have power before? What relationships do you have that are essential to moving equity forward? Maybe an org only needs to do an assessment or audit, they can still make room for knowledge exchange, bring up people, demo ways to bring people in the space who have not been brought in before, want to incorporate what planning could be.
 - Ranfis – Asking an organization’s background, anyone can talk about how it impacts frontline communities but answering why is different, gives further weight to different community groups and how they show up in this space.
- Sam – our starting place is wanting to make planning grant easy.
- Maria – reflecting a lot and thinking about our grants, how much of this is transactional, seed money not thinking about next steps, how do we set people up to develop a long-term relationship with this work? Maybe they just want transaction, but I like to think people want a long-term relationship, climate equity history work checks out, won’t need to fudge a history to qualify.
 - Sam – come into a relationship with the program as part of this effort, is there something specific that calls that out more? Hope you see the core elements focus on priority populations and representation, might be more?
 - Maria – that covers it, feels like there is so much to talk about, maybe not this conversation.

9:00 pm - Meeting adjourned