

Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) Grants Committee
August 12, 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, Janet Hammer, Wendy Koelfgen

MEETING DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS

- August 5th minutes were accepted
- Committee approved proposal to advance the small and planning grant content to be finalized by staff
- Committee approved small, large and planning scoring distribution.
- Committee approved nomination for Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie for the seat currently occupied by Andrea Hamberg.
- Committee approved proposed funding allocation for year 1 that maximizes flexibility with assurances for applicants with the four bullet points. 1) Publish expectation to meet target ranges defined in code, with flexibility depending on number and quality of applications, 2) Allow unused funds from one funding area to be spent in other funding areas, 3) Do not set minimum thresholds for scoring, and 4) Allow scoring panels to identify projects that are not recommended for funding.

6:00 pm Open and Inspiration – Faith shared a quote from Martin Luther King Jr. “If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as a Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, “Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.” And everyone wished Sam a happy birthday!

Public comment - None

Program updates

- Making ASG award announcements early next week and announce publicly by the following week.

Grant scoring staff presentation and discussion

- Staff gave presentation and discussed memo that shows updated distribution of points in all grant types to standardize weight given to points for reflecting community served and serving PCEF priority populations.
- Andrea: 50% for priority population served and represented makes sense.
- Ranfis: on small grants, if we had someone apply for workforce development and they get zero on diversity, they could still get a good score in workforce section, like the work on points for community served, workforce piece will continue to be a question in year two. Appreciate clarity for committee
- Faith: appreciate presentation and memo sent, this has changed from last week, very pleased, curious if anything came up for staff that feels left undone or takeaways for staff, lessons from reorganization.
- Ranfis: combining workforce and contractor diversity is in some ways putting two separate items into one, a project could do one well and the other poorly and still score high, I think we are ok with this at this stage, aspirational on how promote priority populations to benefit on workforce side, we don't know yet what our application will push the market to do.
- Shanice: Want more detail in demographics for reporting as we track the impacts of each of these different kinds of projects. Expressed concern about the systems we are setting up for the future. The way in which we are allocating points reflects the inherent value of what PCEF funds are for.

- Michael: we have to look at applications beyond the score, it's up to us to make sure that we look at all of the applications with a critical eye towards what the orgs are trying to achieve and who they serve
 - Sam: you all will be on the scoring panels and bring your lived experience into the review, understanding what organizations are trying to say, even if ESL, or can identify when it's just a good grant writer.
- Jeffrey: so much emphasis on reflecting community served, orgs may hire people who reflect to get points, need to watch to see this is meaningful, not tokenizing.
- Megan: glad to see honing our focus on priority populations. Is Shanice's concern that non rep org could still do well in the scoring?
 - Shanice: that's part of it, the way we are structuring and allocating points, we are now looking at a set of criteria that is consistent around populations reflected/served. At same time, name the reality that there is a lot of interest and folks will do well on this criteria who aren't target populations. I'm hearing about it. Not sure how it will play out but want us to be cautious.
- Megan: good grant writers may succeed in being convincing, panel discussions will bring in what Michael was talking about. I feel good about the overall weighting. Thanks.
- Ranfis: I will likely vote for this, always try to make small grant easier for small and emerging orgs. Would like to see 5-10 additional points for small and emerging orgs on all of the grant opportunities, to be consistent. To ensure that we don't have bias, we need to score on the submitted information, we need to check our own biases, try not to bring in your own personal information that others don't have. Good practice to keep score based on information in application.
- Shanice: on Ranfis' previous comment, award points not tied to what we are looking at but to give a boost in a process which we recognize as inherently inequitable, the kinds of orgs we hear from, who may be considering physical improvement, the scope shows up in a different way in the scoring criteria, there is more consistency with other pieces, I agree with Ranfis recommendation for points for small/emerging
- Cady: strong message from community to reward people who have been doing this work, for large grants you can't get all of the points without having done this work with priority populations for 3+ years. For planning grants where we gave small and emerging points, there is question on whether they belong grouped together. We grouped based on assumption that small organizations tend to have less back office capacity to plan, and emerging organizations may not have had the time to benefit from planning, there is no dissonance for having them together in planning, may be different for small of large. What are we achieving by giving points for small non-profits? Do small and emerging belong together for small and large grants? If we are prioritizing small NPs, why?
- Sam: groups may not be small but also may not have had resources to work in this space before.
- Ranfis: I recall that we had a conversation on defining small and emerging and how to be inclusive of both, taken shape on planning grants, context of my point is how we designed small grants, achieving consistency, has shifted and feels inconsistent with our earlier thinking.
- Shanice: echo Ranfis, I do think that the foundation we are setting is important. If we are thinking about orgs that are small and emerging excluded from clean energy work, maybe there can be an opportunity to reflect where small, emerging, excluded orgs get a boost in an inherently inequitable process.
- Robin: I love to be able to support small/emerging. This being the first year, we don't know what is going to happen, this is year zero. Would like to revisit this next year when we have data and have seen results and then tweak points/scoring/allocation with real data in hand. It's all a guessing game at this point.
- Maria: I see value in boosting small businesses in every way we can, including adding preferential points. Given what we bring and the lens we bring, there is room here for us to operate with our discretion on how we allocate points, adjusting points is one option. That said, I see the value in adopting what we have and seeing what happens, I think committee should exercise discretion.

- Faith: My memory of the past conversation about small and emerging organization is that we said we make sure there was not a barrier, how are we sure that we are not creating a system that someone cannot participate in? Makes sense to have planning and mini-grants to have support to create a good application. What I am concerned about is that there may be competing priorities, concerned about adding any additional points in small and large grants.
- Ranfis: I do recall that conversation when we talked about making the application accessible to small and emerging, I recall offering points for groups those, I think it got reflected on the planning side.
- Megan: I hear Cady's point that there are different definitions, I have concerns about trying to boost small/emerging, would conflict with criteria for experience, what does a boost point mean? Does it change the proportions or is it an add on? Glad we have the project assistance grants. I lean towards being comfortable with what we have and paying attention to what comes in.
- Jeffrey: I am comfortable with what we have and I think we will learn a lot this year. Everybody has the right mindset. We will address this head on. We have been thorough with our work. At this point, it is time to see where it ends up.
- Michael: I like what Jeffrey said that we are all uncomfortable with aspects of the application. I am ready to go forward and learn.
- Andrea: I feel like the additional points in planning for small/emerging organizations to help develop a competitive project are good and I am moved by a call to recognize the organizations that have been doing this work.
- Request for temperature check on proposal to advance small and planning grant content to be finalized
 - Shanice: move forward with reservations
 - Faith: for advancing
 - Jeffrey: warm on advancing, watch this year
 - Maria: same as Jeffrey
 - Robin: warm, ditto Jeffrey
 - Ranfis: warm
 - Andrea: also warm
 - Megan: warm on advancing small/planning grant content
 - Michael: warm
- Andrea: I propose that we advance the small and planning grant content
 - Robin: second
 - Shanice: agree
 - Faith: agree
 - Jeffrey: agree
 - Maria: agree
 - Ranfis: aye
 - Megan: agree
 - Michael: agree
- Sam: (coming back from break) culturally specific orgs have not had benefit of membership base, as a result have had to focus on immediate needs, it wasn't a function of size for them, it was the type of work they had to do in the past, that was further shown in the application support grants, they came in over 20 FTE, although many with 4-5 staff with substantial experience in implementing in PHB projects, our focus is on prioritizing those that reflect the community they serve and have experience serving that community. What are we trying to get at by providing additional points for small orgs? We have made a commitment to analyze who applied, what did they apply to and what was that experience for them. Where did we strike the right balance and where did we miss the mark. Will shape how we go back out

into the community on future RFPs. Would like to ask for a proposal and additional thoughts as they relate to a proposal.

- Faith: I propose that we accept small, large and planning scoring distribution
 - Ranfis: second
 - Shanice: agree
 - Jeffrey: agree
 - Maria: agree
 - Robin: agree
 - Andrea: agree
 - Megan: agree
 - Michael: agree

Funding allocation discussion

- Robin: say an application scores poorly, no minimum threshold, the mechanism for denying is scoring panel discretion? Second, if a scoring panel can override points by recommending or not for funding, doesn't that introduce subjectivity in decision making?
 - Cady: there is some subjectivity in this process and in all grant making processes. In terms of mechanism for not recommending even if funding available. The scoring panel could not recommend and explain why (will be sent on to the Committee), Committee could override.
 - Sam: a lot of eyes on how you will make decisions, the scoring panel and the overall process, we want to bring recommendations in a way that is transparent to public. Can't capture everything in scoring criteria, the process we built here aligns with best practices and being transparent.
- Robin: want to make sure people clearly understand how it is possible that a scoring panel could not recommend a project for funding, communicate this.
- Michael: I think this is all subjective, otherwise a machine could be reading bubbles, that is not what I want to do. I want to make decisions based on evidence and energy and everything else out there. There have to be decisions made and we have to defend the decisions we make. Subjective thought is required in this. At least I hope it is. We should make that clear. They are getting a point score, but we aren't just doing math.
- Ranis: I'm used to having more fantastic projects than you can fund, if there is more money than good applications, get good guidance from staff to ensure it doesn't feel arbitrary, when do we feel like a group is ready to do a project, I am comfortable with what is being proposed here. We balance each other out as a committee. How we balance out is more of an art than a science.
- Conversation tabled to accommodate guest participant Laura John, City of Portland Tribal Liaison.

New Committee member recruitment discussion

- Sam: thanks to Laura John for helping us through this effort. You acknowledged that we did not do right in first time and needed to be recruiting for a committee member with deep roots in indigenous community. Subcommittee on recruitment (Maria, Michael and Megan) is recommending Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie.
- Maria: we unanimously want to recommend Amanda to the PCEF committee. Her resume and written narrative demonstrated her service and commitment to build community and solutions for people experiencing inequities, voting and grassroots organizing. Thank you Laura John for ensuring we had this clear path and task and were able to fulfill with City staff guidance.
- Michael: impressed with Amanda's depth of lived experience, impressed with her involvement in direct action, being an active change maker in the communities, highly recommend Amanda for position.

- Megan: echo fellow committee members, detailed in memo sent around in last meeting, Amanda had experience in naming and dismantling white supremacy in organizations. Thank you to Laura John and staff. We are humbled by Andrea's move to make room on the committee for this change.
- Laura John: Appreciate PCEF staff for mindfulness for willingness to reflect, to admit missteps, have commitment and drive to course correct, especially moved by the decision for a committee member to step down to create space for an indigenous person, courage and willingness to do this immediately instead of waiting for next time. Excited committee is moving toward reserving a seat for an indigenous person, I have not heard that this has been done before. This is monumental. I hope with it will continue to expand in other work happening within the city of Portland. Have seen Amanda working in community. She will bring fire, heart, commitment, resilience to committee. Congrats Amanda.
- Andrea: Amanda so excited to meet you on zoom. Incredible honor to be with the committee for last nine months. I can see here a drive to do this job right. Commitment to taking in information and course correcting. Thank you Laura for calling us to action. I have confidence that drive to improve will continue particularly with the passion and experience Amanda will bring.
- Amanda: thank you for kind words. Thank you to Laura John. Andrea thank you for your sacrifice to make this happen. For so long our voices have been silenced and you are lifting up our voice. Shout out to Carrie Waters who instilled this passion in me. Always there to help me understand things. Honored to be on this call with all of you.
- Andrea: I propose that we submit a nomination for Amanda Squiemphen-Yazzie for the seat I have been in for the PCEF committee.
 - Ranfis – second
 - Megan – agree
 - Faith – agree
 - Robin – agree
 - Maria – agree
 - Michael – agree
 - Jeffrey – agree
 - Shanice – agree

Racist incident at 4th and Montgomery building: next steps discussion

- Ranfis: city will be taking steps to convene community stakeholders around specific items from community, city has acknowledged, opportunity to hear what the city is doing, they offered for us to meet, getting periodic updates, suggest meet with Lester Spitler, chief procurement officer for the city.
- Michael: not sure about next steps, we in construction industry know how often this happens, positive it will happen on a PCEF work site, what in the future will we do on one of our construction sites. What is our reaction going to be?
- Janet: anyone receiving PCEF funding grants, will sign workforce and contractor agreement, addressed in application, tightening up the language to make it necessary to comply.
- Shanice: as a committee, it would be really great for us to consider having that discussion, solutions we might be able to sort through and lifting up the voices that took initial action.
- Robin: want to speak and hear from Anderson. Want to send a message that we are paying attention. Lester is messenger. Want to have conversation with the prime.
- Maria: glad we are having this discussion, there is a lot of harm of all sizes that occurs on and off the clock, justice oriented work for clean energy involve so many relationships, model the type of accountability when harm is done, not just racial but gender based violence.
- Megan: as city entity can we call for action on our own projects. Would like to get report on what we are setting up to confirm if it is robust enough, hear from community, there needs to be a reporting

mechanism, maybe that's a role we can plan, expect all projects to sign on, want to hear from those on front line of experience before signing off on recommendations.

- Jeffrey: expect this to happen on our projects, be proactive on our end, address prior, we can have protocols in place, anonymous tip line to people who can do something. Opportunity to be proactive
- Michael: read the letters, don't ever want PCEF to act like Anderson and be surprised or fake shocked when it happens, this will happen, have specific policies and procedures to address it intentionally and forcefully, this is not to be tolerated. It's been tolerated top to bottom and still is. Construction is still good old boys club. We should not be shocked when it happens on one of the sites we are funding. We need to be ready.
- Ranfis: sounds like PCEF staff is taking some steps to engage with community, small group meet with Lester to id steps to take together, multiple processes around this, good opportunity for us to learn more about what is being done. I will share dates to meet with Lester to identify next steps.
- Clarification that City grants do not go through procurement, only contracts.
- Faith: I propose that we accept the proposed funding allocation for year 1 that maximizes flexibility with assurances for applicants with the four bullet points. 1) Publish expectation to meet target ranges defined in code, with flexibility depending on number and quality of applications, 2) Allow unused funds from one funding area to be spent in other funding areas, 3) Do not set minimum thresholds for scoring, and 4) Allow scoring panels to identify projects that are not recommended for funding.
 - Jeffrey: second
 - Shanice: agree
 - Robin: agree
 - Andrea: agree
 - Megan: agree, have some thoughts which will be emailed
 - Michael: agree, excited for minimum thresholds in following year
 - Ranfis: I agree
- Megan -staff please compile points we want to return to in future year consideration and retain

9:00 pm – Meeting adjourned