**PORTLAND CLEAN ENERGY COMMUNITY BENEFITS FUND (PCEF) COMMITTEE**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**February 15, 2024 • 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**
**Hybrid Meeting — Zoom Call & Open Signal**

| Committee Members | Position | Affiliation | Present |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dr. Megan Horst | Co-Chair | Associate Professor, School of Urban Studies & Planning at Portland State University | Yes |
| Ranfis Giannettino Villatoro | Co-Chair | Oregon State Policy Manager, BlueGreen Alliance | Yes |
| Alicia Chapman | Member-at-Large | Willamette Technical Fabricators | Yes |
| DeAngelo Moaning | Member-at-Large | Raimore Construction | No |
| Faith Graham | Member-at-Large | Elevate Energy | Yes |
| Maria Gabrielle Sipin | Member-at-Large | Community Member | Yes |
| Paul Lumley | Member-at-Large | Cascade AIDS Project | Yes |
| Robin Wang | Member-at-Large | Vibrant Future LLC | Yes |
| Michael Edden Hill | Member-at-Large | Community Member | Yes |
| Sam Baraso | Program Manager | PCEF | Yes |
| Cady Lister | Deputy Program Manager | PCEF | Yes |
| Jaimes Valdez | Org. Development & Policy Manager | PCEF | Yes |
| Kris Grube | Project Manager | PCEF | No |
| Wendy Koelfgen | Project Manager | PCEF | No |
| Rachel Gilmore | Administrative Specialist | PCEF | Yes |
| Elizabeth Stover | Senior Communications Strategist | PCEF | Yes |
| Tracy M. Smith | Facilitator | Inhance LLC | Yes |
| Camerina Galván | Notetaker | Galvan Consulting LLC | Yes |
| Ciara Pressler | Consultant | Pregame | Yes |

**Others**: Seetha Ream-Rao; Jenni Hall, Energy Trust; Candace Avalos, Executive Director, Verde; Dana Fulkerson, REACH CDC; Diana Nichols; Gayle, Thrive East PDX; Gosia Wozniacka; James Metoyer; Jason Skipton, Executive Director, Growing Gardens; Babs Vanelli; Tatyana Castro, Central City Concern; Donnie Oliveira, Director, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

- Tracy M. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM.
- The quorum was met.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** TRACY M. SMITH, FACILITATOR

- James Metoyer is concerned about the equitable and just use of the PCEF. Amendments and inequitable community engagement have diverted funds to city bureaus that have historically failed to meet sideline populations, particularly the Black community, and climate goals. The community trust is broken. James Metoyer called for honoring the original intention of PCEF.
- Jason Skipton feels that not increasing funding to nonprofits perpetuates the idea that nonprofits should be underfunded and do more. The RFP funding cap has decreased over the years. Relying on applications received is not a true reflection of demand. Jason Skipton asked for additional support for regenerative agriculture (RA).
- Candace Avalos agrees with the previous testimonials and encouraged the committee to look into a re-granting process that eases the pressure and bureaucracy of reapplying for PCEF dollars. The process is cumbersome for organizations with a track record of administering PCEF dollars and partnering with PCEF for years.
- Babs Vanelli is a 75-year-old community member who agrees with the three testimonies and thanks the previous speakers for their continued commitment to making the city better for everyone.

**CO-CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:** PCEF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A co-chair appreciates the testimonies and uplifting of the PCEF values in supporting nonprofits.
- A co-chair affirmed that they do hear community members. She hears the call for funding community-based organizations (CBOs) and RA. She acknowledges that due to the limitation placed on RFP 3, the applications won't reflect the actual community's needs.
- A committee member thanked the people who testified. He would like to discuss what happened in the last two committee meetings compared to the process nonprofits must go through to apply for funding. He has heard complaints that the RFP process is complicated. He would like this addressed.
- A committee member shared community members shared with her that the application is arduous. They are frustrated that city agencies are not held to the same standards as CBOs.
- A co-chair wants to do justice to the community's comments. The committee should be reflective of the process and decision-making timelines. The co-chairs have contacted commissioners regarding the process and next steps. They have met with Commissioner Rubio, Commissioner Mapps, and Commissioner Ryan. They have yet to hear back from Commissioner Gonzalez and the Mayor.
- A co-chair would like the committee to have intentional in-person and online meetings. She feels positive about some aspects of the decision-making process. She is optimistic that bureau projects will serve priority populations with a PCEF lens. Part of the co-chair's responsibility is to be the first responders to the press. In her comments to the press, she stated that the committee:
  - Felt pressure to have a fast deliberation.
  - Had not heard about nor deliberated on the use of PCEF interest.
  - Was pressured from different directions, one being a threat that if the committee didn't decide, the Commissioners would make it on their behalf.

- The co-chair went on to say that she wants to hear more from PCEF staff about the capacity of nonprofits to take more money. What is the truth? Is it a staff capacity issue?
- There are many meanings of community. The committee needs to deliberate what community work means.

**INITIAL DISCUSSION ON PROCESS FOR THE SECOND SET OF ALLOCATIONS:** SAM BARASO, PCEF

- The first set of allocation decision-making could have been better and was pressured by the budgeting process. The original intent of PCEF was to invest in CBOs, but the reality of PCEF has changed, and PCEF will continue to evolve.
- Sam Baraso reviewed the future committee meetings through May 2024 and the city budget schedule. The Mayor's proposed budget will be released in early May 2024. The committee must submit its recommendations for the Mayor's proposed budget on April 11, 2024. In late April 2024, the City Economist will release the PCEF forecast update. Adjustments to the budgets can be made in September 2024 (BMP)
- Committee member questions and comments:
  - We have $160 Million in the fund, not including the interest and additional potential in April 2024. Do we have to decide by April 2024 or wait until September 2024?
    - Response: If it's a program that will take place in fiscal year 2024, the deadline is April 2024. In September 2024, the previous year's expenditures will be reconciled, and adjustments will be made. It is up to the committee's discretion.
  - If we want to fund a project in fiscal year 2024, will the committee need to decide by a public meeting on March 21, 2024?
    - Response: That is correct unless the committee would like additional meetings.
  - A committee member would like to discuss allocating additional funding to the community and schedule additional meetings if needed.
  - Is April 11, 2024, the deadline for giving dollars to the community?
    - Response: The April 11, 2024 deadline is for city-administered projects. Funding for CBOs can be added during the Fall budget process.
  - A community member proposed to allocate funds to the community in Fall 2024 to give the committee time for due diligence.
  - Can you speak to the interest question? Commissioners have recommendations for using PCEF interest. Is it within the committee's parameters to make recommendations on the interest? Is that within this timeline?
    - Response: Generally speaking, there are several rules about how interest moves. In the past, the PCEF interest was lumped with the rest of the PCEF funds. The proposal to use PCEF interest came from the commissioner. Questions about the proposal should go directly to the commissioner's office. PCEF staff can host an executive session with an attorney so committee members have a better understanding.
  - A committee member would welcome a discussion with the city attorney to learn about the rules regarding interest.

- Another committee member supports having an executive session. He reminded the committee that the committee can also make recommendations to the code and funding.
    - Response: A code amendment is required to use the interest outside PCEF's goals and objectives.
- **Action Item**: A doodle poll will be sent to committee members to set up a lunchtime executive session soon.

- Sam Baraso recommends that the committee decide on the process at the February 28, 2024 committee meeting. Many requests are coming in for PCEF, and the committee needs to start communicating the process. He shared a list of considerations for prioritizing and determining allocations for programs and projects.
- Committee member questions and comments:
    - What is the allocation for this round?
        - Response: $40-$60 Million.
    - What is the timeline for the next round of Community Responsive Grants?
        - Response: A year from now.
    - Is that the swiftest we can go?
        - Response: Yes, given our staff capacity. We have an extensive hiring plan, and this conversation should be revisited.
    - Will we have a sense before the February 28, 2024, committee meeting of the size of the requests for RFP #3?
        - Response: We will share with the committee the volume of applicants and the dollar value associated. A month from now, we'll know which applications are eligible.
    - What is the total amount allocated for the community-responsive grants in the CIP?
        - Response: I don't recall exactly. It is about $190 Million.
    - After last week, how much has been allocated for the city?
        - Response: We will need to get back to you with the exact amount, but it is over $500 Million.
    - Can you provide a budget synopsis by email?
        - Response: Yes.
    - **Action Item**: Staff will send a budget synopsis.
    - A committee member requested a detailed analysis of how much funding is going to CBOs and city agencies. She asked that the analysis show to what degree funding will be funneled through city agencies to CBOs.
        - Response: Staff will follow up with tables and narratives. It will be inadequate because it is difficult to determine right now what funding will go to contractors and CBOs.
    - At a previous meeting, representatives from an Energy Just Economy presented on participatory budgeting for accountability. They would like participatory budgeting as a mechanism for PCEF funding when revenue exceeds expectations and is allocated to the community.

- This is a good time to rethink our approach. This is an opportunity to challenge groups to rethink how to define community, promote coalition building between government and community, and learn from other cities.
- Can we streamline the community-responsive grant application process? The process makes it almost impossible to be successful and to participate. He would like to join a committee to streamline the community-responsive grant application process or sit down with community members to find ways to improve the process.
  - Response: Staff will share their experience with the Community Responsive Grants program and are happy to work through the application.
- The committee spent time simplifying the grantmaking process three years ago. A committee member would like to learn more to understand the disconnect.
- A committee member agrees with reviewing the grantmaking process and remembers giving feedback about making the process easier for RA. She is unsure how much was implemented. PCEF has been unsuccessful in creating an RA coalition.
- A committee member agrees that PCEF can support coalition-building and collaboration. There is an opportunity to rethink the grantmaking approach.

- Sam Baraso reminded the committee that benefits for priority populations were the core focus of the CIP, which was guided by layers of community engagement. He noted the Climate Emergency Workplan can also guide PCEF's work.
- Sam Baraso reviewed considerations for soliciting, evaluating, and recommending allocation proposals. He shared the pros and cons of three draft options for consideration.
  1. **Solicit proposals to allocate remaining forecasted funds ($158 Million) in time for the Mayor's Proposed Budget.** This option is rapid and less inclusive. There is a narrow window for proposed submission and supports earlier climate investment work.
  2. **Solicit proposals to allocate a portion of remaining forecast funds ($X Million of $158 Million) in time for the Mayor's Proposed Budget.** This option is rapid. There is a narrow window for the proposed submission, and it supports earlier climate work. It creates opportunities for community collaboration and amendments based on feedback from RFP#3.
  3. **Develop a process that supports more collaborative proposals in time for the Fall BMP.** This option sets a longer timeline. It creates opportunities for more collaboration and larger form projects. It's more inclusive and can be responsive to feedback from RFP #3.
- Committee member temperature check:
  - One committee member would like all funding to go to the community. She supports option three.
  - One committee member doesn't see a rush. He suggests amending the CIP to $1.5 or $2 Billion. The committee decides where the additional funding goes within the CIP. One day, the forecast will be lower, and the committee will need a process when cuts need to happen.
  - A committee member agrees with the first two comments.
  - A committee member agrees to reopen the CIP.

- A committee member supports option three. They would like to open the CIP and increase funding for strategic programs.
- A committee member supports option three and is certain the community knows how to use funds best. He is worried nonprofits are also in difficult budgeting situations. He is concerned that PCEF is distanced from the community and siloed into government.
- A committee member is torn. Due to the project scale and timeline, she knows the city would be the best option for implementing some projects. She is concerned that vital services will not be provided if funds are not allocated rapidly. She will support option three because her fellow committee members support option three.
- A committee member is torn between options two and three.

- The PCEF staff will bring options regarding how the committee can approach making a recommendation in Fall 2024.
  - **Action Item**: Staff will brief the new committee members on the grantmaking process.

**COMMITTEE WORKGROUP AND SUBCOMMITTEES**: SAM BARASO, PCEF

- PCEF needs committee members to serve on the Recruitment Subcommittee, Strategic Program 8 Equitable Tree Canopy Workgroup, and Strategic Program 15: Federal Climate and Equity Funding Opportunities Workgroup. Sam Baraso shared additional committee engagement areas.

- **Action Item**: Staff will connect with committee members regarding filling seats for the Recruitment Subcommittee and two workgroups.
- **Action Item:** Megan Horst will follow up with Paul Lumley, who will be absent at the committee meeting on February 28, 2024.

- A co-chair clarified that the committee is still deliberating and has not decided today.

- **Action Item**: Committee members interested in developing the agenda for the next meeting should communicate with Megan Horst or Ranfis Giannettino Villatoro.

**THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:01 PM**

**NEXT MEETING**: The next virtual meeting will be on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 6:00 PM—8:30 PM.

Submitted by Camerina Galván, Notetaker, Galvan Consulting LLC.