

**Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) Grants Committee**  
**1/28/20 MEETING MINUTES**

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

**Committee Members not present:** none

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

**MEETING DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS**

- **January 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes.** Committee accepted 1/14/20 meeting minutes.

**OUTSTANDING REQUESTS**

- Staff presentation of plan to address need for input from indigenous community

**MEETING SUMMARY NOTES**

**A) Public meeting called to order.**

- Opening inspiration: Sam Baraso – reading of poem “There is beauty” written by Njeri Wangari in honor of Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize winner and environmental and political activist.
- Sam provided an update on proposed program development timeline, working back from releasing the Request for Proposals (RFP) in June 2020. The timeline includes two public comment periods to solicit feedback on the guiding principles of the program and the draft grant criteria for application review in year one. The timeline also includes two months for applicants to respond to the RFP and two months set aside to complete technical, staff, and Committee review.
  - Questions and comments from the Committee:
    - Robin: Is this timeline tentative?
      - Sam: We anticipate the two months for the RFP and two months for review as a minimum time we’ll need.
    - Shanice: Is there an estimate on the number of applications to be reviewed?
      - Sam: We don’t have a number for an estimate.
    - Faith: Will you be hiring?
      - Sam: We will have budget proposals to enable more hiring.
    - Maria: Can you clarify when the review starts for the Committee?
      - Cady: This is a topic we are talking about in the grants subcommittee, which will be developing review process recommendations to come to the full committee.
    - Shanice: It would be helpful to understand the amount of time it might take similar bodies to review similar types of grants to provide a thoughtful response on the timeline.
      - Cady: This will be part of what the subcommittee looks at – staffing and contracting levels needed for various levels of funding.
    - Faith: If you are looking for additional volunteers, please let us know.
    - Ranfis: Will this timeline document be posted online so folks looking at applying know what to expect?

- Sam: We expect to communicate this timeline more widely after getting your feedback and coming to resolution on a few more details.

**B) Public comment.**

- Four individuals provided public comment:
  - 1) Adam Boesel, Proud Ground Board Member, shared that his involvement with Proud Ground began because of his interest in homeownership, equity, and greening. He shared his experience in applying for a solar rebate program for five Proud Ground homes. While applying for this program, income requirements became a barrier because some families were just above them. Adam’s takeaway for the Committee was that if there are lots of hoops and complications, it makes it tougher for programs like this to be successful. He asked the Committee to be mindful of this in their design of the program.
    - a. Ranfis: Were there any specific criteria for selecting contractors that was burdensome or was the broader process burdensome?
    - b. Adam: It wasn’t about the selection of a contractor, but having a short amount of time to find families that would qualify.
  - 2) Jenny Lee, APANO and Alan Hipolito, Verde provided joint public comment. Jenny expressed that as the Committee gets deep into the work of developing the program, they wanted to share some considerations. She noted that non-profits can apply solely or in partnership with other entities such as government partners for funding. As one of the organization representatives who helped draft this language, Jenny shared that there is a broad spectrum of how nonprofit and government partners can work together in partnership – from projects or programs that are deeply community-led with some government support to an existing program that engages community as a routine part of that program. In Committee meetings, governmental agencies such as Bureau of Environmental Services, Multnomah County, and Portland Parks have shared their expertise to implement various projects to address climate change and create healthier communities. Jenny expressed appreciation at these agencies bringing existing resources to bear and implement frontline community-focused projects as many organizations have been able to collaborate on projects such as Greening the Jade or the Living Cully Community Energy Plan.

Alan provided suggestions in regards to how government partnerships are considered for funding by looking at the expertise and resources they bring. When government is bringing its expertise and resources, it may be a stronger match for the goals and values of PCEF. When government is not bringing meaningful resources including personnel to a project, maybe it isn’t a good match for the goals of PCEF and maybe it is weaker when the preponderance of the project or program is not from the nonprofit, but it is for the government agency. Alan noted that existing projects can add value to the work, but it is inappropriate for any government agency to look at PCEF as a new revenue resource for existing operations or to address systemic budget shortfalls as this is not aligned with the initiative. These considerations are the motivation for us to come to you today.

- a. Faith: Are there certain programs that are of most concern?
  - i. Alan: There’s always a concern about the attractiveness of this new funding as institutions with access to power – public or private, would try and justify

using it for themselves. I want to make sure that we drive resources to the community as it is not the responsibility of PCEF to have to deal with budget challenges.

- b. Maria: A question more for PCEF staff -- is there formal communication to Bureau partners regarding this issue?
  - i. Sam: We've had some communication with Bureaus and have identified the need for more communication to clarify how agencies engage with the program.
  - ii. Cady: Based on guidance from the City Attorney's office, PCEF funds can't be used to backfill budgets. This has been communicated to other bureaus.
  - iii. Jaimes: We are also communicating to those involved with permitting that might have a connection to PCEF implementation to reduce institutional barriers. This is an example of how we're trying to engage more proactively with Bureaus.

3) Jill Fuglister, Meyer Memorial Trust, introduced herself and expressed appreciation to members of the Committee taking on that role. As a fellow grantmaker, Jill offered Meyer Memorial Trust as a partner in delivering on the full vision of PCEF that frontline community organizations created and championed as PCEF is a new and exciting program in Portland that also delivers on the mission of their organization. Meyer has many lessons learned from over 40 years of grantmaking to offer the Committee and is committed to helping keep PCEF strong and resilient in the face of attacks to seek carve outs and exemptions. Jill noted that Meyer will continue to be investing in frontline community serving organizations as, for many decades, investment in these communities has been absent or lacking, and they want to make up for that time.

- a. Ranfis thanked Jill and expressed hope that this can be an ongoing conversation so there is a dialogue between grantmakers so that the program is utilizing best practices and have a product that's user-friendly.

### **C) Work session.**

- Purpose: articulate year-one guiding principles.
- Guiding principles convey beliefs on a high-level about how the program is designed and implemented and can serve as a framework to inform decision making.
- There will be a two-week public comment period to solicit feedback on these guiding principles in February. To allow for small group work, the telephone line was muted.
- Exercise:
  - Committee members were asked to read "Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Initiative 2018" and write out principles or values that came up in the language.
  - Principles or values were then discussed and Committee members grouped them into general categories.
- Key themes that emerged from the exercise included:
  - Justice – commitment to climate justice, social justice, and racial justice
  - Innovative and anti-colonial – not business as usual, community-led, and intentional; inclusive of non-traditional measures, processes, expertise, and priorities

- Accountable – transparent, accessible, responsive, and evaluative
- Climate action – climate-focused with economic and social co-benefits, local, greenhouse gas reductions, regenerative, and operating with urgency
- Community and workforce – centering and prioritization of frontline and BIPOC workers, businesses, and communities emphasizing BIPOC, skilled labor is a solution
- Community-centered - Deep democracy. community self-determination, community-oriented, begin with community.
- Based on this exercise, staff will draft guiding principles to provide for Committee review in a subsequent meeting.

**D) Closing comments.**

- Sam invited committee members to use the time set aside at the end of each meeting for committee member comments to share anything relevant to the group including things they have learned, meetings they have attended, resources they are aware of and think bring value, etc.
- Ranfis shared that he attended the workforce and contractor equity design session that was held on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. He thanked staff especially Janet Hammer who put the event together and appreciated the range of attendees who were experts in fields such as large construction, small business, or workforce training. Takeaways that stuck out for him from the meeting were making sure there is consistency in holding folks accountable to the goals/deliverables of what they're submitting in their applications, having consistency with other grantmaking bodies so we're not adding significant layers of paperwork, and how to leverage other funds.
- Cady noted that there will be a report out to the Committee on findings from this session at an upcoming meeting.
- Robin shared that he participated in a webinar, Financing Resilient Power in Under-Resourced Communities: A Foundation's Comprehensive Financing Initiative for Solar+Storage Projects, which talked about projects being done around the country particularly around solar and storage and applies to some of the broader work we're doing here. (Link to webinar: <https://www.cleanelectric.org/webinar/financing-resilient-power-in-under-resourced-communities/>)
- Ranfis noted that the Community Equity and Inclusion Committee (CEIC) will have its first meeting on Tuesday, February 4, 2020.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.**