

## **Clean Energy Advisory Board (CEAB) Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing Committee**

**9/4/2020**

**11:00am – 1:00pm**

### **FINAL MINUTES**

Hannah Coman, Committee Chair called the meeting to order at 11:02am. Carrie Hearne read the electronic meeting notice into the record. On a motion by Kruse, seconded by Towell, Bond, Kruse, Reisinger, Towell and Coman voted in favor and the meeting may proceed as an electronic meeting.

Roll call was conducted, and Coman, Bond, Kruse, Reisinger, and Towell were in attendance. There was a quorum of members present. DMME staff present include Carrie Hearne, Jordan Burns, and Dan Farrell.

Carrie Hearne of DMME gave a presentation on stakeholder engagement with respect to other Boards and Authorities that DMME convenes and facilitates, with guidance from the respective Boards. This convening role can include Board members, however if more than two Board members attend, it needs to be an official Board meeting and needs to be publicly noticed as such. The stakeholder meetings still need to be publicly noticed. Hearne stated that having DMME lead on stakeholder engagement helps the process in terms of ease of scheduling and having fewer administrative hurdles to clear. DMME to report back to the Board.

Chair Coman asked if stakeholder meetings are to be virtual. Hearne responded that for the foreseeable future that virtual/electronic meetings due to public health concerns and social distancing recommendations. Kruse stated that electronic meetings may present a challenge in terms of engaging member of communities this program is intended to serve, such as low-income communities. DMME and the Board should consider opportunities for more in-person interaction, which might include tables at events where written surveys could be administered (e.g. outdoor events such as COVID testing, essential workers outreach). There was discussion about other organizations we could reach out to. Kruse will pose question to Charlottesville-based community organizations on Sept. 15 and provide feedback. Other suggestions included farmers markets or food banks, but in general the focus should be on getting community-based organization involved.

Kruse suggested a small survey with adequate survey size, with guidance from partner agencies. Hearne stated DHCD Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) could be engaged, or weatherization providers to gather information from program participants. Bond asked how information would gathered and reported in a statistically valid way. Hearne said DMME is working with UVA on survey for another project and they could be engaged to help develop this survey. Coman said that accessibility (such as translation into other languages) will also be a necessary component.

Coman suggested a two-pronged plan to include 1.) electronic meetings; and 2.) reaching out to community-based organizations. Rachel Smucker from MDV-SEIA raised her hand and commented that having a trusted community leader along to help set up tables and make introductions will help build trust.

Bond asked about data collection and if organizations that are typically engaged in helping folks with income challenges can also be engaged in the process so that privacy and transparency concerns are met. Hearne stated that this could be built in as a first step, and developing a timeline and sequence of steps would be a good approach. Kruse suggested that lawmakers involved in drafting/passing the CEAB legislation may also be able to help engage stakeholder communities.

Hearne asked if it would be helpful to share the mind-map graphic in terms of which stakeholders we are targeting for engagement. The group reviewed the current stakeholder list/mind map. Kruse suggested that coordinating among the 12 major groups listed could be challenging, i.e. would there be one call with each group? Hearne suggested combining some groups into buckets so that fewer calls with questions specific to each group can be developed. The mind map will be posted on the DMME CEAB website along with the meeting minutes.

Hearne asked if gaps could be identified for starters. Towell provided a list of community based organizations by e-mail to DMME. Coman stated that we should cognizant of geographic diversity in terms of organizations we contact. Kruse suggested reaching out to Virginia Poverty Law Center, and state legal aid organizations (Virginia State Legal Services Corporation). This could be an all-encompassing way to reach these communities. Kruse will reach out to VA Legal Service Corporation to connect with local legal aid services. Kruse will also reach out to Blue Ridge area food bank that have regional reach as another network to tap into. Hearne clarified that we are building out a list of contacts at this point, and will reach back out about a survey or set of questions for potential participants.

Coman suggested that committee identify groups to begin engagement with now and asked about DMME's bandwidth to support this activity. Coman suggested developing a list of questions prior to this outreach. Kruse suggested solar provider and weatherization providers as first groups to contact. Hearne mentioned that since the solar industry Board positions are still vacant outreach to solar providers would be a good place to start. Utilities are another group that could be brought in early and are already familiar with the LMI solar program. Coman stated that IOU conversations are taking place, however this is in keeping with the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA) directive that the Board should engage with the IOUs about LMI program implementation more broadly.

Hearne stated that DMME has had conversations with LMI solar program administrators and will be able to hear from other LMI solar program administrators (DC Solar for All) at the Sept. 9 Board meeting.

Bond stated that Dominion will speak to the Board later this Fall about Dominion's efforts to engage low-income customers. Bond stated that gathering information and assessing feasibility are different, and experiences from other states may not necessarily be relevant to Virginians. Bond stated that the work of the Board has potential to become far-reaching and unwieldy, and wants the group to be cognizant of the number of meetings being scheduled and requested.

Kruse stated because of the timing and logistical issues that it is important to start the process to coordinate stakeholder meetings now. Coman suggested having conversations by the end of the year with: Solar providers, Weatherization providers, IOU conversations per VCEA requirements. Virginia Poverty Law Center (VPLC) and Appalachian Voices are other organizations that would provide helpful context. Coman asked what are action items and next steps in terms of setting up meetings. Kruse stated that survey process can wait until we get feedback from community-based organizations; most important task is to develop a list of entities and questions.

Coman – Develop/Circulate list to full Board first what are the questions that need to be asked? Send them to DMME contacts (Hearne and Farrell) Kruse suggested we look to other models of stakeholder engagement? Hearne will ask if CESA has list of questions from other states. Hearne offered to develop initial list of questions.

The Committee agreed that next steps would be to get initial discussions with solar installers and weatherization providers on calendar early October (DMME to reach out and initiate scheduling). This would be followed by separate IOU meetings in early November.

Coman moved to the Public comment portion of the meeting at 12:33

Joy Loving asked in general what sort of timeline the Board was looking at in terms of actually implementation of a program?

Hearne said there is no date on the calendar for a program launch. Board goals are identified and will be included in annual report. Coman suggested that a demonstration project has been identified as a first step, which could provide feedback useful to scaling a larger program. DMME has constraints around being able to expend funds to support demonstration project, due to COVID-19 budget freeze.

With there being no further public comments, the comment period was concluded.

Hearne ran down a list of DMME next steps:

- Boardmembers to submit questions to DMME on what would be valuable information to gather
- Hearne to reach out to Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) for best practices on stakeholder engagement
- Add stakeholders to mind map (state legal aid, foodbanks, Virginia Habitat for Humanity etc.) and post revised version to DMME website
- Set dates for conversations in early October with solar installers and weatherization providers
- Draft up questions for solar and WAP providers
- IOU conversations in early Nov.
- Sept. 10 Norfolk Qualified Opportunity Zone LMI solar program webinar
- Develop spreadsheet of potential contacts
- DMME will send Doodle poll for late September reconvening of this group

Hearne asked if having DMME facilitate stakeholder outreach/meetings is still viewed as the preferred approach? Committee members agreed that this is the best approach. Hearne asked if Coman is comfortable expressing what this committee's objectives are going forward?

Coman stated that the Committee's directive to DMME to: 1.) facilitate outreach to solar providers, WAP providers; and 2.) Begin process of developing survey questions

DMME will also share mind map with Boardmembers so that all key stakeholders are included and it can be updated. Hearne stated that DMME will update the Board on the SCC rule-making on shared solar regulations. Dave Eichenlaub is SCC contact.

With no further business to discuss, Coman thanked members of the public for attending. At 12:59 Coman asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was approved and meeting was adjourned.