

MVRF Advisory Committee Meeting  
Meeting date: 6/2/2022  
Location: Via Zoom

Attendees:

AGO: ETD Chief Nate Forster, Elizabeth Mahoney, Adriana Bakhos.

DOER: Commissioner Patrick Woodcock, Maggie McCarey, Alissa Whiteman, Danilo Morales Heather McMann, Patrick Lawlor (North Andover), Laurie Burzlaff and Joyce Losick-Yang (Andover), Evan Silverio, Tennis Lilly, Jhovanny Martes, Anil Navkal, Michael Armano . Ana Javier, Abel Vargas, Susan Almono, Evelyn Friedman.

Invited guest: Beverly Craig to talk on WFD

- AGO mentioned that we will work with the mayor's office to set up a time to talk because it'll be helpful to have their perspective. DOER noted, we have to be very careful about preserving the procurement process, particularly has to follow some strict statutory guidelines, which is good for the end results. It will give us some challenges, and that's why we hope you've been having these discussions and we'll meet with the mayor's office.
- We don't think that one organization can or necessarily should run this whole thing. We think that there are so many vibrant community organizations in the city and in the two towns, that would be hopefully a great addition to this and perhaps our nontraditional to the energy efficiency or clean energy space.
- AGO explained that we want to get into some of those communities that really are nontraditional to this, but that are so integral to the operations of the community and neighborhoods, particularly for the immigrant communities. And those who are represent, new residents of Lawrence, who either don't speak the language or have all those barriers that we are trying to overcome of the challenges of just everyday life to try and to access these programs.
- Maybe we can have all these discussions and hopefully get feedback with Lawrence, and we can expand our outreach and so that we get more and more community groups to this
- The City of Lawrence (COL) mentioned that once we do define what these components are, the most important thing is to just to nail that down, and then we can have a brainstorming session amongst with the mayor's team department heads and community organizations to figure out who we want to reach out to.
- The most important topic in this meeting is how can we make people aware that this opportunity is available, and then who was potentially going to bid in or join a bunch of different community groups to then bid in to do the work and get paid to do the work? That is a lot of what is happening in this first stage of the LMI program is really community building.
- We're not just looking for volunteers. Part of this is that they will be paid to run this program and to work with residents to access this access this program. This is something that has not traditionally been done in this space, although the program administrators for energy efficiency are trying to fund that sort of work.
- Lawrence has been a part of one of those groups, but that' really the intent for us is to fund some of this work so that community groups aren't just doing it out of their extra time. Everybody's time is precious, but these are important things to do.
- Advisory Committee member asked what we are looking for with this procurement. AGO responded that it is like one central organization, we are thinking we'll manage a group of organizations or are we looking for many bids, and then many organizations will be contracted separately. Our hope is to have one lead organization like a prime organization, but many partnerships with other organizations. But we are trying to write the procurement in a way that would allow us to just apply for certain portions of the

requirements, so if there's like an organization that just wants to apply for like outreach on one specific thing, we're trying to make the procurement as flexible as we can to bring that organization potentially into a team. But we are hoping to make this successful, we think we need one prime organization that that helps manage the relationships with all of the organization rather than distinct contracts for everyone.

- Advisory Committee member asked if we have a timeframe on when the bids will be doing when we hope to award them. AGO said that we are open also to feedback on that our goal is to try to release the procurement in late June. We want to make sure as the DOER said, we're feeling pressure to bring these organizations on to help us finalize the program design, get the fun, start getting the funding out, but also recognize that it's summer, if we're trying to get local, like smaller organizations, they may need more time we want to facilitate more partnerships.
- Our plan is to leave this open for longer than our normal procurement. But hopefully, if we can get some good ideas on outreach that we can really let people know about this as soon as it gets posted. So maybe actually awarding in September or October.
- AGO mentioned that we are hoping that a couple of programs and funding opportunities can all come together, so that we can have a big announcement and come up and be in Lawrence, Andover, and North Andover to talk about these announcements soon. We've made some good progress with municipal grants and going back to this procurement discussion; we have been very careful, and it does shed a bit of light on as to what how this all has to happen. But we have awarded two awards in the towns, and we had some good starter conversations with Mayor De Pena and his team on what could be possible in Lawrence.
- In North Andover, they are they are really at the starting line of trying to update their municipal buildings in terms of GHG reductions and clean energy, energy efficiency. They've done some good work with DVR in the past, but they are at the point where they want to do an assessment of all of their town buildings. So, to start with, we did give them \$20,000 to hire a firm, which they hired through their procurement process to do an analysis of all of their buildings. We tried to focus in on a few buildings that we knew probably could benefit from this program. But that's the start.
- The group that they've hired in North Andover are going to do the analysis are going to produce a report which will help the town make some decisions about how they can spend this money, and then perhaps how they can spend some of the money.
- In Andover, they are working on a brand-new roof on an elementary school, they are planning to electrify the building. So, all the sort of the stars aligned with respect to this project that community is pledging quite a bit of money for it. We are funding a portion of a solar facility on that building.
- We never had the intention to fund solar, but the combination of the gist of all the factors that went into this because it will allow for the school to electrify, and to demonstrate that a 30 - 40-year-old school can get to that point where it's all electric and show other communities or other buildings in the town of Andover, that this is possible. It's sort of removed some of our hesitation to funding this program.
- Andover is so, so far advanced because of their sustainability coordinator and other things that they just are a bit ahead of others. We are going to learn a lot from this program. This funding that will help us in other portions of the overall font.
- The question that we want to talk through is one is there something we should be doing to raise awareness of the existing programs in Lawrence and increasing access to those and, are there things that be shouldn't be in addition to the existing programs? Should we be using any of the Merrimack Valley renewal funding for those either like new programs or are there programs where we want to have dedicated funding, like add funding to any of these existing programs that is really dedicated for Lawrence?

- We should be adding to finding ways to increase awareness of these programs in the communities.