

URBAN WEATHERIZATION INITIATIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 2010

Meeting was called to order at 10:08am by Karin Norington-Reaves

Attendees: **DCEO Staff:** Karin Norington-Reaves, Charlene Raickett, Don Falls, and Claudine Najjar
Voting Board Members: Deborah Harrington, Percy Harris, Melissa Williams, and Kurt Summers.
Ex Officio Members: Representatives Dave Winters and Ken Dunkin, Earl Bell representing Senator Trotter, and Jaimee Ray.

Apologies: Senator Donne Trotter, Lester McKeever.

RFQ Applicant Review: Ms. Norington-Reaves informed the Board that over 3,000 people have attended UWI Information sessions held throughout the state and that after reviewing all the RFQ entries for auditor training, it was evident who had attended an information session and who had not. It was clear that some applicants were relying on political connections to secure their advancement in this process; some applicants did not know what they were doing in preparing and submitting their RFQ; and some applicants were applying for the RFQ when it was clear that their services do not match up with the purpose of the grant.

A total of 49 applications were submitted, but only 45 were reviewed. The 4 applications that were not reviewed were submitted after the deadline and one solely provided a letter of support as its RFQ application. A spreadsheet was provided for all members of the Board detailing the following: Organization Name; Type; City; Region; Education Partner(s), Community Partner(s), Support Letter(s), Legislative Letter(s); Course Length, Training (Hands-on/Technical), Cost/Participant, Stipends; The scores of 5 independent reviewers (Out of 150); Total Score (Out of 750); and Average Overall Score. Ms. Norington-Reaves explained that applicants highlighted in green earned, on average, at least 80% of the individual scores (120+). Applicants highlighted in pink earned, on average, between 75%-80% of the individual scores (115+). All remaining applicants highlighted in blue earned less than 75% of the individual scores (below 115).

Bearing in mind the fact that the program only has 1.7 million dollars allocated at the moment (versus the 10 million that was projected for this time), Ms. Norington-Reaves proposed that applicants scoring at least 80% of the points be invited to move on to the second round; applicants scoring between 75%-80% of the points be up for discussion; and applicants scoring below 75% of the point not be invited for the second round. Representative Winters suggested that the cutoff point for applications to move on be drawn in an area where there was a noticeable gap in the scores as opposed to solely relying on percentages. Mr. Harris suggested that the Board use the aggregate score for determining the cutoff point. After discussing all the options, Mr. Harris moved to use the aggregate score of 572+ as the cutoff point, with all applicants scoring above that total be invited to submit an RFA; the motion was unanimously accepted. The RFA will be sent out to applicants on Monday, November 22, 2010 and the RFA Application process will mirror that done for the RFQ and the highest scoring applicant will then be asked to come in for an interview. Ms. Norington-Reaves also prepared the Board for an almost certain backlash from those applicants who were not ask to take part in the second round. If and when those calls, emails, etc. come in, the Board is recommended to forward their inquiries to DCEO.

Mr. Harris inquired about the Board's previous consensus to focus on certain target areas within the state for this pilot year of the program and Mrs. Norington-Reaves confirmed that those areas will be covered. Ms. Williams brought it to the Board's attention that all applicants of one of those target areas did not move on to the second round. Mr. Harris was concerned because he is very familiar with the area and knows that there are qualified potential applicants there.

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Ms. Norington-Reaves agreed, but stated that most people were interested in the Weatherization Specialist Training. Ms. Harrington suggested giving those applicants special review, but Ms. Norington-Reaves said that the applications were so poor in content and quality that there would be no way they could move on even if given a second review. She suggested reaching out to the area again in the next couple of months to attract more potential candidates and the Board agreed that it was a proper next step.

Logistics:

With the initial application process completed, it has become clear that some organizations partner and work together toward a common goal. As the application process progresses and it becomes clearer who the strong candidates are, those weaker candidates will receive recommendations to partner with their stronger allies in requesting UWI grant dollars.

Ms. Harrington was curious as to how many organizations will be funded at the end. Using another DCEO program with the same maximum dollar amount per grantee as an example from which to base her answer, Ms. Norington-Reaves explained that this other program had double the money and was able to fund 13 organizations. Therefore, it is to be expected that in this pilot year, approximately 6 organizations will be funded for the Auditor Training.

Ms. Norington-Reaves outlined to the Board what will be asked of applicants to provide when submitting the RFA. She also advised the Board to be prepared that when the time comes and grantees are being finalized, there may be instances where the organization is in poor standing with the State and therefore cannot be awarded the grant dollars.

Ms. Norington-Reaves then walked the Board through the updated Urban Weatherization Initiative Program Guidelines and Weatherization Specialist Training Statement of Qualifications. It was noted that new additions to the RFQ are highlighted in yellow. She then went through the tentative timetable for processing and awarding of grant dollars, most of which will depend on the number of applications that are received. The more applications received, the longer it will take to process, and therefore more time will be needed to properly review, discuss, and award the dollars.

Miscellaneous:

All members of the Urban Weatherization Initiative Board were confirmed by the Illinois Senate on Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Upcoming Meetings:

Friday, **December 19, 2010** 10am-12pm at JRTC/DCEO

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 11:39am by Karin Norington-Reaves

Respectfully Submitted,

Claudine Najjar

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity