

BOND REIMBURSEMENT & GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Subject Work Session/Meeting

18, February (02), 2025 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting on Teams

Committee Members Present

Randall Williams
Dale Smythe
Kevin Lyon
Branzon Anania
Larry Morris
Douglas Hayman

Staff

Heather Heineken
Michael Butikofer
Sharol Roys
Alex Bearden
Alex Watts

Additional Participants

None

CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

Heather Heineken gave opening remarks and called the meeting to order. Roll was taken, and a quorum was established to conduct business.

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Motion to approve agenda. Agenda approved.

REVIEW PREVIOUS MEETINGS MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes from December 3, 2024. Minutes approved.

Public Comment –

None

FY2027 Application Changes – Draft (Larry Morris)

Draft is finalized in April 2025 Meeting

Motion to approve CIP application as presented: Motion approved.

If anyone wants to look at one section in April, we can still look then one last time.

Electronic version is on hold until funding can be identified. GMS will be used to manage the application. The biggest benefit expected is an applicant cannot submit an incomplete application with online system. FY28 is the current goal of going live.

Beta testing was discussed.

Haven't thought that far ahead yet. GMS is super user friendly based upon past experiences. Almost 100% of school districts likely utilize GMS somewhere for grant management already. Great idea about Beta testing limited to a small group of districts. Need to have a few internal conversations regarding backend roles and administration of the system with our group.

Department side will still have a lot of manual database updates to do, efficiency is for benefit of districts at this point.

GMS ties directly into the state accounting system and will easily track submittals for payments. Communication is tracked back and forth. DEED will need to create an instructional document to publish online. When GMS was first rolled out in other divisions of DEED they did training sessions for the districts. DEED will need to offer similar training.

Each additional complexity added to application and online processing adds additional costs to the system. We will try to offer in person training by adding an additional day to CIP workshops. Online training will be offered as well.

Funding is needed to move forward.

Retro Commissioning (DEED)

Michael presented questions regarding the current evaluation process and the efficiency of identifying buildings in need of retro commissioning. They're retro commissioning or is it creating an unnecessary burden for the districts? Does the current requirement align with the operational realities of districts?

Randall asked: What are the concerns?

Districts use the form that is provided and input all the required data to assess if their systems are functioning properly. It seems like it isn't accomplishing the goal based upon DEED's review. Some view it as an unneeded burden.

Branzon stated that a lot of things are burdensome based upon the current assessment like how smaller districts are pieced together and can't always be separated out easily. Also, not easily trackable with solar, wood, etc. usage. Creates a lot of difficulties to accurately represent in reports. Otherwise, the idea to track energy usage and preservation is a noble goal.

Randall discussed how the EPA Energy Star form is easier than DEED's retro commissioning but it's more geared to gas, oil, or electric. There are three options to demonstrate compliance with regulation: (1) develop own tools, (2) EPA portfolio manager, or (3) DEED's form.

Kevin stated that he gets more information from EUI's system report than doing retro commissioning once a year.

Larry discussed how DEED developed its own form but thought it was not great since it was based on what someone else thought your usage should be. The idea of being able to track your EUI over five, six, even seven years so you can see the trends is very good. Baseline is different from one building to another, even prototypical buildings. The idea is great, but the current form is not great. Get rid of "other" section (bottom right-hand corner) and it'd be a lot better.

Kevin stated that umbers go up with community events and not sure if that's accurate reporting for schools.

Larry did not see an adjustment or change when buildings closed for Covid, even though it should've, didn't know until after the fact.

It appears that some things may have been overlooked.

Kevin got monthly reports for energy and utilized cameras to check what's going on monthly, but that is not helpful for once-a-year review.

Branzon stated that a lot of schools rely on generators and when city generators go down, back up generation is used and isn't tracked; usage looks lower but then it is actually higher. Utilize cameras with temperature readers to keep up to date with areas of schools.

Heather stated that Don Wheeler will likely help with the conversation in April's meeting.

Publications:

Swimming Pool Guidelines:

Michael proposed postponing this to next cycle (5 years from now) since nothing has changed and only a handful of school have pools.

Kevin stated that it would be good to convince schools that they really don't want swimming pools due to cost and maintenance. Let Parks & Rec have the pool.

Larry mentioned that it is in statute or regulation that schools can partner with boroughs with bond funds for part of what they use it for.

Dale said that you can add more about cost effective Alaska pool construction like water types and basics operation and overall running cost assessments.

Sharol said that our construction standards would also need to be updated if we made changes to this.

Kevin added that ADEC standards need to be in here mentioning all tests and additional monitoring that is required.

Randall stated that he is in support of pushing this out 5 more years.

Doug mentioned that student and water safety classes are considered a valuable asset until you start talking about actual costs. When it comes down to student well-being pools are important especially in coastal communities.

Heather stated fair point.

Randall stated that Pool Guidelines speak towards that point of importance of pools as noted by Doug.

Heather stated that for now we will plan to put them for review again in 2030.

Member Recruitment:

Heather stated that the recruitment period has been extended to February 15, 2025. Just now starting review process.

Committee provided compliments and thanks to Dale for his 8 years of service.

JaDee Moncur was recognized for his prior BRGR membership as he passed away in a plane crash recently.

Workplan Review:

Heather discussed the BRGR committee meeting in April and the CIP Application Workshop at end of April. A bill is in place to move application deadline up to July 1st of 2025. Moratorium of Debt Reimbursement is possibly going to be extended another 5 years.

Michael asked those who complete applications to please provide information about level of effort spent on producing applications.

Kevin added that the application itself isn't that hard; it's the background information that makes it difficult.

Branzon said that it's the work that goes in before the application. Difficulties come from lack of understanding or yearlong tracking of needed items. Small districts are at a disadvantage, but SERRC helps a lot with that. If a district isn't tracking the information day in and day out throughout the year, then it will be very difficult. If the work is done incrementally throughout the year the process is simpler. I usually figure it costs about \$2000 a year plus SERRC costs. Less cumbersome is always a noble endeavor.

Kevin stated that there is no point in applying for a project until it is fully documented.

Per Larry, doing the due diligence ahead of the project is a part of the application process.

Training for maintenance personnel was discussed. AASB/ALASBO Maintenance conference helps to train maintenance personnel.

Kevin suggests "Good School Maintenance" book.

Committee Member Comments:

Doug added the following commentary: Don't forget to use good education practice and start with the "why" when helping with new hire maintenance employees.

Motion to Adjourn - Meeting Adjourned.