



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 20, 2023
Virtual Meeting: Zoom

Executive Committee Members Present: Greg Abbe, Jo Ann Bodemer, Amy Boyd, Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony, Dennis Villanueva

Executive Committee Members Absent: Emmett Lyne

Other Attendees: Adrian Caesar, Ina Dasso, Rachel Evans, Ian Finlayson, Sam Nigro, William Rose

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Mahony, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

Commissioner Mahony motioned to move the meeting into executive session in order to conduct a preliminary screening of bids for the EEAC Workshop Facilitator Procurement. Abbe seconded. Abbe, Bodemer, Boyd, Mahony, and Villanueva were in favor. No Executive Committee members were opposed or abstained. The Executive Committee entered executive session.

2. Executive Session – EEAC Workshop Facilitator Contract

Commissioner Mahony stated that one bid was received for EEAC Workshop facilitation services and asked members of the Executive Committee to share their feedback.

Villanueva asked if only one bid was received due to conflicts of interest, but commented that Raab Associates is an excellent candidate. Bodemer asked if the Council needs to actively promote procurements to garner more bidder responses. Bodemer supported Raab Associates and their partnership with more diverse organizations, but hoped that more bids could be used as points of comparison. Bodemer asked if Councilors could share EEAC procurements among their networks. Commissioner Mahony said that COMMBUYS, the platform for public procurements in Massachusetts, has shareable links that Councilors can distribute. Commissioner

Mahony added that procurements are shared with EEAC distribution lists and existing state contractors.

Commissioner Mahony stated that the expanded Raab Associates team includes Birch Road and Common Spark Consulting, which will complement Raab's extensive experience with these organizations' perspectives from working in other states such as California. Bodemer agreed, but indicated that the bid did not clarify who would facilitate each Workshop. Bodemer suggested that Common Spark Consulting facilitate discussions focused on equity and low- and moderate-income programs due to their expertise in equitable program transitions. Bodemer proposed that the Workshops be organized based on topics instead of sectors since there are cross-cutting issues like equity and affordability that span across multiple sectors.

Boyd recalled that in prior Workshops, Raab Associates did more notetaking and transcribing than pushing for consensus on issues. Boyd suggested that Raab Associates push for consensus in order to move the Council and its priorities in a common direction. Commissioner Mahony said that the addition of Birch Road and Common Spark Consulting may change the dynamic.

Villanueva praised the Clean Heat Commission for its work, but said that the people supporting the Clean Heat Commission enabled successful outcomes. Bodemer commented that Raab's facilitation improved during the course of the 2022-2024 EEAC Workshops, but noted that Raab's personal direction can affect discussion. Bodemer emphasized that the Workshop facilitator needs to be objective.

Bodemer said that the bid submitted by Raab Associates mentioned Blair Rhodes as a contributor, but did not recall any facilitators other than Jonathan Raab during the 2022-2024 Workshops. Boyd replied that others may have taken notes or supported other work. Bodemer concurred with Commissioner Mahony that Birch Road and Common Spark Consulting are exciting additions.

Commissioner Mahony clarified that the budget submitted by Raab Associates did not account for in-person meetings or travel and noted that the EEAC has saved significant funds due to remote participation. Commissioner Mahony said that hosting remote Workshops is consistent with the Council's general preference for virtual meetings.

Abbe expressed disappointment that only one bid was submitted, which is a problem that impacts the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. Abbe highlighted the importance of public input and said that Raab Associates mentioned the solicitation of public feedback during Workshops in their bid. Abbe asked whether active outreach to solicit feedback from underserved communities was included in Raab Associates' anticipated budget. Commissioner Mahony said that the Department of Energy Resources is working with the Secretary of Equity and Environmental Justice to make recommendations for Workshop facilitation. Abbe noted that the request for proposals did not require that the bidder conduct public outreach or feedback activities, but Raab Associates mentioned the ability to support such activities.

Abbe motioned to select Raab Associates as the vendor for the facilitation of EEAC Workshops. Villanueva seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed or abstaining. Raab Associates was selected as the vendor to facilitate the EEAC Workshops by the Executive Committee.

3. Adjournment

Commissioner Mahony, as Chair, adjourned the meeting at 1:31 PM.

Meeting Materials

- Official Meeting Notice
- Meeting Agenda
- Bid Response
- Score Sheet