

Draft Minutes 6/19/2013 Database Subcommittee meeting

Massachusetts Energy Efficiency Advisory Council

Start: 10:05 am Wednesday June 19th 2013

Attendees: Ian Finlayson (DOER acting chair), Steve Venezia (DOER), Alissa Whiteman (DOER), Matt Saunders (AG), John Howat – (NCLC), Christina Dietrich (ENE), Eric Winkler (ISO), Bob Rio (C&I), Shaela Collins (PAs), Lisa Shea (NU), Steve Bower- Consultant

Sharon Weber (DEP – via phone), Tina Halfpenny (DOER – via phone)

Absent: Pen Loh (GJC), Brad Swing (Muni)

Agenda:

- Sharing of database RFQQ evaluation scores
- Discussion of merits of top 4 teams
- Next steps for procurement

Notes: The meeting was convened to allow the Database subcommittee to discuss possible interview and selection of one or more respondents to the DOER RFQQ for a statewide database ‘design’ phase. The RFQQ was put out to bid for pre-qualified database firms on statewide contract, and six firms responded.

Collins - Initial question about the interpretation of open-meeting law, and whether Tina could participate by phone, even if only listening.

Sharing of database RFQQ evaluation scores

Finlayson – circulated 2 sets of total combined scores from voting members: AG, ENE, ISO, GJC, DOER both with and without the consultant scores. 2 of the 6 RFQQ respondents had very low scores, the remaining 4 proposals had similar low-moderate scores, with no clear winning bid. Suggested that the group discuss and decide whether it was appropriate to select up to 2 teams for in-person interview.

Discussion of merits of top 4 teams

Winkler – There was lack of Energy Efficiency (EE) experience on all teams, and furthermore many proposals went beyond the scope of the RFQQ and designed the database is this first phase. If selected they would have most of the work complete prior to the phase 2 bidding, not clear that this is a good use of funds.

Finlayson – There was a lack of EE experience on all teams, and that is reflected in no teams getting high scores. However, within the scoring there were some significant variations, asked Winkler and AG to comment on their scoring approach.

Winkler – Scored some teams very low based on dissatisfaction with their ability to perform the scope, no teams were strong. Least bad team had at least a clear description of their process.

Saunders – Agreed with lack of EE experience. Difficult to score teams given technical nature of proposals, so also looked at how long companies had been in business – as proxy for likelihood of success and at their websites. One team had no website – the same team that Winkler considered least bad, most teams are young companies with limited experience.

Howat – Lack of EE experience, concern about ability of any teams to manage the process.

Weber – DEP has experience working with two of the six teams. Of the two, one was better to work with and although they did not have content experience they picked it up during the process.

Consultant – Described how they analysed the responses in coming up with their summary and scoring. Agreed with Winkler that the majority of teams misunderstood the ‘Design phase’ as requiring them to design the database, rather than working with stakeholders to agree on the requirements and scope of the database for phase 2.

Dietrich – Agreed with general concern around lack of EE experience.

Rio – Echoed concern about lack of EE experience, we would be paying to bring them up to speed. Suggested that not a good use of time to interview two teams given lack of confidence in any team to deliver on the scope.

Next steps for procurement

Finlayson – Having heard comments from the group it seems there is not the desire to interview any of these teams based on current proposals. Alternative is to seek a waiver from state Operational Services Division (OSD) and once approved, post a new version as an RFP to open market.

Collins – PAs supportive of going out to bid, and ensuring that outreach is done to potential bidders.

Finlayson – Given concern around lack of EE experience we have option to modify the RFP language to make this implicit requirement more explicit.

There was discussion of where to make minor edits in the last page of the RFQQ to clarify the EE experience requirement and suggested changes were agreed on unanimously.

Consultant – Given that many respondents proposed designing a database, not just the requirements for future a database design, it may help to replace the term ‘design’ with ‘scoping’ to avoid confusion.

There was a review of the RFQQ language for the substitution of ‘scoping’ for ‘design’, and there was consensus support for these changes. DOER agreed to file for a waiver from OSD to allow the procurement to proceed with the minor changes for clarity incorporated by the subcommittee, and as soon as approved by OSD to file an RFP not limited to vendors already on state contract.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50am