

**VLITE Board of Directors Meeting:
Via Video Conference**

**Minutes of December 16, 2020
Approved on March 10, 2021**

Meeting called to order at 1:11

In attendance:

Board members: Dick Marron, Richard Rubin, Hal Cohen, Peter Walke, Annie Noonan, Tony Klein, Pat Moulton

Others: Gabrielle Malina, Ellen Kahler, Geoff Robertson, Randy Drury, Kevin Loso, Ted Samuelson, Craig Peltier, Crispin White, Melanie Paskevich, and Ludy Biddle.

Approve Minutes of September 2020

- A motion was made to approve the minutes from September 16, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.
 - 1st - Pat Moulton, 2nd – Tony Klein
 - All in favor

Treasurers Report

- Treasurers Report read by Annie Noonan: As of December 11, 2020 there was \$75,665 in checking; \$1,706,182 in savings; \$8,681 in money market.
- A motion was made to accept the balances in the treasurers report.
 - 1st – Richard Rubin, 2nd Tony Klein
 - All in favor
- A motion was made to maintain a bookkeeping relationship with the firm of Fothergill Segale & Valley
 - 1st – Richard Rubin, 2nd Tony Klein
 - All in favor
- A motion was made to approve the draft budget
 - 1st – Peter Walke, 2nd Pat Moulton
 - All in favor

Update on Committed and Available Funds

Staff reviewed the unofficial report showing committed grant funds and available funds that demonstrate the board is spending within its means.

Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund DeltaClima Update

Geoff Robertson and Ellen Kahler of VSJF gave an update about the completed 2020 DeltaClima accelerator program and the pilot projects that resulted with electric utilities and businesses as well as an update about the status of businesses that participated in past accelerators.

Grant Presentations

3E Thermal

Randy Drury Program Director presented the application.

The request is \$100,000 to support private landlords of affordable multifamily housing. 3E Thermal is a statewide program that offers consulting services and financial incentives to building owners that are looking to retrofit affordable housing projects. The funds would be used flexibly as owner incentives towards health and safety work that must be completed before energy work can proceed and WAP and Efficiency Vermont funding then becomes available for weatherization and efficiency work. Only landlords who are in the 3E Thermal pipeline and who are serious about improving their building's energy profile would benefit from this program. Residents of the buildings meet certain income requirements for the landlord to be eligible for 3E services. The renters in these buildings would benefit from the health and safety improvements as well as the subsequent energy improvements, leading to reduced utility bills and stabilized operating costs for the landlord passed on to the tenants.

Rutland Housing Authority: Bridge Housing

Craig Peltier of Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Kevin Loso Executive Director of RHA and Ted Samuelson of Evernorth presented the application.

The request is for \$80,000 to put a 64 kW rooftop solar system on the site of a newly rehabbed, all-electric building in Rutland. The building has nine apartments that will house people recently made homeless and will offer an on-site program manager to help the residents access needed resources. The rooftop solar will generate close to enough electricity for the building's usage and is net metered with excess credits going towards other RHA affordable housing projects. The project is part of a larger statewide effort to establish permanent sites for housing and stabilizing the homeless instead of relying on emergency housing in motels. VHCB awarded Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) to 26 projects throughout the state. CRF funds were utilized in this project for the structural requirements necessary to support the rooftop solar panels.

VLITE staff first approached VHCB to seek a suitable solar project on an affordable housing development that could leverage CRF funds. VHCB felt this building was an excellent fit for solar because of its sunny location and all-electric gut rehab.

Neighborworks HEATSquad

Melanie Paskevich, Director of Operations and Ludy Biddle Executive Director presented the application.

Neighborworks is requesting \$125,000 to perform at least 60 energy audits and 35 weatherization projects in one year in the Northeast Kingdom and Bennington County (3/4:1/4). In LMI households this saves them money and reduces carbon emissions. The offering is full service to the client – educating them about the audit process and energy improvements, helping

obtain contractors, and with financing and rebates, and then quality checking the results. They also evaluate health, safety and shell issues that affect indoor air quality. The VLITE rebates would increase from \$1,000 in the last grant round to \$2,000 per household and the Efficiency VT rebates have reduced down to \$3,000. NEK is the most highly energy-burdened area of the state. Very low income customers are referred to the weatherization agencies so they can get the maximum amount of financial help. Neighborworks serves customers who are above the WAP cutoffs and up to 120% area median income.

60% of customers are under 120% AMI. Most are 85- to 100% AMI.

Vermont Adult Learning

Crispin White Regional Director presented the grant.

The request is \$300,000 for two years of an integrated education program (IEP) workforce training for weatherization, heat pump installation and solar panel installation. The program would train 90 to 120 unemployed and underemployed IEP participants, plus low income households who would receive energy services and businesses who are look for trained employees. Rutland County is experiencing particularly high unemployment. Department of Labor data and other sources show that there are many more jobs available than trained employees in these fields.

VAL has begun establishing crucial partnerships with businesses, and area agencies who are experts in the technical and training aspects whereas VAL will provide the platform for education, coordination, and implementation of the program. They have contingency plans and spaces available for working with appropriate physical distancing and remote learning when required. VAL would dedicate some resources to making sure students were equipped with Chromebooks and other technology, if necessary, to facilitate remote learning.

Votes on proposals

3E Thermal Vote

- A motion was made to approve the 3E Thermal request for \$100,000.
 - 1st – Pat Moulton, 2nd – Tony Klein
 - All in favor

RHA Discussion and Vote

Board members discussed net metering, resulting cost shift to ratepayers and whether VLITE should fund net metered projects moving forward. VLITE could consider requiring future solar projects to opt out of net metering. Net metering is existing energy policy and this particular project is in GMP territory spread amongst a large group of ratepayers lessening the cost shift, in this case.

- A motion was made to approve the Rutland Housing Authority request for \$80,000.

- 1st – Richard Rubin, 2nd – Pat Moulton
- All in favor

Neighborworks HEAT Squad Vote

- A motion was made to approve the Neighborworks of Western VT request for \$125,000.
 - 1st – Tony Klein, 2nd – Peter Walke
 - All in favor

Vermont Adult Learning Vote

- A motion was made to approve the first year of the grant for \$150,000 with initial release of funds contingent on achieving an agreed-upon level of project readiness, particularly regarding establishing agreements with project partners. The board will consider the second year of funding upon successful completion of the first year.
 - Members Hal Cohen and Pat Moulton abstained from voting.
 - 5 in favor, 2 abstain
- A motion was made to enter executive session.
- A motion was made to come out of executive session.
- A motion was made to approve the 2021 contract with Downs Rachlin Martin for executive director services.
 - 1st – Tony Klein, 2nd – Peter Walke
 - All in favor

The board adjourned at 4:05 pm.