

DRAFT
Hartford Climate Advisory Committee
May 29, 2020

Present: Erik Krauss; Courtney Williamson; Jack Spicer; Alan Johnson, Selectboard Liaison; Geoff Martin, Energy Coordinator; Ana Mejia, Community Member

Act 92 Compliance: Erik read the Act 92 compliance agreement.

Additions/Changes to the Agenda: No additions or changes were made.

Workshop draft RFP for Climate Action Plan 55: Erik Krauss asked how members should approach edits to the draft RFP circulated by Geoff Martin. Courtney Williamson suggested looking at the bigger issues, including Lori's comments about schedules for deliverables.

Geoff spoke with Lori who thought CAC was asking for a lot in the RFP. She thought that the timeline may not be feasible for many vendors. Geoff mentioned that Sept. is the date because it is in the resolution and because it's the end of a budget cycle. Geoff thinks the consultant could get at least a draft by September to get to the Selectboard up to date on what the action plan might be asking of them in the budget cycle.

Erik mentioned a presentation to CAC and the Selectboard as being a midway point where many recommendations will be discussed and then narrowed down for the consultant to focus on specific pathways. This would allow the Selectboard to be involved in the process early on and give them some buy-in. Jack Spicer mentioned that some vendors are already doing a lot of what the RFP is asking for and may be able to pull from previous work so it may not be as big of a task as it seems.

In comments to the RFP, Lori mentioned having a timeline for an outline of the proposed report and time for committee to review and submit comments for adjustment. Erik said this is something that the Town has done before so that it can get a sense of the content that it should be anticipating.

Erik asked if the presentation to CAC can be called the "Evaluation of pathways" and members agreed. This would be separate from review of outline and first draft. Courtney asked if there should be a review of outline and first draft in addition to Evaluation of Pathways. Are the review of the outline and evaluation of pathways separate? Erik said he was envisioning something fairly formal and would come before any review of outline so they know which direction to head in. Alan asked if the RFP should ask the consultant what they want the check-ins to be and what they propose the schedule of deliverables to be.

Erik has four progress check-in points in mind: outline, evaluation of pathways presentation, first draft, final draft. Jack said the evaluation of pathways should be first so that they haven't outlined a paper that goes down a path that the Town nixes during the evaluation of pathways. Ana Mejia asked if the presentation would be public to ensure buy-in of the public. Erik said selectboard meetings are public.

Courtney said that the RFP should ensure the vendor knows that they are presenting to the public and this is about socializing ideas. There was concern raised about keeping costs down up front.

Jack suggested not putting a timeline on it now but making the potential vendors know what the steps are and that there will be review periods in between these steps. Alternatively, Jack said that the RFP could specify a two-day review period after each step.

Alan wanted to know a review period would be causing the vendor to sit on their hands for too long. Courtney thinks this is a part of the process and consultants are used to it.

Alan doesn't think the Selectboard will be interested in participating in the review of outlines and drafts. Erik agreed with Jack's suggestion. Alan suggested putting forth a proposed schedule. Courtney agreed. Erik asked if Geoff had enough information to create a proposed schedule. Geoff said CAC needs to nail down a date. Courtney asked if September 30 was too fast. Jack suggested being flexible given the budget for this project. Alan said the energy consultant did a good job having quick turnarounds. Courtney said it could be called a proposed deadline. Geoff said Lori was concerned about the budget, timeline, and size of the project. Members all agreed to be flexible. Alan said to be clear that the deadline has to be during budget discussions.

Geoff proposed having a first draft deadline in lieu of a final draft deadline. Alan said that Hartford might not even have a Town Manager by September so that could require us to hold off on this RFP because the Town Manager has some control over the budget. Erik agreed that first draft deadline should be September 30 and suggested November 15 as "no later than" deadline for final draft so that budget workshops could include the proposals. Geoff said if the consultant can't get the final draft by the time the budget is being put together, the draft could be sufficient for informing budget discussions. Alan said the RFP could ask the consultant to prioritize those issues that can be folded in during this upcoming budget cycle. Others agreed. Alan said that since the Selectboard and the School Board created that date in their Joint Resolution, those bodies may need to okay any extensions. Alan said he can bring it up during his liaison report and Erik said he could ask the chair of the Selectboard how he would like the CAC to approach that.

Courtney sees a lot of agreement in the remaining comments on the RFP. Alan said committee members should go through the document and move on when there is not agreement and come back to that. The members went through the draft RFP and made changes to content and form where there was consensus until 7:12 when Jack moved to end the meeting, Courtney seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. A special meeting will be held to finish editing and approving draft RFP on Wednesday, June 3, 2020 at 5 pm.