

November 7, 2024 | 6:00-7:10 PM

Meeting Minutes – Community Resource Hubs Public Meeting

Link to Recording:

https://ctdeep.zoom.us/rec/play/4vKJemoBrW5huZ_2vSDzVGauUfN5HXzWHdtgbNRpKoxTGju2k-ZMQJkeExoquNcVsN4YC1omlwK7jUE.m8yq2hI94xckC_ng?canPlayFromShare=true&from=share_recording_detail&continueMode=true&componentName=rec-play&originRequestUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fctdeep.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2FDavm2mLoMW_SMaovfVIZsEiKi1l-8AAJrf1FohDpYaLDjJsxjFSY__J-aZN8V9.i8C3dbKzWSB_Qg9S

Attendance

Virtual Attendees: full list of registrants is at the end of the document

Presenters: Sarah Huang, Joseph Dickerson, Annie Decker, Peggy Diaz, Andrew Hoskins

Opening Remarks- presented by Sarah Huang, DEEP Director of Equity and Environmental Justice, (0.04-4:34)

- a. Sarah provided welcoming remarks regarding Community Resource Hubs Draft proposal and the agenda. Sarah reviewed the meeting Ground Rules, Questions and Answers (Q&A) and Chat features on Zoom for all the participants. Sarah noted the Chat is part of the public record. Public Comment Logistic were explained, all comments may also be emailed to deep.ej@ct.gov.

Community Resource Hubs Overview-presented by Josep Dickerson, DEEP Senior Advisor on Outdoor Equity, (4:47-15:15)

- a. Joseph defined a Community Resource hub and why the initiative was developed. The Resource Hub would set up localized resources and partnership across the State that would connect DEEP's programs in local communities particularly those in environmental justices (EJ) communities. This initiative aims to create an ecosystem for people who have deep rooted connections replicated through the Resource Hub.

Scope of Servies Expectations- presented by Joseph Dickerson (8:09-15:10)

- a. Joseph explained the five core areas being considered in this RFQ. 1) Community Engagement with DEEP programs 2) Assistance with access to financial resources and capacity building. 3) Educational programs on clean energy, environmental conservation, and climate resilience. 4) Outreach and access to encourage participation in DEEP events and opportunities 5) Workforce development initiatives and business creation opportunities. There has been an opportunity for workforce development in the fields of green and conservation jobs in addition to the opportunity for entrepreneurial ventures in the environmental field. We are hoping to find them within these EJ communities, to offer training, job fairs, internships. The goal of the hub is to connect resources from DEEP to support entrepreneurs in guidance on business planning and navigating environmental regulations. The hub can become a partner in helping translate complex words on websites so people can understand and to connect individuals in their communities.

Organizational Eligibility and Partnerships presented by Annie Decker, DEEP, Chief of Legal and Regulatory Affairs (15:33-19:55)

- a. Annie reviewed the eligibility of the program; the resource hub must be physically located in CT or within or near EJ Communities they serve. Entities can apply as sole entity or with partners. All business and nonprofits seeking to do business with the State of Connecticut must be registered with Connecticut, Secretary of State. DEEP is looking for Lead and Partner entities. Lead entities will be submitting the applications while Partners that apply must have established resources and knowledge of communities. DEEP staff will not be embedded in hubs; however, DEEP staff will work in collaboration with community hubs for workshops. The hubs will need to be open to the public Monday-Friday or occasional weekends. Hubs must also track the training and development needs of staff and participating subcontractors to ensure adequate staffing and supply of a diverse, equitable, and skilled workforce.

Funding and Contract Structure- presented by Andrew Hoskins, DEEP Chief of Staff (20:27-24:59)

- a. Andrew discussed funding structure that is set up in two separate parts. Part one is Base Funding and part two is Program Specific Funding and how they will support the goals of the hubs concept. The RFQ is based on availability of funding to the program, based on the current funding one or 2 hubs will be funded within no more than one hub in any given EJ community. The RFP is drafted to allow for future awards to be made to qualified respondents should additional funding become available through legislative budgetary action or federal funding. Base Funding would be for operational costs i.e. staffing this will be determined by the programs size. Program Specific Funding is service based- i.e. host series of workshops for the community to apply for grants. Any final amounts will be negotiated between DEEP and Hubs.

RFQ Submission Requirements and Evaluation Process- Peggy Diaz, DEEP Assistant Legal Director (25:49-34:40)

- a. Peggy discussed the Evaluation Criteria which includes Completing 12 Concept Questions noting some questions are multiple part questions. In addition, there are required forms: Workforce Analysis form, Statement of Assurance Form, and Respondent Certification. Proposals will be accepted via email; hard copy is not needed. Only complete proposals will be evaluated, review page 11 on the RFQ for all the requirements of the submission. Question number twelve focuses on Budget Proposals in the RFQ DEEP is requesting information on base funding requirements and the service-based funding, i.e. provide unit base cost for public meeting, cost of venue, materials, staff, overall accurate costs is preferred. Application Scoring was reviewed: (Service Expectations (50 points) and Organization Operations. (25 Points) the second part has a worksheet as part of the application. Financial Responsibility (15 points) Budget Proposal (10 Points Total).

Key Dates and Milestones-presented by Sarah Haung (34:41: 36:08)

- a. The timeline for RFQ Submissions was reviewed. The RFQ deadline is January 30, 2025. There are 8 weeks from the release date of the final RFQ to final deadline, to complete the narrative questions, budget proposal, workforce analysis, and signed forms.

DEEP Facilitated Q&A Session- facilitated by Sarah Haug, (36:28-1:00)

- a. Sarah reviewed Public Comment Logistics. There was a period for open question and answer. Please refer to recording time of (36:28-1:00.)

Next Steps- presented by Sarah Haug (1:02)

- a. Comments are Due Nov. 18, 2024.
- b. Office Hours- will occur next week Tuesday- Friday, November 12- November 15th, during lunch hour from 12pm to 1pm to answer questions, each day there is a specific topic.

Adjourn : 7:10pm.

Full List of Registrants:

Doris Johnson	Sonserae Cicero
Jelani Fletcher	Katherine Bennett
Cathy Fletcher	Peggy Diaz
Beth Bernard	Annie Decker
Kathleen Young	Andrew Hoskins
Maybeth Morales-Davis	Joseph DeNicola
Heather Stokes	Joseph Dickerson (He/Him) - CT
Kathy Fay	DEEP
Maggie Favretti	Jaunice Edwards
Lorena Venegas	
Aaron Goode	
Alison Gregory	
Carlos Esguerra	
lori martin	
Yessenia Santiago-Bejarano	
Leila Mekias	
Renato Calle	
Mary Taylor	
Moneer Azzam	
Mercedes Ptpartners	
Eric Hammerling	
Aurora Sanchez	
Stefan Keller	
Caprice Taylor	
Sheila Barney	
Anne-Marie Knight	