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DES Environmental Leadership Initiative
Encouraging Superior Environmental Performance Through Management Systems,
Recognition, and Rewards

Minutes of Stakeholder Meeting

Monday, September 17, 2007

1:30 – 3:35PM

29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH

Room 112

Meeting Purpose: a) Gain consensus on *Aspiring Leaders* program.
b) Update attendees on all aspects of grant project.

Attendees:

Rudy Cartier	NH DES
Tom D'Avanzo	US EPA Reg 1
Michelle Hamm	Monadnock Paper
D. Dickinson Henry	Jordan Institute
Amy Ignatius	NH OEP
Janice Kitchen	NH Small Business Development Center
Bob Minicucci	NH DES
Vince Perelli	NH DES
Sharon Yergeau	NH DES

Record of the meeting:

A. Tier 1, *Aspiring Leaders*

We started with an examination of the publicity brochure, distributed via email on Sept. 12.



This is the proposed program logo (open sourced):

While everyone liked this logo, some thought it would be improved by getting eliminating the hand from the graphic.

In response to that comment, DES's Public Information Center staff came up with the following (also open-sourced) alternatives:



Comments are welcome.

There was discussion of wording changes to the text in the brochure. Additional wording was requested to indicate that: 1) there would be no program fees to the applicants/participants; 2) adopting the best practices mentioned would lead to lower costs and competitive advantage for the user; and 3) that *Aspiring Leaders* could be used as a stepping stone to higher tiers of the program. The font in one section will be changed.

The wording of the “Benefits” section was discussed in detail. To clarify, the “Environmental Leadership Council” mentioned here is no more than the assembled *Aspiring Leaders* – this peer-to-peer support network seemed to need a name when the brochure was drafted and this is what popped up. The nature of this group needs to be better defined, and an alternative title of “*Aspiring Leaders Council*” was mentioned. We also need to add that this group would have face to face meetings, and that they would have the opportunity to hear from business and government leaders. Preferential access to the P2 interns from UNH Chemical Engineering Department was mentioned as an incentive for companies joining the program.

These changes will be incorporated into a re-write of the brochure.

Aspiring Leaders will be asked to implement a few “best management practices” (BMPs) and then report to DES on an annual basis on results achieved as a result of implementation. DES would have BMPs available for members’ use. DES has begun assembling BMPs internally. The pollution prevention program offered an extremely useful website for this; the “Topic hubs” at www.p2rx.org (http://www.p2rx.org/P2InfoNexpert/TopicHubs_2.cfm) which provides vetted BMPs organized by business sector. We will continue to work on this; the challenge now appears to be organizing and characterizing a very large amount of information.

A draft application form was handed out at the meeting, and people were asked to review it. This form is attached to these minutes.

The question was posed: Are we ready to roll the *Aspiring Leaders* tier out to the public?

Discussion followed. In the end, a November 1 target for public announcement was chosen. Between now and then, Tier 2 (*Leaders*, the Performance Track analog) should be fleshed out enough to include information on it in recruiting for the lower tier - applicants will want to know what future steps might be.

B. Tier 2 *Leaders*.

The differences between DES’s proposed *Leaders* program and EPA’s Performance Track were discussed. In summary, applicants would receive a visit of some nature from DES before program entry and projects/commitments undertaken by members would be specifically tailored to address state environmental priorities.

If an applicant had been inspected some short time before applying, would that visit serve for this purpose? Within reason, yes.

C. Other topics.

The financial sustainability of the overall Environmental Leadership Initiative was questioned. Can applicants be assured that the program will continue after the grant funding ends in 2009? There is no ready answer for this, but it may mean that a line item in DES's budget, and possibly legislation, would be required. It was suggested that DES could add an equivalent of the "systems benefit charge" surcharge to existing DES fees.

DES is working with the NH Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to augment SBDC's existing training programs to improve management skills for small businesses. SBDC is preparing a written proposal for development of a distance learning curriculum this winter.

DES is beginning to reach out to business schools to talk about adding sustainability concepts to MBA curriculums. The first step will be to talk to UNH's Whittemore School of Business and Economics. The other schools will be addressed soon after.

DES is talking to the Public Entity EMS Resource Center at UMass Lowell to get a short introductory EMS seminar for public sector staff later this year. Some discussion of what training DES might offer under this grant training ensued. A series of trainings around the state specifically for the members of *Aspiring Leaders* was suggested. Whenever we train or publicize, we need to ask toward the end, (roughly) "Based on what you've heard here, who would like to sign up for this program?"

Minicucci informed the group that he would be talking about the Environmental Leadership Initiative at the NHBIA and at the Environmental section of the NH Bar Association on Wednesday the 19th.

Note: Since I'm finishing these minutes on Tuesday the 25th, I can report that the presentations were well received. Two meeting attendees e-mailed me later looking to join *Aspiring Leaders*. At the Bar Assoc., there was some good discussion, from which I will report that we were cautioned that establishing a preferred class of customers was complicated – no one should be dis-advantaged because they (merely) obey the law. rpm

The activity, or lack of, in the financial sector work group was questioned. Minicucci stated that he needed to get back with Mr. Tremblay at TD Banknorth, but there really seemed to be some fundamental issues of two groups of people speaking different languages. We all seem to feel that the financial sector should be a key player, but no one (and EPA Headquarters has been trying to do this too, unsuccessfully so far) seems to be able to bridge the gap. Mr. Henry is interested in furthering this.

Next Steps:

The biggest next steps will be getting *Aspiring Leaders* ready for a November 1 public announcement, and getting *Leaders* sufficiently firmed up to support that.

The issue of the long-term nature of the Steering Committee was raised. Once DES implements the program, there will be a continuing need for the Stakeholder Steering Committee to advise and assist, although at a lower commitment level than during program design. It isn't clear now whether some legally-supported status for the committee would be needed. More input from environmental NGOs would be specifically welcome.

While we did not discuss this at the September 17 meeting, the next meeting should probably be before the end of the year.

Conclusion:

Thank you all very much for your time and interest. Remember, we can come and speak to your group if you think that would be useful. If you have any comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 603-271-2941 or at RMINICUCCI@DES.STATE.NH.US.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert P. Minicucci II".

Robert P. Minicucci II, PE
Special Projects Manager
Department of Environmental Services

Att: 1) Draft *Aspiring Leaders* application form