

MINUTES

Nebraska Environmental Trust
Grants Committee Meeting
Wednesday, October 11, 2023
1:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Acting Committee Chairman Quandahl called the Grants Committee meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. in Suite 310 at 2077 N St, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Advanced notice of the meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on October 2, 2023. The agenda and documents to be considered at the meeting were provided. The Open Meetings Act was posted near the meeting room entrance and on the Nebraska Environmental Trust website.

Roll call was conducted, and a quorum was present.

Members Present (5):

District I: Mr. Jeff Kanger, Lincoln.

District II: Mr. Felix Davidson, Valley; Mr. Mark Quandahl, Omaha.

State Agency Representative: Ms. Sherry Vinton, Director, Nebraska Department of Agriculture; Mr. Jim Macy, Director, Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy.

Members Absent (1):

District III: Committee Chairman Mr. Josh Andersen, Edgar.

Staff Present:

Mr. Karl Elmshaeuser, Executive Director; Ms. Holly Adams, Grants Administrator; Ms. Madison Moe, Grants Assistant; Ms. Sandra Weaver, Administrative Specialist.

Mr. Andersen arrived at 1:03 p.m. and assumed the position of Committee Chairman.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of September 20, 2023, Grants Committee meeting minutes

Motion by Mr. Davidson, seconded by Mr. Kanger, "I move to approve the September 20, 2023, Grants Committee meeting minutes."

Discussion: None.

Voting Aye: Quandahl, Davidson, Macy, Vinton, Kanger, Andersen
6 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

4. Determination of Eligibility of Applications for Grant Funding

a. Executive Director Grant Applications Not Eligible Recommendations

Executive Director Elmshaeuser noted that NET received 80 grant applications. As per Title 137, "The Executive Director shall review the eligibility criteria to provide an eligibility recommendation to the Grants Committee. The Grants Committee of the Board shall review each such application and shall make a preliminary recommendation of approval or rejection of the proposal for eligibility based on the recommendation of the Executive Director." Executive Director Elmshaeuser outlined his recommendations regarding which grants should be deemed ineligible

based on state statute and/or law criteria. Nine grants were brought forward for consideration by the Grant Committee for their eligibility recommendations. It was noted that the Grant Committee has the option to reach out to applicants if additional information is needed to make a determination. Discussion centered around public/private benefit assessment. As per Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-15,176(2)(c), "The fund shall not pay for private benefits or provide assistance to projects or portions of projects whose benefits are primarily private in nature." During discussion, Grant Administrator Adams noted that the virtual grant informational sessions, which were held in August 2023, had a total of 68 attendees and that NET intends to hold sessions prior to grant application rounds in the future.

Motion by Mr. Macy, seconded by Mr. Davidson, "I move to determine that grant applications 24-159, 24-134, 24-157, 24-115, 24-178, 24-146, 24-151, 24-145, 24-141 are not eligible and forward to the NET Board for review and approval."

Discussion: It was reiterated that the Grant Committee's recommendations will be sent to the full Board for review at the next Board meeting on November 2, 2023, at which time, the public will have another chance for public comment prior to the final eligibility decision of the Board. NET staff will notify applicants of eligibility recommendations prior to the November 2 Board meeting.

Voting Aye: Davidson, Macy, Vinton, Kanger, Quandahl, Andersen
6 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

b. Determination of Eligibility of Applications for Grant Funding: Grant Committee Not Eligible Considerations

As per Title 137, Executive Director Elmshaeuser discussed his recommendations regarding which grants could be deemed ineligible. Discussion centered around public/private benefit assessment and third-party considerations. Special attention was made during discussion to define the quantitative public benefit as outlined within each grant application, the scope of said benefit, and whether the subjective nature of the public/private benefit should affect eligibility.

Motion by Mr. Quandahl, seconded by Mr. Kanger, "I move that grant application 24-149 be deemed not eligible and that we forward that recommendation on to the full NET Board for review and approval."

Discussion: Mr. Quandahl noted that the Grants Committee's eligibility recommendations are based on a threshold that needs to be met for eligibility.

Voting Aye: Macy, Vinton, Kanger, Quandahl, Davidson, Andersen
6 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Macy, seconded by Mr. Davidson, "I move to determine that grant application 24-112 is ineligible for advancement and forward to the NET Board for review and approval."

Discussion: Discussion centered around the private/public benefit assessment.

Voting Aye: Vinton, Kanger, Quandahl, Davidson, Macy, Andersen
6 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

c. Determination of Eligibility of Applications for Grant Funding: Eligible Grant Applications Recommended to NET Board for Consideration

Motion by Mr. Kanger, seconded by Mr. Macy, "I move to determine that the following grant applications are eligible and forward to the NET Board for review and approval: 24-101, 24-102, 24-103, 24-104, 24-105, 24-106, 24-107, 24-108, 24-109, 24-110, 24-111, 24-113, 24-114, 24-

116, 24-117, 24-118, 24-119, 24-120, 24-121, 24-122, 24-123, 24-124, 24-125, 24-126, 24-127, 24-128, 24-129, 24-130, 24-131, 24-132, 24-133, 24-135, 24-136, 24-137, 24-138, 24-139, 24-140, 24-142, 24-143, 24-144, 24-147, 24-148, 24-150, 24-152, 24-153, 24-154, 24-155, 24-156, 24-158, 24-160, 24-161, 24-162, 24-163, 24-164, 24-165, 24-166, 24-167, 24-168, 24-169, 24-170, 24-171, 24-172, 24-173, 24-174, 24-175, 24-176, 24-177, 24-179, 24-180.”

Discussion: None.

Voting Aye: Kanger, Quandahl, Davidson, Macy, Vinton, Andersen
6 Voted Aye. Motion carried.

d. Determination of Eligibility of Applications for Grant Funding: Eligible Grant Applications with Notifications of Deficiencies

Executive Director Elmshaeuser noted that while grants may be deemed eligible, after they have moved past full Board approval for eligibility, there may be deficiencies that need to be addressed. These deficiencies may include, but are not limited to: issues with cash match, administration caps, or erroneously listed in-kind match. It was noted that if the qualitative elements of these applications were deemed insufficient after scoring was completed, then they could be put into the terms of the contract regarding project deliverables.

5. Grant Portal Scoring Process Explanation

As per Title 137, “The Committee may request assistance from the Executive Director to the extent necessary to evaluate each proposal.” Executive Director Elmshaeuser recommended that the Grant Committee members review the answers to grant application questions carefully while scoring. Grants Administrator Adams reviewed the scoring procedures in the NET Grants Portal for the Grants Committee members.

6. Next Meeting

The next Grants Committee meeting will be held December 6, 2023, at 2077 N Street, Suite 310, Lincoln, NE at 1:00 pm.

9. Adjourn

Committee Chairman Andersen adjourned the meeting at 2:42 p.m.



Karl L. Elmshaeuser, Executive Director