

Institute for Sustainable Energy
Board of Advisors

Board Meeting June 6, 2005

Members present:

Arthur Diedrick, Board Chairman
John Mengacci, Undersecretary, Policy Dev. & Planning Division, OPM
Shirley Bergert, Public Benefits Taskforce Director, CT Legal Services
Dana Kubachka, Dept. of Public Utility Control (representing Donald Downes)

Staff: William Leahy, Associate Executive Director, ISE
Laurel Kohl, ISE, Acting Secretary

Guests: David Carter, President, Eastern Connecticut State University

The meeting was called to order by Arthur Diedrick at 10:07 a.m.

Arthur Diedrick requested that Advisory Board members consider the meeting minutes of April 4, 2005. A motion was made by Shirley Bergert to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by John Mengacci. The motion carried.

2005 EPA - Environmental Merit Award

In May, the Institute was awarded one of the ten Environmental Merit Awards from the Environmental Protection Agency for our organizations role in preserving New England's Environment. The award was granted for the Institute's involvement with benchmarking state and municipal government buildings in support of the CT Climate Change Action Plan. A letter has been sent from Dr. Carter to the members of the Energy and Technology and the Environment committees of the legislature acknowledging the award.

2005 Budget Status

ISE met with the ECMB budget committee and the full board concerning the 2004 budget continuance. The ECMB has decided to reduce the 2005 payments from the utilities to the ISE budget in the amount of 2004 continuance funds. Some ECMB members supported carrying over the funds to 2005, rather than reducing payments. Taking back funds was seen as a disincentive for encouraging frugal budget management of rate payer funds. In precedents, other under-expended programs have been allowed to carry over continuances; however there are a number of C&LM programs that have exceeded their budgets.

The ISE board discussed the need for the utilities and the ECMB not to be view and treat ISE solely as a conservation contractor, but as a valued resource to the state. Strategies to maintain funding would include taking on a heightened advisor role, rather than more typical contract work. The board also discussed how the energy independence legislation and state agencies might change funding sources for ISE in the future. Bill Leahy was directed to draft suggested changes for future funding opportunities.

1st Quarter Report

Building Code workshops - ISE completed 5 training sessions with more than 60 CT local building inspectors on the International Energy Code and ASHREA updates adopted by the State of Connecticut September 2004. Four CEUs were offered by the Department of Safety for this training. Only 60 of the 178 state inspectors attended the voluntary training sessions. Problems identified included an intensive required spring training schedule for inspectors and the conflict of offering training on spring dates when the new construction is at its peak. The ECMB increased the line item funding for this project by \$50,000, which will allow for additional training dates in the fall. ISE is creating a DVD of the code training for distribution to towns, and has been invited to present an hour long session at the inspectors' annual fall meeting.

Green Campus

ISE is assisting ECSU in developing an updated Energy Conservation Plan for the campus. During the summer of 2005, ISE will be involved with both SCSU and WCSU in similar initiative. Questions by the board about including UCONN indicated that campus would require a year long effort of its own as it accounts for 25% of the CT state energy bill. It is expected that the campus plan will serve as a models and will lead to some common solutions. The board indicated that the process might be a saleable product for ISE.

HS Energy Curriculum

ISE is completing the research phase and has convened the first stakeholder group meeting. The group includes representatives ranging from administrators and teachers to CT Science Center and CCEF staff, the Utilities, and University resource personnel. Discussions at the first meeting has led to some adjustments in the range of the target program. The modules will address the CT State frameworks standards in Science, Social Studies and Language Arts and offer lessons in Energy Fundamentals, Energy Efficiency at Home and at School, and Air Quality/Climate Change. ISE had hired Karen Schroeder as a University Assistant, assigned to educational program development.

Multifamily Programs

Mike Schoeplein has been hired as a full time employee, acting as multifamily energy programs administrator and technical specialist for ISE. He is working with the utilities in addition to HUD and CHFA on this demonstration project. The project will utilize existing C&LM programs to bring conservation to this sector. John Mengacci mentioned that OPM is also looking to maximize the benefits of the state and federal programs and to leverage the energy assistance program funds.

High Performance Schools

CT Green Buildings Council has held stakeholder meetings and a public hearing on the high performance (HP) schools project. ISE has acted as facilitator and will help to complete the final report. CT Bill 923 is still in the legislature and would require all building projects over \$1 million receiving at least 25% state support building to be built to HP standards. The stakeholder process has helped to define the essential HP elements of the available standards. The state bill originally indicated using LEED Silver as the metric of building, but now had been diversified to include other programs.

In a related project, ISE is working with the CT Green Building Council to complete a statewide survey of Connecticut's public schools, focusing on how efficient the existing buildings are and active plans for renovation and new buildings. About 200 of the existing 1026 schools have responded. The survey data will be compared to the more than 100 schools that ISE has already benchmarked, and will help project the potential for energy savings and the need for conservation assistance to local schools. Preliminary results are expected by the end of June. Initial savings projections and benefits to the towns and the state validate the importance of the project. It was suggested that the Institute and CT GBC should send out a press release.

Next steps in the project will be to develop outreach to local communities and to determine how funding for the renovation projects with existing schools can be handled. A combination of ESCo performance contracts, state financing and bonding, municipal bonding and leases could be used in financing work on schools, with a possibility of aggregating project to obtain the best pricing. It was suggested that funding foundations might find the model to be attractive.

Biodiesel Project

ECSU has initiated a biodiesel pilot program. The project involves operating a 100 Horsepower boiler on B20 biofuel for the 2005 – 2006 heating season. This is a unique pilot for the region, being the first conversion on this size boiler in a stationary heating application. Fueling will be with B20, a blend of 80% diesel and 20% soy oil, requires no mechanical modifications. Transportation pilots have show decreased in emissions of as much as 30%. Testing before and during the heating season will demonstrate environmental effects.

CEAB and the 2006 Connecticut Energy Plan

Conversation continues with CEAB about the role ISE may play in developing the 2006 CT Energy Plan. The plan was developed internally by the CEAB in 2004 and 2005. CEAB is in favor of a web-based delivery of the plan, supported with in-depth examples and information, including explanations, best practices, case studies and links to CT initiatives and programs. CEAB has also discussed presenting public forums and roundtables on energy plan topics, an area that ISE is very interested in support. The CEAB meeting to be held on June 7th will address the role of ISE in support of the 2006 CT Energy Plan, which may lead to a 2-3 year ongoing contract for services to CEAB.

CHP Initiative

DPUC is very interested in promoting CHP applications, especially in southwestern CT where they could reduce Federally Mandated Congestion Charges (FMCC). Bill Leahy has been working with the Northeast CHP Initiative that is supported by the US Dept of Energy. The Initiative includes a Northeast CHP Applications Center at UMass and Pace Universities, and a trade association to support the development of projects in the region.

The next ISE Board of Advisors meeting is tentatively scheduled as a special meeting on July 12 at 9:30 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurel Kohl

Acting Secretary