

I-REN Executive Committee

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the I-REN Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Crystal Ruiz at 2:00 p.m. on February 21, 2023, at the Apple Valley Development Services Building, Conference Center South Room, 14975 Dale Evans Parkway, Apple Valley, CA.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Committee member Art Bishop led the Committee members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

- CVAG:
 - City of Indio - Oscar Ortiz
- SBCOG:
 - City of Rialto - Deborah Robertson*
 - County of San Bernardino - Curt Hagman
 - Town of Apple Valley - Art Bishop
- WRCOG:
 - City of Corona - Jacque Casillas
 - City of Jurupa Valley - Chris Barajas
 - City of San Jacinto - Crystal Ruiz

*Arrived after Roll Call

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

RESULT: APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

MOVER: Bishop

SECONDER: Casillas

AYES: Ortiz, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz

A. Assembly Bill 361 Findings

Action:

1. Affirmed the findings of the I-REN Executive Committee in Resolution Number 01-22; adopted on December 13, 2022, which are:

- a. The Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency on March 4, 2020, related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which State of Emergency continues to exist today, and
- b. State or local officials have recommended measures to promote social distancing.

B. Summary Minutes from the January 17, 2023, Executive Committee Meeting

Action:

1. Approved the Summary Minutes from the January 17, 2023, Executive Committee meeting.

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION

A. I-REN Proposed Programs and Budget Allocations

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, reported that I-REN's vision is to connect local government, businesses, and residents to a wide range of energy efficient resources to increase energy savings and equitable access throughout San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. To do so, they have established business plan goals in the public sector, workforce education and training, and have developed standards to support long-term energy code compliance.

Public Sector programs include the Technical Assistance Strategic Energy Planning and the Public Buildings Normalized Metered Energy Consumption (NMEC), with an annual average cost of \$4,508,000.

The Workforce, Education and Training Sector focuses on increasing the knowledge and capacity related to energy efficiency in the building industry as well as increasing the number of skilled energy efficiency workers in the region. Programs in this Sector include a Fellowship Program, a Certification Program, training for existing workforce stakeholders via webinars and on-demand training, as well as membership in California's energy efficiency landscape. The annual average cost is \$1,678,000.

Board member Jacque Casillas stated that there is a shortage of building inspectors and she would like to see a workforce Fellowship Program that does not require enrollment in a college / university.

Board member Curt Hagman indicated that there are already workforce development departments in place in each county for those individuals who are not in school. Perhaps it would be better to create a partnership since federal dollars are already being allocated for such programs.

Board member Deborah Robertson indicated that Employer Training Panel dollars can extend the amount of money for training opportunities. A portion of the Fellows' salary can be covered by these federal funds.

Mr. Dailey continued that the Codes and Standards Sector would also involve training and education, region-wide outreach, and technical assistance to understand the energy codes and compliance. The total amount for the Codes and Standards Sector is \$791,000.

The estimated total yearly I-REN budget would be \$10.227M. There would be no city contribution unless an on-call program is established upon the city's request for help on a specific project. I-REN would then provide technical assistance and energy support to design the project in the most energy efficient way possible, and use product types that would potentially make the city eligible for incentives.

Board member Art Bishop requested that future follow-ups include a timeline.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

B. Contract Approvals for Implementers for I-REN's Business Plan Sector Programs

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental Programs, reported that with its various programs, I-REN needs to hire the implementers who would develop the programs and handbooks to make them functional. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were released in August 2022, and out of the 13 proposals received, staff selected four, which are currently being negotiated.

Under the Public Sector, the Technical Assistance and Strategic Energy Planning (TA) Program will assist with contracting and procurement, installation of equipment, and ongoing operations. The Normalized Metered Energy Consumption Program will provide incentives for meter-based energy savings. The Public Sector Financing Program will help identify financing mechanisms and creative funding sources for various public sector jurisdictions and facility types in the I-REN service territory. The Energy Coalition (TEC) is currently being considered for these Programs.

Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) software development will serve as a one-stop shop for information on programs and incentives offered by other Program Administrators and will allow members to run reports on their energy usage, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, track projects, and more.

Alternative Energy Systems Consulting (AESC) is currently being considered for this Program.

For I-REN Marketing and Outreach (M&O), ICF Resources is currently being considered. ICF would ensure consistent branding and messaging across all programs and activities.

Under the Codes and Standards sector, the Training and Technical Support Programs will develop tools to assist building departments and the building industry. Frontier Energy is currently being considered for these Programs.

Board member Curt Hagman asked if there could be more than one consultant hired to compare and contrast their work to see which ones would be best.

Mr. Dailey responded that there might be more procurement in the second half of this calendar year, since there is a lot of the 2022 budget that is unspent and can be used in upcoming years.

Dr. Kurt Wilson, WRCOG Executive Director, asked Board member Hagman if he was referring to having the Board take action to allow staff to enter into an agreement with the preferred vendor, but also have a back-up vendor as a contingency option under certain conditions.

Board member Hagman suggested having an on-call list to avoid the 6 - 8 month waiting period as new vendors go through the RFP process.

Chair Ruiz asked if the contractors hired would be helping to identify outside funding opportunities.

Mr. Dailey responded that yes, they would. Mr. Dailey suggested having a standing item in the agendas to provide information gathered on grants / funding.

Action:

1. Authorized the WRCOG Executive Director to execute the following contracts:
 - a. Contract #2023-80-2080-001 between the Western Riverside Council of Governments and The Energy Coalition for Public Sector Energy Efficiency Program Services for an amount not to exceed \$7,500,000 for a three-year term with no more than two options to renew or amend.
 - b. Contract #2023-80-2080-002 between the Western Riverside Council of Governments and Alternative Energy Systems Consulting, Inc., for Building Upgrade Concierge (BUC) Software Development Services for an amount not to exceed \$655,000 for a three-year term with no more than two options to renew or amend.
 - c. Contract #2023-80-2080-003 between the Western Riverside Council of Governments and Frontier Energy, Inc., for I-REN Codes and Standards Program Services for an amount not to exceed \$2,347,000 for a three year term with no more than two options to renew or amend.
 - d. Contract #2023-80-2080-004 between the Western Riverside Council of Governments and ICF Resources LLC., for I-REN Portfolio-wide Marketing and Communications Services for an amount not to exceed \$750,000 for a three-year term with no more than two options to renew or amend.

RESULT: APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED

MOVER: Casillas

SECONDER: Bishop

AYES: Ortiz, Hagman, Bishop, Casillas, Barajas, Ruiz

C. Workforce, Education & Training Sector Update: Introduction of Fellowship Program

Tyler Masters, WRCOG Program Manager, reported that a Fellowship Program would be part of the Workforce, Education and Training (WE&T) Sector, which has a goal to develop job pathways and identify job demand for a trained workforce. With 52 cities in the I-REN territory, I-REN budgeted for one Fellow in each city every two years, beginning in fall 2023. There will be 26 Fellows from educational institutions who will be placed at public sector agencies annually across I-REN, focusing on energy and climate issues. I-REN would continue to partner host member agencies to develop a curriculum and trainings opportunities, and projects that can be scaled across the region to support I-REN initiatives.

I-REN has partnered with CivicSpark, a state-wide program focused on addressing energy, climate, and water issues.

Fellows would received a stipend as well as professional growth and training opportunities. They would have the potential to be offered employment after completing their fellowship with their host agency or at another member agency.

Board members expressed a strong support for a Fellowship Program.

Action:

1. Discussed and provided input.

D. I-REN Strategic Planning Update

Kenyon Potter, CVAG Director of Energy & Sustainability, reported that surveys have been emailed to all member organizations of the COGs as well as stakeholders; surveys are to be completed and returned by February 28, 2023. Results and more details will be presented at the next Executive Committee meeting in March.

Action:

1. Received and filed.

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Ruiz announced that future meetings will be held in person and old Brown Act rules will be in place.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Members will discuss future meeting locations.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board member Art Bishop announced that AB 627 would prohibit diesel-fueled, heavy-duty trucks from driving on any street or county road in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next I-REN Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2023, at WRCOG's office at 3390 University Ave, Suite 200, Riverside.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:13 p.m.