

Clean Energy Fund Oversight Forms

The first five Portland Clean Energy Fund grant committee members were formally enlisted before the Portland City Council last week.

Members of the Portland community, Maria Gabrielle Sipin, Megan Horst, Michael David Edden Hill, Chanice Brittany Clarke and Robin Wang will serve for four years as the oversight body for the \$54-71 million in expected grant funds that are meant to fund clean energy projects, green job training, and green infrastructure for underserved communities, including people of color and



low-income Portlanders.

These first five folks will recommend four more committee members to Mayor Ted Wheeler

The first five committee members to oversee the new Portland Clean Energy Fund were seated before the Portland City Council last week.

for approval. Once fully formed, the 9-person committee will release requests for proposals, review applications, and make recommendations for funding to City Council. They'll also maintain a public website for transparency, adopt a workforce equity plan, and a methodology for tracking the success and impact of the fund. The first round of funding will be available in the first part of 2020.

Help Supporting Diversity in Business

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far, half of those businesses are already actively involved, including participating in focus groups and networking, to further refine the program, which should go into full swing by the end of the year.

Mason said that Mackenzie had already hired interns for this summer before getting involved in the program, but that next year, diversity will become a bigger factor in hiring.

"We will make a more concerted effort next year to hire more people of color," she said. "It's still a process and we're still raising consciousness to what it means to be a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization."

Mason said her company is taking an internal assessment to see ways it can have a more equitable and inclusive environment and will also look at where it buys supplies and its role in helping small, minority-owned businesses.

"How can we help with barriers they are facing as a small business with our knowledge of running a business?" she said.

Shawn Uhlman, spokesman for Prosper Portland, said the city will take stock of the initiative as it decides how it will grow. Portland Means Progress has been a year in the planning stage, he said, and is still engaging focus groups and surveys to course-correct as evolves.

"Before we get more businesses to sign on, we want more (feedback) from a business perspective," he said.

Andrea Gall, project manager of Portland Means Progress, said that's how the early adopters fit in.

"The early adopter businesses are a learning stage, a small group to join us to see how we should grow going forward," she said. "And we want to make sure we're asking the right questions, to work on engagement and surveys on the folks impacted, on youth, on staff culture change. We are trying to

really pause and be thoughtful before we scale up."

Gall added that up to 150 businesses could be included in the program during 2020.

Tory Campbell, director of economic development for Pros-

per Portland, agrees that taking time to make sure the program is viable is essential to its success.

"We want a program that works and not a program that starts and stops, because in many instances, slow is fast," he said.

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