

Breakout Session Revolving Funds –March 29, 2011

Round #1:

Facilitator: Paulo Morais, Notetaker: Monica Gilchrist, Multi purpose Room

Attendees: Beaumont, Corona, County of Riverside, Santa Monica, Gas Co, Edison

Success Stories/Challenges

County of Riverside (Janet)

August of last year. First presented to management. Don't have GSA...rather Facilities and Economic Development Agencies merged. Funding scarce, no money left to do energy efficiency projects. Partnership with Edison/Gas Co for three years. Initiated idea of establishing fund built on energy rebates and capital funds (initial fund was rebate money with ongoing funding from solar rebates). Incentive from Savings by Design for Palm Desert Building significant (\$160,000). Used this as base and built onto it with solar rebates. Built on existing energy efficiency policy instead of creating new one. Interest bearing fund for all rebates and incentives, established guidelines and exceptions.

Exception:

- If rebate necessary to achieve level of efficiency
- Building in Blythe: Needed solar system, so they kept rebate (example of exception)
- Hospital needed more
- Agency made determinations

Gave executive office interest from fund, that achieved buy in.

Willing to share policy. Currently up to about \$200,000, hoping to let it accumulate. Monthly rebates still coming in.

Argument: We are paying for energy efficiency whether we use it or not. Will pay for energy efficiency (lack of) in rate increases. Head of agency approached individual board members and achieved buy in.

Recap:

Compromises initially, *champion* that sheperded it through.

Questions/Comments:

- Santa Monica thinking about splitting energy savings with 50% going into fund and 50% going back.
- County of LA has model. Alameda has model. See: www.californiaseec.org
- Are there any funding mechanisms to establish a fund (Corona)? On Bill Financing?
 - Using savings from project to create internal pool.
 - Energy Commission has some project specific funds, need to be able to identify funds.
 - On bill, combined with other options-concept of creativity in establishing revolving funds.

Paulo Morais recap (session 1):

Plan for the future! It is a slow process, but there is so much that can be gained. You avoid the knee jerk decisions, or lack of homework/knowledge.

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Round #2:

Attendees:

County of Riverside (stayed to share), Palm Desert, Energy Coalition, VCREA (Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance), Edison, Gas Co

VCREA:

Group of public agencies, Joint Powers Public Agency (like a COG). No funds from members for general support. Used to bring in new funding...

Worked with several dozen agencies to help establish revolving fund type mechanisms.

Made in-roads, have not actually established revolving funds.

Elected officials would like to retain control of their funds.

Not much discretion with shrinking budgets, tying up one more fund when discretion is limited already is quite a challenge.

Energy efficiency projects useful for water, county, waste water, enterprise accounts, all educational opportunities.

Questions:

Which funds go into the account? The rebate dollars or the lifecycle savings?

Fund education, helps the agency understand value. May see it as avoided cost or actual dollars. Leverage. How to use the savings (you have to spend to save). “Turning back the meter.” Not actually turning it back but slowing it down.

IF folks commit, then they see the benefits...

In the desert, the desert culture is very energy conscious...