

Meeting Summary
YBP Seasonality Project Meeting
Billings Sub-regional Team
Cody, WY. May 2, 2008

Welcome and introductions

Participants introduced themselves. Because many were new to the project, Barb provided an overview of the first phase of the project—Dr. Swanson’s research, the current work of the six sub-regional groups, and the companion transportation project. Barb was asked to put the overview information including key dates, into a one-page briefing that could be available on the website and handed out to new participants at each meeting and others. Barb will do this.

Research Contract

At the first meeting, the participants developed a list of possible cross-sub region challenges. At the second meeting, the list was added to and a project idea selected. Each sub-regional group has been given \$10,000 to award for research. Beth Hutchinson explained the concepts behind the selected project; to make sure capital investment is maximized, to provide a framework to bring considerations related to community to the forefront, to create a scenario capacity for commonalities, and to pursue economic development while respecting the qualities and characteristics that we value in this area. The Request for Proposals (RFP) contains the deliverables that are expected to address these needs.

Our group decided to develop a Request for Proposals and ask for proposals in response. Beth Hutchinson and John Thompson worked up the language in the RFP. It was advertised for two weeks and we received two proposals yesterday, the deadline. The proposals were submitted by the University of Wyoming and Montana State University--Billings. Barb explained that it is the desire of YBP to engage our educational institutions in this work so that is where the distribution of the RFP was focused.

Evaluation of Proposals

Prior to reviewing the proposals, the group discussed evaluation criteria. Five criteria against which to rate the two proposals were agreed upon. These criteria were:

- Qualifications of proposer(s) including education and interdisciplinary experience
- Quality of the proposal: addressing the deliverables, and how the information in the proposal was conveyed (clear, easy to understand, etc.)

- Whether the proposer(s) have completed previous projects on schedule and delivered what was requested (this will require follow-up checking)
- Breadth of experience
- Evidence that the project is well understood

Each proposal was read independently by the individuals present (excluding the facilitator and reporter) and rated Strong, Weak, or Unclear on each of the five criteria above. The ratings were combined into a master tally. The group immediately concluded that both of the proposers were qualified to deliver what was desired. The master tally while slightly favoring one of the two proposals did not clearly indicate a winner. General discussion ensued about various strengths and weaknesses of the two proposals. A straw poll was taken with opinions split. Then there was additional discussion. Following a discussion of what people liked or were concerned about, the group voted to select the MSU-Billings proposal with the caveat that they be asked:

- 1) to provide additional detail on how the deliverables would be met,
- 2) to provide additional detail on who would be doing what work, and
- 3) to clarify the comment qualifying the collection of other plans depending on cost.

Yellowstone County Health Impact Assessment

Jennifer Staton from Yellowstone City-County Health Department asked for a few minutes to explain the project she is working on. The Department has received a grant to conduct five health assessments. In this process a broad range of participants are brought to the table to talk about health and health impacts of actions. Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) are a new concept, similar to Environmental Assessments. The Department hopes their work can raise health issues to more prominence and serve as a model for future similar efforts in neighboring areas.

Wrap-up

In order to conclude the selection process, Barb will contact Dr. Adair at MSU-Billings to request answers to the three above questions. Barb will send the response out to the Cody meeting participants. If the response is satisfactory, Barb will put MSU in contact with YBP to execute the contract. If the response received is not satisfactory, Dr. Adair will be asked to address the outstanding concerns before proceeding to execute a contract.

The group will reconvene in late July or early August with the researchers for a progress report and to provide any guidance needed.

The fall summit for all of the six sub-regional teams will be held in Cody on October 7-8, 2008. More details will be forthcoming.



Billings Sub-regional group, left to right, Ingrid Eickstedt, John Thompson, Beth Hutchinson, Carla Lawrence, rating proposals at May 2, 2008 meeting in Cody.

