

## **Board Decision**

### **Staffing and Office Space**

June 9, 2004

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#### **Purpose**

Authorize three new staff positions and pursue new office space.

#### **Budget impact**

No budget impact this year. Currently, overall personnel costs are \$100,000 under budget for the first quarter; administrative expenses are \$70,000 under budget for the year to date. Three new staff will increase the budget for both program and administrative costs in future years while at the same time, avoid potential costs related to staff turnover, sick leave and productivity loss. The increased budget costs should not materially affect the percentage of the Energy Trust's budget for administrative ("general and administration") costs.

#### **Background**

The initial staffing plan focused on program design and delivery more than organizational infrastructure. This lean approach to staffing resulted in successfully launching a large number of programs quickly, attracting participants, and delivering benefits to them. The board has previously considered whether and to what extent positions should be added to provide organizational capacity to sustain existing programs, add new program and appropriately staff corresponding operational functions. At the December 17, 2003, meeting and budget discussion, the board authorized two program positions and supported two other positions previously tied to the FastTrack system maintenance. Consideration of other outstanding staffing needs and priorities was postponed until mid-2004.

#### **Analysis**

Staff has identified three priority positions to be filled: a customer service manager, a planning manager, and an administrative position. All positions are intended to improve and enhance internal efficiency and to maintain a high level of customer service to program participants:

Customer service manager: There is a need to provide consistent and accurate information about the large number of programs available and to route and match callers to the appropriate program. To do this well requires that customer service standards be established and communicated, provide updated program information and training on a regular basis and, interact and coordinate with service providers and partners. The customer service manager would oversee the call center, supervise the web master, and develop and uphold customer service standards across all programs. This position would also deliver customer service training and assist program

management contractors, call center staff, trade allies and utility customer service and account representatives in providing information about available program opportunities. Resolution of customer or stakeholder concerns would also be the customer service manager's responsibility.

This growing work load correlates with the success of our programs and the number of program participants attracted. Call volumes now average 1,200/month, having increased nearly 120% in the past year. Participants use the website at a rate of 7,500 visits per month, an increase of 40% during the past year. The area of customer service and satisfaction is also very important not only to the Energy Trust but to the Oregon Public Utility Commission and all three utilities.

Planning manager: The Energy Trust has placed a high priority on obtaining input for program design, tracking and communicating program results to multiple stakeholders with different interests, and continuously improving program delivery. The Energy Trust also makes its program decisions by working with multiple organizations, including internal functions/departments, program management contractors, utilities and state agencies. This complex process involves many stakeholders and data inputs.

The planning manager would be charged with leading efforts to streamline and standardize the process to integrate and track cost, savings, generation and other data from multiple sources and for all programs. The planning manager would also be charged with translating and simplifying such data into clear, consistent and transparent analyses and reports. The planning manager would also assist in managing a growing number of process and impact evaluations and market analyses. The addition of this position assures accuracy, more responsiveness to inquiries, and better intelligence for planning, evaluation and program improvements. This position also preserves the quality and value of evaluations.

(\* This position would be filled by Char Rollier.)

Senior administrative support: Energy Trust is very thinly staffed administratively. Currently, two administrative staff provide critical support to all program coordinators, managers and directors, and handle preparation and documentation of a large volume of materials. Because this work must be performed regardless of other demands, managers, coordinators and directors devote more time to administrative and clerical work than they should.

The senior administrative support position would relieve program staff of administrative responsibilities they are currently fulfilling, redirecting these functions to administrative staff. With additional support, responses to email and telephone inquiries will be timely, copying and faxing will be accurate, recordkeeping, documentation and filing will be maintained and overall office tasks and productivity enhanced.

These positions make it impractical for us to stay in our current office space, which is already over-crowded. Staff is analyzing options for other space that may be available at attractive and competitive rates.

## **Recommendation**

All three positions are intended to address areas that are currently understaffed and where the work load continues to grow. These positions would build capability to support program participants, relieve growing work load on existing staff, and help Energy Trust make the transition from start-up mode to a stable organization with manageable work loads.

## **Resolution**

### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING NEW STAFF POSITIONS AND OFFICE SPACE**

#### **WHEREAS:**

- 1. Energy Trust's initial staffing plan focused on program design and delivery more than planning, administrative and customer service functions.**
- 2. With the success of its programs, Energy Trust's work load is growing and emphasis on planning, administrative support and customer service assistance is increasingly necessary.**

#### **It is therefore RESOLVED:**

- 1. The Board authorizes the Executive Director to hire three additional Energy Trust staff: a customer service manager, a planning manager and a senior administrative assistant.**
- 2. The Board authorizes the Executive Director to pursue a sub-lease for the current office space and to find and secure new office space that meets the following criteria:**
  - Takes full advantage of current availability of commercial office space at competitive costs**
  - Breaks even with, or requires minimal cost increases, when compared to the remaining lease period for the current space**
  - Maximizes favorable lease terms**
  - Minimizes tenant improvements and corresponding costs**
  - Affords room for on-site board, advisory council, training and other meetings**
  - Is centrally located and accessible by public transit**
  - Keeps all staff together**
  - Enhances productivity and efficiency of staff functions and teamwork**
  - Provides flexibility for the future**
- 3. Staff will alert the board to the result of its analysis of office space options and corresponding recommendations.**

**4. In the event that new office space identified by staff meets some and not all of the above listed criteria, the suggested terms and conditions of the lease will be presented to the board for its review and action at a future meeting.**

Moved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by: \_\_\_\_\_

Vote: \_\_\_ in favor \_\_\_ opposed, \_\_\_ abstained

Adopted on \_\_\_\_\_, by the Energy Trust of Oregon, Inc., Board of Directors.