

City of Boston BERDO Review Board  
Public Meeting Minutes  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
November 25, 2024, at 4:30 pm  
[View recording here](#)

**Board Members in Attendance:** Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Gail Latimore, and Jack Nelson.

**Board Members not in Attendance:** Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata and Rashida Boyd.

**Staff Present:** Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, Dr. Claudia Diezmartinez, Aidan Callan, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

**Others:** Approximately nine (9) members of the public attended this meeting.

---

#### **Motion to Nominate Acting Chair**

**4:33 pm:** Environment staff D. Vasquez led a vote for Acting Chair. Board Member L. Jacobs made a motion to nominate Board Member S. Ellis to serve as Acting Chair. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All Board Members in attendance (5) at the time were in favor. The motion carried at 4:34 pm.

---

#### **Call Meeting to Order**

**4:34 pm:** A meeting of the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance, hereafter referred to as (BERDO), within the Air Pollution Control Commission, was called to order on November 25 at 4:34 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

---

#### **Roll Call**

**4:35 pm:** The following BERDO Review Board members were in attendance: Acting Chair Stephen Ellis, Hessian Farooqi, Gail Latimore, and Jack Nelson.

The following Environment Department staff were in attendance: Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, Aidan Callan, Dr. Claudia Diezmartinez, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

**Others:** Approximately nine (9) members of the public attended this meeting.

---

#### **First Agenda Item: Vote on Flexibility Measure Applications**

**4:36 pm:** Z. Chin presented information and details about the YMCA’s Building Portfolio application.

**4:37 pm: Board Q&A Session**

- H. Farroqi asked if the YMCA foresees any future challenges in complying with future emissions standards.
  - H. Rosa explained that while the current application focuses on seven properties, the organization has committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 for all its locations. Challenges include the diverse nature and construction of their buildings and financial constraints as a nonprofit. A Building Portfolio allows for more deliberate planning and prioritization.
- S. Ellis asked if there are any buildings for which the YMCA plans to apply for a Hardship Compliance Plan.
  - H. Rosa answered that there is no plan at this moment, but it might be necessary to have one in the future.

**5:42 pm:** Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve the YMCA's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member J. Nelson seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:43 pm.

---

**Second Agenda Item: Discussion and Update on BERDO Reporting.**

**4:44 pm:** A. Callan presented an update on BERDO reporting compliance after the November 15, 2024 extension deadline.

**4:54 pm: Board Q&A Session**

- S. Ellis asked if the City is on track for emissions limits and why public buildings were not included in the graph.
  - A. Callan explained that a recent graph excluded specific data to focus on outreach efforts directed at building owners who are not on track to meet the 2025 compliance requirement. The City will have more breathing room once a Building Portfolio is approved to meet 2030 emissions limits.
  - D. Vasquez shared that the City of Boston's building Portfolio has been postponed until January 13, 2025, due to timing conflicts and the December 9 Review Board meeting being dedicated to tenants.
  - H. Payne added that removing public buildings allows for more accurate data since the City has a large number of buildings that can skew the data.

- S. Ellis commented that he is concerned about Boston Housing Authority (BHA) having to comply with 2025 emissions limits since residential buildings have had trouble with emissions.
  - H. Payne explained that BERDO is in contact with BHA to create a plan to help them comply with BERDO.
- H. Farooqi asked if BHA is in compliance with reporting requirements.
  - A. Callan answered that the BERDO team is working with BHA to have them complete reporting requirements and develop a more efficient process.
- H. Farooqi asked what outreach the City has done to work with condo owners to engage them in BERDO.
  - A. Callan answered that door-to-door outreach has been conducted to gather property manager information, and new tools will help with building owner contact information. A handbook has been released that is dedicated to condo owners to help them better understand how to comply with BERDO.
  - H. Payne added that there was a webinar when the condo handbook was released. The BERDO team also mailed individual condo owners to contact the condo association.
- G. Latimore asked if the projected emissions compliance numbers for 2025 account for owners asking for flexibility.
  - A. Callan answered that numbers do not factor in any flexibility measures that owners might have.
- G. Latimore asked if a building is tax-exempt are they still subject to BERDO.
  - H. Payne answered that there are no buildings that are exempt from BERDO if they meet the size threshold.
- J. Nelson asked if there will be a special notification from the City notifying the owner that they will not meet 2025 emissions standards.
  - A. Callan answered that the BERDO team has contacted everybody who will not meet the 2025 emissions standards, and now that the reporting extension has passed, another notice will be sent out.
- J. Nelson asked if the owners' names will be released in the Disclosure.

- A. Callan answered that projected 2025 emission compliance will not be part of Disclosure.
- S. Ellis asked what the City will do if building owners contact them past the deadline and ask for flexibility.
  - H. Payne answered that the BERDO team will do another push to contact owners. Owners can explore buying RECs or paying ACPs since the ACPs will be reasonable for the first compliance year, 2025. Short-term Hardship Compliance Plans are also being accepted on a rolling basis if unforeseen circumstances exist.

**5:24 pm:** Acting Chair S. Ellis opened a public comment period.

**5:25 pm:** Acting Chair S. Ellis closed a public comment period.

---

### **Third Agenda Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes.**

**5:26 pm:** The Review Board voted on approving the [November 12 Meeting Minutes](#). Board Member H. Farooqi made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member G. Latimore seconded the motion. Three (3) Board Members voted in favor. One (1) Board Members abstained. The motion carried at 5:27 pm.

---

### **Fourth Agenda Item: Administrative Updates**

**5:27 pm:** Z. Chin shared the number of building portfolios and ICS applications.

Recipients of the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund are currently reviewing the grant packages, and the City is waiting for signed copies to be sent back.

The City of Boston's Building Portfolio application has been postponed until the January 13, 2025, Review Board meeting.

The application for the Building Decarbonization Advisor Program (BDAP) is open, which will help building owners develop zero-over-time plans.

An event in Allston-Brighton on December 10, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., will provide free BERDO assistance to building owners.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 9.

---

### **Meeting Adjournment**

**5:35 pm:** Board Member J. Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member G. Latimore seconded. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:35 pm.