

MINUTES

Low Income Energy Advisory Board
Wednesday, April 6, 2016
Operation Fuel, Inc.
75 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, CT

Members/Designees/Others In Attendance: Alyson Ayotte, PURA, Frank Augeri, PURA, Gail Lucchina, PURA, Carlene Taylor, DSS, Pat Wrice, Operation Fuel, Kate Quigley, 2-1-1, Kathy Wasilnak, UI, Michael D'Onofrio, DSS, Jeff Brining, NPU, Diane Duva, DEEP, Kasia Janik, OPM, Nora Duncan, AARP, Brian Biernat, DEEP, Wendy Wanchak, CT Legal Services, Veronica Gomez-Hernandez, Eversource, Ivelisse Velazquez, CNG, John Roberts, SCG, Mike Gurecka, NOI/CAFCA, Eddie Swift, Eversource, Rhonda Evans, CAFCA.

Welcome: The meeting was convened at 1:35 p.m. Pat Wrice chaired the meeting.

Approval of minutes of the March 2nd meeting: The March 2, 2016 minutes were approved with the correction of a misspelled name. Nora moved to adopt the minutes and Kate seconded.

Operation Fuel: Pat stated that there is no written report but they will ultimately have a detailed report. Pat stated that over \$1 million was spent on the winter program and the bulk of this was spent in the last weeks of the season. Pat advised that invitations have been sent out for the Power Lunch. She advised that it is being held close by and she encouraged LIEAB members to attend. She informed the group that the topic at the lunch would be the Apprise Study. The report will weigh in on whether it makes sense to have a low income rate. Pat advised that the two largest Connecticut utility companies do offer a low income discount rate in other states in which they operate.

LIHEAP: Carlene handed out the two standard reports and she advised the group that Chuck will still be involved but he has been named the new State Refugee Coordinator. Carlene stated that oil deliveries ended as of March 15th. She also advised that there were not many pending applications compared to the same time last year.

Carlene stated that the carryover amount will exceed 10% so they will be looking at what they will do with the overage. Typically, a supplemental payment is made to utility companies. Carlene advised that there is some flexibility as to what they will do. Pat asked if cooling will be considered. Carlene answered that they will be discussing this with OPM and it would depend on weather conditions as a trigger. Pat also asked how far over the 10% limit. Carlene stated that at this point it was approximately \$10 million over the 10% but they are still taking applications so that might change. May 31st is the application deadline.

Carlene provided numbers for the heating repair and replacement program. She advised that 61 heating systems were replaced and 34 oil tanks were replaced. She said that there were 14 heating system repairs. Pat inquired about the closing date. Carlene responded that they are staying open for applications through July 1st and repairs and replacements will be done through the end of that month. They may have carry forward from this program. Carlene said that the weather may have affected demand. They had \$1 million allocated and bumped it up to \$1.5 million in anticipation of stronger demand. She also advised that 1% of the initial funding has been held back by HHS possibly due to fighting the Zika virus.

Pat stated that this is a rare situation with this much carryover. She wanted to know if alternate scenarios were being considered by the subcommittee. Pat suggested that the subcommittee consider using some of the money for secondary heating sources. Carlene stated that this was done many years ago. Carlene advised the group that they welcome suggestions from LIEAB. She also stated that the subcommittee needed to finalize its recommendations and Nora added that the recommendations should go out prior to the June meeting. Nora also stated that the June agenda should include a vote on the subcommittee recommendations.

WAP Update: Diane and Brian reported. They advised that the funds were divided up across the state by the regions. They also stated that they have been advised by DOE that the funding for next year will be the same as this year. That total is \$2.45 million and they anticipate a carryover of over \$1 million.

It was noted that ABCD has decided to stop participating in this program. The other providers can apply to also serve this area or any other areas for that matter. Preference is given to CAAs. Diane stated that a hearing will

be held in April and it will be posted on the website. She also advised that comments may be submitted in writing or comment may be made at the public hearing. RFPs will be later this month and there will be a bidders conference held. Wendy asked if there were any anticipated problems and Diane stated that some concerns had been expressed about the RFP process. She informed the group that CAAs, by regulation, do get preference but if there are others that are qualified and wish to participate, the process should be opened up. It has not been done this way before. In addition, this will ensure that Bridgeport gets covered. Other CAAs have asked to participate and the currently participating agencies have the ability to demonstrate that they believe they are qualified to continue in the program. Mike asked if any areas will be split. Diane stated that they will not but that more than one provider can serve one area cooperatively and without overlapping. She also advised that if no one submits for an area they will immediately go out again seeking proposals so every area is served. This will allow agencies to focus their efforts and decide what their strengths are by making this a modular proposal.

Utility Matching Payment: Kathy provided a handout that showed that as of March 31, 2016, the total electric enrollment was 3,339 and the total natural gas enrollments was 28,904 for a grand total of 32,343. Kathy stated that this total was down 3,200 from the previous year. This may have been due to the weather.

Eddie stated that Eversource did not have an update.

Legislative Matters: No legislative matters were discussed.

Miscellaneous: Pat introduced Ivelisse and John as new members and stated that an email had been sent out previously. Pat informed the group that she is retiring at the end of June. She stated that a new chairperson needed to be elected. Diane asked if anyone had expressed interest. Nora stated that if there are fewer meetings that might make the position more attractive. She suggested that the group meet every other month. Kate asked about a call-in feature but Pat stated that there are always glitches. Pat noted that LIEAB

is the only group that routinely has all the stakeholders in the room and they always present a well thought out product. She told the group that this location would remain available for meetings. Wendy made a motion to go to every other month after June on a trial basis. Kate seconded.

Pat nominated Nora for chairperson. Nora stated that she is not an energy expert but if people are satisfied with her abilities in other areas she will accept the nomination. She advised that a vice-chair also needs to be appointed. Diane added that the importance of the position is the focus on delivering services to clients. She doesn't believe energy expertise is needed but that it is vital to continue this task of providing services. Wendy added that they need to ask any others to step forward if they are interested in serving as chair or vice-chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45. Nora made the motion to adjourn and Wendy seconded.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for June 1, 2016.