

MINUTES

Low Income Energy Advisory Board
Wednesday, February 1, 2017
Operation Fuel
75 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, CT

Members/Designees/Others In Attendance: Frank Augeri, PURA, Gail Lucchina, PURA, Carlene Taylor, DSS, Diane Duva, DEEP, Kasia Purciello, OPM, Nora Duncan, AARP, Chris Herb, CEMA, Taren O'Connor, OCC, Ruth Swift, NPU, Karen Adamson, Operation Fuel, Linda Foreman, DEEP, Kathy Wasilnak, UI, Edith Karsky, CAFCA, Michael D'Onofrio, DSS, Linette Jones, DSS, Eddie Swift, Eversource.

Welcome: The meeting was convened at 1:35 p.m. Nora Duncan chaired the meeting.

Approval of minutes of the December 7, 2017 meeting: The December 2017 minutes were approved. Diane moved to adopt the minutes and Taren seconded. The minutes were approved with no comments or corrections.

Operation Fuel: Karen informed the group that the Op Fuel program has been taking applications as of December 1st. There has been \$390,000 expended thus far with approximately 900 households served. She stated that this number is somewhat lower than previous years due to the low price of home heating oil. Karen did note that applications are beginning to pick up at this point.

Karen advised that they have begun tracking information concerning the ability to pay water and sewer bills. Operation Fuel has found that of the 700 individuals they have tracked since July, approximately 10% have reported problems paying their water and sewer bill. Some owe as much as \$6,000. They are continuing to collect data to assess.

Karen stated that the Apprise Study has been completed and it will be discussed at the upcoming Power Summit which will be held in May. She advised that she will be sending out invitations soon.

LIHEAP: Carlene distributed the caseload report. She stated that there was a decline in applications from the previous year due in part to the decline in the price of heating oil.

Carlene advised that \$35.8 million in funding was committed and 90% of the allocation has been received. She stated that to date approximately \$115,000 has been committed for heating system repair and replacement. Approximately \$40,000 has been spent on cleaning and servicing. Carlene advised that \$1 million had been budgeted.

Carlene stated that HHS is requiring consumption information from deliverable fuel vendors. She advised that there is a portal that allows them to collect the data. It is a pilot program that will branch out statewide eventually. Carlene stated that the Norwich Public Utilities helped out with the Norwich data.

Utility Matching Payment: Kathy stated that UIL had just under 3,000 people enrolled. CNG had 12,300 and SCG had 12,700. She stated that there were less customers enrolled than last year, perhaps due to the warmer weather. She advised that they are continuing to enroll people as they come in.

Ruth stated that NPU also has people coming in for benefits. She agreed that there are fewer applicants this year. She added that energy prices are lower and the weather is warmer than last year.

Eddie stated that Eversource did not have an update. He advised that the information would be available soon.

Legislative Matters: Frank spoke about the Eversource Credit Bureau Docket. He stated that the first batch of statistics will be submitted in May.

Frank also advised the group that PURA has an Outreach Program concerning electric suppliers. He stated that PURA staff went to New Haven Neighborhood Housing Services to do a presentation and he stated that they would be happy to come out to any of the Community Action Agencies to “train the trainers”. He said that PURA sends two staff people to do each presentation.

Nora advised that AARP has particular interest in the matter of Dominion looking to competitively bid in the renewables portfolio. They contend that this will keep rates down and keep them from shuttering the doors. AARP contends that Dominion is not intended to be included in renewables. She advised that nuclear power generation has low carbon emissions but it is cheaper than other renewables such as wind and solar and this would raise rates for everyone because nuclear power generators would be able to bid lower. AARP has asked Dominion to show them its books to prove they are in a fiscal crisis. Nora advised that a subject matter hearing will be held prior to legislation being introduced. She added that this would be AARP's main focus this session.

Miscellaneous: Eddie commented concerning the Credit Reporting Docket. He stated that 97% of customers will be impacted positively. He noted that it is only a very small percentage of customers that have delinquencies that in some cases are quite high. He stated that arrearages that are 60 days or more delinquent or greater than \$200 will be reported. If the customer has an active payment plan they will be reported positively. Eddie advised that the pilot start date is February 4th. Nora asked if there is a definition of success. Taren responded that there are benchmarks. Frank noted that there were nine data orders which all have multiple parts so there will be a great deal of information to review. He added that hearings will begin in December.

Diane advised that at the next meeting the Energy Bureau will present the Weatherization Plan. She noted that they are asking for the same amount of money as last year. Diane asked that the topic be included on the next agenda and advised that they will be happy to answer any questions at the next meeting about the matter. There will be a public hearing and public comment period and the Plan will be filed by May 1st.

Karen informed everyone that the Power Summit would be held May 3rd in East Hartford.

Carlene advised that the Board has to vote on the LIHEAP recommendations at the April meeting if possible. Nora stated that she would reach out to Joy to see if she would like to chair the subcommittee. She added that if the draft recommendations could not be ready by the April meeting she would look into the possibility of electronic voting. Nora also advised that a May 17th meeting might potentially be added.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2:29. Edith made the motion to adjourn and Frank seconded.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for February 1, 2017.