

MINUTES

Low Income Energy Advisory Board
Wednesday, August 2, 2017
Operation Fuel
75 Charter Oak Ave
Hartford, CT

Members/Designees/Others In Attendance: Frank Augeri, PURA, Kate Quigley, 2-1-1, Wendy Wanchak, CT Legal Services, Brenda Watson, Operation Fuel, Ruth Swift, NPU, Karen Adamson, Operation Fuel, Linda Foreman, DEEP, Diane Duva, DEEP, Kathy Wasilnak, UI, Linette Jones, DSS, Carlene Taylor, DSS, Joanne Balaschak, NOI, Michelle Lawson, CNG, Eddie Swift, Eversource, Chris Herb, CEMA, Kelly Sinko, OPM, Krista Ostaszewski, DSS, Michael Donofrio, DSS, Taren O'Connor, OCC, Kirsten Rigney, DEEP, Edith Karsky, CAFCA.

Welcome: The meeting was convened at 1:30 p.m. Taren O'Connor chaired the meeting.

Approval of minutes of the May 17, 2017 meeting: Kathy Wasilnak moved to approve the minutes and Wendy seconded.

Operation Fuel: Brenda informed the group that the Op Fuel program has reopened in July and budget problems with one half of the funding. 984 served households and \$300,000 in grant funding. Operation Fuel stated that 211 updated its information on Stamford/Norwalk/Danbury areas. The program closed for the month of June and reopened July 5th

LIHEAP: Carlene distributed the latest caseload report and introduced legislative liaison. She advised that the numbers were down from for the past 2 years, and stated a reason for this is a decrease in households applying for energy assistance. Much discussion about this, Eddie from Eversource stated that life threatening medical forms increased tremendously. Taren questioned if there is uniformity of the doctor certificate; Edith mentioned perhaps this can be dealt with in legislation; Frank stated that certain medical certificates may not qualify; Kelly stated that there is no income limit to medical certificates; Brenda questioned hardship and Frank mentioned New Start is a vehicle for middle/modest income clients. Carlene further stated total expenditure was \$65 million.

Carlene further stated that there is a carry forward limit of 10% of the funding. There was a decrease in spending because of the decrease in the price of fuel/oil. There will be a supplemental payment of \$295 (next week) and a 2nd credit from the MPP. The carry forward (10%) was also because the utility companies returned dollars. There is \$16 million over carry forward in which \$75,000 will be used to fund a feasibility study; \$150,000 to shelters and \$50,000 for DV shelters and the balance will be for supplemental payments. Carlene stated that fy2017/2018 budget is 81.1 million and target of 91,000 households to be served. Benefits across the board increased and a Level 5 established for furnace replacements. Much discussion about inefficient systems and the furnace replacement procedures. Carlene thanked all who participated in the 2017/2018 allocation plan. LIHEAP chair will present testimony on the plan end of September. Linette stated that the access link and video will be sent out soon.

The Repair/Replace program had \$1 million allocated and they expended approximately \$700,000, (558 serviced, 79 systems installed; and 20 oil tank replacement due to inefficient systems). Carlene stated that last year the program ran until July 1st and they will probably do the same this year. There were also 450 servicing and cleanings done as part of the program. She noted that some of the applications were foreclosures and those are not eligible and there were a couple of fraud cases.

LIEAB Subcommittee Update: Much discussion on outreach/education of the discount rate, legislative and research is needed. Comparative of the discount rates with like States i.e. Mass., New Hampshire, Rhode Island etc. Much discussion about the last DEEP report on discount programs and a discount rate. The timeframe for the recommendations for the Plan was discussed and is due in October.

Utility Matching Payment: Kathy reported for UIL for the period through August 2, 2017 (see reported distributed). She stated that they are halfway through the matches at phase 2 at 42% and they will be completed by November. Eversource electric - 56% success rate of customers and 48% success rate for gas customers. Of these customers, 60% of customers had budget worksheet. November matches will be with the supplemental payment. Wendy asked about the utilities stating that they

planned to put together a cheat sheet. Suanette replied that a cheat sheet had been done and has been distributed.

Legislative and Docketed Matters: Frank stated the MPP is under review in docket 17-06-31. August 10th interrogatories are due in. In regards to the hearing in this matter, the Parties to the proceeding have to request a hearing. Also, Frank stated the SCG public hearing will start.

Energy Assistance Program Payments to Vendors: Chris spoke on the large arrearage of payments. There is little to no payment, even though there is a 30 day payment requirement. May/June \$150,000 is owed and only 5-6 dealers are being paid. New Haven vendors are not being paid. CAANH no weatherization service next year. Diane explain that in the contract to invoice and show payment to vendor. Edith asked if the arrearage is a right-off for the utilities but still on the customer bill. Much discussion on this topic and Eddie stated that there is a company match but there is no double dipping. What lives in the SBC and does this benefit low income customers? Frank will look into SBC issue for next meeting.

Miscellaneous: Diane provided a Comprehensive Energy Strategy (CES) overview (powerpoint presentation) and answered questions about the hearing schedule for CES. Taren spoke about the State budget status.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 PM. Taren made the motion to adjourn and Wendy seconded.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for October 4, 2017 as agreed upon by the board.