

LIEAB Minutes

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

In Attendance: Nora Duncan, Tasheenah Brown, Brenda Watson, Tyra Peluso, Carlene Taylor, Kathy Wasilnak, Kate Quigley, Nora Benson, Tasha Perreault, Luz Rodriguez, Alyson Ayotte, Frank Augeri, Ken Miller, Alexis Warner, Lissette Andini, Wendy Wanchak, Brian Bernat, Joanne Balaschak, Guy West, Bonnie Roswig, Linette Pisani, Deb Polun

Item	Discussion	Follow-up
Welcome & Approve 12/04/19 Meeting Minutes	Chair Brenda Watson called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm. Members introduced themselves.	
Vote on New Chair/Vice Chair, effective immediately	<p>Brenda Watson has become chair due to Taren O'Connor taking a new position at OCC.</p> <p>Motion to have Wendy Wanchak serve as Vice Chair: Kate Quigley, seconded by Kathy Wasilnak. Motion passed unanimously.</p>	
Approval of Minutes	<p>Amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ruth Swift did attend the meeting, as did Bonnie Roswig, Lissette Andino, Teresa Washington, Veronica Gomez-Hernandez</li> <li>- Next meeting date is incorrect.</li> <li>- Stated that ABCD had a new director of personnel, but it is energy.</li> <li>- Carlene did not indicate \$24 million of fuel delivery had been expended; this may have meant "committed"</li> <li>- second to last sentence, add "vulnerable" after "eligible"</li> <li>- level 5 households run out in December</li> </ul>	<p>Moving forward, please note all people in attendance, even if they are guests.</p>

	<p>- DSS is in final stages of "mail in" application, not "online"</p> <p>Motion to approve minutes as amended: Nora Duncan, Wendy Wanchak. Motion passes.</p>	
<p>LIHEAP Update</p>	<p>Carlene Taylor and Linette Pisani provided a LIHEAP update:</p> <p>a) Applications processed/approved through 1/31: there has been a drop in both of these categories. Why the drop?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CRT &amp; ABCD indicated staff changes and warm weather were causes for being low. (Wendy says that she is being told that applications are not being processed timely; this is becoming a big concern).</li> <li>- Other agencies agreed that warmer weather has reduced calls/walk-ins. Other reasons – improved economy, more efficient systems, lower price of fuel.</li> <li>- Some agencies have reached out to prior clients, but many letters returned/calls not answered.</li> <li>- Carlene surveyed the CAAs about wait times for an appointment, etc. Most take walk-ins. CRT is problematic; she has spoken with CEO Lena Rodriguez.</li> </ul>	

	<p>b) Carlene has been in communication with HHS about state funding for LIHEAP. Our final funding level should be \$72-73 million. Final numbers not yet released.</p> <p>c) Heating system repair/replacement: We have replaced 49 heating systems, 29 oil tanks, 5 major repairs, 219 servicing of heating systems. Have disapproved 14 heating systems (mostly due to missing information).</p>	
<p>Operation Fuel Update</p>	<p>Tasheenah Brown reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on 12/2 launched. Have served 1,000 households so far (about \$500K). About 40% seeking primary; 60% secondary.</li> <li>- homeless intervention: 17 households since 7/22</li> <li>- home system repair/replacement: have replaced 24 furnaces or water heaters.</li> <li>- water assistance programs: completed second year last year and served 112 households. On 2/3, they launched two additional water assistance programs (grant from HFPG) – assistance with water bills for HFPG catchment area. Will also provide vouchers and grants for people in Aquarion area (Bpt, New London).</li> <li>- LIHEAP Action Day is 2/26 in DC – Op Fuel will be going.</li> </ul>	

	Brenda is working to get Eversource and UI to attend. Cong. DeLauro is receiving an award.	If interested in attending DC event, let Brenda know.
Matching Payment Program Update	<p>Kathy Wasilnak reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UI as of 1/31 has 2,668 enrolled in program.</li> <li>- Southern CT Gas: 10,690 enrolled.</li> <li>- CNG: 9,877 enrolled.</li> </ul> <p>Eversource – Nora Benson reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- numbers attached for matching payment and NewStart</li> </ul>	Nora Benson will provide success rate for 2019.
Legislative/Docketed Matters	No update	
Report Out by LIEAB Statute Review Sub-Committee	No update. Committee needs to meet. Wendy sent around the statute; a sign-up sheet to join the committee was circulated.	If you are interested in serving on the subcommittee, let Brenda know.
Clarification on interim hardship coding requirements	<p>Kate Quigley asked how the utilities work with someone who is self-declared as hardship. What do the customers need to say/provide?</p> <p>Ken Miller (Eversource) indicated: they will protect the account from further collection, give them 60 days to go to CAA; then customer can get coded as hardship.</p> <p>Kathy (UI) indicated: UI reps ask customers to provide something</p>	Kathy will send around the list of

	<p>to prove it and get them enrolled. For example, they can send SNAP benefits letter. UI provides a 13-day hold while they get the document to UI.</p> <p>Frank clarified that hardship can be for financial or medical reasons.</p> <p>Bonnie: thinks there is some confusion re accessing the CAAs for being coded as hardship versus getting enrolled in energy assistance. Joanne: CAAs are behind because they are doing energy intake, plus hardship coding, plus winter protection, NewStart, etc.</p>	<p>materials that can be provided.</p> <p>We will try to hash out this issue of customers being clear about their needs when they call utilities during the upcoming docket (1712-03).</p>
<p>Function of LIEAB: How Do We Improve MPP Participation &amp; Success</p>	<p>a) Frank: As a result of MPP docket, in July 2019, PURA created a docket on energy affordability. "100 Day Sprints" will include 4 separate tracks: 1) coordination on identifying hardship eligibility; 2) benchmarking; 3) guidance for medical hardship recipients; 4) targeted marketing campaign</p> <p>b) PURA would like to begin providing training to organizations, instead of just customers.</p> <p>c) UI and Eversource are holding information sessions on getting help paying electric bill.</p>	<p>a) Frank recommends participating in the forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Track 1: 2/24 @ 9:30 am</li> <li>- Track 2: 3/4 @ 9:30 am</li> <li>- Track 3: 3/17 @ 9:30 am</li> <li>- Track 4: May TBA</li> </ul> <p>b) Let Frank know if your organization is interested.</p> <p>c) UI and Eversource will share flyers with LIEAB. Please share</p>

		information with your networks.
2020-2021 WAP Update	<p>Brian Bernat provided an update/presentation on WAP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CRT (Regions 1 &amp; 2) and NOI (Regions 3, 4, &amp; 5) will be providing weatherization services. Goal is for 742 housing units.</li> <li>- funding is also set aside for T/TA.</li> </ul>	- if you have suggested changes, let Brian know, as this is a draft. You can also speak at the public hearing (3/19) or send written comments (by 4/2).
Energy Efficiency Board Website Recommendations	Linda Forman (DEEP) asked for feedback on the EnergizeCT web site. Brenda provided some feedback on using more simple language.	If you have feedback on the EnergizeCTsite and/or the energy efficiency board page on that site, let Brenda know.
Other	<p>a) Brian Bernat distributed a list of LIEAB members, which needs to be cleaned up.</p> <p>b) Carlene: This is the time of year when we look at the LIHEAP Allocation Plan, consider what worked well and what didn't in the past, and make recommendations to DSS and OPM on next year's plan. So, we need subcommittee members to work on next year's LIHEAP plan. United Way typically hosts that subcommittee. A sign-up sheet was distributed.</p>	<p>a) if you have updates from your organization, please let Brian know.</p> <p>b) please let Brenda know if you want to sign up for the subcommittee.</p>

	c) Carlene: they are showing energy assistance videos at DMV and DSS and also putting out brochures at the FQHCs. Also working with DOL.	
Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.  Motion: Frank, Nora Duncan.	Next meeting is 4/1.