

MINUTES

Low Income Energy Advisory Board
Wednesday, November 4, 2015
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, Linette Jones, DSS, Kasia Janik, OPM, Pat Wrice, Operation Fuel, Nora Duncan, AARP, Wendy Wanchak, CLS, Kelly Sinko, OPM, Margaret Bain, OCC, Kate Quigley, 2-1-1, Veronica Gomez-Hernandez, Eddie Swift, Eversource, Joanne Balaschak, New Opportunities, Inc., Kathy Wasilnak, UI, Julia Dumaine, BETP, Rhonda Evans, CAFCA

Welcome: The meeting was convened at 1:34 p.m. by Nora. Nora and Pat Wrice chaired the meeting.

Approval of minutes of the meeting: The October 7, 2015 minutes had one correction. Carlene stated that there had not been any vendor meetings held. The minutes should be corrected should be corrected to state that vendor meetings would be held. Wendy moved to adopt the corrected minutes and Kathy seconded.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT: Wendy acknowledged that most people have only had a chance to skim the document. She said the Board will need to thoroughly review the report. Wendy is not convinced they have gotten through the entire process of developing ideas. Margaret suggested that the conversation begin today. Wendy agreed and said they could start the discussion. Kelly stated that she liked the idea of people reviewing the report and sending comments which could be discussed at the next meeting. Carlene noted that while LIEAB members vote on this but non-voting members can voice ideas. There was discussion that the list of voting members needs to be updated. It was decided that Gail and Deb Morrell would update the current list. Pat Wrice felt that the members need time to study the report and she wanted the discussion deferred. Nora stated that if it is deferred then the subcommittee would have to work on

Thanksgiving. Nora suggested that the group discuss the parts they are in agreement on at today's meeting. Wendy said she would walk the group through the draft. Kelly thanked Wendy for all her hard work. Wendy said it describes the Energy Assistance programs with LIHEAP being the largest. Wendy stated that Carlene will have to review this section to be certain that it is accurate. Carlene noted a correction that needed to be made and Wendy asked that it be emailed to her. Wendy went through various programs and Pat asked Wendy to add Project Warm-Up. Pat stated that it is a significant program that is funded through the Southeastern Connecticut United Way. Wendy informed the group that there is a summary of efficiency and conservation programs and she would like everyone to review it and verify that it's accurate. Wendy noted that there needs to be discussion of the recommendations according to the five categories of the law. Wendy also noted that in the course of discussion there were ideas presented that were alternate points of view. Wendy included a couple of these and she said the Board can determine whether or not to include them. Wendy said the conclusion notes that there are subsistence programs that are as important as food and they are underfunded and insufficient to meet the energy burden/income gap. Wendy said that what she just went over was a general overview.

Carlene inquired about the single application. She asked who would determine eligibility and for what with a single application? Rhonda stated that a single app makes sense for energy efficiency perhaps but then for DSS the numbers may not make sense. She also stated that Edith had said that there was not a consensus on this point. Nora added that was the reason it was included under other points of view. Frank wondered if the information would have to be protected if one program required sensitive info and the other did not. Wendy remarked that the sharing of information should be looked at and that Frank's point was a good one. Margaret pointed out that on p. 9 the ratepayer dollar amounts reported by Eversource need to be corrected. Eddie said he would research it. She also noted that UI needed to check its figures and Kathy said she would do so. Julia noted that she has budget sheets for SCG from Brian Biernak. Kelly suggested that maybe they could coordinate with the other agencies to get accurate data. Margaret also offered that there are deferred amounts of almost \$34 million aggregated by Eversource and it is still out there for ratepayers to eventually pay. Wendy noted that this is then actual ratepayer debt.

Wendy advised that the report is due January 1st so she would like comments in a week or so. Nora said everything should be wrapped up by the December 2nd meeting. Nora also noted that the following meeting would be January 6th and this would not be a terribly long push off. Nora asked if there was anything in the document that anyone intended on sending a poison pen letter about. Carlene said no but clarifications need to be made and they may have some concerns. Nora advised Carlene that all concerns can be expressed in the report. Kelly reminded that anything that can have a fiscal impact will be an issue for OPM. Nora said we need to be mindful of what we were asked to do by statute and what is extra. The extra items are not wrong but she feels the Board needs to make some decisions about extra recommendations from a process perspective. Margaret stated that on page 16 the landlord responsibilities section may be going over the line. It was noted that Title 47-a enforcement would help this issue without having ratepayers pay for it. Nora asked Wendy if the 13th of November for a comment deadline would be appropriate. Wendy said yes. Wendy stated that she will make a list of all topics raised and stated that if anyone wants to make clarifications that would be fine.

LIHEAP UPDATE: Carlene stated that they are proceeding with the applications that have been accepted since August 1st. She advised that things are going well and similar to the previous year but only slightly higher this year. Carlene stated that the Continuing Resolution was passed so they have gotten a 90% appropriation of \$72.3 million. They are in the process of amending contracts and so at this point they can send out program dollars but not any administrative payments until the contracts are amended. She also noted that the carryover amounts were utilized and that was helpful.

Carlene provided a draft of the procedures regarding furnace repair/replacement. It is for single family homes and the first \$1 million will be available to everyone and then the last \$500,000 will be restricted to income eligible. Any house under consideration must not be for sale or in foreclosure. Also, a licensed technician must state that the furnace is unsafe or inoperable. The program includes oil tanks and chimney work. They are required to get two bids. Pat asked about a cap and Carlene noted that it is \$2000 for repair and \$800 for replacement. Carlene also noted that a repair might turn into a replacement. Wendy asked if there is weatherization coordination and Carlene said that there was such coordination. She noted that all requests will go to DSS for approval and

the turnaround will be 1-2 days. Pat stated that she wants to run a piggyback program to the DSS program and she will have Julian contact Carlen. Pat envisions that if someone is just over the income levels they could then call Op Fuel for its program. Carlene stated that their budget is estimated to cover approximately 250 homes. Carlene also advised that applicants must apply for and receive Energy Assistance.

OPERATION FUEL: Pat stated that the summer program ended. It served 2,800 homes and \$1.1 million was given out. Pat said that the Winter Program commences November 20th and will run to the end of May or until funds run out. She noted that they intend to use the funding from supplier fines to run their furnace repair/replacement program.

UTILITY MATCHING PAYMENT PROGRAM:

Eddie reported that Phase II match data will be available by the next meeting.

Kathy stated that the Phase II matches for UI were completed for 1,500 customers, SCG had 1,400 matches and CNG had 869. The auto enrollment data was:

UI - 2,400
SCG – 9,600
CNG – 10,500

Kathy also advised that the UI portal to date has 15 agencies signed up with 140 reps having access and the ability to look up information.

Legislative and Docketed Matters: Frank advised that the second half of the report in Dkt. No. 15-06-15 will be done prior to January 1st. It is the variable rate report and explains “Where do we go from here?” Nora advised that there was not a full ban on variable rates.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 2:55.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2015.