

LIEAB Minutes June 3, 2020

Members present: Gail Lucchina, PURA, Aly Ayotte, PURA, Frank Augeri, PURA, Tasha Perreault, Eversource, Jo Ann Balaschak, NOI, Luz Rodriguez, SCG, Danielle Palladino, OPM, Matthew Pellowski., OPM, Nora Benson, Eversource, Theresa Washington, Eversource, Kathy Wasilnak, UI, Nelida Handy, UI, Kate Quigley, 211, Nickey Kollie CTEMA, Ashley Marshall, DEEP, Guy West, Clean Water, Chris Herb, CEMA, Deb Poland, CT Association for Community Action, Carlene Taylor, DSS, Ruth Swift, Norwich DPU, Nora Duncan, AARP, Linette Pisani, DSS, Joy Hollister, Ellington Human Services

Wendy was asked to chair the meeting. Wendy opened the meeting at 1:45.

Approval of the April minutes: Chris moved and Deb seconded. Wendy commented that the minutes were brief but comprehensive. The minutes were approved.

LIHEAP Update: Linette began with the caseload update. She stated that as of May 29th they were up 538 applications from the previous week. There were 374 approvals. They have had 89,100 applications received with 73,282 approved. Wendy inquired about a column labeled as incomplete. Linette responded that the income info was not complete in those cases. Wendy expressed surprise that 10% were incomplete and asked if there was a follow up measure. Linette responded that there is a ten day letter that goes out. Carlene added that applications are being mailed in so agencies may have to do more follow up work. Jo Ann agrees that with everything being done by mail it is part of the problem. Carlene noted that the first year of doing things by mail always initially has problems such as a higher rate of incompleteness. They are currently following up to get the income information.

Linette reported that there were 202 heating system repairs. They exceeded the \$1 million mark. There were 95 repairs made for a total of \$64,794.51, 1003 clean, tune and tests for a total of \$225,142.00. Carlene added that the program has not been closed and advised that if clients qualify they can apply for a clean, tune and test, keeping in mind that there are still some quarantine issues. She stated that now in the off season, vendors are available for clean, tune and test.

Carlene spoke about the CARES Act fund from HHS. She advised that they can use the funds as they would normally be used and there is no 10% carry forward restriction. In addition, she noted that there is the flexibility of longer time to expend the funds. Carlene informed the group that she sent around the proposal of \$250 to all eligible households responsible for the primary heat source. She also distributed information regarding funding and expenditures. She stated that there are still applications that have not been processed.

MPP Updates: Wendy stated that the most recent documents had not yet been provided. Kathy W. from Avangrid stated that the information will be sent out very soon. The data was compiled at the end of the month. She added that due to COVID any customers that did not make all Phase I payments will not receive a match but they won't be dropped from the program. In addition, they can make up payments until October 31, 2020 and then will be eligible to receive a match.

Nora stated that Eversource is doing the same thing with its customers. They are also in the process of compiling the data. Wendy asked if the enrolled people will be notified. Kathy replied that letters were sent out three weeks ago. Both companies sent out letters. Wendy asked for copies of both letters to be sent to the group.

Frank Augeri advised that the termination moratorium will remain in place as long as the Governor's order is in place. Nora stated that customers can enter into 24 month payment arrangements and Kathy said that Avangrid has the same policy. She noted that she has seen a lot of requests lately.

Wendy asked if Eversource is telling customers about NuStart. The response was yes and it was stressed that customers are advised of all available programs.

Docketed Matters: Frank stated that PURA is allowing \$75 below budgets to continue through Oct. 31st. Wendy cited Dkt. No. 20-03-15 for the group. Frank advised that Dkt. No. 17-12-03RE01, Energy Affordability, is continuing and he recommended that people get involved.

Docket No. 18-06-02: Frank stated at this case involves hardship customers and electric suppliers. Hardship customers will not be eligible for the supplier market but will be on standard service. If customers want to relinquish hardship status they can opt out and enter the electric supplier market.

LIEAB Recommendations: Wendy stated that a subcommittee was formed and they drafted recommendations. She questioned whether DEEP would still be requesting the plan set aside up to \$550,000 or not more than 1% for the WAP Program. Wendy also noted that LIEAB is recommending technology and support to improve communications between the WAP program and CAP agencies. Wendy added that Diane Duva mentioned this last year. Wendy said she would touch base with Brian Biernat.

There was also a recommendation to increase the Furnace Repair/Replacement funding from \$1 million to \$1.5 million. Wendy then asked the group if it was necessary to go through each recommendation one by one. She noted that there were no real controversies and it was therefore decided that a vote

should be taken. Wendy moved and Deb seconded. The recommendations were adopted. The recommendations are to be given to DSS in their final form and to the Secretary of OPM.

Wendy told the group that in these difficult times, some towns were establishing their own funds to help people. She called upon the members to spread the word to make sure clients are made aware of all the sources of funding available. She then thanked Brenda for her comments regarding her decision not to participate in or chair the meeting. Wendy chaired the meeting upon Brenda's request with Chris making a Motion to adjourn and Kathy W. seconding. The meeting adjourned at 3:00. The next scheduled meeting is August 5th.