

Low-Income Energy Advisory Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 6, 2021 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM (EDT)

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Brenda Watson called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Remote meeting held via Microsoft Teams.

2. Attendance

Members Present: *Brenda Watson, Wendy Wanchak, Nora Duncan, Deb Polun, Rosemary Lopez, Joy Hollister, Yveson Cassamajor, Theresa Washington, Joanne Whistnant, Tyra Peluso, Frank Augeri, Nelida Handy, Kathleen Wasilnak, Nicole Lawton, Victoria Hackett, Carlene Taylor, Danielle Palladino.*

Members Absent: *Ruth Swift, Nickey Kollie, Christian Herb*

Host: *Starley Arias, Claire Sickinger*

Guests: *Tonya Anderson, Alyson Ayotte, Joanne Balaschak, Tasha T. Perreault, Linette Pisani, Joanne Whistnant, Kimberly White, Darlene Yule.*

3. Minutes for Approval

Minutes for Wednesday, August 4, 2021

Motion by: Deb Polun

Second by: Wendy Wanchack

Abstained:

Opposed by: none

4. Old Business/ Program Updates

LIHEAP/CEAP Update: Carlene Taylor & Linette Pisani

Linette provided an update on the 2021 program Fiscal Year.

- We began taking applications on August 2nd. The weekly activity report that you have represents numbers from August 2nd 2021 to October 1st.
- As of October 1st, 21,357 applications were taken. Of those applications, 430 of them were rental. 12,401 applications were approved of those approvals, 244 or rental assistance household.
- If you take a look at the report, you'll see some of the agencies have some apparent changes where their numbers are down. Each agency has been contacted regarding that data and the apparent changes.
- The common theme was staffing, processing flow changes, and a couple agencies had done some organizational restructuring, so they expect that the numbers to be down, but will pick them up.

- We are also in the process of creating a cadence for the data match with DSS information for our categorical eligible households, which we hope to start within the next quarter.

Teresa Washington: *Can you just explain quickly for me that data match that happens with DSS just so I understand this correlation of the information?*

Linette Pisani: *So the data match that we run is for applications that are taken at the Community Action agencies that may be pending or somehow ended up in the denied status. We run the application information through our system to see if these household are receiving SNAP, refugee cash or TFA and if they're active we send the information back and say these households are categorically eligible, please make them eligible for either level one if they're under any of the Cash programs are level two if they are under SNAP.*

Carlene Taylor explained that at the end of the year the numbers showed 5,000 households denied incomplete but it was over 20,000 at this time last year. Carlene continued to state that conversations with the agencies found that the reason for these numbers was due to the inability to obtain the required information for the applications.

Carlene Taylor: *What we did at that time was take all those households that were denied income incomplete, matched it against the DSS Impact, that shows if these households were receiving a DSS benefit and if they were, then we provided that information to the Community Action Agency so they could then make those households categorically eligible.*

Carlene explained that the plan for this year is to continue doing some data match against DSS Impact and the agencies have access to it so they can too check for eligibility. Carlene stated that the changes to the eligibility guidance, to include SNAP was made and that if one person in the household was eligible the whole household was as well.

Teresa Washington: *Thank you so much for that information. It is helping those customers get through that application process and getting them the funds that would they need. So that's great. Thank you.*

Victoria Hackett: *Thank you for the update. I'm wondering if people who apply can be matched up without having to go through the process of providing new information and being deemed ineligible?*

Carlene Taylor: *Last year was a different year. We have made many changes in response to last year, and some you know some of those changes were implemented during the year and have carried forward into this year. So, if someone comes into an agency and is receiving SNAP or TFA, they don't have to provide their income documentation. There is no assets test. The agency can verify that they're receiving that DSS benefit; they have access to impact and can verify that and there are a couple agencies that we're working through that process, to ensure that they all have access because there are a couple of agencies that say they don't have access, but there's a process in order to get that access. So once the agency can do that to look up information, then they can verify that the household is receiving DSS benefits and don't have to provide income information unless they feel that they should receive a higher benefit. Some agencies have also put up a kiosk, laptop or computer and those clients can go to the myconnect and get that information and provide it to the agency.*

Linette Pisani: *And I should say that is not so many people being denied this year. It could be a pending application. We're just trying to get stuff processed faster, so it's like a failsafe to keep things going and moving faster.*

Victoria Hackett: *That's great, I'm just thinking that we as we think about reducing the burdens on applicants. If there are ways we can just upfront reduce the burdens rather than waiting to see if they aren't able to sort of provide all the documentation and only doing it as a failsafe.*

Carlene Taylor: *It's an upfront because they don't have to provide information, once it is verified that they are receiving SNAP or DSS cash.*

Linette Pisani: *And we can't go out and solicit people. They have to apply for the program. So if you aren't categorically eligible, you must apply because you have to sign the application to attest to the rights and attest to other data sharing information.*

Carlene Taylor: *For example, they have to provide their electric bill because it's important for one of the requirements that we have to submit to HHS. If they use natural gas for heat, they also have to provide that information. So, in terms of income eligibility, it's much easier now.*

Victoria Hackett: *OK, great and are people still required to go in person to apply or are we doing telephone or Internet?*

Carlene Taylor: *I can let Deb speak to that or Joanne, but most agencies have developed some type of hybrid process and are also working with our intake sites, because we do have a network of intake sites across the state. So it depends.*

Deb Polun: *Yeah, to build on that, people can complete the application via phone or in person or by mail. The only problem with completing it by phone is that it does need a signature and so when you complete it by phone then that person does eventually need to physically have the application so they can sign it. That can happen either by having the person come into the agency or by mailing the mostly completed application to the person and having them sign it and bring it back.*

Victoria Hackett: *And we can't do electronic signature for this?*

Linette Pisani: *At this time, if the customer has the ability to sign it electronically and submit it, we will accept it. We are in the process of working that out.*

Deb Polun: *Right, so it's just a question of whether the client has that capability. So if they have DocuSign; I think that's something that I know at least one of the agencies is looking into doing DocuSign for their applications at this time. Joanne, I don't know if you got New Opportunities doing anything like that.*

Joanne Balaschak: *We were looking at Panda Docs for a while but we're still we're still researching it. So we have appointments set up every day; a certain number for walk-ins, and then certain number for telephone and they decide what type of appointment they want. It's working out, except that the other day we had 30 walk-in appointments and only 10 showed up, so that's discouraging, because that took away 20 appointments that we could have had.*

Linette Pisani: *It's important to remember that we can't do everything electronically because there are some people in certain areas do not have Internet access. We have made the application process simpler.*

We are striving to make it better and even more efficient but we will always have some type of paper application because not everyone has access to the Internet.

Deb Polun: And even if they have access to the Internet, they may not know how to electronically sign something that is like a whole separate process. And Joy brought up a good point in the meeting chat, which is that mail is taking a really long time and so that that's delaying things too.

Carlene Taylor: Yeah, and some agencies have established mailboxes outside so that you can drop them off securely so there is an effort all around to make things easier. Lynette mentioned the application process and we sent something out to the agencies today. It's still a work in process, but we're getting there. The application was just recently put up on our site. We are working through it and the decision was made by our leaders that until everything is done, let's put what was on there last year; we're having discussions about electronic signature and we're working through that process, but for now the application is there. The client can print if they have the capability and send that to the agency.

Kimberly White: I'd like to follow up on a statement, one minute ago you were saying you can't solicit people, but if you know all of the folks that are receiving these benefits that make them categorically eligible, are you doing anything to reach out to them?

Carlene Taylor: We have information on our website, but I know that the agencies do a lot of outreach to their constituents. We have requested the agencies to report to us how they're doing their outreach and some numbers where we're getting some information on a weekly basis as to how they're reaching out to their clients.

Kimberly White: For this year or for the past year?

Carlene Taylor: For this year.

Kimberly White: OK, can you share those numbers with us?

Carlene Taylor: We can look at see what we're receiving. It's not, you know, consistent across the board, but we look at the information that we're receiving because some of the information that we've received is also narrative. So I'll have that discussion and follow up with you, Kim.

Carlene Taylor: We submitted our LIHEAP application. We have not yet received full approval. The agencies received supplemental payment of \$700 for every person that was approved for basic benefit. That that funding is being provided to all the utility companies. We had to amend the agencies contracts to do that because it was so much money. Almost over \$50 million are being released to the agencies. And yes, DSS makes payments for couple agencies for a \$700 payment on households who received a basic benefit last year; and it was not just for those who use utility heat, but even those who use the deliverable fuels because we do collect that electric information, and that's one of the important reasons why we collect it. So I sent out an email to the utility companies requesting that if it results in a credit, leave it as a credit. Do not send that money back to DSS unless they cannot find the account to make that credit to.

Nicole Lawton: For the in person appointments, do you have an estimate of how far out those appointments are being booked currently? and if there are a lot of no shows, is it possible to reach out to households with upcoming appointments to see if they are able to come in for an immediate appointment?

Joanne Balaschak: *We try to give them a call prior to, as long as we have their phone number. We're trying to reach out and do the best we can with what we've got.*

Joanne explained that missed appointment becomes a time to catch up on other work that they have. Joanne stated that they are currently booking into the third week of October and are seeing between 75- 80 clients a day.

Joanne Balaschak: *Unfortunately, part of the issue is that we have lost two workers that had been with us for years and we have put out those positions. We have not had one applicant apply; so it's very difficult to find people that want a job here. It's not just in the Energy Department, it's all over the agency in all departments.*

Brenda Watson: *Before we go to Joy, Teresa Washington from Eversource needs to drop off the call, but she notes that for the Community Action agencies to please ensure that files and checks are forwarded to the utilities ASAP.*

Joy Hollister: *I apologize if you answered this already. I see on LIHEAP plan that it was approved with an amendment. I don't see an amendment. I just was curious what it was.*

Carlene Taylor: *It was your typical mathematical error and we apologize for that. We were off by \$26,000, so we had to submit an amendment to that.*

Operation Fuel Update: Brenda Watson

Brenda welcomed and introduced Tonya Anderson from the Operation Fuel Team, who is the Director of Energy programs and is responsible for managing all of energy and water assistance programs at Operation Fuel.

Brenda Watson: *I echo Joanne's frustration with hiring because it is tough out there and folks have their choice of where they want to go and it's not easy filling these positions.*

- We ended our year serving more households fiscal year 2021 than we did in the previous year.
- The total number of households that we served in fiscal year 21 is 5,520.
- We have seen a significant drop in the number of fuel applicants and we haven't studied that, but we tend to believe it's a result of funds being available through DSS, the CEAP program as well as ARPA funds that have been coming down and the utility companies being very kind and generous with their moratorium extensions.
- I believe those fuel prices are going back up this year, so we'll see if we do see an increase in folks seeking fuel assistance as a result of fuel prices.
- We provided 3808 households with electric support.
- 974 for oil across our entire year, across the entire state for operation fuel. That's something that's got us really curious. So we're going figure out a way to study that.
- In addition to ending a year, we actually started off our fall with celebrating national Energy Efficiency Day. It was great to see Vicki Hackett on and Commissioner Katie Dykes I saw some of our fuel banks on today and.
- We had two panels, one focused on energy efficiency and one focused on water efficiency and wanting to bridge these two pieces together. Because you know, water. Water affordability has

been trending for some time now. And efficiency could help folks reduce their energy burden. Water heating water can result in about 20% of 1's overall energy bill, and if you have a water filtration system, it's probably higher than that, so we want to highlight. That piece and bring attention to it. So other than that, that's my update and I'm happy to take any questions. Or comments?

Victoria Hackett: *What happens with your budget if you're getting PURA applications? And I know you get a certain amount of money through ratepayers and other places, does your budget just roll over and you give more to each applicant?*

Victoria Hackett: *Just a comment on the heating water issue, within the CLM fund we definitely are emphasizing heat pump water heaters as a solution there. You have to have a tall basement ceiling so I could not get one, for example. But you know there are solutions that we're working on through the Energy Efficiency Fund for them.*

Brenda Watson: *We roll over our unrestricted funds and it helps our budget for the following season. What it means is that when we have enough money to get started in the summer without having to rely on a 2.1 from the SBC. So what we do is we ensure we spend that 2.1 first, whatever is leftover is utilized for water utility assistance.*

Brenda Watson: *The water utilities fund the supports programs that we run on their behalf, but when those funds run out, we then supplement with our unrestricted dollars. The other piece is that because we've seen a decline in the number of fuel applicants that doesn't mean we've seen a decline in applicants.*

Brenda Watson: *Overall, serving over 5000 households is typically what we serve with the resources that we have, so that's good news for us. It just means that we can serve more people. But what we're also looking at is diving into some of the infrastructure gaps that exist for the people that we serve who cannot afford the upfront costs of remediating their homes due to health and safety barriers.*

Brenda Watson: *So we're working to establish that program this year, and accessing weatherization for those folks and then installing heat pumps for those households, with the extra funds that we have going into this this fiscal year. Any other questions or comments? I hope that answers your question, Deputy Commissioner.*

Victoria Hackett: *I may follow up more with you. Thank you.*

Brenda Watson: *And with all of the funds coming down, I know that deep has an RFP focused on health and safety, what I envision with that is if there are any projects that cannot be completed as a result of costs. Then perhaps Operation Fuel could come in and supplement the cost of that project so that we have, in a sense, a "no closed door" solution for folks this year and hopefully next year.*

Matching Payment Program Update:

Eversource: Joanne Whistnant

- Our active matching payment program balances of 8/31/21, is regular \$44,806,535.95. Our COVID-19 numbers, which are the auto enrollments for \$1,509,318.08 for a total of \$46,315,854.03.
- Our matching payment initial phase one matches, for August 2021 were \$7,284,398.57, which was the difference of -\$192,093.93 from 2020.
- For New Start forgiveness for 2021 from January to August 31st was \$14,608,410.87 for a difference of +\$4,840,713.22; a difference of +3051 applicants from 2020.
- Our total MPP enrollments YTD for August 2021 is 31,001
- Total New Start enrollment YTD for August 2021 was 18,783.
- Total Arrearage Forgiveness YTD for August 2021 was 49,784. A difference of 9,085 from August 2020.

Wendy Wanchack: *Do you have the numbers for the customers that have been coded hardship to date?*

Joanne Whistnant: *No, I don't have those numbers, but I can get them for you.*

Wendy Wanchak: *Okay! If you wouldn't mind that would be great if you could share that with us and include a breakdown of those that were carried over from last year and then any customer that was coded hardship for this year so far.*

Joanne Whistnant: *Absolutely. I will send out an email.*

AVANGRID: Nelida Handy

- At UI we have 3,118 customers currently enrolled in a program with balances totaling a little over 5 million
- At Connecticut national natural gas we have 9,557 customers enrolled with balances of approximately 5.4 million.
- At Southern Connecticut Gas, 11,100 customers with balances of 5.2 million,
- At UI, in our MaPP program we have 5,454 customers enrolled with outstanding balances of approximately 10 million.

Nelida Handy: *I know we really focused on our residential customers, but I also included our commercial. These are customers that are currently enrolled in a 24 month payment plan.*

- At UI we have 6,165 customers and enrolled with balances totaling 6.5 million
- At CNG, 2,906 customers with balances totaling 3.2 million,
- At SCG, 3,737 customers with balances totaling a little over 3 million.

Nelida Handy: *I've included what are matches were at the end of phase one, which I know has been provided in prior meeting notes, but I also included what our summer matches were, which are customers that either enrolls late or made up some late payments. We matched an additional 1,509 customers with matching dollars of a little more over \$908,000.*

Brenda Watson: *I have a question about the small business customers that are enrolled in a repayment plan. What's the demographic of those businesses? Are they small, large, minority owned?*

Kathleen Wasilnak: *We don't have any demographics like that in our system stored, so it's just any customer that's not residential. That's lumped into that commercial bucket. And based on the original*

PURA order of offering these COVID-19 arrangements it was that all customers were eligible. So there was no proving that they, even though we're experiencing any kind of hardship because of COVID or anything; we just had to go ahead and enroll anybody who asked for it.

Brenda Watson: *And are there any funds available to help those rent commercial customers get those arrearages down?*

Kathleen Wasilnak: *So those customers are in arrangement for 24 months, so they can repay their arrearage over the 24 months plus pay their current balance.*

Legislative update: Wendy Wanchack

Wendy Wanchack: *I was reassigned to work on the Unites CT program, which were are the federal monies under the Americans Recovery Act. That were that were designated to each state to combat homelessness, in providing rental assistance, arrearage assistance and also electric utility arrearage assistance.*

That program got off to a slow start around the country but Connecticut has been cited as the model because it ramped up and made a lot of corrections. To date, and you can look at the dashboard on the Unites CT website that's under the Department of Housing because they're administering the program;

- They have distributed \$110 million with another 99 million in the pipeline.
- For the first 110 million, 17 million have gone to the electric utilities toward, individual customer arrearages.
- This is a program that is open to a pretty broad spectrum of income eligibility. And it's up to 80% if it is for renters. It's up to the electric is available for anybody but the income.
- The income guidelines are up to 80% of the area median income, so that makes this program available to a broader spectrum than a lot of other energy assistance programs.
- This is a two phase program, so the funding is going to continue for a couple of years. I think up to \$400 million
- The limit for the electric arrearage assistance per household or per customer is \$1500.

Kathleen Wasilnak commented that the utilities have been on calls with the Department of Housing and their Unites CT team to discuss additional methods to obtain additional relief for customers.

Kathleen Wasilnak: *We've been providing them with lists of customers and they're actually working through them and sending additional award to customers that have been in their system and they are going beyond the \$1500 limit. In fact, just today for UI we received two wires. Covering about 6000 customers for \$8.3 million. So it's going to wipe out a lot of balances for some customers.*

Lynette Pisani: *I thought I heard you say that the electricity portion of Unites City is available for homeowners and renters. Was that correct? because I was told it was only renters.*

Wendy Wanchack: *I'll try to answer that by the end of the end of the meeting, OK?*

Victoria Hackett: *We file a proposed settlement with Eversource on an interim rate decrease, and in that proposed settlement that is under PURA consideration, we proposed to carve out \$10 million to provide*

relief to customers who are struggling to pay their bills due to arrearages, we kept it high level and recommended that PURA apply it in a way that is sort of complementary to other programs.

Wendy Wanchak: My understanding of the policy to go back to the Department of Housing; It is for tenants and all eligible electric utility customers affected by the pandemic up to \$1500. So I will clarify that for you, but my understanding it was for all electric customers.

Kathleen Wasilnak: Yeah, I just from being on the calls with the Department of Housing. It's every conversation we've had with them. It's for the electric piece, it's renters.

Wendy Wanchak stated that she will continue to look into the matter and follow up.

PURA Dockets: Frank Augeri

Frank went over the highlights of various PURA Dockets.

- The authority approved the 21-22 match Payments Program Plan subject to modification. In those modifications, PURA wants the companies described to achieve a 65% success rate at the conclusion of phase one and the companies were directed to propose appropriate metrics for measuring, tracking improvements and customer awareness of and participation in the MPP.
- One of the things I wanted to point out is that PURA recognized at the Low Income discount rate is still under review, in the affordability dockets 17-12-03RE11 and it will make any necessary changes to MPP during program year 22 and 23. But if necessary could make changes to the upcoming program year 21- 22;
- To address the number of customers failing MPP due to missing their energy assistance award, the companies will be directed to establish multiple touchpoints to remind customers to apply for and confirm receipt of energy assistance
- The Authority wants the companies to modify their memorandums of understanding with the Community Action Agencies to improve coordination on receipt of energy assistance, the company should propose a financial payment arrangement that incentivizes the CAAs to assist customers in achieving that 65% successfully.
- The draft brought up how the authority wants companies to “meet customers where they are” in relation to program enrollment and payment cadence.
- It's directing the companies to remove the requirement to make a minimum of three monthly payments and phase one for late enroll participants. Companies will now require the equivalent number of monthly payments that corresponds with the number of months remaining in phase one, including for participants rolling during March in April. So basically, I participate in rolling in early April would only be required to make an equivalent of 1 monthly payment to satisfy the phase one requirement.
- Companies shall also accept partial payments, what the authority stated as a “pay as you go” to allow customers to make smaller, more frequent payments to accommodate the budgets. So long as partial payments equal the total amount owed by the customer during stage one.
- For the upcoming program year 21-22. PURA approved the company's proposed their proposal to allow MPP participants, who receive energy award during phase one, but do not make all the required phase one payments by May 1st to remain in the program, thereby giving participants the opportunity to make all required payments by October 31st to receive the utility match.

- PURA made one modification to this catch up policy; the company shall not begin the service disconnection process for enrolled MPP participants, missing an energy assistance award and the required phase one payments until 2 weeks following the deadline of it extended EA application program. I believe DSS extended the energy assistance application period and if it's extended beyond May 1, 2022, the authority wanted to have this catch up policy extension in place should it happen again.
- The authority supported the company's proposal to continue to enroll customers in specific government benefits listed in the 2020-2021 program year on the reduced \$50 payment plan; that's going to continue.
- There is a lot about the companies modifying their outreach and education plans PURA is designating November as Heating Assistance Awareness Month and is directing companies to implement promotional activities.
- The companies will be directed to revise communications plans for public officials and community partners as part of a comprehensive submission of revised outreach and education plans.
- Companies are directed to incorporate at least 15 town hall or community events, 12 for Eversource, and 3 for Avangrid into the communication plans.
- The companies will have to modify outbound calling campaigns and IVR messages as needed to reflect program modifications, including a reminder to customers to apply for energy assistance and contact the company if their payment arrangement is not affordable.

Frank Augeri: *I wanted to point out that this is a proposed interim decision. PURA's draft identified some topics for potential statutory amendments, such as the established establishment of a program like MPP for non-heating electric customers. Enabling monthly match payments and enabling data sharing between DSS and the companies.*

5. New Business

Bylaws Subcommittee Update: Wendy Wanchak

A copy of the draft bylaws was sent around September 22nd by Starley. Our committee of four met a couple of times and we came up with a complete draft. Most of the information about what we've been charged to do, and who is a voting member and non-voting member is prescribed by statute, but there were a few things that we looked at in terms of conducting the business of the board, and attendance of meetings, and so forth. I'm going to highlight just a couple of things, and then I would ask everyone to take a look at it one more time so that we can vote at next meeting or follow up with any questions.

- Doing a pretty good job with attending these meetings, but we thought that if we have some circumstances where people who have been designated by agencies don't come to the meetings anymore that we put some language in there, that a failure to attend three consecutive meetings without notification or good cause; it gives the board the opportunity to excuse the representative from the board and then ask the Agency to supply another one.
- The offices of chair and vice chair will each serve a two year term in office and have no more than three consecutive terms.
- The bylaws go on to describe the powers and duties of the board chair, the vice chair, and the representative or the designee from DEEP. Who is charged under the statute, with keeping notes noticing meetings and providing a place for the meeting.

- We determined that the board meetings shall be held at least six times a year.
- Described the election process for new chair and vice chair.
- There will be a period for public comment at the beginning and the end of each meeting. These will be the only times unless the person is given special permission to speak during the meeting so that we may conduct our business and give the public an opportunity to have input.
- No members of the public may use the chat boxes during the video conferences to avoid distractions.
- Every person who does intend to speak at the meeting are required to provide some identifying information when they speak, just so we know who it is. We would follow the Roberts rules of order unless something else was prescribed at a particular meeting.
- There can be special meetings called..
- Also says that we can't get paid. We can't have conflicts of interest and all those other things, so it's up to our employers to compensate us for the time that we spend serving on the board.

Brenda Watson: *I would like a chance to read these and I think it would be great to have a discussion and vote in the December meeting.*

Wendy Wanchak agreed with Brenda and suggested that the bylaws be put on the agenda for the December meeting.

Carlene Taylor stated that she had reviewed the bylaws and had some questions.

Carlene Taylor: *I know DEEP also uses this meeting as their Policy Advisory Council requirement for their weatherization plan. I didn't know if you wanted to mention that here and when it says make recommendations to the General Assembly, is it the whole General Assembly or to the Communities of Cognizance?*

Wendy Wanchak: *That's the direct language from the statute.*

Carlene Taylor: *OK, and then the membership maybe we want to specify that in all instances it may be a designee, if possible?*

Wendy Wanchak: *That is statutory language too.*

Carlene Taylor: *OK, my next comment was on members and non-members. For example, I am the non-voting representative for the Commissioner but there also Lynnette also attends the meetings and same for some of the other entities that attend these meetings. How do we do roll call in that instance? Also who is considered a member of the public? Because there are others that participate under the entities like the utilities. Would they all be allowed to participate at will, and then the public is the public?*

Wendy Wanchak: *That's a good question Carlene. We recognize that there are various members or staff of various agencies or entities. Members who have particular expertise in an area, and that may be the spokesperson for that day for an issue. I guess we want to treat them as members for purposes of that. It does get a little unwieldy with the voting and so I think we ought to be careful to make sure that the person who has been designated by the agency is the voting person and not someone who just is showing up to specialize unless they've been given authority to cast votes. So that's something we can look at.*

Carlene Taylor asked if the public comments would be in the subcommittees.

Wendy Wanchak: *I don't think that we're going to open those up to the public unless someone knows of a reason why we have to.*

Brenda Watson asked the board to review the bylaws in preparation for the December meeting and asked for a motion to place them on the December agenda.

Motion made by: Deb Polun

Second by: Brenda Watson

No objections.

Wendy requested the bylaws to be sent out to the board again.

Starley Arias sent them out.

6. Public Comments

Teresa Washington: *I know I saw some attachments with some information, if any group is sharing information on behalf of a utility that the utility did not directly provide. Please engage us, we'd love to partner and make sure that you know we check-off on what information is being shared so we have the right phone numbers out there or the right website. And anything you guys can do to help because we all have the same customers, and we want to provide assistance. So if anybody wants to create something and help us out with educating about programs, we'd love to partner and say, hey, yeah, will look over this for you before you send it out. We would be more than happy to do that.*

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn Deb Poland.

Second by Wendy Wanchack.

Next meeting: December 1, 2021