

**Low Income Energy Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, February 1, 2023 1:30 – 2:35PM**

**Minutes**

**Members in attendance:** Deb Polun (Chair), Nora Duncan, Lisa Rosso, Jaime Soto, Joanne Whistnant, Kathleen Wasilnak, Frank M. Augieri, Jr, Jessica Gouveia, Kenya Van Eyken (representing Op Fuel), Nicole Lawton, Jeanne Pitney, Ruth Swift, Christian Herb, Richard Hanratty, April O’Neil a.k.a. April Salazar, Bonnie Roswig, Alicia Dolce, Karina (representing Alliance CT), Ashley Marshall, Cassandra Norfleet-Johnson, Zani Imetovski, Yessenia Santiago-Bejarano

**Absent:** Rafie Podolsky, Greg Kirschner

*With a quorum present, Chair Deb Polun called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm. The meeting was held via Zoom.*

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action Steps
1. Roll call/Approve minutes	Y. Santiago-Bejarano, roll call  Minutes from 12/7/22 were presented for action.	Motion <i>K. Wasilnak/ Christian Herb</i> to approve the minutes of the meeting passed unanimously with one abstention (N. Duncan).
2. Public comments	No members of the public presented comments.	
3. Program Updates a. LIHEAP b. Operation Fuel c. Eversource d. Avangrid Companies	a. LIHEAP-(Peter Hadler presenting) DSS presented the YTD data. Overall, 23% increase in applications from last year’s applicants. Additional \$21.6 million from Congress was provided and another \$20 million is anticipated, which will assist with the increased number of applicants and increased oil prices. An additional crisis benefit will be added to all deliverable fuel households. If there is funding available at the end of the program year, utility-heated households will receive extra benefits. DSS will offer a webinar to share information about online application, date TBD.  Members posed questions related to: LIHWAP data, benefits for utilities customers, how many customers already have expended all of their benefits, and whether DSS might extend the program year. DSS indicated that, if there is funding remaining after all of the benefits have been provided to the enrollees,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DSS to try to include LIHWAP data in next meeting.</li> <li>2. CLASS rep will check to see if she can share Survey Results</li> <li>3. DSS and utilities will provide program data to all members prior to scheduled meetings.</li> <li>4. Data from MPP Programs from Utilities and Eversource that are below budget.</li> <li>5. DSS will share dates for informational webinar re: online application program.</li> </ol>

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	<p>then an additional benefit will go to utilities customers. There is no plan at this time to extend the program year. DSS does not know how many customers have expended their benefits.</p> <p>Jeanne Pitney (The Executive Director of the Connecticut Local Administrators of Social Services) reported that a survey was completed of satisfaction of services provided. Respondents noted dissatisfaction with timeliness of application processing, communication between agencies, and staffing levels. Jeanne will check with her group about sharing survey results.</p> <p>B. Operation Fuel- (presented by Kenya Van Eyken) The grant maximum was raised to \$1k. There has been an influx in deliverable fuels clients compared to last year. Staffing has also increased by one temporary personnel and new staff hire. Applications have a 7-10 business day turn around. There is limited office space despite hybrid work schedule, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 is the projected date to move into new location to accommodate need of growing personnel. Hosted lunch and learn for Heat Pump for Fuel bank partners to share information with their clients.</p> <p>C. Eversource: refer to Data chart- <i>Questions:</i> Can data be shared prior to the meetings.</p> <p>D. Avangrid Companies -refer to data sheet <i>Questions:</i> 1. Bonnie Roswig - MPP programs- do you have the data that is filed with PURA? Do you have percentage of people that are below budget? <i>Ans: (Jaime Soto) will email the information for Avangrid and Joanne</i></p>	

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	<p><i>Whistnant will also provide on behalf of Eversource.</i></p>	
<p>5. Docketed and/or Legislative Matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. PURA</li> <li>b. DEEP</li> <li>c. DSS</li> <li>d. Committee member comments</li> </ul>	<p>A. PURA (rep. Frank Augeri)- Aquarian rate hearings are on the same date as UI evidentiary hearings. On 2/16/23- Investigative report will be released regarding hardship customers and alternate suppliers. Low Income Discount Credit- 6 credits that will go to hardship customers between 1/23-6/23 hardship customers will receive a \$25.00 per month credit, UI will get a \$24.00 credit for all verified hardship customers. A smaller credit will be applied to all residential customers on one of the line items. Congestion charge/Millstone credit- will occur from Jan- April 2023 for Eversource, its \$12.00/month on average usage and \$10.00 for UI customers average usage.</p> <p><i>Questions:</i></p> <p>1.Nora Duncan (CT State Director of AARP) Is the millstone credit in addition to the hardship credit?</p> <p><i>Ans by Frank Augeri: Yes, it is applied to both.</i></p> <p>B.DEEP- no updates.</p> <p>C. DSS- no updates.</p> <p>D.</p> <p>1. Chris Herb- Human Services Committee raised a concept bill regarding LIHEAP- no language but there may be potential changes.</p> <p>2. Nora Duncan- AARP no specific proposal. Approach has been, first, due no harm in 3<sup>rd</sup> party electric suppliers and consumer protection. Any attempts to nullify, change, 3<sup>rd</sup> party electric supply consumer protections will be objected by AARP.</p>	

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<p>6. Other Updates a. DSS/DEEP/CEMA/CAAs</p>	<p>Chris H. -Thankful for warm weather, issues back in December with cold weather and grids usage being maximized. Cold weather and projections for Feb. may see grid issues again.</p> <p>Alicia Dolce- CT Green Building Council and Operation Fuel are building coalition named The Energy Transparency Coalition. The goal is to get consumer protections in place for renters and homebuyers-similar to concept of MPG for vehicles- “right to know” there is a draft submission of the bill. Alicia can share info as requested.</p>	<p>1. Energy Transparency Coalition- bill for consumer protection for renters and homebuyers.</p>
<p>8. New Business</p>	<p>No new business- Jaime Soto- Avangrid has had in person community events amongst agencies expressed his thankfulness for collaboration.</p> <p>Deb Polun- update roll call list, Bonnie R. present and April O’Neil has name change. Future meetings to include the LIHWAP program. All the reports to be shared for this meeting and future meetings.</p>	
<p>9. Public Comments</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>10. Adjournment</p>	<p>2:20PM</p>	<p>Motion <i>Chris/ Ruth</i></p>

**Next meeting: April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023**