

Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board Meeting
Friday, February 7th, 2025, from 1:30PM -2:51PM
Recorded via Zoom [Zoom Recording link](#)

Approved on April 2, 2025

Attendance: Claire Coleman, Nora Duncan, Lydia Santiago, Jaime Soto, Theresa Washington, Joanne Whistnant, Kathleen Wasilnak, Brittany Wyman (designee for Frank Augeri, Jr.), Kimberly White, Gannon Long (designee for Perkins Simpson), Nicole Lawton, Matthew Hellman, Matthew Dillon, Andrea Millard, Matthew Dillon, Evannie Bocachica, Amanda Deming (designee for Michelle Royce Williams), La'Mont Stevenson, Bonnie Roswig, Rhonda Evans, Seema Melani (designee for Victoria Hackett), Cassandra Norfleet-Jonson, Zani Imetovski

Absent: Christian Herb, Greg Kirschner, Alicia Dolce, Angel Battle

Chairwoman Claire Coleman called the meeting to order at 1:31pm.

1. Roll Call	(Min. 2:07) Electronic roll call was completed.
2. Approval of December 4, 2024, Meeting Minutes	(Min. 2:11) Chairwoman Coleman called for Approval of December 4th, 2024, minutes , Motion by Vice Chair Nora Duncan, Second by Kathy Wasilnak. Abstained: Gannon Long, Nicole Lawton, Kathy Wasilnak, and La'Mont Stevenson. No Objections. Minutes approved.
3. Public Comments	(Min. 4:03) None.
4. New Business a. DSS Demonstration b. Utility presentation of new Matching Payment Plan (MPP) and current state of Low-Income Discount Rate (LIDR) c. DEEP presentation on REPS	a. (Min 6:07 & resumed at 24:53) DSS Demonstration by Cassandra Norfleet-Johnson: due to technical issues, the demonstration will need to be rescheduled. Ms. Norfleet-Johnson indicated she would send a doodle poll to the members to collaborate on date and time. Chairwoman Coleman suggested the presentation can be completed in April's Meeting. Ms. Norfleet-Johnson agreed to this. b. (Min. 7:05-17:55) Utility presentation of new Matching Payment Plan (MPP) and current state of Low-Income Discount Rate (LIDR) , presented by Theresa Washington on behalf of Avangrid and Eversource. A program overview of the MPP and LIDR was provided. The new MPP started as of Nov. 2024, and LIDR program has been in effect for one year, providing a two-tiered discount. The LIDR program will change from a two-tiered program into a five-tiered program within this

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	<p>upcoming year. The Secretary will email the LIDR modification chart to the members after the meeting. Eversource anticipates this new change to go into effect in the Summer of 2025 and Avangrid in 2026 calendar year. A program overview was provided outlining qualifications and eligibility of Financial Hardship Enrollment, Program Removal, Program Reinstatement, and Yearly Auto Reinstatement. The presentation was followed by a period of Questions and Answers from Gannon Long and Matthew Dillon, Bonnie Roswig, these questions were answered live. Min. (0:18-19.4)</p> <p>c. (Min. 26:40-29:30) <u>DEEP's Seema Malani of the Office Director of Affordable Housing Energy Retrofits discussed the REPS program</u>. The program has been successful and is currently oversubscribed. The program received 1, 447 referrals, 316 units have received complete remediation, of those homes 222 were single family units and 94 remaining are two-four unit. Of the total 316 units, 61 have gone through the weatherization process. The current referrals are being saved for the future. At this time there have been reports received stating contractors have not received payment from the Program Administrator. DEEP is actively investigating the Program Administrator and completing an audit.</p>
5. Energy Assistance Programs Updates a. DSS b. Operation Fuel c. Eversource d. Avangrid	a. (Min. 30:36) <u>DSS presented by Cassandra Norfleet Johnson. Ms. Norfleet-Johnson provided an update regarding Federal funding as the federal funding is in a state of flux with federal fundings under a cycle of freezing and unfreezing. CT has received 90% of the Federal allocated resources. We have asked all the operators to continue business as usual. Ms. Norfleet-Johnson presented on the CEAP data of year-to-date applications approved and denied and the denial reasons</u>

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i.e. incomplete applications, missing documentation. Applicants have 10 days to respond to an incomplete application. Once the information is received, the application can be processed, they do not need to re-apply. The report also provides applications based on fuel type, i.e. of the 80,000 applicants 27, 000 are associated with deliverable fuel, except for the type of heat for renters whose heat that is included in the lease. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers by Matthew Dillon, Chairwoman Coleman, these were answered live (Min. 42:10-46:28).

b. (Min. 47:50) [Operation Fuel](#), presented by Gannon Long. The report reflected the number of applications received, denied applications, and a breakdown of assistance by fuel type. Applications are received, reviewed and prioritized by family and medical vulnerability and shut off status. Gannon Long stated Op. Fuel has experienced its highest demand in the shortest amount of time since applications were opened on January 27th. Operation Fuel will continue to accept applications until the funds expire, noting there will be no legislature approval for additional emergency funding as there was in 2024. Operation Fuel continues its partnerships with Water Companies, providing water assistance funding, as long as it is available. Aquarion and CT Water provide discount rate to their customers, while MDC offers a reduced grant amount of \$400.00 for maximum assistance. Tenants who are responsible for their water bill as listed in their lease are ineligible for the MDC grant assistance. Aquarion is also moving to an online platform for applications called New Org. The presentation was followed by a period of questions and answers by Bonnie Roswig, these were answered live. (Min. 52:36)

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	<p>c. (Minute 1:01) Eversource presented by Theresa Washington. The report provides enrollment figures of LIDR, MPP, New Starts and AFP Programs. Ms. Washington noted the New Start Program is no longer in effect, however, there are still enrollees. Overall, there has been decreased in enrollment in the MPP YTD due to the new auto-enrollment feature. This presentation was followed by a period of question and answers by Matt Hellman and Chairwoman Coleman and were answered live. (Min. 1:04-1:09)</p> <p>d. (Min. 1:09) Avangrid presented by Jaime Soto, on the data of MPP, flexible Payment arrangements and LIDR enrollment. Mr. Soto also noted the Bill Forgiveness Program is no longer in effect as of October 31, 2024.</p> <p>e. (Min. 1:11) CT Water presented by Amanda Deming, Director of Customer Service, provided an overview of the three programs: H2O, WRAP, and Operation Fuel grants. Customers can enroll into one of the three tiered programs. Customers can roll over the assistance as credit into future billing cycles, with a maximum carry over credit of \$300.00. CT Water is also working with a third-party vendor and has enrolled over 800 customers into the flexible payment plan, where customers need an initial minimum payment of \$25.00 to enroll and have 18-months for repayment.</p>
6. PURA Docketed Matters	To be presented next meetings as the designee from PURA is absent.
7. Updates on Legislative Matters	<p>a. (Min. 1:15) Vice Chair, Nora Duncan on behalf of AARP, AARP has not proposed any new legislation this session, we are monitoring legislation around electric rates and the Public Benefits Charge.</p> <p>b. (Min. 1:16) Chairwoman Coleman on behalf of OCC, OCC will be seeking to provide education on the Public Benefits Charge to</p>

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	the legislators as this charge includes over 60 charges beyond affordability. Currently there has not been any bill proposals to LIEWAB or LIHEAP Block grant.
8. Public Comments	None
9. Adjournment	(Min. 1:18) Chairwoman Coleman noted the next meeting is scheduled for April 2, 2025; it will be a hybrid meeting at the Legislative Office Building. A clarification to the May 21 st meeting was noted as it listed as "tentative" on the agenda. However, this date change was reviewed in the December 4th meeting, to move the June meeting up to accommodate the legislative session schedule and the timeline to review the LIHEAP allocation plan. There were no concerns or objections presented for this change on the Dec. 4 th . Meeting. Chairwoman Coleman called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Motion by Theresa Washington and second my Jaime Soto. Meeting Adjourned at 2:51pm.

Upcoming Meeting:

April 2, 2025 (Hybrid Meeting ; in-person location Legislative Office Building)

May 21, 2025

August 6, 225

October 1, 2025

December 3, 2025