



LOW INCOME CONSUMER ADVISORY TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES February 27, 2015

The Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force convened in a special called meeting at Town Lake Center, 721 Barton Springs Road, Room 100, in Austin, Texas. Chairperson, Carol Biedrzycki called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Task Force Members in Attendance: Carol Biedrzycki, Tim Arndt, Lanetta Cooper, Richard Halpin, Dan Pruett, Cyrus Reed, and Chris Strand. Karen Hadden and Kelly Weiss were not in attendance.

Staff in Attendance: Austin Energy staff included Debra Athearn, Sady Bartlett, Liz Jambor, Denise Kuehn, Stacy Lewis, and Ronnie Mendoza.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

Dave Cortez, Organizer with Sierra Club- informed members of his organization's first community power forum on February 28th 2-4pm, 3010 Lyons Rd.

Kaiba White, Foundation Communities-shared remarks regarding the memo Austin Energy (AE) provided regarding on-bill financing. She noted that there were no specific citations on the memo of where the legal information came from. She wanted that legal background information before the discussion panel meeting.

STAFF BRIEFING-

Denise Kuehn, Energy Efficiency Director and Liz Jambor, Data Analytics and Business Intelligence Manager, gave a presentation on energy efficiency programs, with emphasis on programs that benefit low and limited income customers including:

- summary of savings goals and the relative contribution of various programs to meet the goals
- review of low income weatherization measures and costs per measure update on program outreach and recent enhancements in program administration
- review of the budget including weatherization program funding and expenditures to-date
- comparison to other programs, i.e., Home Performance with Energy Star, Appliance Efficiency Program and Multifamily
- staff input on low income program challenges and opportunities for enhancement
- response to citizen input shared to-date

Task Force members asked questions and gave comments following the presentation. Staff provided responses during the meeting and noted questions that needed follow-up responses at a later time.

Below are the questions asked and comments made by the Task Force members:

Richard Halpin:

Fix Slide 3 – 2014 data is too low.

Staff Response–We will correct data.

How do you get more names in the pipeline? – **Staff to Respond**

There are 33 nonprofit agencies. They could pre-certify customers.

Quantum impacts of leverage – Work with contractors and job training to increase work.

Staff Response – We are working with Small and Minority Business Resources (SMBR). Look into grant opportunities with Texas Workforce Commission.

Slides 4 and 23 – Can we batch potential customers?

Staff Response – We do this now by zip code. We will be able to do more with the new rebate tool.

Dan Pruett:

Would AE consider repairing AC rather than replace? – **Staff to**

respond What is the criterion for number of window units? – **Staff**

to respond Are the units professionally installed?

Staff Response– Yes, living area plus bedrooms. We may expand beyond Priority 1 customers. Moving program to neighborhood Housing might not be a good idea.

Staff Response– We have monthly meetings with HRC. We have discussed Green Initiative with Betsy

Spencer. The money could not go toward administrative funding.

Cyrus Reed:

Slide 11 – Show budgeted versus spent. – **Staff to Respond**

Slide 12 – The goal per the Generation plan is 800 by 2020 and 900 by 2025. – **Staff to Respond**

Share the kWh goal. – **Staff to Respond**

Could an AC be cost effective if the price point was based on kWh saved? – **Staff to Respond**

Slide 11 – Please provide budget vs spent and total budgets over past few years. – **Staff to Respond**

What is the kWh savings per program? - **Staff to Respond**

What is the price point by savings for AC? – **Staff to Respond**

Chris Strand:

DR goal – provide kW (like the kWh provided). - **Staff to**

Respond What is the ROI and what is cost effective? – **Staff to**

Respond How can we target high energy users? – **Staff to Respond**

How to get DR reduction as high as possible? – **Staff to Respond**

What are the projected savings – deemed vs actual? - **Staff to Respond**

Can vouchers or enhanced rebates be open to all contractors?

Staff Response – We are talking to Texas Gas to develop a program.

What is the impediment to split the money between CAP and EE? Can the money be collapsed? – **Staff to Respond**

When is the contractor RFP going out? Can we stop it? Can we see it?

Staff Response – No, we cannot stop it. That would harm the current program with added delays. We cannot show it to the task force because of where it is in the process (it has not been made public yet).

Lanetta Cooper:

Better to leverage funding with Neighborhood Housing – how to capture all savings? – **Staff to Respond**

Can we use money like rebate in low income – give the rebate to the contractors? – **Staff to Respond**

Replace HVAC, incorporate programmable thermostat.

How did we work with Jayco for bulk purchases of refrigerators? – **Staff to Respond**

Why did we get rid of refrigerators?

Staff Response – Related to the RFP, criteria of escalation, and customer satisfaction.

Slide 9 – Adjust to 1200 kWh as the average amount. - **Staff to Respond**

Break bill into summer components.

Staff Response – The sample bill was based on a summer rate.

Carol Biedrzycki:

Why is 2000 sq. ft. a requirement (slide 17)?

Staff Response – This is per the Discount Steering Committee.

Could we look at the number of household members rather than just sq. ft.?

Staff Response – Yes, we can.

Does the web site have good and updated information on it? – **Staff to Respond**

How does the individual apply if not going through a social service agency?

Staff Response – They work with the EES group.

Voucher on Slide 30 – what does that mean?

Staff Response - Provided TX Gas example.

What are the alternative approaches in regards to multifamily?

Staff Response -Explained it was a way to serve this group.

She would like to see numbers per year for Slide 3. - **Staff to Respond**

She would like the data from Slide 15. - **Staff to Respond**

For slide 29, compare the cost of solar with the cost of an AC replacement. – **Staff to Respond**

Have we ever looked at other scenarios besides tightening up the structure? – **Staff to Respond**

What is the amount of electricity by CAP in the summer and the winter? – **Staff to Respond**

What is the source of the deemed savings?

Staff Response - PUC

Tim Arndt:

31% of homes in Austin have electric heat (did not provide source of data). How does AE deal with electric heat?

Staff Response – Electric heat is not part of our core measures.

Per AI, most AC's are working.

Do the funds under CAP have to be used by AE?

Staff Response – We need clarification from Legal and CFO.

What are the 2 buckets of funding from the CBC?

Staff Response – Each program is line itemed.

Tim will provide his budget to which he was referring.

What is the total budget?

Staff Response – Approximately \$19 million in incentives.

What is the reach of the EE programs by income based on the surveys?

Staff Response – The information was provided in an earlier meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 12:04 pm without objection.