



**LOW INCOME CONSUMER ADVISORY TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 21, 2015**

The Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force convened in a regular meeting at Town Lake Center, 721 Barton Springs Road, Room 100, in Austin, Texas. Chairperson, Carol Biedrzycki called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Task Force Members in Attendance: Carol Biedrzycki (Chair), Lanetta Cooper, Richard Halpin, Dan Pruett, Cyrus Reed, Chris Strand, and Michael Wong. Tim Arndt (Vice Chair) and Karen Hadden were not present at the call to order, but arrived later.

Staff in Attendance: Austin Energy (AE) staff included Debbie Kimberly, Mark Dreyfus, Liz Jambor, Denise Kuehn, Ronnie Mendoza, and Hayden Migl. Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department (NHCD) staff included Cara Welch.

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS: GENERAL

There were no citizens signed up for Citizen Communications.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Approve minutes from August 7, and August 14, 2015 meeting-

A motion was made by Member Dan Pruett to approve the August 7, 2015 meeting minutes and seconded by Member Richard Halpin. All members approved on a 7-0 vote.

A motion was made by Member Michael Wong to approve the August 14, 2015 meeting minutes and seconded by Member Richard Halpin. One amendment was proposed.

Under Future Agenda Items, second sentence:

Edit to read, "...suggesting *that a new group be formed by the 10-1 Council to continue the work...*"

Member Wong and Member Halpin accepted the amendment and all members approved on a 7-0 vote.

3. OLD BUSINESS

a. Discussion and possible action on on-bill repayment and financing arrangements -

Member Cyrus Reed introduced the document "On-Bill Repayment Recommendation" (Back-up Item 3a, August 21, 2015 meeting) and highlighted changes since the previous meeting. Member Lanetta Cooper distributed the document "Customer Protections" (Back-up Item 3a, August 21, 2015 meeting) to be associated with this recommendation. Member Richard Halpin motioned approval of the recommendation, and Member Chris Strand seconded. Discussion included concerns regarding the target market and customer protections. An amendment was proposed and accepted to include "*as the program is developed, the following customer protections are to be considered,*" in the recommendation. The motion passed 6-2 with Chair Biedrzycki and Member Cooper voting against and Vice Chair Arndt not yet in attendance.

b. Discussion and possible action on amendments to the multifamily energy efficiency program -

This item was not discussed.

c. Discussion and possible action on low income energy efficiency program design including but not limited to cost effectiveness of energy efficiency measures, one-stop weatherization, program goals, and heating and cooling equipment repair and replacement –

Member Lanetta Cooper introduced multiple recommendations for this item:

1. Motion to approve “Recommendation for Contractor Rebates in conjunction with affordable housing projects” (Back-up Item 3c, August 21, 2015 meeting) was made by Member Cooper, and seconded by Member Richard Halpin. Discussion included the necessity of the program, including only repair instead of new construction, the level of qualification criteria, and cooperation between Austin Energy and Neighborhood Housing and Community Development. A friendly amendment to add that this will be a “*pilot*” program was included in the Recommendation. The motion passed with all in favor 9-0.
2. Motion to approve “Recommendation for Vulnerable Populations” (Back-up Item 3c, August 21, 2015 meeting) was made by Member Cyrus Reed, and seconded by Member Richard Halpin. Discussion included steps in the process and inclusion in the weatherization program, and program qualifications. Friendly amendments included adding the words “*Energy Star*” before any mention of a window unit; adding “*as deemed eligible by Health and Human Services*” in the Targeted Underserved Group section; and the Recommendation is amended to read as follows: “...including installation to low income *customers who are certified through the medically vulnerable registry of Austin Energy... the use of commitments to purchase appliances from retailers/manufacturers in the Austin area. It is anticipated that these customers would also apply for energy efficiency/ weatherization programs.*” The motion passed 7-0-2 with Members Chris Strand and Michael Wong abstaining.
3. Motion to approve “Recommendation Regarding AHFC Financing Related to Energy Efficiency Services” (Back-up Item 3c, August 21, 2015 meeting) was made by Member Cyrus Reed, and seconded by Member Richard Halpin. Friendly amendments included changing the title to “*...Solar/EE services*” and the end of the Recommendation is to read “... including solar for new *and substantial rehabilitation* construction financing. Higher rebates should be *considered for* these applicants. *PACE program opportunities should also be explored.*” The motion passed 7-0-2 with Members Chris Strand and Michael Wong abstaining.

Chair Carol Biedrzycki introduced a couple recommendations for this item:

4. Motion to approve “Recommendation Regarding Air Conditioners in Low Income Weatherization Program” (Back-up Item 3c, August 21, 2015 meeting) was made by Member Richard Halpin, and seconded by Member Karen Hadden. Friendly amendments included:
 - a. add “*Energy Star*” before any reference to air conditioner units throughout the recommendation
 - b. add “*Criteria should be developed to determine eligibility for window units and limited central air conditioner/heat repair and replacement,*” at the end of the recommendation
 - c. Targeted Underserved Group – Low income customers “*whose household incomes are 250% of federal poverty guidelines or less as qualified by the City of Austin Health and Human Services Department. Vulnerability should be considered, and priority should be given to customers at or below 200% federal poverty guidelines.*”
 - d. End of Brief Description – add “*This program is intended to help limited funding go further.*”

Member Chris Strand made a motion, seconded by Member Cyrus Reed, to keep the Targeted Underserved Group language as is without reference to the 250% of federal poverty guidelines. The motion failed 4-5 with Chair Biedrzycki, Vice Chair Arndt, Members Cooper, Hadden, Halpin voting against. The main motion passed 8-0-1 with Member Chris Strand abstaining.

5. Motion to approve “Weatherization Program Goals” (Back-up Item 3c, August 21, 2015 meeting) was made by Member Richard Halpin, and seconded by Member Lanetta Cooper. A friendly amendment was made to the third bullet to read “...by the end of 2024 *with increased goals to be considered*, as well as...” The motion passed with all in favor 9-0.

d. Discussion and possible action on ECAD (Energy Conservation Audit Disclosure) including but not limited to enforcement and expanding scope of disclosure requirements to small rental properties -

Member Lanetta Cooper introduced the document “Recommendation on ECAD Enhancement” (Back-up Item 3d, August 21, 2015 meeting). A motion to approve was made by Member Richard Halpin and seconded by Member Cyrus Reed. The motion passed with all in favor 9-0.

e. Discussion and possible action on energy efficiency rate true-up proceeding. -

This item was not discussed.

f. Discussion and possible action on final report -

Chair Carol Biedrzycki stated the report working group will be working on the draft to bring forward at the September 4, 2015 meeting.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion and possible action on the low income weatherization budget. –

Member Richard Halpin introduced the document “Energy Efficiency Equitable Budget Resolution” (Back-up Item 4a, August 21, 2015 meeting). A motion to approve was made by Member Lanetta Cooper and seconded by Vice Chair Tim Arndt. Member Lanetta Cooper passed out the additional back-up document “Customers with Household Incomes 0-400%” (Back-up Item 4a, August 21, 2015). Discussion included concerns about considering the budget before savings goals are established and reconsidering the amounts based on new numbers to be provided by Ronnie Mendoza. A working group was formed and this item was tabled to a future meeting.

b. Discussion and possible action on definition of multi-family properties serving low and low moderate income customers –

Chair Carol Biedrzycki introduced the document “Motion to Reconsider Recommendation Regarding Properties Serving Low and Moderate Income Customers” (Back-up Item 4b, August 21, 2015 meeting). A motion to approve was made by Member Richard Halpin and seconded by Member Cyrus Reed. Member Lanetta Cooper distributed the document “Amendment to the Amendment” (Back-up Item 4b, August 21, 2015 meeting) which was accepted as friendly. An amendment was proposed and accepted to add “...*for at least 30% of units* or rent to tenants...” in the amending language. The motion passed with all in favor 9-0.

c. Discussion and possible action on Austin Energy’s overall energy (kWh) and demand (KW) goals and kWh and KW goals for programs for low income and low moderate income customers. – This item was not discussed.

d. Discussion and possible action on Building Codes – This item was not discussed.

e. Discussion and possible action on audit of the billing system. – This item was not discussed.

f. Discussion and possible action on the need for a task force after October 1, 2015. – This item was not discussed.

5. BRIEFINGS & REPORTS

a. Austin Energy staff update on the weatherization program job status - This item was not discussed.

b. Status of data requests – This item was not discussed.

d. Committee Reports – possible reports from the Low Income Energy Efficiency Program Committee, Low-Moderate Income Energy Efficiency Program Committee, and/or Affordable Rental Property Committee - This item was not discussed.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. Discussion regarding future agenda items including a schedule of topics and issues and topics raised during briefings and citizen communications – Chair Carol Biedrzycki stated her plan is to schedule business items for the first hour and a half and going over the report for the second hour and a half.

ADJOURNMENT - The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm with no objection.