



**AUSTIN ENERGY UTILITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 27, 2019**

The Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 at 301 W. 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Kathie Tovo called the committee meeting to order at 1:36 p.m.

Committee Members in attendance:

Council Member Kathie Tovo, Chair
Council Member Leslie Pool, Vice Chair
Mayor Steve Adler
Council Member Paige Ellis
Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza
Council Member Ann Kitchen
Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison
Council Member Sabino “Pio” Renteria
Cary Ferchill, Electric Utility Commission Chair

Committee Members absent:

Council Member Alison Alter
Council Member Gregorio Casar
Council Member Jimmy Flannigan

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1. Approve the minutes of the February 27, 2019 Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee meetings.**

The minutes of the February 27, 2019 meeting were approved on Council Member Kitchen’s motion, and Mayor Pro Tem Garza’s second, on a 7-0 vote. Council Members Alter, Casar, Flannigan, and Renteria were off the dais.

CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

- 2. The first five speakers signed up before the meeting is called to order will each be allowed three minutes to speak.**

There were two speakers:

- Paul Robbins spoke about the effectiveness of proposed solar programs and urged Council to use surplus funds in the Customer Assistance Program for weatherization programs instead of refunding the funds.

- Chris Strand spoke about the history and effectiveness of the low income weatherization program and recommendations from the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force. He also stated unused funds should go to the Customer Assistance Program.

BRIEFINGS

3. General Manager's report:

- **Upcoming recommendations for Council action: purchase power agreement for wind energy, customer service space in south Austin.**

(Notes: SPONSOR: Council Member Kathie Tovo, CO 1: Council Member Leslie Pool, CO 2: Mayor Steve Adler)

Jackie Sargent, General Manager, provided the report.

4. Update from Pecan Street research and development organization.

(Notes: SPONSOR: Council Member Kathie Tovo, CO 1: Council Member Leslie Pool, CO 2: Mayor Steve Adler)

Suzanne Russo, Pecan Street CEO, provided the update.

5. Customer services update on multi-channel payment options.

(Notes: SPONSOR: Council Member Kathie Tovo, CO 1: Council Member Leslie Pool, CO 2: Mayor Steve Adler)

Elaine Veselka, Vice President of Customer Account Management, provided the update. Discussion included which entity receives fees that are collected and compliments that have been received for customer service.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

6. Discussion of low income weatherization and solar programs.

(Notes: SPONSOR: Council Member Kathie Tovo, CO 1: Council Member Leslie Pool, CO 2: Mayor Steve Adler)

There were five speakers:

- Lindsey Randal stated that she manages a property that is seeking to be weatherized resulting in a 13% reduction on residents' utility bills.
- Tim Arndt stated that the weatherization program has become more bureaucratic and properties have been denied for being built within the past 10 years or having past code violations.
- Tim Kisner said that weatherization program staff work closely with contractors and this is a good opportunity for Austin Energy to work with different community groups.
- Dana Harmon stated she was there to make Council aware of efforts by the Texas Energy Poverty Research Institute and that Austin compares favorably to other large cities regarding the percentage of income that goes toward utilities.
- Moore McDonough said contractors have been requesting guidelines for the weatherization program for three years and they just received a draft. He also described why some properties have been denied for the low income weatherization program.

Debbie Kimberly, Vice President of Customer Energy Solutions and Corporate Communications, responded to questions.

Discussion included criteria to participate in the low income weatherization program, how to increase flexibility or use discretion if a property falls slightly outside of the criteria, and reasons for shifting some of

the criteria. A request was made for the multifamily property information compiled by Austin Energy in addition to the number of properties that have applied for the program, how many have been turned down, and the associated reasons.

FUTURE ITEMS

7. Identify items to discuss at future meetings.

Future agenda item requests included continued discussion on low income weatherization and the transition of employees due to the decommissioning of Decker.

ADJOURN

Chair Tovo adjourned the meeting at 2:56 p.m. without objection.