Meeting of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program Subcommittee of the Low Income Oversight Board

**Tuesday, November 14th, 2017**

1:00pm -3:00pm

Call - In Number 1-866-630-5989 Participant Code 3362110#

Members of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program Subcommittee:

Robert Castaneda, Lisa Davidson, Patricia Watts, Jason Wimbley, Ortensia Lopez and Larry Gross

California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue

Hearing Room D

San Francisco, CA 94102

Draft Minutes

LIOB Members Present: Robert Castaneda, Lisa Davidson, Jason Wimbley and Ortensia Lopez

Absent: Board Members Gross and Watts

CPUC Staff Present: Zaida Amaya and Karl Stellrecht

Public Present: Mary O’Drain PG&E, Maria Stamas NRDC, Caroline McCormack, CHPC, Anna Solorio, CHOC

Via Conference: Kathy Wickware, Sheila Lee, Mark Aguirre, Carmelita Miller, Martha Lucey, Sarah Hill and Blanca DelaCruz

1. Introductions

Motion: The LIEAP Subcommittee elected to have Chairman Castaneda as the Chairman of the LIEAP subcommittee and Board Member Davidson to serve as the Vice-Chair. Moved by Board Member Lopez, and seconded by Board Member Wimbley. (Yes: Castaneda, Davidson, Lopez and Wimbley)

The LIEAP subcommittee welcomed all those present

1. Opening Comments from Committee Members

Chairman Castaneda thanked everyone present and those participating via teleconference.

The LIEAP subcommittee commented on the absence of the Board’s Principles, Mission and Vision Statement and the importance of developing a guiding document that adequately identifies these principles. It was mentioned that the Board has a very interesting dynamic and that the low income purpose programs are funded through rate payers as opposed to tax payers. Any comments input or suggestions from the LIEAP subcommittee members should be sent directly to Chairman Castaneda.

Board Member Davidson commented that one of the great strengths is being able to collaborate and develop strong partnerships with the industry, state agencies and the utilities and it makes the Board stronger and able to deliver better value for the most vulnerable customers.

Board Member Wimbley echoed the comments, and added that the Board needs to look at how to better provide and deliver services to the poor and the disadvantaged in the state, and to make sure that the values are defined and having objectives will help the Board to work more effectively.

Board Member Lopez commented that the vulnerable communities are getting worse, and that 20% of the state is considered poor and another 20% that are working are struggling just to survive. She also mentioned that the housing issue and livable wages are the biggest issues in California and that the deportation issue has become a big barrier with the new administration.

3. Guiding Principles - Vision and Mission Statements

The LIEAP subcommittee discussed in detail the guiding principles document that was distributed by Chairman Castaneda.

**DISCUSSION LIOB VALUES:** What Are They? I have always felt that these questions are best answered initially by articulating the LIOB’s value proposition to the communities that we represent and the body (CPUC) that we serve. Our values (who we are and our core beliefs in service to our communities) should be delineated.

* **Reducing Energy Burden for Low Income People:**
  + Economic opportunity: Careers in energy, going into disadvantaged communities and maximizing rate payers’ dollars, not only for measures and services fulfillment, but also reaching into these communities to bring them in as part of a workforce solution as well.
* **Maximizing Public Benefits**
  + One of the values is to continuously look for ways to maximize benefits to folks, for example CARE assists in paying a bill and avoid disconnection, but there’s also a unique opportunity to intercept with these communities, which could bring potential careers that would allow them to address the needs of others like themselves. It is important to recognize this, and value this as an equitable matter with the subsidy. Is everything being done to enroll people?
* **Preventions**
  + Prevent disconnections

Board Member Wimbley commented that one of the primary objectives is to save energy and ensure that energy is affordable for low income families, but there is a broad range of co-benefits such as employment and training opportunities that definitively fall into this area of economics benefits that could extend to low income and low income communities. In addition, he added that the issue of **health and safety and comfort** should not be ignored.

Definition of what the Board Does:

It was commented that the board is the steward of low income communities and as a result, the Board has a big responsibility to push the institutions and that equity and environmental justice are key to all of this in the low income communities. Having actionable items, to move forward, and accomplish these actions are the responsibility of this board. For example, hiring somebody as an ESA contractor that was a client of the service is a big accomplishment.

* Stewards
* Responsibility
* Accomplishments

It was mentioned that the focus shouldn’t be solely on the ESA program, the maximization of dollars should be on the resources that are available “leveraging” should be the point of emphasis, and that as stewards of the community and overseers of the program, the Board has the responsibility to ratepayers, and the Board should not lose sight of this.

* **Rate Payers** –
  + Is everything being done in the most effective matter based on rate payer dollars?

Board Member Davidson agreed and added that the word stewardship also covers the fact that the utilities are stewards of the ratepayer’s funds and the concept of maximizing the benefit of these funds is really important.

**DISCUSSION OF THE BARRIERS** that Prevent the ESA, CARE and Water Programs from Reaching Their Maximum Potential? (Rules that don't make sense and distract people from achieving the mission of any organization - to serve its customers?) How does the Board assist in making the programs that we participate in better?

It was mentioned that having access to information could be a challenge for the Board, and that the utilities are rich in data, but how does the Board create visions or champion the need for changes based on what the data is telling them. The Board understands that the CPUC has processes and guidelines to follow, and that what may seem subjectively as being quick, may not be in concert with the process. The Board has been asked to take position on actionable items, and in order to accomplish this, the Board needs to use “best practices approaches” and use the subcommittee process to come up with positions that can then be taken to the full Board. It was suggested that as part of the LIOB reporting, the utilities could add and share one success; what really worked well, as well as one challenge that they are having.

**Evaluation and Revision Consistent with the Values of the LIOB, which is maximizing benefit, leveraging resources to not only deliver services but also working on prevention.**

The Board needs to work with the utilities based on their existing advice letters and the contracts on their ME&O and also work with the Energy Division based on the advice letter process.

**Addressing Challenges:**

It was commented that understanding the measurement of success in the program is a challenge.

Board Member Davidson commented that the IOU’s measure penetration rates for CARE and also the number of homes treated and penetration rates for ESA, and added that the utilities file very comprehensive monthly, quarterly and annual reports that have a variety of other data points.

It was also mentioned that there is going to be a critical need to measure **disconnections**, as new changes will be happening with the rate structures.

Board Member Davidson commented that residential customers have choices, and that customers will receive a rate comparison that will show their options for better rates. This is part of the rate reform in making sure that the customers understand their choices.

**DEVELOP VISION STATEMENT: The Board Should Define the Vision That WE Want to Create. The Purpose of Our Vision Is to Stretch Boundaries and Enable the Board to Have a Sense of What Can Be.**

**Standard definition of a Vision Statement: An aspirational description of what our organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. Our Vision Statement is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current or future courses of action.**

Chairman asked the subcommittee members to submit 2-3 sentences to present to the Board on a Vision Statement. The vision should stay consistent with the Board’s action items as a board.

**DEVELOPING GUIDING LIOB PRINCIPLES: As we develop our principles keep these guidelines in mind:**

* **Your guiding principles spring from your Values;**
* **The principles need to be consistent with the**[**Vision**](http://www.makeadentleadership.com/developing-a-team-vision-statement.html)**;**
* **What experience the Board/CPUC/IOU want to deliver to its low-income program customers?**
* **Focus on what is important to the business of the Board.**

Chairman asked the subcommittee members to submit 2-3 sentences on defining the LIOB’s value proposition.

Why do we exist?

Why is it important?

What would the world or our communities be like if we weren’t there?

It was suggested for the subcommittee to take a look at LIOB charter to assist in crafting some of this language.

Daily routine could be for things that are near term such as the full program implementation that is coming up in January. How does the board monitor this, are marks being accomplished etc., but to also keep in mind the emerging issues that are long term, and to formulate a plan or strategy for these long term issues.

**Mission Statement: Chairman Castaneda will develop a draft Mission Statement and will circulate to individual subcommittee members for input.**

4. Low Income Multi-Family and the Collaboration between CSD and IOUs

There was discussion on the desire to have a more in-depth briefing on how multi-family is progressing and get an update from each utility.

Board Member Wimbley commented that this particular issue is quite complex, that CSD’s program is not your typical program, that this program emphasizes on core services that are important to the administrators and operators of affordable housing and multi-family affordable housing in the state. He mentioned that one of the observations in the SB 350 barriers report was that there is no program integration, and that these programs are very siloed. He mentioned that the 17-18 budget has more appropriation of funds for CSD, and that these dollars emphasize continue renewable energy offerings to low income individuals as well as new emphasis on farm worker housing; both the single family and multi-family. Recent discussion with the IOU’s have been focused on how to carry out and fulfill the Decision’s directives, and establishing balancing accounts that will abide by current ESA rules, and how to align those ESA rules to the way the programs are currently operating. Time is also being spent on deliberating on the requirements, approving measures, crafting a contract/standard agreement between CSD and the IOUs’. CSD is willing to share any and all information as it helps for successful approach, as well as the co-benefits that the utilities may want to study and take a look at.

Board Member Davidson commented that the IOU’s are all for streamlining, and that they don’t want to create additional new programs, and that their intent is to integrate something together.

Lastly, it was commented that there seems to be consensus and that the Board should take this opportunity to advise the Commission on this issue.

5. Public Comment

Carolina McCormack form CA Housing Partnership and Maria Stamas from NRDC would like to see updates on the multi-family program design as part of a standing item for the LIOB as well as an update on the coordination with CSD and the utilities program.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:50pm