

Draft meeting notes

Thursday June 17th, 9:00 – 3:30 PM

Webex Virtual Meeting

Board Member Attendance:

Present: Shiroma, Delgado-Olson, Stamas, Castaneda, Watts, Wimbley, Medina, Linam, Irwin, Castilone, Lim

Absent: None

1. Welcome and Introductions

Board Chair Delgado-Olson opened the meeting of the Low Income Oversight Board (LIOB) at approximately 9:00 AM. Commissioner Shiroma followed by providing her opening remarks, which included recognition of the Board's contributions to the most recent Decision on the Low Income proceeding, D.21-06-015. Commissioner Shiroma also remarked on another California Public Utilities (CPUC) decision related to energy efficiency, D.21-05-031. Board Member introductions followed.

2. Public Comment

There were no comments from members of the public at this time.

3. Approval of the March 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes – Action Item

Board Member Castaneda moved to approve the minutes from the March 11th meeting and Board Vice-Chair Stamas seconded the motion. The LIOB approved the minutes unanimously.

4. Comment from Community Based Organizations

There were no comments from Community Based Organizations at this time.

5. Energy Division Update

Kapil Kulkarni, of the CPUC Energy Division, provided updates on the large investor owned (IOU) utility low income proceeding (A.19-11-003) and recent decision (D.21-06-015), the small multi-jurisdictional utility (SMJU) low income proceeding (A.20-03-014) schedule, the Low Income Needs Assessment (LINA), and the 2023 Potential and Goals (P&G) study. The low income decision applies to the California Alternative Rates for Energy (CARE), Energy Savings Assistance (ESA), and Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) programs.

Board Member Castaneda asked about the ESA program pilot and the Southern California Edison (SCE) electrification pilot and whether they were the same program. Mr. Kulkarni answered that they are different pilots, though electrification could be included in other IOU

pilot programs. Board Member Castaneda also noted that the CPUC should consider incorporating Net Energy Metering (NEM) into program outreach, in order to help lower energy bills for income eligible customers.

Board Member Castaneda shared that the ESA decision is an opportunity for workforce development in disadvantaged communities. Commissioner Shiroma said her and Commissioner Rechtschaffen are very interested in workforce development and would like to advance the CPUC's work on this.

Vice-Chair Stamas asked for more information on the multifamily whole building program and asked for more updates on that program at future meetings. Mr. Kulkarni noted that the ESA working group will have opportunity to participate in development of the program no later than January 2022.

Chair Delgado-Olson asked if there was an opportunity for a LIOB member to join the ESA working group and Mr. Kulkarni responded that Energy Division will look into that question and the composition of the working group in the future. Chair Delgado-Olson also asked if the design framework for the pilot program could be shared at the December LIOB meeting and Mr. Kulkarni responded that whatever information is available at that time could be shared.

Board Member Medina asked when the survey samples for the Low Income Needs Assessment (LINA) will be available and Mr. Kulkarni responded that it should be available in Q3 of 2021.

Board Member Castaneda asked about the advice letter required to be submitted in 90 days by the low income decision, and whether it is a Tier 1 or Tier 2 advice letter. Mr. Kulkarni responded that they are Tier 2, which means there is an opportunity to protest. Board Member Castaneda responded that it would be helpful and limit the potential for protest if the IOUs could share their proposed plans at a LIOB subcommittee meeting. Board Member Castaneda also expressed concern that the program funds not be affected by the bifurcation of the bridge period. Mr. Kulkarni responded that the Energy Division is looking for clarification from the IOUs on how the budgets will work during the transition period to make sure it is fair to program contractors.

A member of the public asked if the LINA will look into whether the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) or Multifamily Common Area Measures (MF CAM) programs can help get tenants into the main ESA program. Mr. Kulkarni shared that the LINA surveys will ask landlords which other programs they have participated in and where they received program referrals from.

Another public question was on what percentage of tenants were treated as opposed to other rental properties. Mr. Kulkarni answered that this level of detail will be available through survey data.

6. Energy Efficiency Goals and Portfolio Process Reform Decision

Jessica Allison, of the CPUC Energy Division, provided an overview of the main energy efficiency decision, D.21-05-031. Key components of this decision include Total System Benefit, portfolio system benefit, including an equity portion, and portfolio structure and approval. There is an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in equity design via the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC).

Board Member Castaneda asked about the different cost-effective values for ESA, the main energy efficiency program and its effects. Ms. Allison responded that the equity category for the main rate programs doesn't have a cost effectiveness minimum. Commissioner Shiroma noted that this decision can help to fill in the gap between ESA customers and other lower income customers who may not qualify for ESA.

Board Member Lim asked whether a program needs to be either ESA or an equity offering. Ms. Allison answered the distinction will be worked out in the CAEECC working group, but there will be a separation.

Board Member Wimbley asked about the scale of the equity budgets and Ms. Allison gave the example of Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), which has an ~\$150M combined budget for equity and market outreach.

Board Vice-Chair Stamas asked if health and safety will be eligible for the program. Ms. Allison responded that the details are still to be determined, but those considerations are on the table for equity programs. Board Vice-Chair Stamas asked about how equity will be defined and Ms. Allison answered that the way these programs address equity in granularity is still being addressed.

Board Member Medina asked about selling of solar energy out of state and Ms. Allison responded that solar is considered in the avoided cost calculator, but not used in the same way. Board Member Medina also asked how this decision overall will impact low income and specifically CARE eligible customers. Alison LaBonte, of the CPUC Energy Division, along with Ms. Allison answered that the main benefit for customers is that part of the main energy efficiency budget is reserved for equity activities. Another benefit is that there is a great market and market understanding of energy efficiency in the low to moderate income communities.

Board Member Watts commented to encourage contractors to participate in the CAEECC working group.

7. CPUC Standing Reports – Legislative Update

A CPUC Legislative Update was included in the agenda packet which summarized the end of the 2021 legislative session.

7. CPUC Standing Reports – Water Division

Viet “Kevin” Trương of the CPUC Water Division presented several Water Division Updates: COVID Impact on Customer Assistance Program (CAP) Customers, water IOU transition plans, and statewide drought conditions.

Board Chair asked about the federal assistance opportunities and Mr. Trương answered that the CPUC is still awaiting more details for how these funds will be dispersed. Board Member Wimbley also commented that Community Services Development (CSD) is the designated agency to administer those federal funds to water customers in arrearage. Commissioner Shiroma asked if this program was for both the privately and publicly owned customers and Board Member Wimbley affirmed. Also, in Governor’s May revised budget, there is a proposed \$1B to address water bill debt.

Board Member Medina commented on the drought and the cost of transitioning to well water. She asked if there was any opportunity for the CPUC to consider low income family needs during a drought.

Board Member Wimbley asked if there are any lessons learned from the previous drought task force that could be applied to the current situation. Mr. Trương answered that one lasting effect of the previous drought measures is that each utility came up with ways to address water usage. This has contributed to a 15% overall decrease on water usage since 2015

Board Member Castaneda mentioned that during the last drought, there was legislation from State Senator Dodd regarding a water low income rate assistance program, Assembly Bill 401. Board Member Castaneda asked about the status of that legislation. Mr. Trương answered that the State Water Resource Control Board (SWRCB) submitted their draft proposal last year to the legislature. Board Member Linam confirmed that the proposal is with the legislature at the moment, but the biggest concern is the funding of this assistance program. Board Member Linam suggested that the SWRCB be invited to the next quarterly LIOB meeting to provide an update on AB401.

Board Vice-Chair Stamas asked about the timeline for the water disconnections moratorium and how that aligned with when assistance funds will be available. Board Member Linam answered that the moratorium has been extended to the end up September which should allow more time for the distribution of assistance funds.

A member of the public commented about regulating well drilling in areas where low income customers are at risk of losing their water supply. Commissioner Shiroma responded that the CPUC only has jurisdiction over a small part of the water in the state, but could share those concerns with the SWRCB. Board Member Linam noted that the state passed legislation a few years ago regarding ground water that prevents over-pumping.

7. CPUC Standing Reports – Community Help and Awareness of Natural Gas and Electric Services (CHANGES)

Ravinder Mangat of the CPUC's News & Outreach Division provided the biannual update on the Community Help and Awareness of Natural Gas and Electric Services (CHANGES) Program. Casey McFall of Milestone Consulting LLC and Anni change of Self Help for Elderly were available to answer questions about the program.

Board Member Medina thanked Mr. Mangat for the presentation and the CHANGES team for the work they have done during the pandemic.

Board Chair Delgado-Olson commented on the point made in the presentation that sometimes the most critical marketing does not always reach the most vulnerable population. This disconnect highlights what the Board has been interested in and how different program and outreach partnerships can be best leveraged to increase accessibility.

Board Member Castilone asked about the metrics slide and whether they count individuals receiving each type of assistance. Ms. McFall answered that there may be duplicate individuals participating in different programs. Board Member Castilone then asked if these individuals were new or re-enrollments and Ms. McFall responded that the program will be collecting that data in the future.

8. Recommendations Pursuant to Resolution M-4849 and Related Matters

Ben Menzies, Jeneille Hsu, Mia Hart, and Gillian Weaver presented on the Energy Division response to the LIOB's recommendations submitted in response to Resolution M-4849.

Board Member Castaneda commented that he contributed to recommendation #6 which considers special energy saving measures. He feels that this idea was adequately addressed in the ESA pilot program.

Board Chair Delgado Olson commented that regarding recommendation #1, there is an opportunity to learn more about the heat index temperature forecasting model at a future LIOB meeting.

Board Vice-Chair Stamas asked if there had been any thought given to extending the June energy disconnection moratorium. Mr. Menzies responded that extending that moratorium to better align when relief funds can be distributed is still ongoing and that has been identified as an issue.

Board Member Medina requested that there be a follow up on these recommendations as their various responses are implemented in the future. She also asked that there be consideration for coordination with the housing assistance program and the utility relief assistance programs.

Board Member Wimbley asked if there were an emergency situation and an expedited response is needed, if there was a mechanism for the CPUC to respond quicker than the

standard procedures. Commissioner Shiroma responded that existing mechanisms include Executive Orders and assigned commissioner rulings on relevant proceedings.

9. Joint Investor Owned Utilities Status Reports

Board Member Lim opened discussion on this agenda item by sharing that low income program activity has increased in recent months and that the utilities look forward to responding to the recent low decision. Staff from PG&E, SCE, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDGE) and Southern California Gas (SCG) were available to answer questions.

Board Member Medina commented on the increase in new CARE customers and expressed interest in tracking these newly enrolled across the long term to see if they stay in the program.

Board Member Castaneda noted that the emphasis on FERA in the recent decision. He conveyed a need for more coordinated activity between outreach contractors that work with different utilities, such as those that work with both private and public utilities. Commissioner Shiroma responded that historically the FERA program has been under enrolled, but that the recent decision has a higher penetration goal.

Board Member Medina asked about how CARE works for those that live in a master metered multifamily housing with no direct utility bill, as she knows someone who should be enrolled in CARE in the Southern California area. SCE responded that income eligible customers who live in master metered buildings are able to enroll in CARE and that they would follow up Board Member Medina offline. Commissioner Shiroma commented that individual customers with issues enrolling in CARE should contact the CPUC consumer affairs branch (CAB).

At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Shiroma departed for another obligation.

10. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Updates

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet during this quarter due to increased focus on the low income decision and resolution M-4849.

11. Subcommittee Reports

The Low Income Energy Assistance Programs (LIEAP) subcommittee met to review the proposed decision low income decision. LIEAP Subcommittee Chair Castaneda noted that it would be helpful for the IOUs to present their proposed program designs at a subcommittee meeting in advance of the compliance filing in September.

The Legislative, Low Income Needs Assessment (LINA), and Water & Climate Change subcommittees did not meet this quarter.

The Water & Climate Change Chair Linam commented that the subcommittee will meet prior to September and discuss things that came up during this quarterly meeting.

12. Coordination Report on Low Income Weatherization Program (LIWP)

Board Member Wimbley shared that there is no update on coordination with the LIWP program at this time.

13. Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group (DACAG) Update

Board Chair Delgado-Olson shared that there will be a meeting of board leadership from the LIOB, DACAG, and the Universal Lifeline Telephone Service Trust Administrative Committee (ULTSAC) to better define the liaison role between the two boards at a future date.

14. Wrap Up & Closing Remarks

Board Chair Delgado-Olson shared closing remarks and thanked the Board for their increased work in recent months in response to the pandemic. He also noted that 2021 marks 20 years since the Board's creation, which will be celebrated by the Board in person as soon as it is safe to do so.

Board Medina also shared closing remarks, thanking board for making a difference and emphasizing a continued need to advocate for the planet.

Board Member Castaneda provided comments on the need work with the ESA contractor network, especially during the upcoming phases of program transition and expansion.

Board Member Watts thanked Board Chair Delgado-Olson for his leadership of the Board in supporting its advisory capacity to the CPUC.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 PM.