



Kent County Essential Needs Task Force * Energy Efficiency Subcommittee Meeting
Kent County Health and Human Services Building * 121 Franklin SE * Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Suite 110 * Conference Rooms C/D

July 25, 2017 Minutes

ENTF Energy Efficiency Subcommittee Members and Guests Present:

Susan Cervantes (ACSET Community Action Agency), Darcy Cunningham (Salvation Army Social Services), Ken Ford (Flat River Outreach Ministries), Sherrie Gillespie (ACSET Community Action Agency), John Mitchell (United Way 211), Angela Gillisse (The Salvation Army)

Guests: Kendrick Heinlein (Area Agency on Aging of West Michigan), Dr. Neil Carlson (Calvin College for Social Research), and Joanna Bascom (Calvin College for Social Research)

Darcy Cunningham (Salvation Army Social Services), presided.

1. Welcome/Introductions

Introductions around the room.

2. Review notes from last meeting

Minutes provided from last ENTIF EE Subcommittee Meeting, held on June 27, 2017

Motion: John Mitchell

Second: Susan Cervantes

Motion Approved

3. Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Update

Darcy Cunningham (Salvation Army Social Services)

Ms. Cunningham reported that due to numerous changes at the State level the Coalition has been very busy. The Michigan Agency for Energy (MAE) made an announcement at the end of June regarding changes. As a result of a Federal Low Income Home Energy & Assistance (LIHEAP) Audit utility companies will no longer be grantees of the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) grant. The utility companies included DTE Energy, Consumers Energy, and Samco. In the past, the utility companies have used the grant for customer affordable payment plans. The MAE would like to retain the affordable payments plans, so local agencies will now have to run the programs. The RFP for PY 2017-2018 has not been introduced yet, but there have been discussions about how these changes will effect budgeting. The utility companies have requested that all customers currently utilizing the affordable payment plans should remain on the plans. Ms. Cunningham will keep the group updated on this subject.

3. Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Update (cont.)

Darcy Cunningham (Salvation Army Social Services)

Ms. Cunningham reported the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) has lowered the monthly surcharge from \$0.96 to \$0.93 per meter in each household for regulated electric customers. The monies from the MPSC surcharged are blended with LIHEAP monies to create the MEAP fund. The MEAP fund is capped at \$50 million, but there have been more utilities opting in for regulation. As a result, the funds will be adjusted as to not go over the \$50 million cap.

Ms. Cunningham reported the Michigan Agency for Energy (MAE) released fiscal data for the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) grant for all grantees through the end of May 2017:

- served over 91,000 households of low income
- expended \$67 million of the \$90 million dollars of the grant
- utilized 75% of the grant
- 59% of the households of low income where below 75% of the Federal Poverty Level

Ms. Cunningham reported that The House Labor Appropriations Subcommittee introduced a bill to keep LIHEAP funding at the same level (\$3.39 Billion) as the previous year. This bill will still need to go before the full Committee for a vote.

4. LIHEAP Update

Susan Cervantes (ACSET Community Action Agency),

Ms. Cervantes reported that the Weatherization Assistance Program may be receiving additional LIHEAP funding to be spent by September 30, 2017. The Federal Poverty Level to be eligible for the LIHEAP funding is under 150%. Ms. Cervantes is awaiting confirmation of the funds and is hopeful that the weatherization units will be completed by the deadline. If the additional funding is not spent out, it will have to be returned.

5. Success Measures and Indicators – Roll-up to K-Connect

Darcy Cunningham (Salvation Army Social Services)

Ms. Cunningham reported that K-Connect would like all ENTF Committees to pare down their indicators in order for them to fit on their website dashboard. Ms. Cunningham said this will be a future project for members of the Energy Efficiency Subcommittee and will be addressed at upcoming meetings by Ms. Randall.

6. New Consumers Energy Data

Dr. Neil Carlson (Calvin College for Social Research)

Dr. Carlson summarized Calvin College Center for Social Research's Metric Study to date for members and guests (Older meeting notes are available upon request). Dr. Carlson referred to the 3 Indicators chosen by the group:

Indicator- Number of days assistance is available

Indicator- Percentage of eligible households receiving a subsidy in the last twelve (12) months

Indicator – Percentage of Kent County households spending no more than 2% of income on electric

6. New Consumers Energy Data (cont.)

Dr. Neil Carlson (Calvin College for Social Research)

Dr. Carlson reported that Consumers Energy has been cooperative with data sharing. As a note, the shared data is not at the individual account level. The shared data that is available is one monthly row of data per ZIP+4. Dr. Carlson showed members the shared data on Tableau. The link for the Tableau content is on the ENTF EE Subcommittee Trello Board and can be officially shared now. If you need to be invited to the Trello Board please contact Ms. Randall.



Dr. Carlson spent time adjusting the map to show members how the shared data can be useful for agencies. Here are some highlights:

- The current default data range is June 1, 2016 – May 30, 2017
- 1% is the threshold default (this can be adjusted)*
- The Dunning Level default can be adjusted, most programs can intercept when there is an arrearage
- When the metric changes have been tailored to the agency's need, the visual graphs will correspond with this information
- “Shut-offs” will only show up in their month and then once shut-off the account will be non-existent. This is one caveat for the lack of account level data.

*The 1% threshold default was selected as a result of 1/200 Kent County Households are at risk of utility shut-off

6. New Consumers Energy Data (cont.)

Dr. Neil Carlson (Calvin College for Social Research)

Dr. Carlson challenged members to use this information on recidivism studies and also to devise a strategy to make a pilot program. Once the program is in place then members can invite the utility companies to ENTF EE meetings and give them regular updates.

Dr. Carlson selected the Lowell area (has a municipally owned utility company) for member Mr. Ford. Dr. Carlson is working on the DTE Energy data and encouraged Mr. Ford to provide a contact to the Lowell area utility company so it can be added to the Metric Study. Mr. Ford suggested a similar approach to local deliverable fuel companies.

Ms. Cervantes asked Dr. Carlson if it would be a fair assumption that if a customer is having trouble with their electric bill, then they would also be having trouble with a gas/deliverable fuel bill. Dr. Carlson answered that a direct correlation will be visible once the data is shared from DTE Energy. There will be visible alignments on the map to help agencies plan for energy bill crisis.

Mr. Ford would like to think about community sustainability as a long term goal of the ENTF EE Subcommittee. Ms. Cervantes agreed and would like to find alternatives and always keep the client's best interest as the bottom line.

Dr. Carlson addressed guest Mr. Heinlein (Area Agency on Aging of West Michigan) regarding the social cost of elderly clients. As an example, a dementia client may be in a crisis due to a medical condition being responsible for a utility bill being forgotten to be paid. Dr. Carlson asked if there is a way to put a value on this population, and can the Metric Study be a helpful tool to manage the risks of aging.

Ms. Cunningham collaborated with Dr. Carlson on future uses for the Metric Study and the partnership with Calvin College for Social Research. Dr. Carlson offered three suggestions:

- Condense K-Connect Indicators
- Create a Pilot Program using the Metric Study
- CCSR support is available

7. Adjournment 11:30 am

Next Meeting

Date/Time: August 22, 2017 10:30 AM

Location: ACSET Community Action Agency
121 Franklin St SE Suite 110
Conference Rooms C/D

Meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 10:30 AM.

Meeting Location:

ACSET Community Action Agency,
121 Franklin SE Suite 110, Conference Room C/D

2017 Meeting Date Schedule:

August 22, 2017

September 26, 2017

October 24, 2017

November 28, 2017

December 26, 2017

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