



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

ENTF Energy Efficiency Subcommittee Members and Guests Present:

Darcy Cunningham (The Salvation Army), John Mitchell (211), Ken Ford (Flat River Outreach), Kendrick Heinlein (AAAWM), Niki Perkins (Access of West MI), Sherri Vainavicz (211), Susan Cervantes (KCCA), Tom Oosterbaan (Senior Neighbors), Wende Randall (ENTF), Tara Robinson (The Salvation Army), Marissa Boerman (True North EmPower): Bree Butler (ENTF)

Darcy Cunningham, Co-Chair presided.

I. Welcome/Introductions

Introductions around the room, state your name and organization.

II. Review notes from last meeting

Minutes provided from last ENTF EE Subcommittee Meeting, held on October 24, 2017

Motion to Approve: John Mitchell

Amendments: Funds Update C: change Marcy to Darcy and Location changed to Kent County Community Action.

Second: Tom Oosterbaan

Motion Approved with amendments

Meeting time officially changed to 1pm

III. LIHEAP Updates

Grantees that received Crisis Prevention Funds were able to apply for the LIHEAP funds. Those applications were due the week before Thanksgiving and applicants are currently waiting to hear regarding award status.

a. Agency Updates

The Salvation Army: Recently received Crisis Prevention Funds, they have a limited amount of funds to help customers with energy costs. Majority of funds went to LSP enrollments. Working with the vendor PMC, they have created an online application for both LSP and CARE customers. They also received about one thousand CARE enrollments. TSA recently

partnered with Flat River Outreach Ministries to provide CARE in Lowell. It is unknown if any new spots will be open for CARE. TSA did apply for crisis prevention funds for paying bills, but are still waiting to hear back.

211: Receiving a lot of calls recently and feeling increased pressure without LIHEAP funds. Now that funding has been received and media has made that news public, calling has gone up, but DHHS is still the only one to be able to provide services.

Senior Neighbors: has about 2k left, call volume has been down the last month. 211 has inactivated the ability to refer to Senior Neighbors since they are not currently able to help with large bills. They are currently able to give about \$350/case.

True North EmPower: Able to give limited assistance for gas and deliverables. No longer accepting applications due to high volumes of applications already received. Still taking CARE applications. LSP limited re-enrollment spots and unknown new CARE spots.

Flat River Outreach Ministries: Sees a lot of shut off protection plans that have expired but are unable to give any aid for one-time payments until funding is released. Currently running a money management course that is going well and have 15 people enrolled. Anticipating a busy year.

DHHS: Put 6 extra people in lobby expecting a large volume of customers, but have been experiencing trickling numbers. It is suspected that the warm weather is impacting patrons, holidays don't typically affect the numbers of customers. Still have under \$10,000 County Funds that will reset in January. Currently using those mainly for eviction funds.

KCCA: MEAP contracts had to be corrected due to agency change so paperwork is still being pushed through and contract still needs to be signed. It is expected that the contract will arrive soon. KCCA has started taking applications so that interviews can get underway in the meantime. Currently 3 months off schedule and looking at doing 12 months of work in 9 once LIHEAP is released. If you have people who want deliverable fuels – as of Jan 1st will have funds.

ACCESS: Receiving significantly high emails mainly from local churches and website regarding needs for gas.

b. Pricing Trends – Susan C

Talked to Weatherization and analysis needs to be completed, National Energy Audit Tool must be updated so that during weatherization efforts it can be discovered what the savings to investment would be. The deliverable fuel companies are gearing up to raise the prices due to a predicted cold winter. If bills are found to be exorbitant it is important to report it to MPSC so that price gouging doesn't occur. This year gas and electricity prices are staying consistent with last year. When energy prices go up, it does mean a higher saving/interest ratio. The analysis can be made public information, therefore, in the future this info can be used for advocacy.

c. Talking Points

Reference options for seniors, talk about how to get aid in preparing your home for weatherization, educate about shut off dates. Discussion around if this tool was helpful and if it should change due to some funding having been released. Susan gave message sheet to lobbyist. It is advised, instead of saying we don't have any services, explain that we do, but once the list is open, it's hard to get on. 211 discussed how it's very difficult to make sure people can get on the list because it's undetermined how long it will be open and when. It

was only able to be open for 4 hours before it filled up last time. Conveying this may be difficult, therefore Darcy will reword the funding availability section.

IV. Advocacy

a. Client Stories and Quotes

Please email any stories and quotes you might have to Bree.

Both success and non-success stories are encouraged. It's important to show a full and balanced picture.

b. Agency Stats Related to How Funding/Assistance Impacts Your Clients

The statistics looked for include the county wide data found in reports from last year but if your organization has more specific information or data points regarding energy needs and variety services in Kent County, please email them to Bree or bring them to the next meeting to be compiled. Talk about flexibility of funding and demonstrate different levels of impact per projects. Statistics including why an individual was found ineligible are also very useful. The cooling and heating days of the year and how they affect energy needs can also be useful information. The utility request for assistance is usually the first marker that a spiral downward or a need for other services may occur, therefore this can indicate a family or individual who may need assistance outside of energy needs.

c. Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Day at the capitol – December 12th

Programming is at 11:30am inside the capitol building in Lansing. There will be a short presentation from the coalition. Lunch is provided, and legislators are invited to attend. There is no RSVP necessary.

d. Walk for Warmth – February 24th

Fund raising for utility assistance for families that don't qualify for mainstream assistance. Missing mainstream assistance can arise from just barely missing cut off numbers, etc. Last year \$43,000 was raised. There is a goal of at least \$20,000 for this year.

e. LIHEAP Days – March 12th & 13th

V. Success Measures and Indicators – Basic Needs Index

ENTF has a strong partnership with KConnect. They are looking at childhood development from cradle to career. Regardless of how old a child is, basic needs are attention worthy. ENTF was already completing important work regarding basic needs, therefore KConnect approached ENTF to be the basic needs workgroup. Each subcommittee has created indicators regarding their purpose. It needs to be decided which indicators should be presented to KConnect to be included in their index. Which indicator(s) are the most important for success. In January, all the Co-Chairs from the subcommittees will be meeting to go over recommended indicators and agree which should be compiled and presented to KConnect in May.

a. Please review attached measures

Open discussion around indicators and their importance. It was said that E1.3 – affordability – is very important because it sums up what the key issues may be regarding energy. Consumers will put affordability first, they will forgo being warm by keeping the heat low and wearing a lot of layers to compensate. E2.2 was also discussed as being important. Weatherization is very important regardless of city or country living and heat loss ties into housing and affordability. The audience for this information will be KConnect and ENTF. It

was discussed that some measures are hard to understand. Therefore, work may be done in the future to create indicators that make sense and are presentable to the public. The goal is make it so individuals can be self-sustaining, with success measures, it's important to see clearly what the goal is. It's important to discern if we're just solving the symptom of the issue or addressing the root cause is very important. Looking at it from that perspective, we look at things we can do to make success in that indicator. Subcommittee members are encouraged to keep thinking about this and it will be discussed at the next meeting. Some data is on Trello, if you are not on Trello, please email Bree.

VI. Annual Report Preparation

Historically, a report has been created about energy assistance provided, dollar amount, and demographics over the last year. Currently working on the 2017 report. The 2016 report will be sent out to subcommittee members, please send Darcy feedback. This report would be beneficial towards advocacy and hasn't been shared past the ENTF subcommittees previously, but can be. For anyone that works with organizations or churches that aren't apart of the government funding system, please include that in report to show a picture of other groups that assist in our area. Of course, all privacy rules your organization may have regarding collecting data should be followed.

VII. Other Discussion

Regarding weatherization, Capital Supply will do Mobile Homes and Houses, but windows don't qualify for SRI anymore and are rarely done as part of weatherization.

VIII. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 23, 2017

Date/Time: December 2017

Location: Kent County Community Action

121 Franklin St SE Suite 110

Conference Rooms C/D

Meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of every month, at 1:00PM.

Meeting Location:

Kent County Community Action,
121 Franklin SE Suite 110, Conference Room C/D

2018 Meeting Date Schedule:

January 23rd - February 27th

March 27th - April 24th

May 22nd - June 26th

July 24th - August 28th

September 25th - October 23rd

November 27th