



Energy Efficiency Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2019
1:00pm – 2:30pm

Facilitator:	Susan Cervantes		
Meeting Attendees:	Susan Cervantes, Monica Light, Tom Oosterbaan, Nick Grinwis, Kendrick Heinlein, Jayme Vosovic, Donata Kidd, Sherri Vainavicz, John Mitchell, James Geisen, Wende Randall, Brianne Czyzio		
Time Convened:	1:05	Time Adjourned:	2:15

Introductions

Review of Minutes **From March 26, 2019**

Discussion	None
Amendments	None
Conclusion	Motion Passed

Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Updates

Discussion
One topic discussed was issues from the streamlined payment plans, there will be communication with department heads on how to fix this policy.

MEAP 2019 Updates

Discussion
As a Friday, April 12, Kent County Community Action (KCCA) had to give back their MEAP funds. Salvation Army, True North, and THAW may have also lost funds. A few years ago, Consumers and DTE had applied dollars and were paying themselves through affordable payment plans. As a recipient of funds, payment for affordable plans were taken out of MEAP dollars. Last week, DTE came to all agencies and MPSC and said that their projections for the year were under by 225%. The CCA network had to give back dollars. They asked for \$200,000 back from Kent County. Other counties throughout the state had to give back money as well. DTE has the obligation to pay affordable payment plans for 2 years. The MEAP money from tax payers (\$0.93 a month on bills) and federal LIHEAP dollars make up the MEAP pot. Consumers had better projections and is doing ok with payments. They took 73% of their funding, they will be able to help 250 less homes than expected. In addition, this year's funds were half of the previous year's funds. KCCA has finished up with their appointments that were already scheduled and will not be taking any more appointments. The reason Kent County is being hit so hard is because they had the most money left because of troubles getting their contract finalized and signed. This led to a delay in starting to expend dollars.
In addition, MEAP legislation sunsets September 30. It seems that DTE is aligning themselves and wants support on a bill that would make affordable payment plans mandatory. This is an opportunity for advocacy. If this bill goes through, affordable payment plans would be a requirement to access MEAP dollars. Multiple agencies have voiced that these plans are great but are not necessarily the right fit for every client. Affordable payment plans are dependent on lifestyle. With affordable payment plans, participants must make monthly payments, or the entire bill is due. The monthly payments are calculated based on estimated usage and payment due. The second SER payment to clients can only be a co-pay to help with the affordable payment plans if they are enrolled. If not enrolled, clients are able to receive a second payment. The collective cost for the DTE affordable payment plans was under-projected to be \$450 per household. As of now, the average has been around \$760 per household. In some cases, the payment has been \$450 a month per household. Coupled with the extremely cold January, the usage amount ran out. This year, clients who had



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enrolled in affordable payment plans were automatically re-enrolled in affordable payment plans. Bottom line: DTE is spending more money on the affordable payment plans than they expected and can no longer afford it. This is concerning from a policy standpoint because enrollment is being pushed. When signing up for a client up for an affordable payment plan, agencies can see payment history for clients and identify whether a plan would be a good fit. What happens next year? Right now, there is only 1 purposed MEAP plan that seems to be out there (though there may be others). Legislators leave for summer in about 5 weeks. Right now, for next year, it is unclear what assistance looks like.

Next Steps: Wende will send out email to gauge what resources are available. DHHS has limited county funds. KCCA has limited Walk for Warmth funds. There should be a letter drafted that is specific to Kent County based on what has happened and what resources are available. There is an opportunity to advocate whether automatic payment is a good thing. This will impact clients as they are not available for a second round of SER payments. Yesterday, got notice that CCAs cannot enroll any more clients into DTE affordable payment plans. No further LSP enrollments, assist customers with applying for SER only.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Send email to gauge resource availability in the community	Wende	

Data Reporting Update

Discussion

Gaps: different organizations participated in the data collection throughout the past few years. ENTF staff need assistance in framing the language under the MEAP policy area. What should be added to the narrative section? Please send any client stories to Brianne. In addition, West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum is looking at climate impacts on health, household environment is important to them, that data would be great to have.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Agency Updates

Discussion

Universal Case Load (UCL) – there is no rollout schedule yet. DHHS has 6 staff that have access and are working with different counties to work through issues. There are 50 counties up and running, Genesee is the only urban county with UCL. They are letting other counties work out the bugs before starting in Kent County.

KCCA is conducting a Community Needs Assessment for providers and clients. They are asking for participation in electronic and paper surveys. If there is an event where people can fill out the survey, let Susan know. Public Sector Consultants will be helping facilitate. They will be connecting with state and federal resources as well as VoiceKent results. This will allow them to program for the next three years. They have the opportunity for people to be selected to receive \$50 voucher to utility assistance if they participate in the survey.

Michigan League for Public Policy is a statewide organization started by 2 social workers. They are data driven and focus on advocacy. They are releasing Kids Book data today. Their policy forum will be coming up. They will be doing focus groups in June. They focus on education, social determinants of health, budget and tax, workforce development, etc. Advocacy bootcamp – scholarships are available.

Adjourn