



Energy Efficiency Subcommittee  
 Meeting Minutes  
 January 28, 2020  
 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Facilitator:	Susan Cervantes		
Meeting Attendees:	John Mitchell, Tom Oosterbaan, Monica Light, Carissa Patrone, Maddie Strom, Keisha Hills, Autumn Smith, Kendrick Heinlein, Sherrie Gillespie, Susan Cervantes, Brett Little, Andrew Fishback, James Geisen, Wende Randall, Brianne Czyzio Robach		
Time Convened:	1:05	Time Adjourned:	2:32

**Introductions**

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

Discussion	None
Amendments	None
Conclusion	Motion Passed

**Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Updates**

Discussion

Wende shared that the coalition’s big push right now is getting a designation for the month of February as Keep Michigan Warm month. In addition, they are planning for LIHEAP action days in DC on February 25 and 26. Social media images and fact sheets are available to be shared during this time. The coalition’s organizing meeting is February 14, connect with Wende if you are interested in attending. In addition, [NEUAC All Parties letter is available online](#) for signature.

Wende encouraged organizations to build awareness to the importance of LIHEAP through social media and/or through signing onto the letter.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

**MEAP Updates**

Discussion

**North Kent Connect** has been seeing MEAP clients.

**KCCA:** MEAP funding is not yet open. They are billed each month for affordable payment plans from last year.

**Salvation Army** has been seeing MEAP clients. In addition, they currently have funding for clients who have been denied MEAP funds.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

**WMSBF Event**

Discussion

Many members attended WMSBF event to discuss energy efficiency and utility assistance and to participate in solution-generation. Carissa developed a summary of information shared at the forum. Based on the solutions generated by table groups at the forum, the group discussed how to prioritize and focus efforts across multiple industries.



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**Data:**

One proposed solution was documenting the community's needs which ties into other recommendations regarding auditing and inventorying homes and targeting services. This ties into common data. Building consistency in data points could draw awareness of greater need and could highlight inequities. To start, the group can identify shared data points with common definitions. The next step would be determining whether all service providers would consider participating in a common data collection process. In addition, the group should think about other organizations in the community that may currently have information (Healthy Homes, LINC UP, WMEAC, etc.). After connection and analysis, the group may find that there are certain areas where there is not robust information. There is a potential to plug into current canvassing efforts to collect this information.

Susan suggested an update to the Consumer's Energy map of shutoff. Currently, data is up to date through mid-2017. Consumers is working on this on their end. Also, would need to collect data from other utilities (including water) to ensure that all data is there

**Education:**

Resource guide: Identifying screening questions that are similar across all agencies will help identify most frequent areas of need, tying into the data next steps. Then, organizations could compile/develop similar educational and awareness content with messaging addressed to different audiences. Standardized areas where staff can provide education and awareness. Monica suggested educational walk-throughs to demonstrate weatherization and energy consumption solutions (e.g.: mobile home that is used for sales purposes but also serves as a demonstration project.). To increase utilization of current education and awareness resources, Wende suggested that a next step is a workshop to overview all information currently available. Then, all organizations will be aware of the resources and ENTf can serve a liaison in broadening awareness, building capacity and competency.

Household energy audits: Brett noted that energy use intensity assessments could be a low hanging fruit and suggested that staff do a generalized assessment with participants. Energy Star Yardstick is one option for an assessment.

Empower youth: In terms of schools, ENTf would likely not want to get directly involved but could support programming built into lesson plans or utilities. Support could include sharing resources and opportunities through schools (e.g.: handouts in each student's folder) and could be done in conjunction with current education programs. In addition, resources can be provided to parents during back to school or similar events. KSSN liaisons could be a connection as well.

**Technology:**

GHI is working on shifting to electrification from propane as it is cheaper and less prone to shifts in market and there is little concern for combustion. They are hoping to train heating and cooling contractors to offer electrification systems instead of swapping out propane infrastructure. Could be an opportunity to spread awareness. This could be a long-term funding and/or advocacy opportunity.



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Wende shared that she recently connected with Crystal Flash. Discussion included the drastic cost difference between maintaining a tank and requiring an emergency delivery and the potential for a way to contact an account holder when their tank is at or below 25%. Additional questions remain: Is there a way to scholarship cost to install a gauge on the tank? Are vendors willing to put an alert on their system? Potential to track reduction in cost for emergency deliveries.

Community solar: Currently, this is more of an education and policy issue. Currently, community solar is not available for those in DTE and Consumers territories unless you are a large development with single metering for the entire building. Policy-wise, there is a bill in the House Energy Committee with a lot of co-sponsors to allow for community solar. ENTf is willing to share talking points to encourage letter writing.

Tiny homes: Seeds of Promise has been focusing on “right-sized” homes. Smaller homes are cheaper and help build equity, trying to get these buildings to be no-cost utilities. Currently, the City of Grand Rapids has limitations on housing size. Suggestion to look into providing education around size limits for houses outside of the City of Grand Rapids.

Policy and collaboration topics will be included on next month’s agenda. After preliminary conversations, the group will discuss potential resources in each area along with additional resources needed. The meeting will also include an impact versus effort matrix for prioritization, then determine immediate and long-term action steps. To continue to the data conversation, the group will also discuss the data collection workflow at agencies. **Please bring list of data points that your agency collects to February’s meeting as well as ideas for what ENTf may deliberately want to collect.**

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Bring a list of data points collected by your agency	All	February meeting

**Agency Updates**

Discussion

**Flat River Outreach Ministries**: They have a new Executive Director, Wendie Preiss  
**DHHS**: The direct support services for vehicle purchases has increased from \$2000 to \$4000  
**Walk for Warmth** is February 29. Registration starts at 8:30, Walk starts at 9 at DHHS.  
**West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum**: Their February 10 forum will feature Mark Washington talking about sustainability at the City of Grand Rapids. The forum will be at the Rapid.