

**MINUTES of the  
POLICY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
February 20, 2020**

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The Policy Advisory Council (PAC) was called to order by Robert Cooper on Monday, February 20, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. Nevada Housing Division, 1830 College Parkway, Suite 200, Carson City NV and via teleconference at Nevada Housing Division, 3300 West Sahara Ave, Suite 300, Las Vegas NV.

**Council Members Present**

Chair Robert Cooper, At Large Representative  
Vice-Chair Jennifer Rose, Utility Company Representative, called in  
James Dondoy, Sub-grantee Representative  
Tamera Saida, At Large Representative  
Angela Haskett, At Large Representative  
Jacob LaRow, NHD Representative

**Nevada Housing Division (NHD) Staff Members Present**

Shelly Calvert, Weatherization Analysis  
James Wallace, Weatherization Inspector  
Stephen Aichroth, Administrator NHD  
Martha Bredemeier, Grants and Projects Analyst

**Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) Staff Members Present**

Betsy Ransdell, DWSS, Energy Assistant Program  
Maria Wortman-Meshberger, Chief, DWSS

**Others:**

Mark Hooper, HELP of Southern Nevada  
Jessica Mahon, Community Services Agency  
Angel Williams, NV Energy of Southern Nevada  
Dr. Gil Peach, Gil Peach and Associates  
Doreen Venturino, Rural Nevada Development Corporation  
Mary Kern, Rural Nevada Development Corporation  
Antoin Tillman, NV Energy  
Katie Borgman, Carson Rural Clinic  
Shannon Bullock, CDPCN

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Robert Cooper asked if there was a quorum and it was confirmed there were 6 out of 7 members present.

## **Public Comment**

Robert Cooper opened the meeting for public comment.

No action may be taken on a matter raised under this item of the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on an Agenda as an item upon which action will be taken. (Because of time considerations, the period for public comment by each speaker is limited to three (3) minutes and speakers are urged to avoid repetition of comments made by previous speakers.)

There were no public comments in Las Vegas, Carson City and on the phone.

## **Approval of Minutes from October 10, 2019**

Robert Cooper asked if there were any proposed changes for the October 10, 2019 minutes? There were no changes. Robert Cooper if there is a motion to approve the minutes: 1<sup>st</sup> motion to approve: Jennifer Rose, 2<sup>nd</sup> motion to approve: Robert Cooper. Yeas: 6, Nays: 0. Motion carries.

## **Introduction of New Members**

Shelly Calvert introduced the two newest members to the Policy Advisory Council.

Jacob LaRow who has replaced Tim Whitright as the NHD Representative. He is the Deputy Administrator for the Nevada Housing Division. He primarily oversees the Housing Programs such as the Grants Unit and Weatherization Assistance Programs.

James Dondoy from HELP of Southern Nevada. He is the new Sub-grantee Representative and took the place of CSA's representative Leslie Colbrese. He has been with HELP of Southern Nevada for a few years, and he is the Weatherization Assessor and inspector. He originally came from California.

Steve Aichroth spoke up to talk about Patrick Conway. Shelly Calvert stated that Patrick Conway has left the agency and pursued other adventures in his home town and is sorely missed at this time if Steve would say a few words. Steve stated he appreciate their patience. Patrick Conway is a resident of South Lake Tahoe and his commute on a good day was 1.15 minutes and if there were snow, his commute would be 2 hours. He was with NHD for approximately 5 years. He originally started with the City of South Lake Tahoe and is going back home, which is about 10 minutes' walk from where he lives. His position is the City of South Lake Tahoe's Housing Division, one-person Division. The State in its infinite wisdom would not allow to bring someone on before he left the agency. To try and bring someone on it would take NHD about a month to start the process of replacing him. With the RTF period and interview and hire, it would be about 2 months from hiring and getting that person up to speed on the program. We are hopeful to have that person hired by the next PAC meeting.

## **Solicit Recommendations for the Following Program Year's Fund for Energy Assistance and Conservation (FEAC) and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) State Plans for the Energy Assistance Program (EAP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)**

Maria Wortman-Meshberger summarized:

### **Proposed amendment to the FY2020 State Plan:**

- 2.40 “Supplemental payment” means during the SFY, if it is determined additional funds will be available, the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services Administrator has the authority to approve a supplemental payment for all or some of the eligible households.
- 10.1.2.1 During the SFY, if it is determined additional funds will be available, the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services Administrator has the authority to approve a supplemental payment for all or some of the eligible households.

### **Proposed changes for FY2021 State Plan:**

Other than the usual update to dates, percentages, minor corrections, and a PUC projection of \$14.2 million, EAP is discussing:

- 8.1.6, 8.1.8, 10.1.4, 10.1.5, and 11.1 - increasing the minimum payment, the amount will be TBD.
- 10.1.4 -- giving \$100 to all targeted households and not just a benefit cap increase.
- 11.1.3 changing a UEC-eligible household may receive an arrearage payment once in a lifetime to once every five years.

Shelly Calvert summarizes for Weatherization:

- 10.2.6 propose increasing the average per household expenditure from \$7,541 to \$7,669 which came out from DOE last month.
- 10.2.15 add to Community Services Agency---*Development Corporation*.
- Update the Sub-grantee Administrative Manual (SAM) to Weatherization Administrative Manual (WAM).

### **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program**

#### **Proposed amendment to the FY2020 State Plan:**

- **2.6.** During the SFY, if it is determined additional funds will be available, the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services Administrator has the authority to approve a supplemental payment for all or some of the eligible households.

#### **Proposed changes for FY2021 State Plan:**

Other than the usual update to dates, percentages, minor corrections, and a PUC projection of \$14.2 million, EAP is discussing:

- **2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 3.6, and 4.7** -- increasing the minimum payment, the amount will be TBD.
- **4.8** Propose changing receive an arrearage payment once in a lifetime to once every five years.
- **6.1** Under Other - add have identified staff to go out into the community for outreach.
- **11.2** Will update with information from the PAC Meeting and Public Hearings.
- **14.3** Will update with information received from Partners.

Robert Cooper asked if there were any questions or comments?

Steve Aichroth asked the one to five years, is that for the recipient or property or both? Maria Wortman-Meshberger said it is for the individual. Steve Aichroth stated if they move, they still get EAP benefits when they move. Maria Wortman-Meshberger said yes, that is correct.

Jennifer Rose asked if there was a cap on arrears that DWSS would pay? Betsy Ransdell said no, there was not cap and also depends on how much money available.

Antione Tillman asked if arrears is out of a different fund or is it out of the same fund? Marie Wortman-Meshberger stated it was out of the same fund.

Robert Cooper said the driver for the supplemental payment, was that generated from testimony? Marie Wortman-Meshberger said they had to make supplemental payments in the past year which could be from projecting lower than what is received. Traditionally they increase the benefit and go back and do a supplemental payment.

Robert Cooper asked if there were any more comments? There were no comments in Las Vegas, Carson City and on the phone.

### **Energy Assistance Program (EAP) Management Monitoring Summary**

Maria Wortman-Meshberger the Management Monitoring Summary demonstrates:

- January the Program received 2,888 applications, about the same number of applications as the same time last year. Overall, the Program has received about 7% more applications through January than we did last year.
- In January 2,579 applications were processed, 1,613 were eligible (63% approved).
- *Average days to process a case in January was 14 days.*
- The average energy burden in January was 1.98% and the current energy burden is 1.94%.
- The total amount of funds expended for regular benefits in January was \$1,243,780. An average of \$771 per household served in January.
- The total amount of funds expended for arrearages in January was \$53,271. For an average of \$392 per household served.
- The overall total of funding expended in January was \$1,297,051 which makes the overall average for benefits and arrearages for January \$804 expended per household.

Robert Cooper asked if there were any discussions or comments? There were no comments in Las Vegas, Carson City and on the phone.

### **Department of Energy (DOE) Technical Review of WAP Projects**

Jim Wallace gave a summary on the WAP projects. We had five properties that have not yet been approved by DOE, NHD has been talking to DOE over the several months on these projects by the Project Officer that oversees the program, as of now, there has been no decision yet and DOE are still working the reviews.

### **Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Sub-grantee Production and Expenditures**

Shelly Calvert began with the spreadsheet provided.

- DOE: Grant funding is up 6% from last year, a little over 354K. Both expenditures and completed units are up from last year

With DOE last year, we have had a few issues, due to rolling out the new WxPro program and had a lot of technical issues so projects were not being completed. Even this year, the program still is experiencing some issues with the program and the designer is diligently working to get the program to where it should be. Also noted, was NHD was able to carryover a little over 190K and distributed to the Sub-grantees. If we did not have the carryover, the percentage of expenditures would be higher.

- FEAC: Funding is up by 44K over last year. Expenditures are down from last year about 15%, and completions are down about 16%.

The reason is unknown on why FEAC is lower this year than last year, although, we do have one Sub-grantee that has spent out all of their FEAC money 6 months before the year-end which is RNDC. We are also anticipating the Sub-grantees will spend out by the end of the fiscal year. This funding source can be carried over and put into reserves for future spending. Jim Wallace stated that we are asking the Sub-grantees to spend more of the HEROS funding before spending FEAC. In the past, the Sub-grantees have not spent out in HEROS. When NHD requests more funding from the Governor's Office of Energy, we cannot justify asking for additional money as we have not spent out in the current year. FEAC funds are used more frequently, therefore, should have no problem spending out towards the latter part of the fiscal year.

- LIHEA: Grant funding is up by 114K over last year. Expenditures are up from last year about 2%, and completions are down slightly.

It is noted that LIHEA funding does not expire until 3 months into the next fiscal year. This funding source is typically what the Sub-grantees use between July and September for expenses as they begin the new fiscal year. LIHEA is also used if the annual contracts have not been executed for the new fiscal year.

- HEROS: Grant funding is the same as last year. Expenditures are up from last year about 16%, and completions up by 15%

NHD has requested that the Sub-grantees put use DOE and HEROS funding sources together as they are both at 200% over poverty.

- AHTF: This funding source is skewed and does not show a true picture of what is spent as the Sub-grantees are still spending their 2019 allocation, is a 2-year contract from 2019- 2020. The SFY2019 allocation is being administered by the Grants portion of Nevada Housing Division. The Weatherization Assistance Program is overseeing the funding beginning SFY2020. Some of the Sub-grantees are still utilizing SFY2019 allocations and not spending their SFY2020 contract award. SFY2019 allocations are not reflected in our funding amount of \$340,285. The spreadsheet shows that only 2 Sub-grantees are spending SFY2020 money: NRHA Carson City and NRHA Las Vegas. We do show the completions as we still need to report to the Grants unit how many AHTF completions were done in SFY2020, as it is used as leveraging with other funding sources. It is also used with emergencies when needed.

The combined totals for this year are about a little higher by \$511,532 over last year. The expenditures and completions are about the same as last year. NHD anticipates, as usual, when the weather is nicer, weatherization completions will pick up. NHD anticipates no DOE

carryover money as we are on our 3<sup>rd</sup> in the cycle. Any monies left over will be recouped by DOE.

- DEAL: Funding is lower than last year. This year, the available amount for projects for the State employees is \$329,000 and after much consideration, the Governor[s Office of Energy has decided to end the DEAL program once all of the projects have been completed. CSA is the only Sub-grantee that has any outstanding projects, a total of 6 projects at this time.

Are there any questions or comments?

Jake LaRow referring back to the AHTF, with the expenditures for two Sub-grantees and the other Sub-grantees have completed units, what does that mean? Shelly Calvert answered that sometimes the Sub-grantees will use DOE or other funding sources with AHTF as leveraging. Weatherization has always had to account for the units completed to Grants Unit as they report the information on the clients to DWSS. The numbers will be skewed until the time when Weatherization has complete oversight of the funds. Jacob LaRow asked if this will come out to be a wash? Shelly Calvert stated yes, it will once the SFY2019 funds have been spent by the Sub-grantees.

Robert Cooper stated that NHD Accounting Department has a lot to keep track of and sounds like they are really on top of it. Shelly Calvert stated yes, they do very well.

Are there any other questions or comments?

### **Presentation by H. Gil Peach, PhD regarding SFY 2019 Evaluation: Energy and Weatherization Assistance Programs**

Gil Peach stated that the two programs are solid programs and they work well which gives solidity to the State of Nevada.

#### **Energy Assistance Program (EAP)**

- Main Achievements:
  - Service to low-income households: 22,431 which is about 64% of 35,192 applicant households).
  - Slight dip, but essentially stable Social Security household participation: Currently at 93% of equivalent Social Security recipients. By changing the eligibility criteria from 2011 to 2012, it caused a big drop for Social Security households, 7,709 recipients. Now the number of Social Security recipients is 12,994.
  - Lowered energy burdens approach statewide median: Statewide medium for 2019 is 2.13%. Prior to EAP, the energy burden was 13.42% and with EAP 2.30%.
  - Increased case processing efficiency. In 2019, the average days to process a case was 17 days or less each month.

The EAP Recommendations are:

- Consider if the time window for response for missing information might be extended.
- For 2020 operate well with current processes, management, and organization.

**[DWSS's Energy Assistance Program is compliant with NRS 702 for SFY2019.](#)**

## **Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)**

- Main Achievements:
  - Weatherized 316 homes in SFY2019, exceeding servicing goal.
    - CSA – completion goals, 47, actual completions 42, which is 89%.
    - HELP – completion goals 156, actual completions 203, which is 130%
    - LVUL – completion goals 61, actual completions 36, which is 59%
    - NRHA – completion goals 29, actual completions 31, which is 107%
    - RNDC – completion goals 14, actual completions 4, which is 30%
- FEAC Primary Heating Fuel:
  - Electric - 14.6%
  - Natural Gas – 81.7%
  - Oil – 0%
  - Propane – 3.5%
- House type:
  - 2-4 Family – 6.7%, owned 16, rental 5
  - 5+ Family – 17.4%, owned 4, rental 51
  - Mobile Home – 40.8%, owned 123, rental 64
  - Single Family – 35.1%, owned 94, rental 17
- Special Needs and High Energy Use:
  - Elderly over 60 – 177 homes, 56%
  - Persons with Disabilities: 125, 39.6%
  - Children under 6 - 45, 14.2%
  - Native American 5, 1.6%
  - High Energy Users – 89, 28.3%

The WAP Recommendations are:

- NHD should fully implement their new software
- NHD should continue to optimize WAP by working optimally within budget

### ***Housing Division's Weatherization Assistance Program is fully compliant with NRS 702 for SFY2019.***

Challenges for EAP and WAP:

- Poverty Continues
- Poverty metric (from the 1960's) today works imperfectly as a measure of need (or income insufficiency):
- Federal Consumer Price Index works as an indicator, but overlooks some inflation:
- Senior CPI would be better for seniors but is not used;
- Climate change accelerating (less HDD's; More CDD's);
- Since 1970 income inequality greatly increased; and
- On the plus side, unemployment is low.

Robert Cooper asked if there any other questions or comments? None from the Carson City, Las Vegas and the phone.

## **Agenda items for next Policy Advisory Council Meeting**

- Department of Energy (DOE) State Plan and Application:

- Federal (DOE) Budget
- Department of Energy (DOE) Technical Review of WAP Projects
- Energy Assistance Program (EAP) Management Monitoring Summary
- Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Sub-grantee Production and Expenditures

Stephen Aichroth said he wanted to acknowledge Jim Wallace's and Shelly Calvert's efforts in Patrick Conway's absence.

**Next Meeting Date: April 16, 2020 at 2:00pm.**

**Public Comment**

Robert Cooper closed the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments at this time.

**Adjournment**

Robert Cooper adjourned the meeting at 3:28pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Shelly Calvert, Grants & Projects Analyst