

DRAFT Summary Notes
Energy Services Working Group
Feb. 5, 2014, 9 to 11 a.m.

Attendees

- **City Staff:** Yael Gichon, Kendra Tupper, Lisa Smith, Elizabeth Vasatka, Todd Jorgensen, Allison Smith
- **Energy Services:** Pankaj Sharma, Greg Ekrem, David Kline, Larry Kinney, Chad Garrett, Tim Beal, Martha Campbell, Linda Olsson, Tim Schoechle, Josh Kuhn
- **On Phone:** Tim Hillman, Doug Hargrave, Jeremy Epstein, John Street

Energy Services Working Group

- Staff took questions from the working group, including clarifying schedules and how we will report out to council (e.g. acknowledging dissent).

Low-income and affordable housing team reported out:

- When working with this population often helping people move out of crisis, e.g. bill payment assistance. Getting people stabilized, assisting with day to day balancing of budget. Inability to pay utility bill is a leading cause of homelessness.
- Continuum of services while maintaining social equity.
- Also want to move toward sustainability and resilience and get in line with city values.
- See a need for this component to work closely with the Customer Experience working group. See best practices as likely tending toward a case management- style approach. That is taking into account the total situation of the individual customer. Could shepherd referrals to housing, human services, EFAA; help people navigate processes.
- Also outreach and education to empower customers. This would spread awareness of residential electricity use.
- Agreement expressed that case management idea is good – if someone is behind on bills, view this as a symptom.
- Keep in mind other tools like weatherization, efficiency, behavior change.
- Question about where the right place to intervene is with this population. For example, should we be working with landlords rather than tenants? Where can we be most effective? Is the problem primarily behavioral?
- Can try the “lasagna approach”: many layers. It’s not just one strategy or tactic. How do you achieve market penetration? What’s most efficient? Use existing entry points to start.
- Would sub-metering (smart meters) help with this? Can people see their usage? Hodgepodge around town. Boulder Energy Challenge grant to do just that. Technology is getting better.
- Also look at working with CU (SCORE program) and remember that landlords don’t pay utility bills so minimal/no incentive to increase energy efficiency. Also a lot of this is behavior change. Smart Regs is targeting landlords, theoretically up to code by end of 2018.
- Landlords can’t get rebates for example on efficient furnaces. Worth exploring this paradigm further.
- So to serve low-income and affordable housing we need a multi-pronged approach.
- Issue of equity for residents whether they’re owners or tenants.
- To achieve emission reduction, should tackle all barriers.
- Attack low-hanging fruit and accelerate as much as possible.

- Also think about hassle factor to landlords, how difficult is it to participate in programs? Give them a concierge service to assist.
- Clinton Foundation has a program offering EE as an HR benefit.
- Net metering pushback from utilities. Framed that grid defection and death spiral unfairly impacts low income people because higher income have more solar systems. There is an equity issue here – how can low income take advantage?
- Case studies for low income and affordable housing – starting with an inventory of what’s out there (see spreadsheet). Bill payment assistance, involves interaction between many programs and organizations, local, state, federal, etc.
- Look at Energy Outreach Colorado grant programs.
- LEAP- cash assistance administered through counties.
- State weatherization program- Longs Peak energy conservation
- SMUD has a great program including bill payment assistance. Look at how they define poverty. Philosophy of SMUD around customer service is important, starting with crisis intervention through education and outreach. Well-known and lauded nationally.
- Austin Energy also has a good program. Similar to Sacramento. Also coordinates with other programs, such as medically vulnerable population tracking. Great menu of services and coordination including free waivers and rate discounts.
- Efficiency Vermont has great EE and weatherization services for low-income. Supplemented with private money. Allows for funding for alternative energy technology, e.g. solar or other for low income.
- Massachusetts multifamily retrofit. Unique partnership between big utilities, housing, and nonprofits to retrofit large multi-family housing authority owned projects.

Portfolio Management

- Idea is to use city resources efficiently to achieve city goals. By product is that we get data, information, concepts that we can use for analysis and communication.
- Can manage metrics as single aggregate metrics which allows direct comparison and ranking or can use a multidimensional matrix which is the recommended approach since eventual comparison will have qualitative component. This preserves more richness of information.
- Useful to translate to visual display format so you can get a sense of ROI.
- Can measure how much city pays per KWh and how much customer pays per KWh.
- What impact does this have on the operational utility system, on the environment. Have Supply Diversity in as metric but not sure if it should be in. See PPT for all proposed metrics.
- Draft dimensions and definitions to measure metrics.
- What social goals will the utility have?
- Review of NREL example of visual representation of multi-dimensional metrics. What software did NREL use?
- See a need to ID energy services and be able to compare them using a handful of metrics.
- Insight on budgeting and planning around these programs; it could be that up to 50% of costs are portfolio management. So be thoughtful about allocating resources when considering energy services programs.
- Importance of local economics.
- Portfolio Management helps people make intelligent choices about what to do and not do and why. Very iterative process.
- How much is saving one watt of electricity worth? Benefit of saving energy.
- Often don’t account for true cost of program, important to evaluate and plan this.

- Is the city considering working with an external third party program administrator?
- Benefits to Efficiency Vermont and Oregon programs, interesting legislatively.
- Discussion of Total Resource Cost test. Look at British Columbia example
- Also think about how we display and understand information from portfolio management. E.g. visual representation of data.
- Concern around putting quantitative and qualitative measures in one chart.
- Tough policy discussions will be necessary around deciding which programs when and why. Want metrics to inform this discussion.
- Could also look at metrics around water-energy nexus, how much water needed to create kWh of energy. Referenced NREL paper.

Green pricing

- With a muni, need to balance needs of utility with needs of customers. Also values, goals of utility, city, customers.
- Green energy sources are priced comparably to conventional fossil fuel sources and prices continue to go down.
- Keep in mind that 80% of energy is used by 20% of customers.
- Instead of subsidy, consider tax rebates. For both residential and commercial.
- Biggest challenge is intermittency and reliability so need to see improvements in storage, etc.
- Look at green pricing over time in a market context, e.g. where should we be in two years, five years, 10 years.
- Links to distributed generation discussion and resource discussions.
- On Day 1 will we want to replicate Wind source/green pricing project?
- There's always a market for premium products but it's limited. Don't let this hold back more renewables.
- Wind source is not a great program, need to improve this.
- Communication plan for customers and businesses why want to keep/opt in to the label of "100% wind" or whatever.
- Could couple participation with benefits and recognition.
- Whatever we do, need to reach more of the pie, reach more customers.
- Green pricing program may be a bridge to eventual goal of providing clean energy by default.
- Build programs around local generation, micro grids, and solar gardens.
- Place for time of use rates? Customers could opt-in to different rate structures?
- Communication plan needed around transition to cleaner fuel sources to explain potential phase out of green pricing.