

# **Structure and Organizing Principles for Low Income Energy Efficiency Workgroup (amended January 2017)**

## **Background**

As part of Post-2011-Review, BPA agreed to convene a low income energy efficiency workgroup. The structure was largely undefined by the Post-2011 Review workgroup's (Workgroup 3) recommendation leaving BPA to take the initiative to move this forward. BPA agreed to convene meetings quarterly. The workgroup provided a list of challenges and opportunities to serve as a starting point (See excerpt from *Workgroup 3 Recommendations* below).

## **Mission**

The Northwest Public Power Regional Low-income Energy Efficiency Work Group aims to share information and develop best practices in order to increase low income residents' access to and uptake of energy efficiency services across the Northwest.

## **Objectives**

- Provide a venue for utilities, advocates, and other organizations to come together.
- Increase knowledge of CAP and utility business activities.
- Find simple solutions to streamlining reporting between organizations (CAPs, utilities)
- Identify barriers and solutions to increasing low income access to EE programs.

## **Structure**

Facilitator/Coordinator/Meeting prep: Summer Goodwin, BPA EE Program Marketing Team

Back-up facilitator: Boyd Wilson, BPA EE Program Marketing Team, and Energy Efficiency Representative

## **Steering Team**

The group should be steered by a small balanced group representing all levels of the low income EE acquisition chain, such as utilities, Weatherization Assistance Program agencies and other interested parties with implementation experience as well as policy expertise (amended January 2017)

1. Utility position 1: Todd Blackman, Franklin PUD (2014)
2. Utility position 2: Travis Hardy, Northern Wasco PUD (2016)
3. Utility position 3: Wid Ritchie, IDEA GROUP (2015)
4. Non-utility position 1: Shawn Collins, The Energy Project (2015)
5. Non-utility position 2: Steve Jole, HACSA (2014)
6. Non-utility position 3: Hans Berg, Washington Department of Commerce (2015)
7. BPA Residential Sector Lead or designee position, Jess Kincaid (added January 2017)
8. BPA State Grant Program Manager, Carrie Nelson (added January 2017)

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Other BPA staff to be involved: Dena Hilde (EE COTR), Brent Barclay (Programs Team Manager), Josh Warner (Constituent Account Executive), and Energy Efficiency Representatives.

**Responsibilities of Steering Team Members:** Steering Team convenes for one meeting prior to each workgroup meeting to confirm that the agenda is acceptable and one meeting after each workgroup meeting to close out open items from the meeting. This makes for an estimated eight meetings in the year. This is a guiding role. Steering team members are asked to provide feedback to the facilitator if workgroup is moving beyond the intended scope and support the facilitation of effective and valuable meetings. (amended January 2017)

Steering Team membership is voluntary and for a one year period starting in the third quarter of each calendar year, except for the two BPA positions which shall remain constant. There are no term limits. Any existing member who wishes to renew their position may. In the event of a vacancy, new members are selected by the current steering team prior to the calendar year third quarter workgroup meeting each year for a term beginning in advance of the fourth quarter meeting so that the new steering team will support the agenda-setting for that meeting. If a steering team member chooses to vacate their position, the steering team will solicit a new member from the larger working group to serve out that term. It would follow that the member would not need to renew their position on the normal cycle and would serve for the next year, as well. This policy can be revisited at any time. (amended January 2017)

### **FAQ:**

**Who is invited to participate in the workgroup?** All BPA-served public utilities in the region, low income advocacy groups, community action partnership weatherization assistance program managers (WAPs), Tribal governments, state energy offices and other interested parties are invited. There is an “open door” policy. (amended January 2017)

**Who will facilitate?** BPA will provide a facilitator. A steering team will provide guidance as requested by BPA.

**When and where will the group meet?** Meetings will be broadcast via WebEx and by telephone to make them accessible without travel. It is advantageous to hold meeting in a location that is central or move it around the region to give everyone an equal opportunity to attend in person. It may piggy back on other meetings or conferences that are happening that members may be attending so as to reduce travel costs. The current norm is to hold every other meeting in Portland.

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**What is the duration of the Workgroup?** BPA commits to facilitation of this group for one year at a time. If it is determined that BPA cannot perform this function or the scope is too broad for the workgroup to function effectively and efficiently, BPA may decide to discontinue facilitation or adjust the scope.

### **What resources will BPA contribute?**

- Facilitator and coordinator staff time
- Meeting preparation pre and post
- Access to meeting space
- Communication to workgroup and other potential workgroup members
- Report out to BPA EE, customers and other interested parties
- Provide some staff time for research and analysis of low income energy efficiency measures, grants, or other relevant program activity.
- Periodically share progress with utilities and stakeholders at roundtables, brown bags, etc. Some liaising with state agencies and public interest groups.

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## Excerpts from Historical Documents

### Workgroup 3 Recommendations

#### Recommendation #1, BPA Adopt a Low-Income Energy Efficiency Guiding Principle

##### The Preamble

- Financial constraints limit low-income ratepayers' participation in traditional incentive-based programs.
- There are a large number of low income households throughout BPA service territory that could benefit from energy efficiency and conservations measures.
- Existing sources of funding, including state and federal resources, are insufficient to meet current needs.
- The high number of funding sources used for this work and the number of entities involved complicates effective and efficient program implementation and reporting.
- Current efforts sometimes lack coordination and could benefit from improved communication.
- Management and administration of programs usually works best when there is involvement at the local level — from the utility and low income agencies.
- One single solution will not work in every electric service territory and for every utility. Therefore, recommended actions are developed with a variety of options to choose from in order to ensure management and administration remains at the local level.

The Principle: BPA customer utilities should provide equitable access to energy efficiency services tailored for low-income customers funded through utility self-funding and/or BPA incentive dollars.

The rationale for this recommendation is to set a common framework for future work and action. The principle grew out of the concern of some stakeholders that BPA and its customer utilities lacked an adequate commitment, given the need, to low income energy efficiency. Once it was agreed to the development of a principle a sub-committee was formed and task with bring a proposal to the entire group. The sub-committee completed its task on time and presented the proposed preamble and principle to the entire workgroup. There was lengthy give and take on behalf of the all Participants and the workgroup was able to reach consensus on the both the Preamble and Principle.

#### Recommendation #2, Ongoing Workgroup for Low Income

BPA reconstitute a workgroup to meet quarterly on Low Income Energy Efficiency (LIEE) in its service area to address some of the topics identified by this group, such as:

- Small utilities path to do low income work.
- Data streamlining. More comprehensive tracking system meeting requirements from U.S. DOE and BPA's Implementation Manual.
- Best practices and improved communication, coordination and collaboration:
  - Guidelines for structuring an agreement including CAP administrative costs
  - Approaches for cost control
- Align so the measures line up (US DOE requirements / Utility requirements in the IM). There are misaligned and have some conflicting requirements.
- Understand BPA's role in facilitating access to LIEE across its service territory.
- Training.
- Other topics that the workgroup may choose.

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The rationale is that this was the first time in many years, if ever, that this type of Workgroup has been convened. Although we made great progress, we did not have time to develop solutions for the core issues in these meetings over 90 days. In this recommendation #2, the Workgroup asks that the dialogue continue on these important topics.

### **Recommendation #3, Turnkey Implementation for Low Income Programs**

BPA facilitates a method or process that would allow utilities to designate some of their EEI or other utility funds for implementation of LIEE, where BPA is the administrator of the funds.

A number of Utilities that served on this Workgroup already provide funds to their local CAP Agency to install Low Income measures that meet the specifications in the I.M. Some of the smaller Utilities may not have a CAP Agency, may not do business with the local CAP Agency even if there is one in their service area, or may not have the time, staff, or expertise to do Low Income programs. The Utilities are looking to BPA for assistance in this area. BPA provided guidance that it cannot transfer EEI funds to CAP Agencies because BPA does not have an Energy Conservation Agreement (ECA) with the CAPs. The smaller Utilities have asked BPA for additional help from BPA. It is recommended that BPA spend time to determine if and how best this could work best for the Utilities, the CAPs, other Stakeholders, and BPA.