

**URBAN WEATHERIZATION INITIATIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: May 14, 2010 Meeting was called to order at 10:15am by Karin Norington-Reaves

Attendees: Karin Norington-Reaves, Jeff Stauter, Deborah Harrington, Lester McKeever Jr., Maureen Davlin, Carol Kulek; and, participating by phone was Percy Harris, Representative Dave Winters, Representative Ken Dunkin, Senator Donne Trotter, and Kurt Summers.

Apologies: none

Introductions: Ms. Norington-Reaves greeted the Board and provided an overview of the agenda.

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes from the April meeting.

DCEO Energy Programs

Overview: Maureen Davlin presented an overview of the Energy Efficient Affordable Housing Construction Program and the Residential Retrofit Program.

The Energy Efficient Affordable Housing Program provides grants to Illinois based non-profit and for-profit developers with the objective of including energy efficient building practices in the rehab or new construction of affordable housing units. The grant pays the incremental difference toward making the construction high efficiency while focusing upon the safety of tenants and the long-term use of the building. The program is all-or-nothing in the sense that the program requires all aspects of the construction to be energy efficient, grantees cannot pick and choose which energy efficient measures to use. Ms. Davlin explained how the program is aimed at abandoned buildings or new construction with grant amounts being an average of \$4500.00 per unit for gut rehabs and \$4000.00 per new single family unit (the average grant amount depends upon the number of units in the project). The program is open to mixed-use housing developments --- the development must all be energy efficient, however the grant only applies to affordable housing units.

The members discussed the use of Area Median Income (AMI) as a factor in eligibility criteria. Ms. Davlin explained that in her experience individuals at 60% AMI and below are well covered in Illinois (this generally constitutes "low income") and that 80-120% AMI range is not being covered by programs such as these. She explained that typically 80% AMI and below constitutes eligibility for affordable housing. Senator Trotter inquired about the use of AMI rather than the federal poverty rate, and it was explained that AMI is being used due to the requirements of the Urban Weatherization Initiative legislation and the legislature's intent of making the program have broader reach. (Ms. Davlin also provided comparisons between the federal poverty level and the AMI). Senator Trotter mentioned the option of using a multiplier with the federal poverty level as is common with other programs. The importance of reviewing AMI by county was also discussed in addition to looking at census tracts. Ms. Davlin will provide Ms. Norington-Reaves with that information for the Board's review.

Ms. Davlin also discussed the Residential Retrofit Program. This program is funded with the Illinois Energy Efficiency Portfolio and is open to organizations in territories served by Ameren or ComEd. The objective of the program is to save kilowatts. The program runs from June 1-May 31 each year and works in conjunction with other programs and organizations such as CDAP, CHA, Center for Neighborhood Technology, and Heartland Housing to maximize use of efficiency measures.

Carol Kulek discussed small-scale solar and wind energy rebates which are available for up to 30% of the project cost. She also mentioned other programs within the Illinois Energy Efficiency

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Portfolio such as options open to public schools, municipalities and park districts which in some cases cover 50-75% of costs.

Ms. Kulek explained that all of these programs are summarized on the website: www.illinoisenergy.org and that there are numerous helpful links there including one to the Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC).

**Overview of
Energy Auditors:**

Ms. Norington-Reaves explained the energy audit process and the importance of auditor training/certification was emphasized throughout the ensuing discussion. Training of auditors currently takes approximately 6 months with most of the training being on-the-job. There is already a shortage of auditors with current programs and identifying funding for training of auditors is critical. The auditor shortage has been magnified by the influx of stimulus money, and for the Urban Weatherization efforts the board may want to require more rigorous training in order to avoid bad assessments. Jeff Stauter emphasized the need to think broadly about training.

The board needs to determine a target number of homes to be serviced as well as a target number of grantees. Also, estimates need to be determined regarding expected jobs and indirect jobs. All of these numbers tie into determining a strategy and timeline for auditor training as well as efforts to identify funding.

There was also discussion regarding which training certification is currently being used by organizations in Illinois and the need for the board to determine the standard for this program which must also be in line with USDOE standards

The need to identify organizations throughout Illinois communities that are already conducting audits was mentioned, and participants were asked to be certain and share names of organizations which they know are conducting training.

Jeff Stauter mentioned that due to Senate Bill 51 there may be a need to do an RFP for trainers. The legislation requires many more programs to operate using RFP's.

Representative Dunkin urged aggressive action to get the program moving. Ms. Norington-Reaves urged the legislators to approve bond authorization which would fund the Urban Weatherization Initiative.

**Review of Draft
Program Guidelines:**

Ms. Norington-Reaves discussed how the program guidelines are still a work-in-progress with the legal department and explained that a draft of the guidelines (with holes in areas where decisions must still be made) will be provided for the next meeting.

Next Steps:

Ms. Norington-Reaves outlined some next steps:

- 1) Rough draft of program guidelines
- 2) Energy Auditor Issues
 - a. Identify existing training options
 - b. Identify prime candidates such as EOGP (ex. YouthBuild), building trades
 - c. Identify funds for training

Miscellaneous:

Ms. Norington-Reaves announced that additional staff will be joining the bureau soon, and she is also hoping to obtain assistance from unpaid interns whom have demonstrated an interest in the field.

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Upcoming Meetings: June 18, 2010 10am-12pm at JRTC/DCEO

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 11:45am by Karin Norington-Reaves

***Respectfully Submitted,
Jenni Grigsby-Rogal
Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity***