

**Urban Weatherization Initiative
Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
January 15, 2016**

Meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by UWI Board Chair, Percy Harris.

Attendees:

Voting Board Members: Percy Harris (via phone); Robert Wordlaw; Jorge Perez.

Department of Commerce Staff: Gwendolyn Davis; Donnie Love; Lynell Mims; Anne Conwill.

Ex-Officio Members: None present.

Guests: Eric Halvorson, Chicago Jobs Council; Natalie Covello, DCEO; Justin Heather, DCEO; H.A.C.I.A.; Luther Mason, W&M Insulation; Ann Conwill, DCEO; James Militello, Lucha; Ray Martin, W&M Insulation; Kerry Knoodle, CCS; Rodney Dunning, Energy Savers Remodelers; Bishop Porter, PLCCA; Danata Andrew, Quad County Urban League.

I. Introductions:

II. Approval of Minutes: Minutes from September 25, 2015 were approved.

III Executive Session:

- General Counsel Justin Heather(DCEO) stated that he was meeting with all the DCEO Board of Directors to ensure they were adhering to the legal specifications needed to call an **executive session:**
 - a. Must have a quorum.
 - b. A motion must be called.
 - c. There must a specific reason for the session.
 - d. The public must be asked to leave the session.
 - e. The session must be recorded.
 - f. The agenda must be posted at least 48 hours before the session.

- General Counsel Justin Heather (DCEO) also stated that he was meeting with all the DCEO Board of Directors to ensure they were adhering to the legal specifications needed to conduct an open meeting. Mr. Heather passed out copies of the ILCS 120/Open Meeting Act, which also detailed some reasons to conduct a close meeting, to all the members in attendance:
 - a. State Id's are required.
 - b. New Board Members must be trained on how to conduct the meeting.
 - c. A member must be present to vote on public matters.
 - d. A minimum of three members is needed to vote on public matters, if less than three contact Mr. Heather.

IV. Status of Grants:

- The training grants Home Energy Auditor and Weatherization Specialist programs ended on 11/30/2015. The accounts for several grantees will not be effectively closed out until pending modifications are resolved. The Residential Weatherization Specialist program will continue to 11-30-2016, there are eight programs presently.
- The staff consists of three Grant Managers and a Program Manager/Grant Manager.

V. Legislative Report:

- Program Model
 - The UWI program is based on a two-pronged approach: 1) to increase employment opportunities among Illinois residents through training that leads to Building Performance Institute (BPI) certification, and 2) to provide residential weatherization services in urban areas. Training and weatherization services are administered through grant to organizations. All grants are awarded via a competitive selection process. The training programs are designed to provide both classroom and hands-on training to participants within eligible communities. Upon completion of the training program, participants are expected to achieve BPI certification. BPI is a national standards development organization for residential energy efficiency and weatherization retrofit work.
 - In addition to the employment opportunities and weatherization services provided, the program stimulates local economies by utilizing local contractors, suppliers, distributors and/or manufacturers of equipment and supplies necessary for the weatherization work.

VI. Program Direction:

- 2015 Challenges:
 - Program suspension amid the state budget impasse impacted grantees in a range of ways. Some had to discontinue operations and lay off staff, and once the suspension was lifted, they were unable to recover before the grants ended. Training and weatherization performance metrics suffered because of the program suspension.
- 2016 Recommendations:
 - Address prevailing wage restrictions by decoupling weatherization work from state public works requirements, which will make the program more efficient. This will require legislative action.
 - Award a new round of residential weatherization grants, pending passage of a budget, appropriation for UWI and availability of bond proceeds.
 - Expand the residential weatherization grants to all eligible communities which completed training programs in 2015, increasing the capacity for homes weatherized and program participants employed.
 - Pursue legislative changes to increase the per-home spending limit (\$6,500) and to increase the size of eligible multi-family units.

VII. General Discussion:

- Board Member Mr. Wordlaw, who facilitated development of the Weatherization Initiative Program, expressed his disappointment in the overall results of the program:
 - The minute numbers of homes weatherized and the small number of trainees placed into weatherization jobs.
- Mr. Wordlaw and Mr. Harris, also detailed the challenges the program faced from the beginning:
 - Getting and maintaining staff.
 - Lobbying the legislature to enact the program.
 - Writing the program without any prior programs as a model.
 - Small number areas qualified for the program.
 - The small amount of monies allotted for the RWP program.
 - Prevailing Wages Restrictions.
 - Educating the public that the grants were not part of an entitlement program.
- Mr. Wordlaw asked and received answers to the following questions:
 - How much of the \$8,750.00 was actually spent or vouchered for by the grantees?
 - Each RWP grantee was given the first allotment of \$250,000.00. No other cash has been dispersed. Each training grantee was given \$62,500.00. No other monies have been forwarded to the grantees. Neither HEA nor WEA program have received the total amount of funds awarded. RWP per grantee is budgeted for 1 million and the training programs were budgeted to receive \$249,849.00.
 - How many home audits were conducted?
 - For all 7 RWP grantees there were in total 99 pre-audits completed.
 - How many Weatherization Specialists were trained?
 - There were 96 participants trained as weatherization specialists. There were 40 certified target numbered for FY15 was 120.25. There were 72 building analysts trained and there were 40 certified and the target number was 79.
 - How many Weatherization Specialists were placed and for how long, and at what wage?
 - There were thirty weatherization specialists employed in the 1st Quarter, and by the 4th Quarter were 3 employed. We will not have the final numbers of people employed until the final reports are received on 1/15/16. The wage information is not a statistic we track.
 - How many homes were weatherized? How many multi-unit buildings?
 - To date there have been 19 homes weatherized. The target number is 503. We may not meet that target if more money is not given to the current RWP grantees. The RWP program started 12/1/2014 and it ends 11/30/2016. To date there have been 4 multi-units weatherized.
 - Why is there only one Residential Weatherization Grantee listed in Chicago for 12/1/14 thru 11/30/16?
 - Reasons include:
 - Applications not filled-out correctly.
 - Some grantees drop out of the program.

- Some applicants were unable to create the proper designs to adapt and complete the program.
- Board Members and an Independent Committee decided on qualified grantees.
- Applicants believed it was an entitlement program.

VIII. Public Comments:

- Does the governor have the authority to allocate moneys controlled by BOARD OF DIRECTORS?
 - Unsure, requires further inquiry.
- What is one of duties for which the BOARD OF DIRECTORS will no longer be held accountable for?
 - Approving Modifications.
- Can a grantee service more than one area?
 - Only the BOARD OF DIRECTORS can make them decisions.

IX. Next Meeting: March 18, 2016 10:00am to 12:00am.

X. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

XI. Meeting Minutes Prepared by: Donnie Love