

Energy Assistance Committee Meeting Minutes

July 23, 2009

Judi Martin gave a quick update and read the section of the minutes from the July 6 meeting pertaining to the Education Committee. Mike Kelly said Congress has agreed to fund LIHEAP again at \$5.1 billion for 2010. That means Nebraska will receive \$40 million upfront with an additional \$4 million in contingency dollars. In 2008, Nebraska received \$22 million and in 2009, Nebraska received \$45 million.

Agreement to work on the following five initiatives since they are all tied in together.

1. Educate customers to apply for assistance before it is too late, how to avoid service disconnection.
2. Educate customers about use of the level payment plan.
3. Educate individual to report problems sooner than later in the process to avoid immediate crisis.
4. LIHEAP information (where to apply, program information, etc.).
5. Offer financial plan/financial stability programs to low-income clientele, middle class, etc.

Discussion focused next on the education section as one of the items the Education Committee needs to focus on. Laura Demman will compile/update a list of NEAN and agency contacts that can/will be used on the NEAN website and other resources for both caseworks and individuals to use when looking for contacts at utilities. Possibility of two lists rather than one depending on what audience needs to be reached. Laura will send the list to the committee for review.

Arrearage and shutoff information from utility companies to the United Way. -- LES is on-line to report this information.

Still looking for chair and co-chair. Any volunteers? If two or three people could work together sharing the duties as a chair, it may not seem quite so daunting. The Education Committee needs a chair and vice chair. Volunteers should contact Mike or Judi Martin.

There will be some linkage between this committee and the NEAN Energy Education Committee through possible workshops, etc. More decisions will have to be made how these two committees can work together.

Does anything look like it is something that we can work on with the Energy Education Committee? We will share the information form #2 with the Education Committee.

Next meeting time will be in two weeks (August 6, 2009). The time will come out in an invitation for the next call. Does 2 p.m. work for everyone?