

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Municipal Utilities Committee

2021 – 2023 Council Members

John Courage, Dist. 9

Mario Bravo, Dist. 1 | Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4

Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6 | Ana Sandoval, Dist. 7

Tuesday, June 28, 2022

10:00 AM

Municipal Plaza Building

The Municipal Utilities Committee convened a regular meeting in the Norma S. Rodriguez Council Chamber in the Municipal Plaza Building beginning at 10:05 AM. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: John Courage, *Chair*
Mario Bravo, *Member*
Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*
Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Member*

Members Absent: Ana Sandoval, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from the June 3, 2022 meeting of the Municipal Utilities Committee.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the June 3, 2022 Municipal Utilities Committee meeting. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Courage, Cabello Havrda, Bravo, Rocha Garcia
Absent: Sandoval

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Briefing by CPS Energy on Equity and Energy Burden and Customer Affordability

Programs [Ben Gorzell Jr., Chief Financial Officer; Troy Elliott, Deputy Chief Financial Officer]

DeAnna Hardwick, Interim Vice President for Customer Strategy, provided an overview of equity strategies, community research and analysis components. She noted that a focus of equity strategies was on energy burden issues. Hardwick stated that CPS Energy worked with Brattle Consulting to identify energy burdens and causes and reviewed the specifics of the 2010-2019 national and local energy data reviewed by Brattle. Hardwick provided comparisons of national and San Antonio market analysis on energy consumption and impact on income quintile segments.

Hardwick discussed the current options to support customers in an equitable energy service and spoke to customer outreach conducted to have a more wholistic approach for all customers in various income levels. She reviewed the status of applications submitted for assistance under the ARPA Program and auto-enrollment process for customers needing financial assistance for energy service. Hardwick also reviewed the status of the Affordability Discount Program, related program enrollment data and community partners assisting in identifying customers in need. She discussed the next steps in leveraging existing programs while using equity lenses.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda stated that it was important that CPS Energy reach out to the community to identify customers in need and that she appreciated CPS Energy and City efforts in providing assistance. Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked for data on the number of senior residents in assistance programs and communication efforts to that community. Hardwick stated that data would be provided to the Committee. Councilmember Cabello Havrda recommended that Senior Community Center and the center partners be contacted for enrollment ideas. Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked if outreach was conducted for military veterans. Hardwick confirmed that veteran outreach was a part of the outreach plan.

Councilmember Bravo asked for clarification on the energy discount amounts and weatherization enrollment efforts. Hardwick provided clarification on both issues. Councilmember Bravo spoke to the weatherization need within the community. Garza spoke to current practices. Richard Luna, Director, Technology & Product Innovation, stated that CPS Energy was not currently performing drive by thermal imaging, but that staff worked closely with enrolled residents to identify energy savings.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia stated that it was important to engage energy stakeholders within the community to identify energy savings options and processes. Hardwick spoke to continuously conducting community engagement and that CPS Energy was open to expanding outreach under identified recommendations. Councilmember Rocha Garcia stated that it was important to research assistance for multifamily facilities and underserved populations.

Chair Courage asked what the dollar costs were annually to current options of support excluding ARPA funding. Hardwick stated that the information would be provided to the committee. Chair Courage asked if any other federal grant opportunities were being considered. Garza stated that CPS Energy worked closely with the City to identify grant options and that both organizations were working to build grant application capacity.

Chair Courage expressed concern regarding the amount of unclaimed funds for bill assistance

programs. Garza spoke to the efforts conducted to provide assistance to customers and that staff had initiated disconnect practices which had brought more residents forward asking for financial assistance and enrollment into assistance programs. Chair Courage asked for clarification on Project Warm funding and status of the program. Hardwick stated that Project Warm had been rolled into the REAP fund and he clarified how funding was provided for the fund and that additional data would be provided to the Committee.

Chair Courage asked how a new energy rate structure could assist with addressing energy assistance programs. CPS Energy Chief Financial Officer Cory Kuchinsky stated that early conversations on rate structure recommendations were being conducted and that updates would be provided to the Committee in the future.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if there was a possibility for a subcommittee for community outreach that could be considered. Garza stated that CPS Energy was willing to work with community groups on outreach efforts.

No action was required for Item 2.

3. Update by Reed Williams, Chair of the CPS Energy Rate Advisory Committee, on Committee Progress. [Ben Gorzell, Jr., Chief Financial Officer; Troy Elliott, Deputy Chief Financial Officer]

Chair Courage noted that Chair of the CPS Energy Rate Advisory Committee (RAC) Reed Williams was not able to be present and that he would read an updated memo submitted by Mr. Williams. Chair Courage read the memo and stated that a report was provided for the Committee's review. The memorandum was submitted for the record.

Rudy Garza, CPS Energy CEO and President, noted that the update provided by Williams was to be further discussed by the CPS Energy Board and that process would be continued to be followed to facilitate input by the RAC. He stated that he would have continued conversations with Williams and the RAC. Garza stated that it was important to continue work with the RAC.

Councilmember Bravo asked for clarification on the process for review of generation planning under the RAC. Garza reviewed the process and variables impacting the process to determine generation planning models and recommendations from the RAC and Board approval on generation planning actions. Councilmember Bravo asked what the process for the RAC was to make recommendations. Garza stated that CPS Energy leadership and Board would collaboratively work to gain alignment on presentation of recommendations.

Chair Courage expressed concern on the challenge of keeping confidentiality and providing information to the RAC. Garza stated that it was vital for CPS Energy to keep confidentiality in order to preserve pricing practices or competition in negotiation of energy contracts. Chair Courage recommended that the RAC should be able to sign a confidentiality agreement in order to be briefed on certain items in order to make quality recommendations and that it was concerning to him that the RAC was not already provided this information. Garza stated that CPS Energy leadership was committed to being transparent, building a process for review and working closely with the RAC in gaining future trust.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked about the two consulting firms that would be used on energy generation remodeling. Garza spoke to the two consultants and scope of their work and confirmed that funding would be provided by CPS Energy.

No action was required for Item 3.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:16 AM.

Approved

John Courage, Chair

Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk