

## NEUAC Board of Directors

### Meeting Minutes – Spring 2023

February 17, 2023 at 9:00 AM

Virtual – Zoom &  
 & In-Person – American Gas Association  
*-Meeting votes and outcomes are **bolded** throughout-*

#### 1. Call to Order (Tanya Jones)

- Quorum established; Tanya Jones called the meeting to order at 9:16 AM.
- **Attendees:** Katrina Metzler, Saunteel Jenkins, Tamara Johnson, Rhonda Harper, Shannon Stahley, Allison Poe, Kim Campbell, Faye Kinner, Todd Berreman, Gerri Drummond, Bonnie Temme, Jackie Castrellon, Kelly Caplan, Britton Gabel, Keelie Gustin, John Rich, Francine Artis, Brian Caudill, Erin Mao, Carolyn Perry, Gabe Terry, Kathleen Kerr, Jennifer Whiting, Tanya Jones, Laura Bayona, Maria Delaplain, Michael Bell, Daniela Suarez, Matt Treadwell, Scott Thatch, Alita Corbett, Angela Sterner, Aimee Gendusa-English, Anne Armstrong, Susie Holmes, Frank Rapley, David Carroll, Andrea Schroer, Rasheeda Davis, Ziyen Sears, Celia Andrade, Mike Bradford, Tony Hunt, Amanda Dewey, Liz Brister, Thomas Joyner, Häly Laasme, Jennifer Rodriguez, Olivia Wein, Theresa Kullen, Sheila Ruffin

#### 2. Approve Minutes from Last Meeting (Tanya Jones)

- Tanya presented the minutes and provided members a chance to review the minutes from the September 2022 meeting.
- **Motion to accept the meeting minutes from September 2022.**
  - **1<sup>st</sup>: Rhonda Harper**
  - **2<sup>nd</sup>: Kelly Caplan**
  - **Abstain: None**
  - **Motion Passes**

#### 3. Committee Reports

- **Finance Committee (John Rich)**
  - **Financial Overview**
    - John reviewed the Balance Sheet (Statement of Financial Position), stating NEUAC is in a great financial position, include cash and accounts receivable assets.
    - John reviewed the Budget vs. Actual Report for FY 2022 and acknowledged large discrepancies in the budget vs. actual, primarily due to initial planning for a virtual conference and actual conference planning in New Orleans last Summer. This discrepancy also accounts for the difference in 2021 and 2022 totals.
    - **Motion to approve Financial Report as presented.**
    - **1<sup>st</sup>: John Rich**

- **2<sup>nd</sup>: Mike Bradford**
- **Abstain: None**
- **Motion Passes**
- **Unclaimed Funds Overview**
  - Erin Mao reported NEUAC has received over \$37,000 in unclaimed funds, so far. These funds are leftover from NLIEV and the National Fuel Funds Network and will be used for unanticipated expenses, including moving LIHEAP Action Day meetings from the American Gas Association to the Yotel, due to an increase in LIHEAP Action Day participants.
- **LIHEAP Action Day 2023 Overview**
  - Katrina reviewed NEUAC's decision to move the preparatory meetings to the Yotel, which cost NEUAC an additional \$15,000 for the space, AV, and food.
  - Moving forward, NEUAC would like to discuss how we sustainably grow LIHEAP Action Day and manage our costs alongside an increasing number of participants.
  - Board members discussed the excellent price and location of Yotel. Carolyn Perry recommended we market additional sponsors for the event to help cover increasing costs. Members also expressed concerns about the noise level in the ballroom.
  - Some members expressed concern about the size of a few rooms but were still comfortable with the level of cleanliness.
  - Katrina is concerned about space as we grow and requested permission to explore additional hotel options for next year. Members agreed we would like to be in person next year. With the Board's permission, Jennifer Whiting (Meeting Solutions, Inc.) will begin pricing hotels in the Capitol Hill area to determine what our costs could look like for 2023 LIHEAP Action Day.
    - The Executive Committee will review options for next year's LIHEAP Action Day accommodations prior to the next board meeting.
    - Members suggested the next hotel not have a fee for early check-in. The Yotel had a fluctuating early check-in fee, based on the time of day you request to check-in. A fee was also required for late check-out, if requested.
    - Members also reminded NEUAC that February 19, 2024 is President's Day – the Executive Committee will need to look at the dates for next year when negotiating a contract.
    - Katrina spoke with several Legislative Aides that suggested we hold this event the last week of February, first week of March with the event occurring on Wednesday. Jennifer Whiting explained that a Tuesday-Wednesday pattern will likely not allow for exceptionally reduced hotel rates, but could lend to less expensive flights.
    - Allison Poe, who works heavily on the Hill, suggested that we do meetings earlier in the year. And that while it is nice to have members in office, it can increase wait times and discourage as many meetings as possible in one day.

- NEUAC will continue to keep the Board informed as they plan for LIHEAP Action Day 2024. NEUAC encouraged all attendees to utilize the Whova app to provide additional feedback.
- **Public Policy and Advocacy Committee (Allison Poe and Brian Caudill)**
  - The All Parties Letter is still open and currently at 990 signatures.
  - Brian Caudill (AGA) stated the current number for LIHEAP FY24 is sitting at \$6.1 billion, a billion higher than full appropriations requested. Brian does not think this number will hold firm as appropriations negotiations continue.
    - Brian stated there is bipartisan support in the House, at this time. In the Senate, Susan Collins (ranking Appropriations Committee member) is still a very strong LIHEAP supporter. AGA continues to look for a Republican champion in the Senate – someone to sign letters supporting the program.
      - Because Senator Collins is now the ranking member, she is not able to sign the letter of support. Senator Murkowski previously signed on, as did Senator Hogan, and AGA will continue to review options for a Republican LIHEAP champion.
    - Many House Republicans are very fiscally concerned and conversations about a spending freeze (at FY22 levels) will continue. This would serve like a CR, locking in LIHEAP at about \$3.8 billion. While this is not optimal and we can make a case for additional funds, it is better than a potential cut to the program that could be greater. Brian expects opposition to the FY22 freeze proposals, but conversations are still outstanding.
  - Allison Poe (EEI) stated she received great reactions from both parties in the House in Senate regarding LIHEAP funding and the benefits of the program. Allison will also continue to look for advocates, particularly Republican. Allison is confident we have the momentum to obtain at least \$4 billion this year, with continued education on the program.
  - Katrina reported we still have \$1.5 billion that has not been released from HHS for this year. Katrina also met with Senator Jack Reed’s office (Senate Champion) who asked for information on Kansas, Alaska, and North Dakota to assist with selecting a Republican champion to sign the Dear Colleague letter.
  - Katrina reported the State Sheets were challenging to compile this year. The information used to compile those sheets comes from HHS – not all states turned in their data on time. In addition, HHS published the numbers publicly – incomplete data – before NEUAC could utilize. Therefore, NEUAC did not receive permission to use the data for the current year and could only use complete data for all the states from FY2021 – the latest, complete information available.
- **Executive Committee Report (Tanya Jones)**
  - **The Executive Committee is seeking Board approval to enter into a contract with SKA Associates, Inc. for strategic planning services at an expected cost of \$17,500.**
    - **1<sup>st</sup>: Tanya Jones**
    - **2<sup>nd</sup>: Rhonda Harper**
    - **Abstain: None**
    - **Motion passes**

- **The Executive Committee is seeking Board approval to enter into an agreement with the American Gas Association for State Resource Directory Project, for which NEUAC will receive \$31,400.**
  - Katrina reviewed the details of the project, including NEUAC's creation of PDFs for available LIHEAP benefits in every state. Katrina
  - Phase I includes PDFs of the directory, while Phase II incorporates the directory into the NEUAC website, which is currently being revised. This should be ready by June 2023. Katrina shared an example of the Directory with attendees.
  - Katrina clarified this project serves as a "fee for service" contract, rather than a grant to complete this project.
  - 1<sup>st</sup>: Saunteel Jenkins
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>: Rhonda Harper
  - Abstentions: none
  - Motion Passes
- **The Executive Committee is seeking approval from the Board to ratify the decision to enter into a contract with the Yotel to host meeting space for LIHEAP Action Day 2023 at an anticipated cost of approximately \$16,000.**
  - 1<sup>st</sup>: Saunteel Jenkins
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>: John Rich
  - Abstain: none
  - Motion Passes
- **Conference Committee (Co-Chairs)**
  - Katrina reported that conference planning went on hold for January & February 2023 so we can plan for LIHEAP Action Day.
  - The schedule presented for review today is tentative and was finalized in December 2022. Katrina reviewed key sessions that we hope will attract attendees to San Diego this summer.
  - Jen Whiting (MSI) updated Board members on the hotel's renovations prior to arrival. Things are progressing, on track, and will be ready to go for June 2023.
  - Registration will open on March 22, 2023. MSI and NEUAC will also be launching a new tool for Speaker registration and submission of headshots, presentation, and bios.
  - Tanya reintroduced the discussion for an award in memory of Edward Gingold. Tanya encouraged members to offer ideas about how to commemorate Edward at the upcoming conference. Rhonda Harper acknowledged Edward's kind and caring nature, while Saunteel Jenkins suggested we use this opportunity to honor a dedicated government or nonprofit employee that is an outstanding LIHEAP advocate. Mike Bradford and Katrina echoed these sentiments.
  - **Motion to create an award in Edward Gingold's honor to honor a government employee that is an outstanding LIHEAP advocate.**
    - 1<sup>st</sup>: Tanya Jones
    - 2<sup>nd</sup>: John Rich
    - Abstain: none
    - Motion Passes

- **Membership/Fundraising (Keelie Gustin & Mike Bradford)**
  - 217/256 goal for Membership. Keelie and Mike encouraged members to keep spreading the work about NEUAC, including engaging with LIHEAP Action Day attendees that re not currently members.
  - For sponsorship, Mike reported we are at \$447,430, which is 90% of our goal for this fiscal year. Mike encouraged members to continue to reach out to contacts for sponsorship – particularly for items at the NEUAC Conference.
  
- **Site Selection Committee (Rhonda Harper)**
  - Rhonda reported the Site Selection Committee has been meeting monthly. Rhonda, Jen, and Katrina did a site visit to Charlotte to look at two hotels for the 2025 conference – The Westin and The Sheraton/Le Meridian (hotels are connected with a meeting space in the middle). Rhonda reported on benefits of each hotel, particularly that The Westin hotel has recently renovated rooms with a nice meeting space.
  - Another site visit is scheduled next month for the Seattle/Bellevue area for 2026.
  - The Executive Committee will meet to review options and ask the Board for a ratifying vote as to 2025 and 2026 locations at the June meeting.
  - We have strong North Carolina participation, including support from the Lumbee Tribe, and may receive additional sponsorships for hosting our conference in Charlotte.
  - Katrina reminded everyone the 2024 conference will take place in Chicago.
  
- **Nominations Committee (Kim Campbell Hailey)**
  - Kim reminded the Board that Governance Board members represent organizations; while Executive Committee members are individual representers.
  - Kim reviewed the nominations requirements, including the necessity for members in good standing and how to nominate. Kim reminded members that even though your term is expiring, you do have to be re-elected for the second term.
  - From a Governance Board perspective, it is essential to look at countrywide representation, as well as to be thoughtful about conference locations in upcoming years.
  - Kim reviewed the nomination process for Executive Committee members, as well as terms for each Executive Committee member. Kim reviewed the tight timeline for nominations, as well.
  
- **JEDI-B Committee (Rhonda Harper)**
  - The JEDI-B Committee has been meeting monthly, including review the “Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization” which will guide NEUAC on how to integrate JEDI-B priorities throughout our organization. The JEDI-B committee agreed that discomfort is necessary when implementing this type of initiative.
  - The Committee discussed what JEDI-B means to NEUAC – including taking a holistic approach to JEDI-B implementation throughout the organization. Katrina is looking at incorporating JEDI-B into NEUAC’s upcoming Strategic Planning network.

- Saunteel Jenkins discussed the importance of looking at JEDI-B through a NEAUC lens, but also through a lens that benefits our customers across the country and including those customers in policy and advocacy.
- The JEDI-B committee will also look at creating a charter and committee outline of goals and issues to address. The committee is dedicated to equal access to NEUAC programming for all interested.
- David Carroll offered that, at the request of Dr. Howard, HHS will begin collecting demographic data regarding race, gender, and ethnicity to help identify and better assist those we serve.

#### 4. Executive Director's Report (Katrina Metzler)

- Katrina reviewed the 2022 Draft Annual Report, including LIHEAP Action Day statistics from the 2022 virtual event.
- Katrina reviewed the Board Insider page, specifically for Board Members, to access meeting materials, membership and fundraising dashboards, the annual report, bylaws, financials, etc.
- Katrina updated the Board on the Strategic Planning process and reviewed SKA's proposal included in the board materials. Strategic Planning is one of NEUAC's big projects for 2023, alongside refreshing and redesigning the website.
  - i. The contract includes a \$17,500 cost. Katrina encourages all members to participate in the Strategic Planning process to make it worthwhile. The benefit of a third party is to offer insights from each member regarding NEUAC. NEUAC is exploring Strategic Planning time at the San Diego conference – keep an eye out for updates.

#### 5. Other Business

#### 6. Adjournment

- **Motion to adjourn the NEAUC Spring 2023 board meeting.**
  - **1<sup>st</sup>: Bonnie Temme**
  - **2<sup>nd</sup>: Kim Campbell Haley**
  - **Abstain: None**
  - **Motion Passes**
- Meeting adjourned at 11:08 AM.