



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
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**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

A regular Board meeting of the Board of Public Utilities was held on December 15, 2021, via online @ https://youtu.be/P_bNIDtFd7c

Public notice was given pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-18 by posting notice of the meeting at the Board's Trenton Office, on the Board's website, filing notice of the meeting with the New Jersey Department of State and the following newspapers circulated in the State of New Jersey:

Asbury Park Press
Atlantic City Press
Burlington County Times
Courier Post (Camden)
Home News Tribune (New Brunswick)
North Jersey Herald and News (Passaic)
The Record (Hackensack)
The Star Ledger (Newark)
The Trenton Times

The following members of the Board of Public Utilities were present:

Joseph L. Fiordaliso, President
Mary-Anna Holden, Commissioner
Dianne Solomon, Commissioner
Upendra J. Chivukula, Commissioner
Robert M. Gordon, Commissioner

President Fiordaliso presided at the meeting and Aida Camacho-Welch, Secretary of the Board, carried out the duties of the Secretary.

It was also announced that the next regular Board Meeting will be held on January 12, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. via livestream on YouTube.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

After appropriate motion, the following matter, which involved attorney-client privilege and/or contract negotiations exceptions, was discussed in Executive Session.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

D. Docket No. EG20060445 – In the Matter of the Energy Assistance Grant as Authorized Under N.J.S.A. 48:2-29.39 – Payment Assistance for Gas and Electric Program.

Discussion: This matter was presented by Maureen Clerc and it pertained to the Board's contract with the Affordable Housing Alliance (AHA) for administration of the Payment Assistance for Gas and Electric (PAGE) program, an energy assistance program for low and moderate-income households.

The current contract, initiated in January 2021, provides PAGE grants to not only moderate-income households, as had been the case in the past, but also low-income households. AHA applies a PAGE benefit cap of \$400 to low-income PAGE households due to these households' ability to access federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) benefits. PAGE applies a PAGE benefit cap of \$700 to moderate-income households.

However, in October 2021, the income limits for the Board's Universal Service Fund (USF) program and Department of Community Affairs' LIHEAP program, which also provide benefits to electric and gas customers, were raised significantly. Therefore, AHA wrote a letter to Board Staff requesting clarification regarding if it should continue to use the LIHEAP income ceiling as the low-income threshold and continue to provide the same benefit caps to the different income groups.

AHA also requested a waiver of the requirement to distribute PAGE grants according to a 60/40 percentage breakdown between moderate and low-income households as AHA has no control over the income levels of households seeking assistance.

In response to AHA's letter, Board Staff recommended a contract modification to allow the following:

1. AHA should continue to use the LIHEAP income ceiling as the low income threshold for PAGE;
2. Moderate income households should continue to receive the \$700 benefit and low income households continue to receive the \$400 benefit, however, Staff recommended that low income households denied LIHEAP benefits also be applied the \$700 PAGE benefit; and
3. Staff recommended the requirement to maintain a 60/40 percentage breakdown in PAGE grant distribution between moderate and low-income households be waived, while AHA continue to report the distribution in funds between the two income groups.

4. Board Staff also recommended these changes be retroactive to October 1, 2021 when the new USF and LIHEAP income limits went into effect.

After appropriate motion, the Board reconvened to Open Session.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.



AIDA CAMACHO-WELCH
SECRETARY

Date: February 23, 2022