

**EEB APM Meeting**

**Wednesday, September 11, 2024 | 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

[Meeting Materials](https://app.box.com/s/3bts94ao5afs056f3f1ulz8xflovy5nf)

[Meeting Recording](https://vimeo.com/1018127256)

Meeting Minutes

1. **Process**
   1. **Roll call of Board members**

Board Members, Voting: Anthony Kosior, Amanda Fargo-Johnson, Anne-Marie Knight, Kathy Fay, Bernie Pelletier, JR Viglione, John Wright, Jack Traver, Jayson Velazquez, Melissa Kops

DEEP Designees: Ben McMillan, Becca Trietch, Victoria Hackett

Board Members, Utilities: Amy Mclean, Diane Del Rosso, Steve Bruno, Jillian Winterkorn

Board Consultants: Stacy Sherwood, George Lawrence, Richard Faesy, Bahareh van Boekhold, Leigh Michael, James Willamson, Lisa Skumatz

* 1. **Approval of September Minutes**

Mr. Bernie Pelletier motioned to approve the [September EEB meeting minutes](https://app.box.com/s/mlmcus1kx2u6r4ruohbwsr9i8i37go1i). The motion was seconded by Mr. Jayson Velazquez. The motion passed 9-0 with an abstention from John Wright. (Mr. Jack Traver joined shortly after the minutes vote. Ms. Anne-Marie Knight was in attendance at the time of the vote.)

* 1. **DEI RFP Rebid & Reprioritization E-Vote Results**

Mr. James Williamson noticed the results of the [DEI RFP Rebid and Reprioritization E-vote](https://app.box.com/s/yfnch06xyzzz0efmz9ti3tdzc3a5gjjl). He explained that the e-vote had been conducted regarding a motion “To direct the Review Committee to go back to all DEI consultant RFP respondents to ask for updated proposals that adhere to a $500,000 budget cap and the revised task prioritization” as outlined in the [Review Committee’s memo](https://app.box.com/s/7hloe663ot7ob8tke7e9uqj0fxmc7e85), which had been shared during the September 11th meeting.

Mr. James Williamson further elaborated that the motion had passed with a vote of 10-0 with one abstention from DEEP. As an update on the candidate selection progress, he mentioned that the team had contacted all respondents, requesting updated pricing and scope based on the motion. The team expected to receive the responses by October 11th.

* 1. **Committee Updates (Evaluation, Residential, and C&I)**

Mr. George Lawrence (Caerbannog Consulting) provided an overview of the 10-08-24 C&I Committee Meeting:

* Illume led a discussion on the draft equity indicator framework and reviewed preliminary results of the participant/non-participant study.
* An update was provided on the heat pump cost calculator created by Mr. Griff Keating. The calculator highlights customer savings from displacing oil, propane, and electric resistance heat, but not natural gas.
* The discussion covered three-year planning, reviewing the C&I budget, evaluation recommendations, public comments, benefit-cost ratios, and planned savings.
* There was a robust discussion about program management incentives and changes, mainly concerning C&I secondary metrics.
* There was a presentation on C&I demand response, noting that diesel backup generators, which made up a significant portion of the capacity, are being phased out due to their greenhouse gas emissions.
* An update was provided on Company efforts to maximize savings by the end of 2024 using available funds.

Mr. Bernie Pelletier provided an overview of the 10-09-24 Residential Committee Meeting:

* There was substantial public comment on proposed program changes and Plan updates.
* Mr. Richard Faesy highlighted the Q&A tracker, focusing on ensuring questions raised in meetings are addressed by the appropriate individuals.
* One takeaway from the DEEP update was the upcoming opportunities for public comment on various aspects of the Conservation Load Management plan, including those surfaced during the October 4th meeting.
* The team received the residential presentation on heat pump analysis, emphasizing its importance, especially for low-income households, to ensure financial benefits.
* There was considerable discussion about the 2025-2027 Plan, with a specific focus on program management incentives.
* The group also briefly touched on DEI matters and anticipated these topics would reappear in the November meeting.

Mr. Jayson Velazquez acknowledged that public comments concerning procedure, equity, and ensuring environmental justice voices were represented throughout the discussions.

Ms. Kathy Fay provided an overview of the 10-07-24 Evaluation Committee Meeting:

* NMR presented interim results on HES and HESIE audit data.
* The team reviewed the proposed 2025-2027 three-year evaluation plan and budget, which follows a cycle similar to the C&LM plan. They did not vote on the Evaluation Plan during the meeting. An e-vote will take place.
* There was a discussion on the evaluation use memo and how it functions.
* Highlights were provided on the availability of a searchable spreadsheet of evaluation studies, encouraging members to utilize it to review collected data and insights.
  1. **Discuss Evaluation and Evaluation Administrator Budget**

Ms. Stacy Sherwood (EFG) discussed the evaluation administrator budget, explaining that the Board leadership and Consultant Committee are working together to assess how much funding remains for the 2023-2025 RFP period. This could impact the available budget for evaluations, and a resolution is expected by the end of October, with recommendations included in the November 1 Plan Filing. Ms. Kathy Fay clarified that the EEB received the evaluation plan on time. Mr. Anthony Kosior noted that internal budgetary issues need to be resolved before the end of the month.

* 1. **Announcement of Special DEI Session in December**

Mr. James Williamson introduced an announcement regarding a special EEB meeting. He clarified that the EEB plans to hold a special Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) session on Wednesday, December 11th, from 12:00PM to 1:30 PM. The session will focus on supporting the closeout of DEI metrics and potentially facilitating the transition to a new DEI consultant. This meeting has already been added to the Energize CT calendar, and a formal notice will be sent out via the email subscription lists. Ms. Stacy Sherwood clarified that there will be no regular EEB meeting in December, which is why this session is scheduled during that time.

1. **Public Comment**

Edgardo Mejias (Efficiency For All)

Mr. Edgardo Mejias began by sharing how the EFA organization has been involved in developing contractors, particularly from minority backgrounds, who now work in energy programs across the state. He credited Letitia Colón de Mejias for her pivotal role in starting this work over 20 years ago, noting that several minority contractors who service environmental justice (EJ) communities have come through their programs.

He emphasized the scale of their impact, stating that while many contractors working in these programs come from EJ communities, they also service communities statewide. He recounted how the organization first funded a project called the Green Eco Warriors with an $80,000 grant from Massachusetts Electric about ten years ago, allowing them to work in 40 schools and reach about 8,000 students. Despite their success, they never received public funding in Connecticut, instead relying on self-funding through their for-profit company, Energy Efficiency Solutions. Through this, they’ve managed to work with hundreds of schools and impact over 10,000 students by distributing educational materials and conducting presentations. He stressed that education and workforce development are key to the success of any plan the Board puts forward, and his organization has been at the forefront of that effort.

However, Mr. Mejias expressed frustration over being denied funding and access to financial support, which has limited their ability to grow. Despite knowing how to do the work, they continue to face barriers to securing the resources they need. He shared that, over the past 20 years, Efficiency for All has helped over a thousand individuals, many of whom now own homes and have broken free from generational poverty. In the last two years alone, with a budget of around $1.5 million, the organization has trained over 200 people and placed 190 of them into jobs that service EJ communities. Despite these successes, they struggle to obtain grants and financial backing.

Mr. Mejias discussed the challenges his organization faces while working in programs like Energize Connecticut. While he acknowledged having a mostly positive partnership with the Companies, he expressed disappointment that despite being the “boots on the ground” and working directly with EJ communities, they have no place at the decision-making table. He pointed to the conflict of interest in the room, where vendors like himself are excluded from discussions because their participation could be perceived as self-serving, even though they continue to serve these communities.

Mr. Mejias expressed that he had been an observer for many years, seeing the same people making the same decisions in various roles and capacities, and that the same plans continue to be rolled out without significant change. He argued that diversity requires inclusion, and the current setup lacks genuine inclusion. He passionately called on those in the room to either give up their seat at the table to make room for others or create more seats to allow for broader participation.

He shared his frustration with the State's approach, which he described as overly siloed, making it difficult to provide needed services to communities despite having the resources to help. Mr. Mejias highlighted that, despite providing many roadmaps for solutions over the years, the organization continues to face barriers to being heard. He reiterated that, to them, a lie and a half-truth are the same thing, underscoring the importance of honesty in these discussions.

As the conversation shifted to the future, Mr. Mejias expressed concerns about the State’s three-year Plan, emphasizing that equity and environmental justice communities had not been sufficiently prioritized in the planning process. He lamented that, after three years, the focus is only now shifting to conducting studies instead of taking action. He called this approach shameful, reminding those present that they had the power to make choices that could impact future generations by opening up access to workforce training and education for EJ communities.

Mr. Mejias urged the Board not to waste this opportunity, which he described as a privilege that neither he nor the communities he represents have. He stressed that the answers to moving forward are rooted in collaboration and that they are ready and willing to contribute. Despite providing input and data over the years, he pointed out that the same people continue to dominate the discussions, making decisions based on their own perspectives, which often don’t align with the needs of those they serve.

He shared his worry that the upcoming vote on the three-year plan would neglect to prioritize the needs of EJ and underserved communities, and he urged the Board to reconsider their approach. Mr. Mejias emphasized that everyone in the room had a powerful voice and urged them to speak up for the less fortunate, reminding them that their personal experiences differ vastly from those living in disadvantaged communities. These communities don’t have the luxury of time or resources to participate in the ways that the decision-makers do, and thus their voices often go unheard.

Workforce development, Mr. Mejias said, should be at the center of the board's efforts. He shared that Efficiency for All is the only program that has successfully trained and placed individuals from EJ communities into jobs that serve those same communities. Despite this, they are often excluded from workforce discussions. He noted that, out of the approximately 1,000 people they’ve helped, the organization has done it without public funding, relying solely on their own resources.

He also spoke personally, explaining that although he holds advanced degrees in engineering and computer systems design, and has managed analytics teams at companies like Cigna, he is still relying on Social Security for retirement. His personal and professional skills allow him to see patterns in data, yet he lamented that data is often held too tightly by those in power, preventing his organization from contributing fully. He called for more transparency, noting that decisions made by those in charge often don’t reflect the realities faced by people in EJ communities.

Mr. Mejias emphasized that now is the time to act and urged the Board to use common sense and dignity in their decision-making process. He asked for a voice at the table for his organization and others like it, as well as more collaboration and financial support to make a real impact. He also touched on the broader issue of siloed approaches across different organizations, highlighting the need for set-aside funding specifically for EJ communities to address their unique challenges directly, rather than relying on complex financial packages that could ultimately burden these communities.

As he concluded, Mr. Mejias urged the Board members to make the right decisions when voting on future plans, reminding them that if they aren’t ready to move forward in an inclusive way, perhaps they should pause the process and ensure that EJ communities have a seat on the train before it leaves the station. He closed his remarks by expressing his hope that the Board members would be touched by a higher sense of purpose and make choices that reflect the needs of everyone involved.

He then handed out materials that shared the stories and smiles of the people who have come through their programs, emphasizing the real difference they have made in people's lives and calling for more funding, grants, and partnerships to continue this vital work.

Leticia Colon de Mejias (Efficiency For All)

Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias shared that this was not her first time attending these meetings, stating that she has been involved for over 20 years. She explained that she initially became interested in this work due to her background in healthcare administration, where she realized that carbon-based energy pollution was a leading cause of asthma, cancer, and strokes in her community. Both of her parents passed away from cancer, and many people she knew suffered from asthma, which motivated her to take action.

Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias described how she sought mentorship from Julio Mendoza at the Spanish American Merchants Association (SAMA), who introduced her to Raquel Kennedy, the founder of Victory Energy, and Paul Keys. They mentored her and helped her navigate the energy efficiency field. Over time, she built connections with various individuals and organizations, including Capital Workforce Partners, where Yolanda Revere helped her earn her Building Performance Institute (BPI) certification. She went on to work with many key figures in the field, such as Lamont White, Ron Arajuo, Glenn Reed, and Stephen Cowell, among others. She also collaborated with organizations like the League of Conservation Voters, Clean Water Action, and Capital Community College.

Despite these collaborations and her efforts to make progress in environmental justice (EJ) communities, Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias shared her frustration that she had been told she wasn't "good enough" to be in certain spaces. She recounted how people had accused her of pursuing personal gain, though she emphasized that her work had always been about serving others. She noted that, if she had followed a more self-serving path, she could have been a millionaire, like some others in the room.

Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias expressed her frustration with the complacency of those in the room, describing how their indifference had made her ill. She poetically described the situation as "drip, drip, drip, drop," where funding is directed to the top, benefiting only a select few, while people like her and the communities they serve are left with little to no support. She emphasized that her work, as well as the work of those behind her, had been valuable and impactful, yet they were consistently sidelined.

Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias called for greater inclusion and collaboration, urging others in the room to allow those like her a seat at the table. She asked those listening to step forward and share their stories, insisting that the process was moving forward without proper representation from EJ communities. She also called on utilities to recognize the work that has been done to reduce greenhouse gases and carbon emissions, while training people from EJ communities.

She explained that although her husband, Mr. Edgardo Mejias, had spoken earlier, he did not know all the specific numbers because he hadn't worked in the same spaces as she had. However, the reports documenting the work they had done were available, despite their lack of financial and institutional support. Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias shared that she often found herself running between different spaces, trying to be present where it mattered, because when she wasn’t there, no one else was speaking for her community. Ms. Leticia Colón de Mejias closed by thanking the room, emphasizing the importance of speaking up and ensuring that voices like hers are heard.

1. **DEEP**

Ms. Victoria Hackett (DEEP) provided [updates on multiple DEEP topics](https://app.box.com/s/apizayeq7cwrsavjpvfrot1nfq4iyy4i).

* 1. **Recap of CTAC Special Meeting**

Ms. Victoria Hackett, representing began her update by recapping the Contractor Technical Advisory Committee (CTAC) meeting held on Friday, October 4th. This meeting focused on the utility-proposed changes to the Home Energy Solutions (HES) and Home Energy Solutions-Income Eligible (HESIE) delivery models. On October 28th, there will be a regularly scheduled CTAC meeting to discuss current program communication, documentation processes, and other topics submitted by stakeholders. However, the redesign of the HES and HESIE programs will not be discussed in this meeting, as DEEP will propose a separate process for that engagement.

Ms. Hackett went on to provide a detailed recap of the October 4th CTAC meeting, which was convened in response to contractor concerns regarding the utilities’ proposed changes to residential efficiency programs and their impacts on contractor business models and the communities they serve. DEEP had received communications from contractors indicating significant worries about these changes, prompting the special CTAC meeting. The meeting was well-attended, with many participants actively involved, though the discussion at times became contentious and passionate.

She noted that DEEP had put together an ambitious agenda for the meeting but was unable to get through even the first of the three or four planned slide decks. However, she emphasized that it was more important to give participants the space to voice their concerns and be heard rather than strictly adhere to the agenda. The communication workshop that had taken place earlier in the year had established a communications chain between contractors and utilities, which was meant to resolve issues before they were raised to DEEP. Unfortunately, many issues were still unresolved, which led to the meeting.

Ms. Hackett explained that one key takeaway from the meeting was the need for different processes to encourage active listening, mediated problem-solving, and respectful dialogue while maintaining a safe space for everyone to provide and receive input. She acknowledged that contractor positions on the proposed changes varied widely, ranging from firm opposition to openness to seeking middle ground. By the end of the meeting, there were signs of progress, with some areas of potential compromise emerging. However, Ms. Hackett expressed disappointment that these discussions required mediation in a CTAC meeting, rather than being resolved through ongoing communications between the utilities and contractors.

She provided an overview of the key topics discussed during the meeting, including evaluations of air sealing realization rates, how those evaluations were structured, utility data on inspected versus non-inspected projects, contractor impacts from the proposed changes, and pricing clarity and planning confusion. Contractors also shared their experiences from the field and made recommendations for improving realization rates without resorting to sweeping changes to program implementation.

Ms. Hackett emphasized that it would be impossible to summarize all the positions taken during the meeting due to the wide range of opinions, and she encouraged participants to watch the meeting [recording posted on the CTAC website](https://portal.ct.gov/deep/energy/conservation-and-load-management/ctac). She then outlined the next steps, which include DEEP issuing a letter to the utilities later in the week regarding the proposed HES and HESIE changes, based on feedback received during the CTAC meeting and additional written comments. DEEP expects to significantly alter the current proposed timeline for the upcoming contractor Request for Proposals (RFP) and the pricing Request for Information (RFI) to allow more time for discussions and engagement with the Energy Board (EB).

Ms. Hackett also mentioned that DEEP will be bringing back the CTAC tracker, which is similar to what is currently used for the Residential Committee, to ensure that unresolved questions raised during the CTAC meeting are properly addressed. Some questions raised during the meeting were deemed irrelevant, but relevant questions will be tracked and answered. In addition, DEEP will issue a new form of RFI in the form of a survey, allowing contractors to provide feedback on the agenda items that were not covered during the meeting. The survey will be designed to allow for quick yes/no responses, but also provide room for contractors to elaborate on their answers and offer open-ended feedback. The goal is to make it easier for contractors, who are busy running their businesses, to participate in the process without feeling the need to submit formal responses.

Furthermore, DEEP plans to develop and implement a streamlined, less formal platform for contractors and others to submit written comments. Ms. Hackett acknowledged that contractors are often out in the field and cannot always attend meetings, so the goal is to increase opportunities for them to provide input without taking time away from their work. DEEP hopes that this approach will enable contractors to share their opinions on the best paths forward and participate more fully in the public process.

Ms. Hackett also mentioned that DEEP is considering bringing on a contractor ombudsperson to better support contractor engagement with utilities and the board. This idea was raised by Mr. Edgardo Mejias during the meeting, though he did not use the term “ombudsperson.” The goal would be to have an independent third party track contractor issues and attend meetings between contractors and utilities to help resolve concerns. Ms. Hackett suggested that this is something the EEB should consider and seek feedback on how such a role should be structured.

* 1. **Notice of Upcoming Public Meetings**

Ms. Hackett announced a technical meeting scheduled for October 17th to review the Budget Optimization Plan, part A, which had been submitted to DEEP on September 30th. This part of the Plan directed the Companies to develop demand scenarios and associated mitigation actions aimed at improving the predictability and sustainable management of program budgets and operations. DEEP looks forward to stakeholder feedback during this meeting. Additionally, a technical meeting on the three-year Plan will be held on November 21st, with agendas and notices to be sent out in the coming weeks. Public comment will be solicited, and DEEP plans to issue a Request for Information (RFI), working to streamline the process for those with limited time for engagement.

* 1. **Status of Inflation Reduction Act Applications**

Ms. Hackett provided updates on federal funding. She shared that the Home Energy Rebates (HER) and Home Energy Efficiency Retrofits (HERE) applications have been submitted and are currently under review by the Department of Energy (DOE). The applications have undergone multiple revisions to ensure compliance with evolving program requirements. DEEP is working with its consultant, VEIC, to develop implementation blueprints for both programs, which will include targeted interactions with various stakeholder groups, including contractors, the EEB, landlords, and developers. A significant portion of these programs will focus on multifamily housing.

The contracting process for the primary program implementers, the electric investor-owned utilities, has begun. DEEP will conduct a public process in 2025 to ensure that municipal electric customers can benefit from these programs. Five percent of the budget has been reserved for municipalities served by non-regulated utilities, weighted according to population.

Ms. Hackett also gave a brief update on the Solar for All program, noting that DEEP had been awarded $62.45 million by the EPA through the Solar for All competition for Project Sunbridge. These funds are intended to benefit low-income and disadvantaged communities by deploying greenhouse gas-reducing technologies such as residential solar and storage. The program will focus on multifamily affordable housing, and DEEP is revising its work plan and budget based on public feedback. The revised plan will be submitted to the EPA for approval.

She continued by discussing the CPRG Heat Pump Accelerator, noting that DEEP is still negotiating the final grant terms with the EPA. Once finalized, DEEP plans to launch the program in early 2025, with a focus on market transformation through midstream market incentives for the residential heating market. The program will also include innovation and resource hubs to support data sharing, grants, and public awareness initiatives.

Ms. Kathy Fay raised a question about the definition of multifamily housing in the HER (Home Energy Rebates) and HEAR (Home Energy Appliance Rebates) programs and how it impacts the work done in HESIE (Home Energy Solutions-Income Eligible). She asked for clarification on the definition of multifamily housing in these federal programs and expressed concerns about the implications for smaller properties.

Ms. Victoria Hackett responded by explaining that DEEP is actively coordinating the federal programs with HESIE to ensure a smooth rollout together. Mr. Ben McMillan (DEEP) noted that, according to the federal definition, multifamily housing includes properties with two or more units, which differs from the current definitions used in Connecticut’s programs. Unfortunately, DEEP cannot alter the federal application to match the state's definitions.

Ms. Kathy Fay voiced her concern that if larger multifamily projects are separated out from the IE (Income Eligible) work that has been done in the past, it would highlight the significant lack of support for one- to four-family homes. She pointed out that evaluation studies have shown that smaller properties, particularly those with one to four units, have been underserved, and that these homes need to be adequately addressed in the HER and HEAR programs.

Ms. Hackett agreed with this concern but clarified that HER and HEAR may not be the best tools for addressing smaller multifamily homes due to the restrictive federal audit requirements tied to the HER program. She explained that these federal audits align better with the type of work done on large multifamily developments, like those under the Department of Housing (DOH) and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), which already have heightened audit requirements. Implementing similarly intense audits for smaller two-family homes would consume significant resources and might not be the most efficient use of federal funds.

Ms. Hackett suggested that a better approach could be to use the federal funds for larger multifamily developments while refocusing some of the Conservation & Load Management (C&LM) budget to address smaller properties. This would allow Connecticut to design a more suitable program for one- to four-family homes that wouldn't be constrained by federal requirements. She noted that it is still possible to serve smaller homes through federal programs, but the larger multifamily developments are more likely to fit within the constraints of the HER program.

She emphasized that the process will need flexibility as the programs roll out and that decisions will evolve based on the needs identified during implementation. DEEP and stakeholders will need to maintain an adaptable approach as the three-year Plan progresses. Ms. Hackett suggested that as the full scope of the federal programs becomes clearer, DEEP may need to consider rebalancing program budgets next year to ensure all housing types are served appropriately.

Ms. Hackett then provided an additional update on the rollout of Round 2 of DEEP's broadband program. This program will include outreach efforts to multifamily dwellings that currently lack sufficient broadband access. She stressed the importance of broadband, not only as a critical utility in daily life but also as a necessary infrastructure for residents to participate in energy programs. DEEP plans to explore collaboration opportunities between the broadband and energy programs to help ensure residents can engage with both services.

Mr. James Williamson acknowledged that Mr. Jack Traver had joined the call.

1. **2024 Budget Update and Special Offers for Gas Programs – Companies**

Mr. Steve Bruno (Eversource) presented on [the 2024 budget update and special offers for gas programs](https://app.box.com/s/h7vcsk3epqpr3bt07y46sk082r6o13p2).

He began by discussing the electric forecast, explaining that it was fairly consistent with the forecast from the previous month. The residential programs were expected to end the year with a forecast of $64.8 million, compared to a budget of $56 million. This $9 million variance, he explained, was largely driven by the heat pump program, which includes the HVAC and domestic water heating initiatives. He stated that the heat pump rebate had been lowered to $700/ton for the reservation system. Despite these modifications, he said the forecast for residential programs remained unchanged from the previous month.

Shifting to C&I programs, Mr. Bruno highlighted the overall budget of $62 million. The forecast for year-end was $55 million, leading to a shortfall of about $7 million. He explained that the higher-than-usual budget was primarily due to the reallocation of Park City Wind project funds. In contrast, other C&I programs like demand response, education, and workforce were projected to close the year in line with their budgets.

Next, Mr. Bruno transitioned to gas programs. The forecast for residential gas programs had been adjusted down to $10.2 million, compared to the previous projection of $12.6 million, resulting in a projected underspend of $2.4 million. On the C&I side, the gas programs were forecasted slightly over budget, with $10.1 million projected against a budget of $9.8 million. He mentioned that several initiatives had been implemented to boost spending, including new efforts in the small business program, which had been discussed in the C&I Committee meeting the day before.

He then turned back to the residential programs, outlining some upcoming efforts. For the Home Energy Solutions (HES) program, the copay for gas customers would be eliminated if they scheduled and completed a visit by December 31, 2024. He also mentioned a $50 voucher for smart thermostats through an online marketplace, with limited-time offers being sent via email during the week of October 14 and the week of November 5. He added that the expected activity resulting from these initiatives had already been detailed in a prior slide. In summary, Mr. Bruno reported that the electric programs were expected to come in on budget, while gas programs were slightly under budget.

Ms. Sherwood began by raising a concern related to the use of C&I funds to cover residential program overages. She noted that the overage in the HVAC program was being offset by C&I funds and pointed out that the team had been working to move away from this practice, especially in light of the allocation of Park City Wind funds to the C&I budget. She expressed concern about how this might affect future planning, given the reduction in carryover funds from C&I programs and the anticipated budget cuts for C&I in 2025.

Mr. Bruno responded by acknowledging the importance of the issue and suggesting that the optimization plan could provide some answers. He explained that Eversource had traditionally managed the budget in aggregate but recognized that there was a valid question around whether it should be driven more by sectors in the future. He assured that the C&I team was still actively marketing and working to spend their funds but clarified that they were basing their efforts on forecasted spending. He added that, as with previous years, they would work with the team to reallocate any remaining funds at the end of the year. He also stated that the team would reassess the reductions to the C&I budget for next year to ensure that the sector was treated fairly.

Mr. Anthony Kosior noted that the PMI costs were currently grouped with other expenses under the administration and planning line item and requested that these be separated out in future presentations. Mr. Bruno clarified that although the breakdown was already available on the dashboard and other platforms. Mr. Kosior requested that it be reflected in the presentation slides as well for clarity, particularly since PMI represented the bulk of that line item. Mr. Bruno acknowledged this request, explaining that while the information was already available in other formats, they grouped it for presentation purposes. He agreed to separate the PMI costs in future slides.

Mr. Kosior then asked about the projected C&I spending for 2024, which was expected to close at $55 million. He inquired about the 2023 year-end figure, seeking to compare the two years to better understand spending trends, especially given the additional funds from Park City Wind. Mr. Bruno admitted that he did not have the 2023 figure readily available but offered to follow up with the exact number. Mr. Kosior emphasized that he was particularly interested in seeing a positive trend in spending, considering the Park City Wind allocation.

Ms. Stacy Sherwood noted that although Avangrid had not yet adopted the marketing changes that Eversource had proposed for the gas companies, they had completed a significant effort over the weekend with the Bridgeport Zoo marketing event.

Ms. Amy McLean explained that the effort had been in development for some time. The idea was to work specifically with the city of Bridgeport, and the event took place at the Bridgeport Zoo. She shared that the event was highly successful, with 4,700 attendees, all from Bridgeport. The event featured 14 vendors, who collectively gathered 1,400 leads. These leads represented individuals from the Bridgeport area, and the next step would be to contact all of them. Ms. McLean noted that the outreach process had already begun, and by Tuesday at the latest, every lead would have been contacted by a vendor. She added that the team would assess whether these individuals fell into the income-eligible (IE) category or the market-rate category to determine how best to proceed.

Ms. McLean discussed the copay waiver for Connecticut Natural Gas (CNG) customers. She explained that while they were ready to offer this waiver, they were holding off until they had a clearer understanding of the impact on the Southern Connecticut Gas (SCG) budget. She emphasized that once they had identified the needs of the people who provided leads at the event, they would move forward with the copay waiver accordingly. At this point, Mr. Bruno followed up that the 2023 C&I year-end spend was $59 million, or about $4 million short of the year-end projection.

Ms. McLean mentioned that her staff was currently operating at half capacity, but despite this, they had managed to deliver an event of considerable magnitude. She expressed pride in their efforts and thanked the vendors who attended the event, noting that they could attest to the scale and impact of the gathering. Ms. McLean revealed that they were already planning to replicate the event in New Haven next year. Additionally, they were looking into the possibility of using a micro-version of the event in other communities as they continued to refine the process. She offered special thanks to her team members for their contributions in making the event a success.

Ms. Kosior praised the Bridgeport Zoo event as a great success. He expressed an interest in investigating the “lessons learned” from the event and how they could potentially replicate the initiative in other parts of the State. He suggested that they might consider how to better engage with vendors and contractors to support and enhance their efforts, particularly in areas where the need was greatest. Ms. McLean agreed and said she would be open to further discussions on how to move forward with that approach.

Ms. Hackett provided a comment, referencing a former colleague, Rich Steves. She expressed a concern about how events like the one in Bridgeport were branded. She emphasized that it was crucial for future events to be clearly advertised as Energize CT events, rather than being perceived as company-specific events. She explained that this distinction would avoid any confusion or potential criticism from the public regarding the use of ratepayer funds. She emphasized that this issue should be addressed as part of the upcoming review of the Three-Year Plan.

Mr. Bernie Pelletier then weighed in, supporting Ms. Hackett’s concern. He noted that with the current level of public discourse surrounding electric rates, the branding of events had become more important. He remarked that, while he might not have given this issue as much weight in the past, the growing public scrutiny of electric utilities warranted careful consideration. He stated that ensuring proper communication about who was funding the events was now a priority.

Ms. Kathy Fay reinforced Mr. Pelletier’s point. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that ratepayers were aware that these programs were funded by them and that they should be encouraged to take advantage of the benefits. She noted that although events typically included a line indicating that the programs were ratepayer-funded, it was important to continue driving this message home. She highlighted that this clarity was particularly important in light of recent opposition to public benefit charges, with some groups wanting to eliminate them altogether.

Ms. McLean responded to these comments by assuring the group that ratepayer awareness had been central to the entire event in Bridgeport. She reiterated that the focus of the messaging had been to promote the energy efficiency programs as ratepayer-funded initiatives. Mr. Hackett then clarified her earlier comments, explaining that she did not intend to criticize the event itself. Instead, his focus was on how events like this were structured and conveyed to the public. She emphasized that as they continued to hold these types of events, it would be important to ensure that the messaging was clear and that the events were branded correctly.

1. **2025-2027 Plan Overview – Companies**

Mr. Steve Bruno began by introducing the next agenda item, stating that Mr. Ghani Ramdani (Eversource) would present on the [2025-2027 Plan overview](https://app.box.com/s/sy0mjlhtora6c2gdqhiulb8t23uhu7qz), followed by a discussion on the Energy in Action Mobile Exhibit led by Ms. Alice Martin (Avangrid) and Ms. Mary McCarthy (Eversource). He made a quick note that the presentation would focus on high-level points, as the technical consultants would be making their recommendations later.

Mr. Ghani Ramdani explained that they had been working on developing the Three-Year Plan for the past six to seven months. He presented a timeline, noting that the last draft of the plan had been submitted the previous Thursday. This submission included the text plan, savings, and program savings documents that had been shared with the Board and its technical consultants.

He discussed the outline of the text plan, which still contained the same nine sections and three appendices as before. He then detailed the next steps where he mentioned that after the Board's vote today, the team would incorporate any final edits and integrate the tables and charts that had not yet been added to the text plan. He noted that the team would be working through the end of the month to finalize the plan, with a goal of submitting it by November 1st. He also mentioned the upcoming DEEP technical session scheduled for October 17th, where Part A of the optimization plan would be discussed.

Mr. Ramdani then presented a summary slide, which outlined the spending and savings projections for the next Three-Year Plan. He explained that the total planned spending was $706 million across all Companies, covering both electric and gas sectors. He highlighted that the $706 million in spending was expected to generate approximately $2.4 billion in benefits for ratepayers, meaning that for every dollar invested in energy efficiency, ratepayers would receive $3.40 in benefits.

In terms of updates since the last meeting, Mr. Ramdani mentioned that the team had incorporated public comments from the meeting held on September 26th. Additionally, they had introduced a new format for presenting public comments and Company responses. He then discussed some specific updates on the Eversource side, including an increase in the C&I budget to facilitate a smoother transition between the 2024 and 2025 budget years. He also noted the addition of the C&I Active Demand Response (DR) program, along with a new Performance Management Incentive (PMI) metric focused on collaboration with Green Bank. The overall savings numbers had been updated to reflect these changes.

Mr. Ramdani also introduced a new initiative: a moderate-income Home Energy Solutions (HES) offering, which would target customers with incomes between 60% and 80% of the State Median Income (SMI) and between 80% and 100% of Area Median Income (AMI). He also mentioned that they would identify customers between 80% and 150% of AMI to ensure they were eligible for the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) rebate, as that was a key criterion for the rebate program.

Mr. Ramdani then presented an example of the new public comment format that had been developed. The example related to the gradual phase-out of gas combustion equipment, with an exception for low-income customers. This new format, he explained, was created in collaboration with their consultants to improve transparency and response to public feedback.

Mr. Steve Bruno briefly interjected to mention that in the appendix of the plan, the priorities for the next three years had been broken down into key sections like decarbonization, equitable access, and energy affordability. He explained that the following slides would highlight these priorities for the residential and C&I sectors, as well as workforce education and community outreach efforts. He emphasized that these priorities were threaded throughout the Plan to ensure they were consistently addressed.

Mr. Bernie Pelletier pointed out that not every element of the C&LM Plan was finalized, noting that certain aspects remained deliberately fluid to allow for continued engagement and updates. He wanted to emphasize that the plan left room for future adjustments, and it was important to keep this in mind. Mr. Bruno agreed, explaining that the technical consultants would provide their recommendations, and any changes approved by the Board would be incorporated into the final version of the Plan.

Ms. Alice Martin and Ms. Mary McCarthy then presented on the [Energy in Action Mobile Exhibit](https://app.box.com/s/8lflphvu60otspyhac53sr64pzwx5611). Ms. Alice Martin began with an overview of the exhibit and stated that today’s agenda would include images of the mobile exhibit and an update on its progress. The first slide displayed the exterior of the mobile unit, which Ms. Martin described as being equipped with two solar panels on the roof that provide power to the unit. She emphasized that the unit is also wheelchair accessible. Images were also displayed to depict the interior of the mobile unit.

Ms. Martin highlighted the “energy grid” exhibit, which demonstrates how energy travels from generation stations to homes and businesses. This exhibit also focuses on careers in energy efficiency, providing visitors with insights into various roles within the energy sector. She explained that this exhibit is based on the popular Plinko game, making it engaging and interactive for visitors.

The presentation also showcased other features inside the mobile unit, including a thermal camera, solar power exhibits, and a plasma tube. Ms. Martin explained that these exhibits educate visitors about solar energy and how it powers the trailer itself. She then discussed the generation station, which shows how much energy is required to light up an incandescent bulb compared to an LED bulb. She noted that on the adjacent wall is a kitchen layout featuring fun facts about induction cooktops. At the wind power station, visitors can crank a wind source to power a turbine, which lights up LED bulbs.

Next, Ms. Martin introduced the Light, Wind, and Water Meter exhibit. At the Light Wall, visitors select a peg representing an energy-saving action they plan to implement at home and then add it to the wall. This exhibit is designed to resemble the Light Bright game. The water meter portion of the exhibit uses color-coded pegs to demonstrate the different volumes of water consumed by daily activities, helping visitors understand their water usage. She also explained that all the exhibits within the mobile unit are removable, allowing them to be brought into schools that do not have the infrastructure to accommodate the trailer.

Ms. Martin then moved to discuss the outdoor activities provided by the mobile unit. These include two bikes, an induction cooktop, a dollhouse, and a poster board. She explained that pedaling the bikes generates energy, allowing visitors to compare the power required to light up an LED bulb versus an incandescent bulb. The induction cooktop demonstrates how induction cooking uses magnetic fields to heat the pot directly, while the dollhouse showcases a mini blower door that simulates how air leakage occurs when a home is not properly insulated. At the exit, there is a "Pass It On" poster where students can make a pledge by stamping the poster to indicate how many people in their household they plan to share the energy-saving message with. The poster is later displayed in their classroom as a reminder of their commitment.

Ms. Martin then provided an update on the program's goals and results as of October 5th. She explained that their goal for school events was 40, of which they had already completed 31, with 13 more scheduled. This would bring the total to 44 by the end of the year. For Environmental Justice (EJ) school events, the goal was 24, with 21 already completed and 10 more scheduled, meaning they would complete 31 by year-end. Regarding community events, the goal was 40, but they had already completed 50, with 5 more scheduled, ensuring a total of 55 events by the year’s end. For EJ community events, the goal was 24, but they had already completed 27, with 4 more scheduled, putting them at 31 by year-end. She emphasized that they would surpass both their 2024 regular goals and their EJ goals for schools and community events.

Ms. Martin expressed pride in the program’s consistent ability to exceed its goals year after year, even with very little marketing and promotion. She then displayed a map showing the locations of the 2024 school events, noting that the green dots represented EJ schools, while the black dots indicated non-EJ schools. There was also a gray cluster, representing an EJ census block group. Next, she presented a similar map for community events, with orange dots representing EJ communities and blue dots for non-EJ communities.

In terms of the impact of the program, Ms. Martin explained that students attending school events were sent home with information about residential energy programs, as well as an energy-saving pledge activity. Additionally, students were introduced to green careers, which could have a long-term impact on the future workforce. At community events, energy efficiency program information and pledge activities were also distributed, and utilities referred any leads generated to the appropriate programs for follow-up.

Ms. Martin then provided an update on the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. She explained that the RFP was released in early July with four options for contractors to bid into: (1) design and build a new exhibit for community events, (2) program management services for community events, (3) design and build a new exhibit for K-12 educational events, and (4) program management services for K-12 educational events. She noted that they received four proposals for educational program management and three for community program management. For the design and build options, they received three proposals for education and four for community events. She explained that the estimated award date for the RFP was December, pending the approval of the 2025-2027 C&LM Plan. The implementation date was targeted for August 2025.

Ms. Martin then discussed two potential scenarios for the future of the mobile exhibit program. If they were to keep the existing unit only, it would continue to serve both K-12 school and community events, with the potential to add more residential and small business technologies to the outdoor activities. Some upgrades to the interior exhibits might also be feasible. If a new unit were approved, the new unit would be used solely for community events, while the existing unit would be dedicated to school events. The new community unit would include features such as heat pump water heaters, Level 2 electric vehicle chargers, weatherization exhibits, and other technologies appropriate for residential and small business use.

In concluding her presentation, Ms. Martin discussed the proposed budget, which amounted to a little over $1 million. This figure included operating costs for the existing unit and the expenses related to building and operating the new unit. She noted that if the new unit were approved, program goals for both community and school events would be increased accordingly. She thanked the audience for their attention as she finished her presentation.

Mr. Steve Bruno clarified that the presentation was included to address previous questions about whether a second exhibit was necessary. There had been discussions around the demand for the current exhibit and its success. He reiterated that the exhibit was performing well, with high demand, and that the $1 million budget presented included an estimate for what a second exhibit might cost. He also mentioned that once they had the final costs, they would return to the Board to share those details.

Ms. Victoria Hackett asked if there was any data to show how many leads were generated from the exhibit and how it impacted program outcomes or participation. She wanted to know if there was a measurable way to link the exhibit to tangible results. Ms. McCarthy responded that while they do send home information to help inform customers about the available programs, it has been difficult to track leads directly from the exhibit. She explained that it is challenging to determine where a lead originates, especially when customers don’t indicate whether they learned about a program from the mobile exhibit. Ms. McCarthy admitted they did not have hard numbers to show but added that they were continually trying to find ways to track this.

Ms. Hackett responded by highlighting the need to track this information, especially in an environment with tight budgets. She suggested adding a code to the handouts or materials that go out to families and students, so that if a parent calls to inquire or sign up for a program, they could provide the code as a way to track the lead source. Ms. McCarthy agreed and noted that while they had tried using codes in the past, not many people reported them. She also mentioned that although they use a pledge card to track what customers say they will do, they don’t have data to confirm whether they followed through. Ms. McCarthy expressed openness to any suggestions on how to improve this process and encouraged feedback. Ms. McCarthy explained that a similar issue arose when customers signed up for programs online, often without mentioning where they learned about the program. She emphasized the difficulty in collecting accurate tracking data but reiterated that they were trying to come up with more effective solutions. By Zoom Chat, Mr. John Karycyak (Avangrid) stated that Avangrid would investigate tracking participation for each event in their service territory.

Mr. Ben McMillan questioned about the nature of the exhibits in the second unit and how they would differ from the current K-12-focused exhibit. He asked if the new unit would be designed for community events, with a stronger emphasis on residential and small business technologies, rather than K-12 educational content. Ms. McCarthy added that the current unit, designed for K-12, doesn’t always resonate with adult audiences at community events, so the second unit would be tailored more toward engaging customers with technologies they could use in their homes and businesses. The new unit would focus on promoting energy efficiency programs and technologies rather than solely educational content.

Ms. McCarthy mentioned that one of the RFP proposals included an iPad for gathering customer information on-site, which could help with lead tracking at community events. This would allow them to better capture data on customer interest and engagement, particularly at events where they could more directly promote programs.

Ms. McCarthy acknowledged the point, explaining that the current mobile unit had been fully booked and had exceeded the number of visits originally planned for the year, which demonstrated a high demand for this kind of outreach. However, she agreed that it was important to evaluate where resources could have the most impact and noted that the RFP results would help inform that decision. Mr. Kosior and Ms. Hackett discussed potential strategies of tracking program performance in geographic areas where the mobile unit had been exhibited. Ms. Hackett discussed incorporating the mobile exhibit tracking into the optimization plan.

Ms. Stacy Sherwood clarified that once the RFP results were available, the cost and value of the second unit would be presented to the board for approval. She assured the board that no decisions would be made regarding the second unit without further input. She reiterated that the budget estimate included $500,000 for a second unit, but this was contingent on final approval once all the details were confirmed.

Ms. Hackett reiterated the importance of being mindful of budget constraints, especially given the financial challenges of the current year. She also emphasized that the community engagement efforts should be focused on underrepresented groups, ensuring that outreach was not redundant but rather aimed at filling gaps where program awareness was lacking. She suggested that future community engagement should have clearly defined goals, particularly in communities that may not have previously been reached by energy efficiency programs. Ms. Hackett also emphasized the need to be strategic in how the board allocates resources, especially in light of the board’s diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals.

Mr. Kosior questioned if the $1.6 million budget being voted on included both the existing and proposed second mobile units. Mr. Bruno clarified that the $1M figure described the existing mobile unit and an approximate cost of $500k for a second unit. The $1.6M included other community outreach costs. He confirmed that the current plan included the $1.6M. This clarified that the second unit was still a proposal, and the board’s approval of the current budget would not mean an automatic green light for the second unit.

Mr. Bernie Pelletier then discussed the challenges of tracking leads generated from campaigns and shared an example from West Hartford, where campaign participants often came from surrounding towns. Although this tracking difficulty was acknowledged, Bernie expressed support for the exhibit, which has proven valuable in attracting participants and has resulted in cost savings.

Ms. Kathy Fay voiced her appreciation for the exhibit but raised concerns regarding its place in the budget and whether more CPI (Community Partnerships Initiative) work or direct programming might be a better use of funds. She echoed concerns over budget sensitivity, especially in the current fiscal year.

Ms. Stacy Sherwood requested that the Companies to wait until the RFP came back for Board approval, suggesting that the Companies could hold off moving forward until pricing was clearer. The Companies agreed to the request. Ms. Sherwood noted that the $1.6 million would be used as placeholder. Mr. Kosior suggested that the mobile exhibit conditional approval should be documented for clarity.

Mr. Jason Velazquez raised questions about the value of another mobile unit, suggesting the additional funds might be better spent on community partnerships or strengthening existing organizations in the initiative. He agreed with Mr. Pelletier that the mobile exhibit had been effective but wondered if existing community organizations could serve the same purpose or if they could further leverage the first unit. Ms. Sherwood highlighted that the current mobile unit was fully booked and exceeded its original visit expectations, explaining why the Companies were requesting a second unit. Additional projections and visit schedules were requested before a final decision. Mr. Bruno explained that the Companies added the RFP for the second mobile unit based on the board's feedback.

Ms. Victoria Hackett suggested that community engagement plans should focus on filling gaps in underrepresented communities, as identified in equitable distribution reports. The outreach should target communities not already benefiting from current programs and align with DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) metrics under development.

Ms. Amanda Fargo-Johson provided support for the mobile units, emphasizing their effectiveness in reaching people in communities and educating participants of all ages. She expressed her favor for a second mobile unit, provided that the necessary metrics were in place to ensure its success, and commended the overall value these units provided in raising program awareness.

1. **Review of 2025-2027 Plan and Recommendations – Technical Consultants**

Ms. Stacy Sherwood presented the [Technical Consultants’ recommendations on the 2025-2027 Plan](https://app.box.com/s/sf08ryrwvwi5w512nju3fcc1z4di9oyf). She began by acknowledging that the Board had a significant decision to make regarding the 2025-2027 plan and emphasized the importance of today’s vote. She outlined the goal of the presentation, which was to review the budget and savings tables, discuss the technical consultants’ recommendations, and address any questions board members might have before voting. She encouraged board members to stop her at any point to ask for clarification, as these decisions were crucial to the board’s work.

Ms. Sherwood began by revisiting items discussed in the previous meeting. In September, the technical consultants had requested a delay in the budget and savings tables vote to allow more time for adjustments. She was pleased to report that the issues had been addressed and would be presented today for a vote. These adjustments included both the Plan text and the Program Savings Document.

The first adjustment discussed involved Eversource’s electric residential new construction (RNC) program. Ms. Sherwood explained that the technical consultants had requested that the 2025 budget for this program be reduced to be more in line with the 2024 budget of $3.4 million. Eversource had responded by reducing their proposed 2025 budget from $5.196 million to $4.994 million.

Next, Ms. Sherwood addressed United Illuminating’s (UI) residential HVAC program. In September, the consultants requested an increase in the 2025 budget to align with the 2024 projected spending levels, which were about $4.1 million. Initially, the company had budgeted $3.449 million for 2025, but after feedback, they increased it to $3.849 million. Ms. Sherwood noted that this adjustment brought the budget closer to the projected spending for 2024.

Ms. Sherwood then moved on to another UI program, the residential behavior program. The consultants had requested a reduction in the proposed 2025 budget, as the Company had planned to increase it to four times the 2024 level. The budget was initially set at $982,000, but the consultants suggested reducing it to $500,000 and reallocating the funds to the residential HVAC program, which was underfunded. UI agreed to reduce the budget to $682,251, though Ms. Sherwood indicated that the consultants believed it could be reduced further.

Next, Ms. Sherwood discussed Eversource’s small business energy advantage (SBEA) program. The consultants had requested an increase in the budget to align with prior performance levels, as the company’s proposed 2025 budget was lower than the 2024 allocation. Eversource responded by increasing the budget from $8 million to $10 million.

Finally, Ms. Sherwood addressed Eversource’s demand response program. The consultants had asked for an increase in the 2025 C&I demand response budget, which had been significantly reduced from previous years, while the residential side had seen increases. The rationale was that demand response is more cost-effective in the C&I sector, and Eversource agreed to increase the budget to $3.4 million from $2.9 million.

Ms. Sherwood noted that the companies and technical consultants had worked closely together throughout the year, holding weekly calls and other meetings to fine-tune the plan. These efforts ensured that the plan reflected feedback from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), public input, and guidance from the EEB.

The presentation then shifted to what the board would be voting on: the 2025-2027 Plan text, budget and savings tables, and Program Savings Document. Ms. Sherwood clarified that although this was a three-year Plan, annual updates and adjustments were expected through the November 1st filings.

She mentioned that the redesign of Home Energy Solutions (HES) and Home Energy Solutions Income Eligible (HESIE) programs were requested to be excluded from the Plan ( as it will be addressed as program implementation item). Another request is for the residential programs to be budgeted at or above 2024 levels and for C&I programs to have a more gradual ramp down than what was originally forecasted. There was also a recommendation that the R2222b findings be incorporated into the PSD as defined in the study memo but that that the Companies provide details on how it will be adopted before it becomes part of the programs.

Ms. Sherwood recognized that the plan fell short of the energy savings goal of 1.6 million MMBtu as defined in the 2013 statutory guidelines, primarily due to factors such as inflation, the elimination of lighting measures, and the focus on deeper savings measures. Mr. Bernie Pelletier asked for clarification on what specifically was not being met; Ms. Sherwood confirmed this to be the 1.6 million MMBtu goal.

Ms. Sherwood then listed the conditional items that the technical consultants believed should be included in the November 1 filing:

Compliance with 2024 DEEP Determination (Slide 8)

The first was ensuring compliance with DEEP’s determination on the pairing of weatherization with heat pump adoption. The consultants felt this had not been adequately addressed in the current draft. They asked that the companies either include findings on best practices for pairing the two or outline a plan and timeline for completing the analysis.

Budget and Savings Tables (Slide 8)

Next, Ms. Sherwood discussed the need to break out single-family versus multifamily allocations for HES and HESIE programs in the budget and savings tables. While this was already included in the plan text, the consultants wanted it reflected in the tables for easier reference.

Additionally, the consultants highlighted that the budgets for evaluation administrators (EA) and DEI consultants were placeholders, as the final budgets for these roles were still being determined through ongoing RFP processes. Ms. Sherwood clarified that these placeholders represented the maximum budget and that any remaining funds should be reallocated to program budgets once the final costs were determined.

Ms. Sherwood paused and asked for confirmation from the Companies that they were in agreement with these conditions. Representatives from Eversource and UI indicated their agreement. Ms. Sherwood explained that these items were not currently included in the draft Plan but were recommended for adoption by the board.

Performance Management Incentives (Slides 9-12)

Ms. Sherwood explained that the consultants recommended updating the PMI metric language to ensure consistency across the utilities. They also proposed a new secondary metric, representing 1.5% of the PMI, to focus on a coordinated effort around solar PV, EV charging, and battery storage in combination with energy efficiency measures. This new metric was introduced in response to goals set during the Joint Green Bank Committee meeting in July.

Ms. Stacy Sherwood began her explanation by detailing the history and rationale behind the performance metrics for residential new construction programs. She pointed out that, initially, these programs included a secondary metric related to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which made up 2% of the Performance Management Incentive (PMI). Of this, 1.5% was tied to retaining 50% of production builders for the program year 2024, and 0.5% focused on developing a GHG emissions metric that would compare emissions against the baseline of residential new construction.

Ms. Sherwood then clarified that after evaluating the past year and a two-year metric, it became evident that the companies were successfully retaining builders at the required level for the all-electric residential new construction program. This led to the conclusion that the metric was no longer stretching the companies to achieve a higher level of performance. Therefore, the decision was made to remove this secondary metric going forward as it was deemed unnecessary.

She went on to explain the second metric regarding GHG emissions, which was still under development. The utilities were expected to provide updates on it later in the year. Ms. Sherwood acknowledged that discussions with various parties indicated that more work was required on the GHG emissions goals. The DEEP concluded that if the aim was to move in the direction of more stringent GHG goals, an analysis of the impact would be necessary. Therefore, this remained an outstanding item. In the interim, a new metric was proposed that would apply to both the residential and C&I sectors. This was a response to the EEB's request to expand the goal set by the Green Bank Committee to include both sectors.

Ms. Sherwood continued by outlining the specifics of this new metric. The goal was to develop a plan by October 1, 2025, to offer both residential and C&I customers, in Q1 2026, a coordinated initiative covering solar PV, electric vehicle (EV) chargers, battery storage, and other measures in combination with C&LM program offerings. Ms. Sherwood emphasized that the new plan would include detailed information on the benefits, incentives, and financing opportunities. Additionally, the Companies would be expected to coordinate with internal teams to break down operational silos. This would involve collaboration with the Connecticut Green Bank, along with other state and federal initiatives, to promote the adoption of renewables, storage, and EVs alongside energy efficiency upgrades.

She then explained that the 2% originally allocated to the residential new construction metric had been revised. Of this, 1.5% would now be dedicated to the combined residential and C&I goal, and the remaining 0.5% would be reallocated to a residential equity PMI, which would be developed and approved by the EEB later in the year.

Ms. Pelletier clarified a point raised during the during the residential committee meeting: he emphasized that no conservation and load management (C&LM) funds would be redirected to solar initiatives. Instead, he explained, this was a coordination effort between programs that had been somewhat distant from each other. Ms. Sherwood noted, different teams, such as the renewables team, EV team, and EE team, often operated in silos. The goal was to foster communication between these teams to provide customers with a more comprehensive and integrated set of offerings. She reiterated that the plan would also need to discuss how these initiatives would be funded but assured the audience that no money was being shifted currently, nor did she recommend doing so in the future.

Ms. Hackett suggested that proposals could be entertained that seek funding from programs overseen by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), in conjunction with any funding that might come from the C&LM plan. She mentioned the importance of knitting together different programs and suggested that the C&LM program should not be the sole funding source. There could be other potential funding streams, including programs overseen by PURA, which could be explored if such a request was raised within a PURA docket. Ms. Sherwood responded, agreeing that a coordinated funding effort was important for this initiative.

Ms. Sherwood highlighted that there were multiple instances where the filings would need to be updated to reflect new or additional information. She explained that many of the PMI values were based on end-of-year performance, meaning the 2024 baseline would need to be considered when developing the final PMI values. As a result, the March 1 filing update would include the final PMI values, including the secondary equity metric for both the residential and C&I sectors.

Mr. George Lawrence noted that for the C&I secondary metrics, the only one with an "X" placeholder was the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) metric. He mentioned that the C&I metrics between the two companies were already reconciled and that they were ready to move forward on this front. Mr. Richard Faesy added that, in the residential sector, several programs still needed further performance evaluations relative to 2024 in order to fill in the placeholders marked by "X."

Mr. Bernie Pelletier questioned if the reference to March 1, 2024 filing should be 2025. Ms. Sherwood acknowledged a typographical error in the filing and apologized for the confusion, clarifying that the corrections would be made before the board vote.

Ms. Sherwood then introduced a new condition that had been circulated to the board the previous night as a result of further conversations with EEB members and the C&I committee meeting. This condition, she explained, would require the Companies to include additional language in the plan text to explain the PMI structure, how metrics were determined, how the PMI was calculated, and other questions raised during the October 8, 2024, C&I committee meeting. The goal was to add transparency around how the metrics were designed to ensure they stretched companies to achieve higher standards and made measurable progress year over year.

Mr. Kosior added that there were concerns around setting appropriate thresholds for the PMI so that the goals were a stretch to achieve. He suggested developing a standardize approach across years to assure that progress was being made.

Evaluation (Slides 13-14)

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Stacy Sherwood introduced a proposal condition for evaluation, stating that the evaluation studies typically generate recommendations, and the companies respond to these recommendations within the program savings document that gets filed on November 1. The evaluation administrators also file a memo that responds to whether the companies have agreed to adopt these recommendations. This memo evaluates whether the evaluation administrators are in agreement with the companies' decisions. Mr. Anthony highlighted that one of the recommendations made by the companies was up for discussion, and he passed the conversation over to Mr. George Lawrence to provide additional details.

Mr. George Lawrence began by explaining the intricacies of measuring program impact, specifically discussing the "net to gross" concept. He clarified that when savings from a project are calculated, they are first assessed on a gross basis, accounting for energy savings in kilowatt-hours or gas consumption over a period. However, companies can only claim net savings, which is a refined figure after adjusting for factors like realization rates and other programmatic effects. The net-to-gross ratio attempts to measure the actual influence of the program on customer actions.

He then described two significant effects that can influence net savings: "Free Riders" and "Spillover." Free Riders are customers who would have pursued energy efficiency projects even without program incentives and simply take advantage of available rebates or funding. In these cases, the program does not substantially influence customer behavior, meaning their energy savings shouldn’t fully count as program-driven. On the other hand, Spillover refers to customers who, through program participation, learn to operate their buildings more efficiently over time or make additional energy-saving investments beyond the program’s scope. This means that there are energy savings happening, which the program underestimates or doesn’t claim at all.

Mr. Lawrence explained that the study in question was attempting to measure these Free Rider and Spillover rates for the newly redesigned true new construction energy-conscious blueprint program. He emphasized that this program, while redesigned years ago, often involves long lead times, with some construction projects taking two, three, or even five years to complete. Consequently, he believed this evaluation was premature because the program had not yet seen sufficient participation in certain key areas, such as Path 1, which encourages net-zero buildings, or Path 2, which promotes the most energy-efficient buildings possible. Most of the study participants had been involved in Path 4, which focuses on systems and equipment. This imbalance in participation led to a sample size that skewed heavily toward Path 4, making the results less reliable for Paths 1, 2, and 3.

He noted that no participants from Path 1 were interviewed, only five participants from Path 2 were surveyed, and two from Path 3, whereas there were 17 participants from Path 4. These results were then used to estimate a net-to-gross ratio for all four paths, which Mr. Lawrence found problematic. He believed that Paths 1, 2, and 3 were significantly different from Path 4, and therefore, applying the same net-to-gross estimate across all paths was inappropriate. Furthermore, while market actors such as architects, engineers, and modelers involved in commercial new construction projects were interviewed, their input was not used to develop the net-to-gross figure. He stressed that these professionals are crucial in influencing the developers and building owners and should have been factored into the evaluation.

In his opinion, the sample size didn’t adequately represent Paths 1, 2, and 3, and the program was too new to have its net-to-gross rate reduced so drastically. He pointed out that the evaluator’s proposed rate was 69%, significantly lower than the previous estimate of 93%, which was closer to 100%. He argued that by applying this reduced rate, the program was being unfairly penalized before it had the chance to mature and demonstrate its true potential. He concluded by recommending that the board reject the evaluator’s net-to-gross rate for Paths 1, 2, and 3 and side with the companies in maintaining a higher rate, closer to the previous figure.

Ms. Stacy Sherwood acknowledged the points made and noted that regardless of the board’s decision, this item would be included in the plan document to be filed on November 1 for DEEP to consider. Mr. James Williamson mentioned that the evaluation administrator had drafted a memo on this issue, which had been sent out during the meeting but had not yet been circulated. He invited anyone from the evaluation team on the call to elaborate on the memo, but no feedback was provided at that moment.

Ms. Kathy Fay raised a question about the net-to-gross rate in general, stating that she was less familiar with the commercial side of the program. She asked if the net-to-gross value from 2012 was still being used and what that value was. Mr. Lawrence confirmed that the 2012 rate was around 92-93%, but also acknowledged that the program had been redesigned since then, making this rate less representative of the current structure. He reiterated that both the old number and the new number were flawed, explaining that the evaluator's argument was to use the newer number simply because it was more recent, but he disagreed that it was necessarily better.

Mr. Kosior then asked if there was any recommendation to reevaluate the program in a more meaningful way. Mr. Lawrence confirmed that further research was actively underway, and Mr. Pete Jacobs, a member of the evaluation team, had informed him that preliminary results might be available later in the year, depending on participation levels. Mr. Kosior followed up by asking who was conducting the reevaluation, and Mr. Lawrence clarified that didn’t know which contractor was doing the actual research.

Ms. Sherwood explained that this evaluation recommendation involved the adoption of a thermal boundary definition outlined in evaluation study R2222B into the 2025 Program Savings Document. She explained that this recommendation had been requested by the evaluation administrator team because there was no clear thermal boundary definition in the current program savings document. She highlighted that adopting the thermal boundary definition into the program savings document wouldn’t mean it would be immediately implemented into the programs. The Companies were expected to provide details on how this definition would be applied in the Home Energy Solutions (HES) and HES-IE programs. He acknowledged that there had been concerns from vendors within these programs about the potential confusion and impact of adopting this definition. Therefore, he requested that the companies provide clarification before the definition was fully adopted.

Mr. Pelletier expressed concerns based on feedback she had received from contractors. He explained that if this thermal boundary definition were adopted, some contractors feared it could "kill the program." He elaborated that not all basements are the same—some are essentially part of the living space, while others are almost like outdoor spaces. He hoped that the program manual would provide clear guidance on which actions were appropriate for different types of basements, based on their conditions.

Ms. Sherwood responded by acknowledging that the program manual was indeed being worked on and that Mr. Richard Faesy had been discussing the development of a decision tree to guide responses to different home configurations. This decision tree would help clarify which types of insulation were allowed in specific situations, based on the condition of the basement or other parts of the home. The goal was to ensure the program could accommodate various home configurations without creating confusion among vendors and contractors.

Mr. Richard Faesy stated that the work presented was still in progress. He referred to the discussions held at the CTAC meeting last week and noted that there had been further conversations since then. It had become evident that the vendors had some input and suggestions regarding the implications of the proposed changes. These specifically pertained to how the new definitions could impact several areas, such as how duct sealing savings would be claimed and what types of insulation should be used in basements, sealing band joist walls, and other related issues. He acknowledged that there were still implications that had not been fully resolved. However, he emphasized that it was important for the process and discussions to continue moving forward.

He then proposed that, in the meantime, the evaluators had done their job in defining three basement types. Therefore, he suggested that these basement types should be included in the PSD (Program Standards Document) and be ready for implementation once the program design is finalized. He framed this as a pragmatic step to avoid unnecessary delays, even though the overall process was ongoing.

Ms. Kathy Fay suggested that the group keep an eye on the decision-making process, particularly how mapping decisions would evolve. She pointed out that monitoring this development through the residential committee members was important. Additionally, she framed this as part of a broader move toward thinking about the house as a whole rather than in segmented parts.

Mr. Faesy referenced earlier input from Ms. Vicky and Ms. Becca, stating that DEEP would soon be providing some guidance on the program design for HES and HES-IE moving forward. He saw this as an opportunity to have additional discussions about the program's design, noting that these discussions could take place both in the redesign process and within residential committee meetings. He underscored the importance of using both forums to advance this issue.

Clarifying Recommendation on HES and HES-IE Program Redesign (Slide 15)

Ms. Stacy Sherwood continued her presentation by addressing the redesign process for the Home Energy Solutions (HES) and Home Energy Solutions Income Eligible (HES-IE) programs. She pointed out that, as noted during the CTAC meeting last Friday, there were still unresolved issues in the redesign process. She emphasized the importance of passing the budgets to ensure program funding for the coming years, thereby avoiding any delays in program offerings. However, Ms. Sherwood also stressed that the redesign and implementation processes were somewhat separate from the overall Conservation and Load Management (C&LM) Plan document.

She clarified this point by reading a recommendation from the plan text: the companies had indicated plans to modify the HES and HES-IE programs in 2025, but the C&LM Plan did not provide detailed implementation information. Therefore, the Energy Efficiency Board (EEB) recommended removing this language from the plan until the redesign process was finalized. Ms. Sherwood made it clear that if the board approved the plan, it would not signal approval of the redesign itself. Instead, the redesign was recognized as an ongoing, iterative process, and further review would take place in future EEB and SEATAC meetings. She reiterated that the board’s approval of the 2025–2027 C&LM Plan would be conditional on the plan’s overall design, not on the adoption of the HES and HES-IE redesigns.

Ms. Sherwood then moved on to public comments, explaining that responses to the comments had been included in the fourth draft of the plan issued by the companies. She mentioned that the finalized responses would be ready by November 1 and asked board members to submit any additional edits by October 18 to ensure their inclusion in the final plan. The responses ranged from acknowledging comments to noting where aspects of the comments had already been incorporated or where further proposals were suggested as part of the approval process.

Public Comments (Slides 16-19)

She highlighted public comments that had action items associated with the companies’ November 1 filing. These included:

Promotion of Solar Energy: Public comment #2 requested more integration of solar energy with energy efficiency programs. Ms. Sherwood confirmed that a Performance Management Incentive (PMI) metric was included in the plan for coordinating renewable energy, electric vehicle charging, and battery storage activities.

Demand Response: Public comments #2 and #14 touched on demand response initiatives, with one focusing on reducing peak-hour appliance usage and the other on exploring winter demand response programs. Ms. Sherwood confirmed that an evaluation study was being conducted to explore demand response efforts related to electrification and that winter demand response would be evaluated.

Incentives Beyond Energy Efficiency: Public comment #3 called for aligning incentives with benefits beyond energy efficiency, such as seasonal thermal storage and decreased peak load, especially for ground-source heat pumps. Ms. Sherwood noted that an evaluation study was being explored to accommodate this incentive approach.

Access to Technician Data: Public comment #4 requested a process allowing customers to access the full data collected by technicians during home energy audits. Ms. Sherwood confirmed that companies were working on formalizing a process to address such requests, but also highlighted the need to consider administrative burdens and legal implications, particularly when dealing with sensitive customer data.

Rebate Dollar Values: Public comment #5 requested inclusion of rebate dollar values in the plan. Ms. Sherwood agreed that providing incentive ranges would help with transparency and flexibility within the budgets. She mentioned that the companies were asked to include these ranges in their plan.

Improving the transparency of the public input process: Public comment #27 requested the companies to make adjustments to make it easier to track public comments within the plan document. This was addressed in the current plan by formatting the responses into tables that allow for easier searching within the document.

Recommended Enhancements (Slide 20)

Ms. Sherwood discussed two final budget-related recommendations. The first was a request for Eversource to reduce their Residential New Construction (RNC) budget by $600,000 and reallocate those funds to the residential HVAC program, in response to budget reductions between drafts 3 and 4 of the plan. Ms. Sherwood expressed concern about the sustainability of the projected HVAC budget, given that it had decreased from $15.4 million to $14.8 million, despite high demand for HVAC funding. She proposed evaluating the HVAC budget again in 2026 and 2027 to ensure it was sufficient.

The second recommendation was for United Illuminating (UI) to shift $182,000 from the residential behavior program to the residential HVAC program, which would bring it closer to the projected $4.1 million HVAC spend in 2024.

\*\*\*End of Technical Consultant Recommendations\*\*\*

Mr. Anthony Kosior sought clarification on whether the slides from 8 to 20 represented the conditions the board would consider in approving the plan. Ms. Sherwood confirmed that they did.

1. **Public Comment**

Edgardo Mejias (Efficiency For All)

Mr. Edgardo Mejias began by discussing the $1 million proposal for a new learning trailer, suggesting an alternative approach. He explained that if Green Eagle Warriors, an organization that has been active since 2008, were given $1 million, they could potentially reach 500 schools and provide approximately 100,000 educational books to students. He emphasized that they currently charge $1,800 per school, which covers preparation work, in-person presentations featuring characters and costumes, and educational materials about energy conservation. Each student also receives a book about saving energy at home, which they can share with their families. Mr. Mejias highlighted the program's bilingual nature and its long-standing success. He urged the board to consider carefully how money is spent, advocating for funding Green Eagle Warriors as an alternative to building another trailer.

He then moved on to his second point, addressing the influx of funding for heat pumps. Mr. Mejias suggested that C&LM funds should not be spent on heat pumps if other funds are available for that purpose. Instead, he advocated for focusing on "heat pump ready" weatherization, arguing that weatherizing homes is more cost-effective and impactful than installing heat pumps. He noted that heat pumps are merely a tool and not the ultimate solution, and by overemphasizing heat pump installations, fewer customers could benefit from essential weatherization services. He expressed concerns that the current approach draws on limited budgets, preventing other customers from receiving weatherization assistance. Mr. Mejias also raised concerns about how electrification is being implemented, suggesting that it is leading to increased demand and higher electricity costs, further complicating the issue.

His third point was about the misconception that low-income and environmental justice (EJ) communities already have LED lighting in their homes. He stated that these communities still predominantly use incandescent lighting, and he believed it was a mistake to remove LED lighting from the HES-IE program. Mr. Mejias advocated for reintroducing LED lighting into the program, highlighting the instant customer satisfaction and immediate savings that lighting upgrades provide.

Returning to the topic of heat pumps, Mr. Mejias emphasized that while heat pumps are an important part of energy efficiency strategies, the current implementation leaves much to be desired. He noted that many customers who receive heat pumps do not understand how to maintain them properly, and the lack of maintenance can lead to poor indoor air quality and increased costs. He explained that heat pumps require deep cleaning, which can cost around $1,000 to $1,200 annually. Moreover, he highlighted that many customers see their energy bills jump significantly—from $200 a month to $600 or $800—after heat pump installation, putting them in financial distress. He argued that this reality contrasts sharply with the optimistic promises made about heat pumps and can result in long-term financial harm for these households.

Mr. Mejias also touched on the issue of mini-split heat pumps, noting that they are often sold as long-term solutions, but in reality, they have warranties of only 10 to 12 years, rather than the 20 years some customers expect. He expressed concern that this discrepancy could result in significant costs for consumers down the line. Additionally, he mentioned that while there had been some discussion about funding returning to the market, particularly through the Park City initiative, very little of this money had actually gone back to the vendors doing the implementation work. He stressed that the vendors, who play a critical role in delivering these energy programs, had received only minimal financial support.

Mr. Mejias closed by underscoring the importance of ensuring adequate funding for the Program Operators (POs) and vendors who execute the programs, emphasizing that their work is essential to the success of the overall effort. He thanked the board for their time and left his comments for consideration.

Michelle Long (HES and HES-IE Contractor Coalition

Ms. Michelle Long began by stating that the coalition consists of seven contractors who have come together to advocate for more stable and increased funding for the programs. She acknowledged that their statements had already been submitted as written comments in a previous meeting and were available to the public.

Ms. Long highlighted a significant decrease in funding between the 2022–2024 C&LM Plan and the proposed 2025–2027 plan. For example, HES funding decreased from $47.5 million in 2022 to $37.5 million in 2025, and HES-IE funding dropped from $46.4 million in 2022 to $36.8 million in 2025. She noted that the decrease becomes even more severe when adjusting for inflation.

She proposed that additional funding for the HES and HES-IE programs should come from the residential HVAC budget, while acknowledging that HVAC funding should not be reduced to zero. Ms. Long pointed out that some HVAC dollars are allocated toward smart thermostat installations and workforce development. Additionally, Connecticut is set to receive federal funds to subsidize HVAC upgrades, including $100 million from the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant and $49.8 million from the Inflation Reduction Act for home efficiency rebates.

Ms. Long emphasized the importance of making homes "heat pump ready" through weatherization before installing heat pumps, as the HES and HES-IE programs already focus on weatherizing Connecticut homes. She argued that reallocating funds from the HVAC program to these programs would allow for energy assessments and weatherization to be conducted before using federal funds to install heat pumps. This, she said, would prevent rate hikes for consumers after electrification, a concern particularly relevant given the high rates resulting from the public benefits charge.

Ms. Long also called for greater flexibility for utilities to shift funding between the HES and HES-IE programs to improve equity. She noted that the HES-IE program is more expensive to implement per household but receives similar funding levels as HES. Allowing utilities more flexibility, she argued, would enable more low-income customers to benefit from the residential programs. She concluded her statement by thanking the board for their time.

Tim Fabuien (CMC Energy)

Mr. Tim Fabian began by expressing his technical concerns regarding the thermal boundary definitions being included in the Program Savings Document (PSD). He was pleased to see that the implementation of the thermal boundary had been excluded but still found it concerning that the definitions themselves were being added to the PSD. He explained that this concern stemmed from the differences in standards between Connecticut and surrounding states, particularly in regard to the Ashrae 62.2-1989 standard that Connecticut's program follows.

Mr. Fabian pointed out that many of the surrounding states follow different standards, making it problematic to try to establish common definitions. He argued that comparing programs based on different standards is akin to comparing "apples to oranges" and is not factually sound. He emphasized that if Connecticut does not intend to update its Ashrae standard, it should be cautious about which definitions are adopted and pushed forward.

Additionally, he highlighted that Connecticut's program primarily focuses on older housing stock, unlike many surrounding programs, which include newer housing stock. Introducing new standards and definitions from new construction into Connecticut’s program, which deals with older homes, could significantly impact how the program operates. Mr. Fabian stressed that these changes could hinder the ability to treat homes holistically, which is a key approach in the program.

He concluded by urging the board to consider pausing the adoption of those definitions for further review. Before ending his comments, Mr. Fabian also took a moment to compliment UI for the recent Bridgeport event, describing it as one of the best events he had seen in years. He expressed his appreciation for the effort put into the event and thanked UI for their work.

Dave Wither

Mr. Dave Wither introduced himself as someone who has been working in insulation, particularly in the HES-IE program, for over two years. He expressed deep passion for his work and highlighted its importance not only for his company but also for his ability to take care of himself and his family. Mr. Wither acknowledged the weight of the decisions the board had the power to make, understanding that those decisions could significantly impact him, his family, and his company, either positively or negatively. He spoke with emotion about his role as a provider for his family and the challenges he faces when trying to help his loved ones.

He emphasized the personal stakes involved, noting that his livelihood depends on the board’s decisions. He asked the board to make thoughtful and good decisions that would allow him to continue providing for his family, contributing to the energy efficiency industry, and helping others by insulating their homes to improve their comfort and happiness. Mr. Wither closed by urging the board to consider the far-reaching consequences of their decisions, hoping that they would result in benefits for all, allowing everyone in the industry to continue their work and feel good about the positive impact they have. He thanked the board for their time.

1. **EEB Vote on the 2025-2027 Plan**

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Anthony Kosior paused to ask if the board had any additional comments, questions, or concerns before proceeding with the vote. Ms. Amanda Fargo-Johnson requested that the consultants re-verbalize the caps for three specific items related to evaluation, Evaluation Administrator (EA), and DEI. Ms. Sherwood responded by providing the following figures: $5 million for evaluation (2025), $531,000 for the Evaluation Administrator(2025), and $500,000 for the DEI consultant (3-year) , consistent with a previous e-vote from last month.

Mr. Jayson Velazquez asked for clarity on the procedural steps that would follow depending on whether the Plan under consideration was approved or not. He emphasized the need to outline the potential paths clearly so that everyone in the room, including the board, would understand what would happen regardless of the decision made today. He framed his question in two parts: what would happen if the plan were approved and what would happen if it were not approved.

Mr. Sherwood explained that if the plan were approved, the Companies would adopt the conditions set forth by the Board, which they had previously agreed upon, and they would incorporate these conditions into the November 1st filing. She mentioned that this filing would still be open for public comment and noted that DEEP was hosting a technical meeting on November 21st, which would start at 10 AM, though the final notice for this meeting had yet to be officially issued. She clarified that although notices had been sent out, the final issuance had not yet occurred.

Continuing, Mr. Sherwood stated that the public could still submit comments on the plan once it was filed on November 1st, or even beforehand, though he urged caution as changes might still occur between the draft circulated the previous week and the final filing. She then described the next steps following DEEP’s review, explaining that, based on past practices, DEEP typically makes a determination on the budget in December so that programs can continue into the next year. She also mentioned that a formal determination providing the conditions for approval would be released in the new year, setting requirements for both the companies and external parties, such as the EEB and technical consultants. She specifically referenced a delay in the equity metric as one of the issues addressed in the conditions released in June and highlighted the importance of meeting such requirements as part of the approval process.

Shifting to what would happen if the plan was not approved, Ms. Sherwood pointed out the statutory requirements for the November 1st filing, which Companies were obligated to meet. She recalled a similar situation earlier in the year, around the March 1st filing, when discussions were ongoing, and DEEP or the Companies had requested an extension, eventually delaying the March filing to mid-March. She suggested that if the plan were not approved today, the companies could request an extension for the November 1st filing or proceed with filing without the Board’s approval, incorporating any additional comments or recommendations received. However, he noted that the statute itself requires Board approval but does not explicitly outline what happens if the plan is not approved. At this point, Mr. Steve Bruno interjected, stating that while the Companies could technically file the plan on November 1st without Board approval, that was not their desired course of action.

Ms. Melissa Kops sought clarification regarding the budget levels for each of the residential programs, specifically noting the increase in funding from the previous year, 2024, but questioned how vendor budgets would be impacted by the new budget allocations. Mr. Sherwood responded by explaining that on the electric side, the HES and HES-IE budgets were indeed higher than the 2024 funding levels. She mentioned that Ms. Michelle Long, speaking on behalf of the HES and HES-IE Contractors Coalition, had commented that the 2025-2027 plan was lower in terms of spending compared to the 2022-2024 cycle. She elaborated that during 2022 and 2023, there had been significant overspending on the HES and HES-IE programs, with funds being diverted from the C&I sector to cover the shortfall. She explained that much discussion had taken place over the past year to prevent this overspending from recurring. While he did not have the specific details on hand, he noted that other programs in the residential portfolio, such as retail products, had seen budget reductions to allow for increased funding for HES and HES-IE.

Mr. Kosior and Mr. Pelletier took the opportunity to express his appreciation for the efforts that had gone into developing the plan. They acknowledged the contributions of the companies, consultants, board members, DEEP, and members of the public, recognizing their hard work in getting the plan to its current state. Mr. Kosior emphasized that this point in the process should not be viewed as the conclusion but rather as an opportunity to continue discussions on critical issues shaping the program.

Mr. James Williamson noted that Ms. Anne Marie Knight had provided written direction for Ms. Kathy Fay to serve as the proxy for her vote, under the condition that the technical consultants recommendations were approved. Ms. Kathy Fay asked if the motion included approval of the PSD. Ms. Sherwood explained that the vote is on the 2025-2027 C&LM Plan text, the budget and savings table, and the PSD.

Mr. Anthony Kosior reiterated that the motion to be voted on was to approve the 2025-2027 C&LM Plan text, the budget and savings table, and the 2025 PSD—with the conditional of approval that the technical consultants have outlined in slides 8-20. The motion was approved 9-1, with Mr. Jayson Velazquez voting against and DEEP abstaining.

**Adjourn EEB Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51pm.

**Action Items**

**Announcement of Special DEI Session in December**

* Update Secretary of State Calendar and circulated formal notice via the email subscription lists.

**2024 Budget Update and Special Offers for Gas Programs – Companies**

* PMI costs were currently grouped with other expenses under the administration and planning line item and it was requested that these be separated out in future presentations.
* future events to be clearly advertised as Energize CT events, rather than being perceived as company-specific events

**2025-2027 Plan Overview – Companies**

* Determine potential strategies of tracking program performance in geographic areas where the mobile unit had been exhibited (incorporate into the optimization plan).
* the Companies to wait until the RFP came back for Board approval, suggesting that the Companies could hold off moving forward until pricing was clearer

**Review of 2025-2027 Plan and Recommendations – Technical Consultants**

* the mobile exhibit conditional approval should be documented for clarity
* For PMIs - develop a standardize approach across years to assure that progress was being made.