



COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee

Date: December 3, 2015

Agenda Item #: 6

Agenda Item: Recommend actions on presentations from the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force on its Final Report and Minority Report and from Austin Energy on its response to the Final Report.

Vote: It was decided to split the proposal into three separate items that are to be taken up immediately following the consent agenda of the December 10 City Council meeting.

Sponsors/Department: Mayor Pro Tem Tovo

Summary of Discussion:

Presentations were made by Carol Biedrzycki, Chair of the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force, regarding the recommendations contained in the Final Report; by Michael Wong and Chris Strand regarding the Minority Report; and Debbie Kimberly with staff's response to the Final Report.

Discussion among the Council Members and presenters focused on the recommendations that were agreed on by the Task Force and staff, differences of opinion between the Final Report and the Minority Report regarding the efficiency of some recommendations, and an overview of the effectiveness of current programs.

Public Comments:

Paul Robbins stated he has issues with some of the recommendations of the Task Force, including environmental concerns. Heather Ball stated that renters need to be a priority in low income programs and that door-to-door energy efficiency programs would be effective. Tim Arndt, Vice Chair of the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force, stated that these recommendations address affordability, equity and efficiency concerns.

Direction: The Committee recommended the proposals as separate items for approval by City Council.

Recommendation: A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Tovo and seconded by Council Member Zimmerman to recommend an item to Council to direct the City Manager to report back to the City Council with a proposed schedule, plan, and budget for implementing the recommendations of the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force with which the electric utility and the drafters of the Minority Report concur per the November 10, 2015, memo titled

“Response to Low Income Advisory Task Force Recommendations.” The motion passed on an 8-0 vote, with Mayor Adler, Vice Chair Pool, and Council Member Troxclair off the dais.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Tovo and seconded by Council Member Houston to recommend an item to Council to direct the City Manager to report back to the City Council with a timeline and information about specific actions taken toward achieving recommendations identified as “underway or current practice” in the most recent staff response to the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force recommendations, as well as those planned for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017. The motion passed on a 7-1 vote, with Council Member Zimmerman voting against, and Mayor Adler, Vice Chair Pool, and Council Member Troxclair off the dais.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Tovo and seconded by Council Member Houston to recommend an item to Council to direct the City Manager to ensure that the Electric Utility Commission and the Resource Management Commission are provided an opportunity to review the recommendations of the Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force and the Minority Report, with particular emphasis on those recommendations the electric utility does not support and/or about which there was not consensus among the Task Force members, and to forward any additional comments to the Council. The motion passed on a 7-1 vote, with Council Member Zimmerman voting against, and Mayor Adler, Vice Chair Pool, and Council Member Troxclair off the dais.