



TO: Commissioners Farmer, Brown, Cassidy, Cunningham and Ernst
FROM: Wendi K. Schultz-Kerns, Cash Accounting Supervisor
DATE: December 28, 2009
SUBJECT: Customer Care Programs: Inter-Governmental Agreement No. 12631 Lane County HSC

Issue Statement

EWEB offers a number of programs to help income-eligible customers who are having trouble paying their utility bills. EWEB commits more than \$2 million each year to its limited-income programs, or about 1 percent of retail electric revenues. EWEB contracts with Lane County Human Services Commission (HSC) to administer EWEB's Customer Care Programs.

The current contract with HSC expires on December 31, 2009 and staff is requesting approval of a new three-year Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Lane County Human Services Commission (HSC) for their coordination and execution of programs available to EWEB customers.

Background

EWEB staff best describes our Customer Care Programs in two categories; one is an assistance program, EWEB Customer Care (ECC), and the other is an education program, EWEB Customer Care Plus (ECCP). Both programs are funded annually by the Board approved budget and voluntary public donations.

ECC is an income eligible assistance program which currently offers \$300 assistance once during the Program Year, Oct. 1st through Sept. 30th. Intake appointments are conducted by the HSC and their sub-agents located throughout the community; Saint Vincent DePaul, Catholic Community Services of Springfield, and Celeste Campbell Senior Center. EWEB serves approximately 3500-4500 households annually.

ECCP is an income eligible education program which contains a "menu of services" designed to meet the varied needs of our customers. Intakes are conducted by HSC. EWEB serves up to 1000 households annually. Upon enrollment, customers are assigned a HSC Energy Advocate who works directly with the household throughout the annual enrollment period to help them achieve energy conservation and improved payment behavior. The program offers budget counseling, energy conservation kits and appliances, and educational activities that the customer can complete to receive credit toward their EWEB bills. Each household can receive up to \$350 of incentives during their annual enrollment period.

Discussion

EWEB and HSC contract with one another under Oregon law (190.010) that provides that local governments may enter into a written agreement with another unit (or units) of local government for the performance of any or all functions and activities that a party to the agreement, its officers or agencies, have authority to perform. In the future, EWEB and HSC agree that we can best serve EWEB customers with various community resources by partnering our services through an IGA. The agreement provides EWEB customers access to various social service programs in our area.

These services were previously solicited and HSC was determined to be the best resource for administering EWEB's Customer Care Programs. And during the last several years, EWEB has developed a successful working relationship with HSC. Staff has negotiated a new IGA with HSC to administer EWEB's Customer Care program activities. The IGA will support all expenditures for EWEB's Customer Care programs, including operational costs and administrative overhead, for a three year period, effective January 01, 2010 through December 31, 2012.

Recommendation

Staff requests Board approve the IGA in the amount of \$2.5 million. This amount is sufficient to cover three years of projected program costs. This requested amount does not include the Customer Care funds applied directly to customer accounts.

SIGNATURES:

Project Coordinator: _____

Supervisor: _____

Purchasing Manager: _____

Division Director: _____

General Manager: _____

Board Approval Date: _____

Secretary/Assistant Secretary verification: _____