

**Equity Advisory Group –
Equity Lens Session**

Meeting Date: October 20, 2023
 Time: 7:30am – 9:00am
 Location: Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Facilitator:	EAG Members:
<i>Amber Lenhart</i>	<i>Jean Kindem</i>
Avista:	<i>Karen Boone</i>
<i>Tamara Bradley</i>	<i>Cindy Kimmet</i>
<i>Ana Matthews</i>	<i>Margee Chambers</i>
<i>Amanda Ghering</i>	<i>Brook Beeler</i>
<i>Kelly Dengell</i>	<i>Connie Kliewer</i>
	<i>Tami Dillon</i>
	<i>Vanessa Strange</i>
	<i>Clair Trapp</i>
	<i>KJ January</i>
	Guest: <i>Joshua Dennis (UTC)</i>

Agenda

- I. Welcome & Introductions
 - Overview of Meeting: Rules and Intent
- II. Partner Shares
- III. Named Communities Investment Fund
- IV. Rates 101
- V. Your Support Team and Next Meeting

Facilitator

Amber Lenhart
 Amber Lenhart
 Amber Lenhart
 Ana Matthews
 Amanda Ghering
 Amber Lenhart

Meeting Notes

Welcome & Introductions

Introductions and Meeting Rules and Intent

Partner Shares

- Providence – November 9th – Hiring Fair
- Sunday 22nd, Vote for Survival Fest, Downtown Library 12 – 9, resource fair.
Lots of activities including music, face painting, etc.
- SRCAA – Change out incentive has started – get old wood stoves out of homes.
Not income based.

Named Communities Investment Fund

- Ana provided an overview and a refresher on NCIF
- Ana went through the 5 EE buckets of NCIF
 - Community Identified Projects
 - Multifamily Building Split Incentive
 - Health & Safety for Manufactured & Mobile Homes
 - Named Community Single Family Weatherization
 - Community & Small Business Energy Efficiency
- Ana explained the online grant application process

EAG Energy Efficiency NCIF Prioritization

Rank	Initiatives
1	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency (and EE awareness/education) for schools, community centers, and other places where Named Communities spend time
1	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency for Spokane Tribe partners
2	Improve energy efficiency in multi-family and mobile home communities
3	Increase tree canopy and shade in Named Communities (consider tradeoffs with solar)
3	Increase access to energy efficient products and appliances for Named Communities
4	Increase awareness of and engagement in energy efficiency programs while also meeting whole-house needs through community-based partnerships and referrals to services
5	Set aside funds to match for energy efficiency grant applications for community organizations and tribal partners (could have higher feasibility)
6	Focus efforts on improving energy efficiency for community members without stable housing (consider including with other initiatives)

- Ana explained the efforts with the MLK community center (1)
 - \$57k for EE improvements out of the NCIF
- \$116k renovations for the Stevens County Food Pantry (1)
 - Insulation, windows, lighting, ductwork, preparation of ceilings and walls
 - USDA grant with loan
 - NCIF will cover the ductwork @ \$47,055
- Went through the various initiatives with Spokane Tribe (1)
- Ana explained the renovation of SNAP's affordable housing complex – Pine Villa (2)
 - \$450k for EE improvements from NCIF
 - SNAP is interested in converting heating and water to electric

- Also addressed the other #2 priority – improving EE in multi-family and mobile home communities. Replacement of packaged thermal air conditions in affordable housing complex in Spokane County.
 - \$250k NCIF with incentive for proper recycling of the replaced units
- Another project underway is for Aero-seal duct sealing for manufactured/mobile homes in Stevens, Ferry, and Pen Oreille counties. (2)
 - 1 year demonstration project with start-up small business. Being offered for free.
 - Estimate of 20 homes a year
- Tree Canopy (3). Currently figuring out the opportunity/potential to address this EAG prioritized project.
- Furnace filter program address #4 on EAG project list. Ana explained Avista’s program around furnace filter.

Rates 101

Avista’s Regulatory Structure

- ✓ Regulated Utility
- ✓ Investor-Owned Utility (IOU)
- Different regulation than other forms of electric utilities

Investor-Owned Utilities vs. Public Utilities Districts		IOU	PUD
shareholders invest money in the utility to provide safe, reliable energy for customers	✓	●	
state regulatory commissions approve or set rates they believe are reasonable and fair	✓	●	
invests in technology that drives economic growth and strengthens communities	✓	●	



- Amanda explained the difference between IOU utilities vs PUD’s
- Went through how we give money back to shareholders and invest in capital projects
- Tamara to send out rates video to the EAG.

How Are Rates Set

How rates are set

Avista is a regulated utility. That term, “regulated utility,” is important because it means that regulators set or approve our rates. It’s common to think we can raise our rates whenever we want, but in fact, the opposite is true. Avista’s rates can only be changed with approval from state public utility commissions. Here’s how the process works:



[Avista 101: Rates - YouTube](#)

[WAPBR Metrics](#)



- Avista must ensure our business practices are in line with 3 different states.
- Regulators set rates and only can be changed with state commission approval.
 - Avista files a rate request
 - Commission reviews request
 - Commission sets or approves rates
 - Can be a lengthy process – 9 to 11 months during the “discovery phase.”
 - Rates must be reasonable and affordable for customers
 - Multi year rate cases are now allowed vs. annually. Performance metrics are provided. 92 PBR metrics in the WA 2022 rate case.
 - Displayed PBR metrics on website – available for all customers.

What Rates Cover



- Describe what it takes to deliver safe and reliable energy.
- Costs of the energy market is a major driver of rates
- Session ended due to time, and Amanda will join the November EAG meeting to finish her presentation and answer questions

Wrap Up

Reminder of upcoming meeting on November 17th at 7:30 am.
Dismissed.