

# Energy Efficiency Advisory Group Meeting

## May 6, 2025

### Present

Christian Douglass – Northwest Power & Conservation Council (Virtual)  
Connie Aschenbrenner – Idaho Power  
Derek Goldman – Northwest Energy Coalition  
Don Strickler – J.R. Simplot Company  
Emily Her – Office of Energy and Mineral Resources  
Jason Talford – Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Katie O’Neil – City of Boise Public Works (Representing Steve Hubble)  
Ken Robinette – South Central Community Action Partnership  
Matt Fuxon – Charlies Produce  
Quentin Nesbitt – Idaho Power  
Sidney Erwin – Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association (Virtual)

### Not Present

Steve Hubble – City of Boise-Public Works

### Guest & Presenters\*

Ali Ward\* – Boise School District  
Andee Morton – Idaho Power  
Anita Keil\* – ESI Construction  
Becky Arte Howell – Idaho Power  
Billie McWinn\* – Idaho Power  
Chellie Jensen\* – Idaho Power  
Cheryl Paoli – Idaho Power  
Chris Pollow – Idaho Power  
Landon Barber – Idaho Power  
Laura Conilogue – Idaho Public Utilities Commission  
Matt Scheel – Idaho Power

Michael Cooper – South Central Community Action Partnership  
Michelle Toney – Idaho Power  
Mindi Shodeen – Idaho Power  
Nathan Black – Idaho Power  
Riley Maloney – Idaho Power  
Ryan Trail\* – St Lukes  
Shelley Martin – Idaho Power  
Sheree Willhite – Idaho Power  
Sophie Croome – Idaho Power  
Stephanie Wicks – St Lukes  
Todd Greenwell – Idaho Power  
Tonja Dyke – Idaho Power

### Note Takers

Michelle Toney

### Meeting Facilitator

Quentin Nesbitt

## 9:33 A.M. Welcome & Announcements—Quentin Nesbitt

Quentin started the meeting with safety and introductions. He mentioned the company filed its annual prudence review with the Idaho Commission on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

## 9:40 A.M. 2025 YTD Financials & Savings—Quentin Nesbitt

Quentin presented the company's YTD financials, savings, and impact and process evaluation plans.

### Discussion

One member asked about the total savings for the first quarter and how they compare to future projections. Quentin answered that energy efficiency savings are lower than expected but more projects are expected towards the end of the year, and most will be Commercial & Industrial (C&I) Custom projects.

Another member asked about the most common measures for C&I New Construction (NC). Chellie advised those measures are lighting, controls, HVAC, and building shell measures.

One member asked about what "Other" evaluations meant for the Flex Peak evaluation plan. Quentin answered that the "Other" (box checked for the Flex Peak evaluations) is an impact evaluation that the company does internally every year.

Another member asked if a third-party does the impact and process evaluations. Quentin answered typically yes, and the company uses the "Other" category for internal evaluations or for other evaluations that are not categorized as full impact or process evaluations.

## 9:50 A.M. – Residential Programs—Billie McWinn

Billie presented the Residential Programs savings and participation. She then provided updates on the Bring Your Own Thermostat (BYOT) offering, Home Energy Report (HER) evaluation, and marketing.

### Discussion

#### Annual Savings by Program

One member asked about the number of projects in the pipeline for the Multifamily Program. Chellie answered that there are twenty-two pre applications, and four projects paid to date.

### Program Participation

One member commented on the Weatherization Assistance for Qualified Customers (WAQC) participation, noting the lag in the first quarter. The member stated the Community Action Partnership (CAP) Agencies must pivot because the contracts with Department of Energy (DOE) are not signed due to the DOE being, for the most part, shut down, and without DOE funding it will be hard to leverage. The member then added there are only thirty-five project officers to cover the entire United States.

Billie thanked the member for the information and said the company will also continue to monitor this issue.

Another member asked about why HER savings are up, but participation is down. Billie reminded everyone that the reported savings are preliminary, and approximately 8% per year is due to expected attrition. She added that some savings can continue at a reduced amount for those homes that no longer receive reports, and inclement weather can affect the potential for savings per household. Billie concluded that these are some of the reasons you could achieve a savings increase year-over-year, even with fewer people receiving reports.

One member asked about the Easy Savings Program. Billie explained that it is a low-income education program, which originally distributed energy efficiency kits to low-income customers, but is now providing HVAC tune-up coupons. She added the CAP Agencies provide the coupons and when the customer redeems them, a licensed contractor tunes up the HVAC, and then provides education on the home's energy use and how to maintain the HVAC system.

One member asked about the frequency customers can receive a tune-up. Billie answered that the customer can receive one every year, which ensures the system continues to operate properly. Another member reminded everyone that the coupons are for low-income qualified customers with electric heat.

### A/C Cool Credit and BYOT Update

One member asked about the season start date. Billie responded that the Demand Response (DR) season starts June 15<sup>th</sup>, but BYOT will not be available at that time. Quentin added the program might be available mid-season.

Another member asked about the attrition of the switch program and if the company will be keeping it going forward. Billie advised the switch option will still be available and the BYOT will be an additional way to participate.

One member asked about BYOT participants opting out from their phones. Billie answered that customers can opt out from their phone, but to get the incentive they must participate in more than half of the events.

#### HER Evaluation

One member asked about the validated actual saving vs deemed savings. Billie said the groups could be run concurrently but it would be difficult because the savings would have to be validated retroactively. The member then asked if the deemed savings are from actual. Billie answered that the actuals are used as an industry marker. Quentin added that keeping the control group is to help verify the deemed savings.

Another member asked which organization determines the deemed savings. Billie answered that the same evaluator who does this year's impact evaluation will also provide the deemed savings. She added the company ensures evaluators have experience with other utilities utilizing deemed savings. The member asked for clarification about the service areas they have evaluated. Billie replied that the evaluators do have experience with peer utilities in Idaho.

One member asked about how the company accounts for double counting measures. Billie answered that it is not known, but there is a percentage taken off the savings, assuming that some are achieved through the company's energy efficiency programs. The member then asked about the measure life. Billie answered that the savings are one-year measure life.

Another member asked if the company will be working with the same evaluator that creates the deemed savings. Billie responded that once they provide the company with these deliverables, the evaluators contract expires. She added that through the normal Request for Proposal process, the company can choose to engage them in the future.

The member then asked if the impact evaluation measures Click Through Rates or other kind of metrics to see how people are engaging with the emails. Billie advised that is not part of the evaluation. The member commented that it would be an interesting metric.

Another member asked about opting in. Billie responded that it is not possible with the control/treatment group method. Quentin added that the deemed savings model being considered would allow more customers to be eligible to receive the reports.

## **10:25 A.M. – Commercial, Industrial, & Irrigation Programs—Chellie Jensen**

Chellie presented the overall and individual CI&I program performance, DR preseason enrollment, Small Business Lighting (SBL), a new Whole Building Approach exploration, and C&I trainings planned for 2025.

## **Discussion**

### C&I Flex Peak

One member asked if there was a cutoff date and is it possible for customers to enroll anytime. Chellie responded that customers could enroll during the season, but the incentive would be prorated. Quentin added the company works diligently to have customers enrolled by the start of the season, June 15<sup>th</sup>.

### Irrigation Peak

One member asked about the crops that might prevent enrollment, such as potatoes. Chellie answered that some crops, like potatoes, can be more challenging due to water needs while some, like grain crops, are more flexible.

The member then asked about the regional concentration. Chellie responded that the number of pumps are approximately equal across the groups. She added that there are five groups: Group A is Eastern, Group B is Southern, and Group C is capital and western region combined but there is also a Group D which is the extended hour and Group E, the early hour option, both are across all regions. Quentin added that the kW reductions per pump are larger in the Southern and Eastern Idaho due to deep well pumping causing larger horsepower pumps.

Another member asked about the farms purchased by larger entities and why they do not participate. Chellie answered it is due to labor, as they need someone to go out and make sure those pumps came back on. Quentin added the incentive is not enough to cover the labor cost for someone to check on those pumps that late at night.

### SBL Program

One member asked about the percentage of the overall savings in the SBL offering. Shelley answered that the savings averages around 2,300 kWh and 4,000 kWh per project (it varies per customer) and is a small percentage of the overall savings in the CI&I portfolio. She added there have been 12 projects paid this year.

Another member asked if the Return on Investment (ROI) is tracked for the customer. Chellie said there is a robust lighting tool for each project that shows the ROI as a simple payback, the cost of waiting, the kwh savings, and the incentives.

The member then asked if the carbon emissions are noted on the tool. Chellie answered no, but the information is available, if customers ask.

The member then commented that even though the SBL offering isn't necessarily free, the incentive checks are important and to be celebrated, but above that, the tool can estimate the monthly savings on customers' bills. The member added that in general, customers tend to forget how much they are saving every month.

Shelley added that from conversations with contractors and energy advisors, most customers on the eligible list for SBL already have upgraded to LED. Chellie also added that the company scrutinizes the list to make sure there has not been a significant amount of lighting incentive for that customer in the past.

The member then asked if a customer could get incentives for installing controls. Shelley answered that the focus for SBL has been on replacing fluorescent lighting with LEDs. The contractors are asked to look for control opportunities when they come upon customers that already have LEDs.

#### Custom Program

One member commented on custom projects, saying in their experience, to calculate the savings, often the company measures the real savings.

Chellie confirmed that there are robust calculations on the front end of the project prior to pre-approval so the customer can be confident of what incentive to expect. She added that depending on the size and complexity of the project, there is data to perform a measurement and verification analysis with a third party, post project and prior to paying the incentive. Chellie continued that the scope of the project is verified as well as confirming all energy measures were installed. She concluded that this often ends up being a commissioning effort where the team finds the project has additional work to do prior to completion that would positively impact their savings.

#### Multifamily Whole Building Approach – Asking for Feedback

One member asked about the length of time that a multifamily project would take to design. Sheree responded that it takes 1-2 years depending on the size of the project. The member then asked if the Whole Building Approach will be available to HUD and Idaho Housing and if there is an analysis for market value versus tax subsidized. Sheree answered that it isn't known how many are at market value in the company's service area, however, the existing multifamily offering and the potential whole building approach would be available to any multifamily building that meets the criteria. She added that the company can research whether it makes sense to connect with Idaho Housing.

Another member asked about the analysis, inquiring if it was a proprietary model. Chellie answered the analysis is done by a third-party evaluator, and it is a proprietary model, but based on DOE-2 framework, a widely used and accepted building energy modeling software.

The member then asked about the savings and how those are determined. Chellie replied that the model uses the energy code as the baseline and then the energy efficiency bundles that are presented by the implementer then the design team selections are input into the model. The member asked about the feedback to improve the model. Chellie said the company will research this to see if there could be improvements to the model.

One member asked about the different kinds of multifamily projects, if those are New Construction or Retrofits and why is the documentation needed to verify. Chellie answered that those projects are New Construction. Sheree stated the documentation is to confirm the installation of the equipment.

One member stated that since the savings are from the model, it would be good to verify those savings for the Commercial New Construction Program and not just use model estimates. Chellie thanked the member for the comment and added the company would take this under consideration.

Another member said that they like the Whole Building Approach because of the options and the company getting involved early in the pre-design phase, which is ideal. Chellie agreed and added the company always encourages early engagement.

One member commented that with any new construction project, there already is engagement with the company for design and electrical service. The member asked why this does not trigger a conversation about energy efficiency. Chellie replied that new construction projects sometimes begin with the business development team and energy advisors who loop in the energy efficiency department. Quentin added that it is often too late because by the time they request new construction electrical service with the design team, the architect and engineering project design is already done.

Another member said, as for the perspective of the city, they have a voluntary Green Code which could plug the program at the permitting level. Chellie thanked the member and will follow up.

One member asked about the baseline code the model is based off, but not off the city's Green Code. Chellie answered that the builders often build to the minimum energy code adopted by the State. She added that the company is trying to educate engineers, architects, and contractors about energy efficiency, programs, and incentives offered to help cover the additional costs of building beyond code.

Another member added that most architects and engineers are not all local and that makes it even more challenging to educate them. Chellie agreed. The member then asked about the successes with this approach in other service areas. Sheree replied that this approach is used across the US and the NW region is moving in the direction of a Whole Building Approach. She added that Snohomish County PUD has had a Whole Building Approach since 2021, Seattle City

Light rolled out their program in 2025 and are going to close their prescriptive program, while Xcel Energy is offering both.

One member supports the company's plans but commented that it would be good to research the cost effectiveness of switching the programs from Prescriptive to a Whole Building Approach and would like the company to consider an evaluation.

Another member likes this whole building approach noting that it will be helpful getting input about energy efficiency measure options up front before the design phase and seeing the whole picture with a modeled building instead of piece by piece with the typical prescriptive measures.

### Trainings

One member commented on how valuable these offerings are to the customer and added that these trainings are free.

## **11:15 P.M. – Break**

## **11:39 A.M. – State of the Construction Industry – Anita Keil, ESI**

Chellie introduced Anita Keil, Preconstruction Director with ESI. Anita introduced ESI and presented a brief history of the company and the construction market overview. She discussed the strengths and challenges of the market, case studies, City of Boise permits, and potential impacts from tariffs.

### **Discussion**

#### Energy Efficient Design Case Study #1

One member asked about the agile elevator. Anita responded that it is a destination dispatch system that is responsive by communicating on the control side that is a lot more efficient.

#### Mega Project Labor Needs

One member asked about the 4,000 total craft jobs for Micron. Anita answered that Micron is now one project but has contracts with many workers with different disciplines (drywallers to electricians). They need 4000 workers, 32 cranes, and 100 + elevators to complete their projects and the work varies by job on many project sites.

## **12:15 P.M. – Lunch**

### **1:00 P.M. Strategic Energy Management (SEM) – Chellie Jensen, Ali Ward Boise School Dist., and Ryan Trail St Lukes**

Chellie presented the SEM processes and why it is important. She then introduced Ali Ward, Boise School District Sustainability Supervisor and Ryan Trail with St. Lukes who presented their experiences with Idaho Power and their respective organization's participation in the SEM cohorts.

#### **Discussion**

One member asked about becoming a member of the cohort. Chellie answered that the company has recruiting sessions that are offered to all customers that meet the intent of the specific type of cohort. She added that the company's Energy Advisors help the program managers by engaging applicable customers who can commit the time and effort to long term venture.

One member appreciates the presentations and acknowledged the importance to partner with the company. The member then added that many of these businesses who have worked with the company have received the Governor's Award for Leadership in Energy Efficiency.

### **1:59 P.M. Wrap-up/Open Discussion**

Thank you, I have learned a great deal today. I do appreciate being in-person.

I also appreciate the in-person format, thank you.

I appreciate being part of EEAG and having the opportunity to provide feedback on future programs, especially the BYOT program. It is satisfying to see the success of your EE programs.

I enjoyed the topics presented today and have learned a great deal.

Highly informative and exciting. I do have a question about the percentage that the company matches to cohorts and if Ali and Ryan's time would be eligible. Quentin responded that the incentives provided are based on the savings. Chellie added that the incentive is 2.5 cents per kWh saved, up to 100% of eligible costs and eligible incentive costs do include labor and materials and the company also covers 100% of the third-party implementors costs.

Connie and Quentin thanked everyone for their time and participation.

## **2:15 P.M. Meeting Adjourned**