



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Councilors
From: Rich Olson, City Manager
Date: January 24, 2013
Re: Update – Weatherization Program

One of the provisions included in the Mayor's Energy Efficiency Commission recommendations is to have staff report back to the Council once per quarter on the program's progress. Attached, you will find a copy of the recommendation report, which includes a column entitled "Updates - January 28, 2013". Since we have completed the calendar year 2012, I thought it would be beneficial if we provided an update on the work Dennis Gordon has done over the past 12+ months.

In 2012, the City completed 118 energy audits. Since January 1, 2013, 24 additional energy audits have been completed. After the initial walkthrough by Dennis Gordon, he determined that 25 homes were beyond the scope of the weatherization program. The primary reason for such a determination was that the \$4,500, which the City has committed to weatherization on individual homes, would not prove any benefit to the property owner because the home was in such a dilapidated state. Even though weatherizing these structures would not accomplish the goals of the program, that does not mean that the homes are uninhabitable.

To date this fiscal year, 24 homes have been weatherized. The City has not seen the number of applications we anticipated for the program. In an effort to promote the program, a letter was sent to all property owners who had an energy efficiency rating of approximately \$1.50 per square foot. A total of 123 letters were sent. The City received 29 responses and twenty-four energy audits have been scheduled. Upon visual inspection, seven homes were determined to be beyond the scope of the weatherization program. Three homes are waiting to be weatherized.

In addition, the City has partnered with the ECSU Community Development Program to weatherize six homes that are currently under renovation. The weatherization work will be completed this fiscal year on these homes.

Staff is considering a second round of letters for those home owners with an energy efficiency rating above \$1 per square foot. It is disturbing to staff that we do not have a waiting list of homes to be weatherized.

Placing the Energy Efficiency Rating for all dwellings in the City on the website has become a challenge due to the size of the file, and it is not practical for us to do this. Instead, staff has decided to place on the website a query-based solution where a citizen would request the data on

an address online and the information would be sent to them by email. There are a number of dwellings for which we have been unable to secure the square footage information from the County's tax records. However, if a query is received for those dwellings and the customer provides the square footage information to us, we will be able to compute the rating for them. We hope to have this section of the website completed and ready for use by February 1, 2013.

The City is ready to send to the Salvation Army our annual contribution of \$10,000 to assist customers with utility bills. In addition, \$1,918.10 has been donated to supplement this amount by our customers and it will be included in the total contribution. I have not been able to schedule an appointment with representatives of the Salvation Army to discuss the issues brought forward by the Energy Commission with regard to the parameters for providing this assistance.

RCO/vdw

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1. Goal – To develop a public that is knowledgeable of ways and means to reduce their electrical usage.

Sub-Section	Action Steps	Responsibility	Cost/Impact	To be completed	Update 1-24-13
(1)	<p>Develop two rating scales to communicate approximate cost and efficiency of each dwelling unit:</p> <p>a. Using historical electrical usage data for the last three years, place every housing unit in the city on an “Approximate Cost Scale” so that citizens can determine approximate electrical cost associated with each dwelling.</p> <p>b. Develop a Dwelling Efficiency Rating scale that will rate the efficiency of every housing unit in the city based on kWh/sq. ft.</p> <p>c. Put this information on the city’s website.</p>	City Manager	Time	October, 2012	Completed October 2012
(2)	Amend the utility service policies to include the disclosure of the Dwelling Efficiency Rating and the approximate dollar cost for the structure at the time of sign up and add these ratings to the city’s website for full public disclosure.	City Manager	Time	June 30, 2012	Need to address software issues
(3)	Require all persons seeking a third extension on their electric bill within a year to take a seminar on energy efficiency strategies before the third extension is granted.	Customer Service, Energy Officer	Time to develop seminar	June 30, 2012	In Process
(4)	Inspect dwellings of persons requesting a third extension to ensure they have an operational cycle and save switch and consider a blower door test, if their dwelling’s efficiency rating warrants it.	Energy Officer	Time	July 1, 2012	Began on October 1, 2012

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(5)	Develop a comprehensive communications plan that includes but is not limited to: city officials presenting to community groups, use of public television, the city's website, billboards, developing information for teachers to use with students, continuing to offer tips through the bill, and a door-to-door campaign for delivering energy saving kits to dwellings with poor efficiency ratings.	Customer Service Energy Officer City Manager City Council	Time to develop materials needed	August 31, 2012	In Process
(6)	Require citizens receiving city money through the Salvation Army for payment of their utility bills to attend the educational seminar mentioned above before receiving payment.	Customer Service Energy Officer Salvation Army staff	Time	July 1, 2012	Funds to the Salvation Army will be distributed in January 2013. (Seminar in process of development)
(7)	Reformat the electric bill so it is easier to distinguish the electric charges from the other charges on the bill and to draw attention to the city's energy assistance program for the purpose of increasing donations.	Customer Service, City Manager	Time/Software?	January 1, 2013	Will be dependent on software migration
(8)	Develop a plan to expand the usage of load management switches which includes a component that raises public awareness as to the importance of these devices. This plan will determine what if any changes or additions should be made to the City Code or other pertinent procedures.	Load Management Tech, City Manager City Council	\$35,000	September 30, 2012	In Process – An issue has occurred with load management switch
(9)	More aggressively pursue criminal action under state law against contractors or citizens who disconnect load management switches.	City Manager City Council	Time	August 31, 2012	Ongoing

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2. Goal – To modify city codes as needed and to improve the efficiency and capacity of code enforcement

Sub-Section	Action Steps	Responsibility	Cost/Impact	To be completed	Update 9-24-12
(1)	Annually conduct a windshield inspection of all streets within the city to identify code violation, whether building, zoning and/or nuisance and then direct appropriate action to be taken to address the issues discovered. Report findings annually to the City Council	City Manager City Council	Time	September 15, 2012	Update competed for 2012
(2)	Increase the amount of money budgeted to demolish dwellings in the city budget.	City Manager City Council	\$18,000	July 1, 2012	Approved in FY 12-13 budget. This FY, six structures have been condemned/demolished; 15 others have been abated by owners; and 12 others are currently going thru the process of rehab/condemnation.
(3)	Amend the city code to reduce the time a unit can be boarded up from 12 to 6 months. At 6 months aggressively move to demo the boarded up dwellings that are declared unsound or take the owners of boarded up dwellings declared sound to court.	Code enforcement officers, Building Inspections Dept. City Manager City Council	Attorney costs	July 1, 2012	Code amended 7-23-12
(4)	Add an additional code enforcement officer	City Manager City Council	\$9,060	July 1, 2012	Darrell Cross hired as Code Enforcement Officer effective 9-11-12
(5)	Make the amendments to the city code as outlined in Appendix 1 attached to this document.	City Council	Time	September 1, 2012	Refer to Update on Appendix 1
(6)	Modify the City Code to allow staff to utilize “chronic offender” statute (Appendix 1)	City Manager City Council	Time	September 1, 2012	Adopted 7-23-12

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3. Goal – To strengthen the city’s existing rental inspection program

Sub-Section	Action Steps	Responsibility	Cost/Impact	To be completed	Update 9-24-12
(1)	Develop an accurate listing of all rental properties within the city using the tax records.	Building Inspections	Time	September 30, 2012	Completed
(2)	Adopt the revisions to the utility service application procedure found in Appendix 2 so that the city can maintain an accurate listing of all rental property within the city.	City Manager City Council	Time/Software?	September 30, 2012	
(3)	Continue to key rental inspections to utility service applications.	Building Inspections	None	Completed – May 14, 2012	Ongoing
(4)	Develop a renters’ Bill of Rights that will be posted on the city’s website.	Mayor	Time	July 1, 2012	

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1. Goal – To strengthen and expand the city’s current weatherization program

Sub-Section	Action Steps	Responsibility	Cost/Impact	To be completed	Update 9-24-12
(1)	Develop a Dwelling Efficiency Rating scale that will rate the efficiency of every housing unit in the city based on kWh per sq. ft. This scale will be used to determine the prioritization of housing units needing weatherization.	City Manager	Time	May 31, 2012	Complete
(2)	Increase the amount budgeted for weatherization to \$200,000 annually.	City Council	\$100,000	July 1, 2012	Adopted in FY 12-13 Budget
(3)	Expand the weatherization program to include rental dwellings so as to tap into the Federal Weatherization Program dollars.	City Council Energy Officer	Time	July 1, 2012	Federal funds are no longer available for this.
(4)	Utilize the Dwelling Efficiency Rating, average kWh usage and other objective measures to develop a priority list for dwellings needing weatherization.	Energy Officer	None	September 1, 2012	October 1, 2012
(5)	Identify, train if necessary, local contractors who can be used to supplement Martin County Community Action Inc. to weatherize dwellings.	Energy Officer City Manager	Time	September 1, 2012	The City is working with Workforce Development on this.
(6)	Reconstitute the rebate programs the city has offered in the past: \$500 for energy efficient HVAC, attic insulation and supplying hot water heater blankets, where applicable.	Energy Officer	Time \$20,000 furnaces \$5,000 insulation	July 1, 2012	Adopted in FY 12-13 Budget. Heat Pump Rebate Policy Adopted 7-23-12. Program in process.
(7)	Allocate up to \$4,500 per privately	Energy Officer	See above	July 1, 2012	On hold due to federal funding

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	owned dwelling and up to \$1,000 per rental unit to weatherize based upon established criteria and the recommendation of the energy officer.				cut.
(8)	Meet with landlords to make them aware of the Federal Weatherization Program and offer the City's assistance in pursuing these dollars.	City Manager Mayor	Time	August, 30, 2012	On hold due to federal funding cut.
(9)	Identify and recruit community agencies, such as River City CDC and The Northeast Commission who can assist renters and landlords through the Federal Weatherization Program.	City Manager Mayor	Time/Training	August 15, 2012	
(10)	Provide the City Council a report of dwellings weatherized and other significant accomplishments in the area of energy conservation three times per year: January, May, & September.	City Manager	Time	September 2 , 2012	Ongoing

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APPENDIX 1

Code	Section	Action Steps	Timeline	Responsibility	Update
City Code	42-85(1)	Modify to lower weeds/grass height from 18" to 12"	45 days	Police	Adopted 7-23-12 Council ordered aggressive enforcement for 6 mos. from 6-25-12
City Code	42-85(2)	Corner visibility for site triangle from 3 ft. to 2 ft.	45 days	Police	Council chose not to pursue
City Code	50-8	Prohibit recreational vehicles/equipment on streets	45 days	Police	See 42-85(2)
City Code	74-10	Lower vegetation height within site triangle from 3 ft. to 2 ft.	45 days	Police	
City Code	74-11	Modify to prohibit grass clippings from being deposited in street due to their adverse impact on drainage	90 days	Public Works	Adopted 11/26/12
UDO	9.5	Modify section on accessory use to reflect provision that addresses shipping containers and portable storage containers	90 days	Planning	
City Code	46-114(11)	Modify to prohibit parking in the front yard unless it is on an improved surface (concrete, asphalt, gravel, etc.)	45 days	Code Enforcement	Being worked on by Planning Commission
City Code	46-114(12)	All recreational vehicles must be parked behind the front building set	45 days	Planning	Council chose not to pursue
City Code	42-85(10)	Modify the length of time a building may be boarded up from one year to 6 months	45 days	Inspections/Code Enforcement	Adopted 7-23-12
City Code	42-90	Modify the City Code to allow staff to utilize "chronic offender" statute	45 days	Code Enforcement	Adopted 7-23-12

Appendix 2

Residential Utility Service Application

In order to qualify for a **Landlord, Property Owner &/or Agent** residential “utility turn-on” within the City limits, the City will:

1. Develop two rating scales to communicate approximate cost and efficiency of each dwelling unit:
 - a. Using historical electrical usage data for the last three years, place every housing unit in the city on an “approximate cost scale” so that citizens can determine approximate electrical cost associated with each dwelling.
 - b. Develop a dwelling efficiency rating scale that will rate the efficiency of every housing unit in the city based on kWh/sq. ft.
2. An inspection request will automatically be generated by the Business Office anytime an applicant applies for an electrical turn-on request within the City limits, for any dwelling unit that has other residential utility accounts in the same name &/or the applicant is an owner or part owner of another residential property within the city limits, even when the account or property is listed under a different name.
3. The City’s existing utility service agreement application will be modified to include a question asking the applicant whether they own other residential dwelling units within the City limits. If they respond yes, they will be required to list the addresses of said property **OR** required to complete a property disclosure form. The utility account application already has a statement where giving false information will be grounds for refusal of service rendered or disconnection of services.

Exception 1. Inspections Department *may* waive the automatic inspection requirement as listed in **A** above, based on the property &/or the owners previous code compliance history, last inspection date, etc. However the ownership listing of other applicable properties would still apply.

Exception 2. Except for the required inspection, utility accounts for temporary electrical service poles are exempt from the ownership disclosure & time frames listed in **A** above. Said poles are to be utilized for construction related purposes only & does not give anyone permission to occupy the dwelling unit for habitable purposes until approved by the Inspections Department.