

DATE: May 13, 2008

TO: Chair and Members of the Regional Utilities Committee

FROM: Bob Hunzinger, General Manager

SUBJECT: Staff's recommendations for referral #070255

Recommendations:

1. The energy per square foot type rating:

Using this type of performance measure on detached homes would not be very effective. There are many different factors that go into a home's energy intensity; one of the largest being how the occupant uses energy. A home could be very efficient, but if the occupant uses energy wastefully it will appear bad on an energy intensity basis. There may be a benefit, however, in applying it to an apartment complex to get an overall efficiency rating. The aggregated usage throughout the complex will tend to reflect more of the relative performance given the fact that some occupants may use energy wisely and others not so much. Calculating the relative energy intensity of the apartment complexes in Gainesville would be a large undertaking. The data may be able to be mined from SAP, but then it would have to be merged with the square footage data, which would come from the Alachua County Property Appraisers Office or from the apartment complexes directly. It may be possible to partner with UF..

2. Educating customers about HERS:

There is an informative link on the GRU website in the Green Building program section. <http://www.gru.com/YourHome/Conservation/Energy/energyEducation.jsp>

3. Offering rebates to encourage people to get a HERS rating:

In 2006, 441 houses were certified Energy Star in Gainesville. Each of these homes received a HERS rating. If GRU were to give a rebate similar to the \$300 rebate for Affordable Energy Star Homes it would result in \$132,300 needing to be budgeted just for "free riders". Staff recommends not rebating for HERS at this time.

4. How does the HERS rating differ from the energy audit GRU currently provides?

The HERS rating is a very detailed, and somewhat costly, performance analysis of a home. It involves using specialized equipment to depressurize the house and measure the relative leakage to the outside. The standard residential audit is a brief walk-through addressing areas of need such as HVAC servicing, insulation levels, water leaks, A/C Heat and water temperature settings, and general energy and water efficiency education for the customer. At the conclusion of a GRU Efficiency Survey the customer receives a list of recommendations to improve their efficiency and lower their utility bills.