

RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: MAY 4, 2019

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

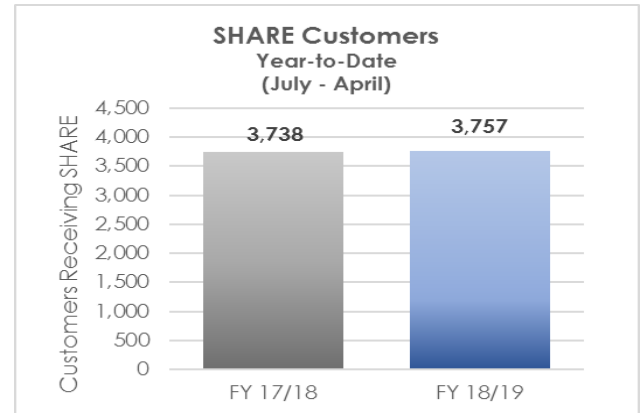
ITEM NO:

General Manager's report on SHARE program participation July through April 2019

Concurrent with the adoption of the rate plan earlier this year, the City also approved enhancements to the SHARE program as well as increasing the amount budgeted for the program from about \$1.7 million per year in FY 17/18 to \$2.8 million for FY 18/19. The SHARE program provides financial assistance to qualified low-income customers.

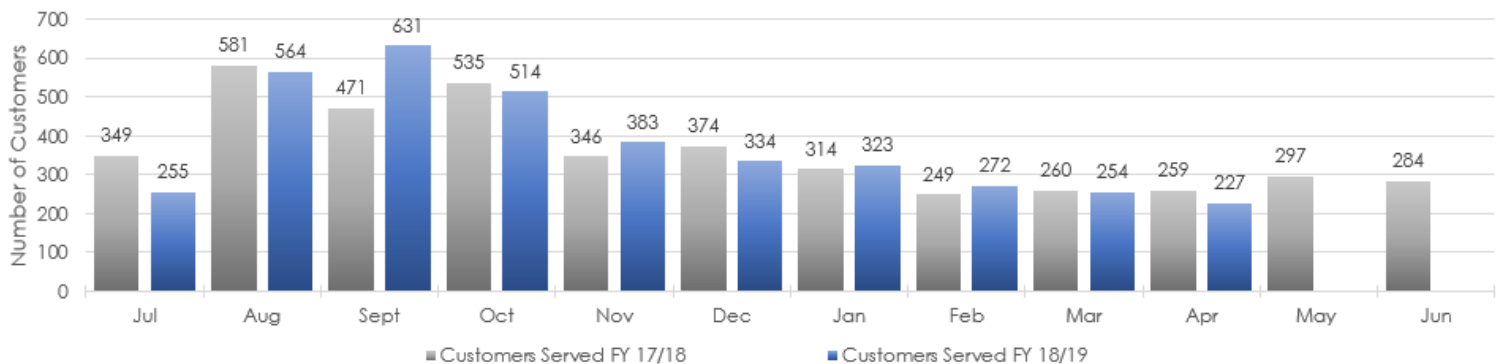
Enhancements for this fiscal-year included changing the income eligibility for customers from 150% of the Federal Poverty Level to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, which will allow more customers to qualify. This now allows RPU's program to align eligibility with State and Federal agency assistance programs with the same income eligibility such as the CalFresh or National School Free Lunch Programs. Customers are now able to demonstrate eligibility by providing documentation of current program assistance with an eligibility letter from these programs.

The SHARE program currently offers two monthly on-bill rebates for customers. Qualified customers can receive \$14 per month from their electric bill and \$2.25 from their water bill. The SHARE program maintained the once-annual \$150 assistance to customers but has limited it to either deposit assistance or emergency assistance for customers that have receive a disconnection notice but are unable to pay. In prior years, customers did not need to demonstrate an emergency to receive the once-annual assistance.



Over the first ten months, through April 2019, the total number of customers that have received SHARE assistance on their utility bill is 3,757. This represents a year-over-year increase of 1% when compared to 3,738 customers served between July and April 2018. Participation continues to trend similar to prior years.

Customers Receiving SHARE Assistance by Month



Note: The number of customers served in FY 17/18 in February through June have been updated to reflect actual data. Prior month's data were estimates based on previous years.

Customer Engagement conducted four outreach events during the month of April:

Figure 2 Eastside Neighborhood Meeting (4/4/2019)



Figure 1: City of Riverside Spring Eggstravaganza



Figure 4: SHARE On-site Application Processing at the Janet Goeske Center (4/17/2019)



Figure 3: Norte Vista High School Padres Unidos Parent Workshop (4/27/2019)

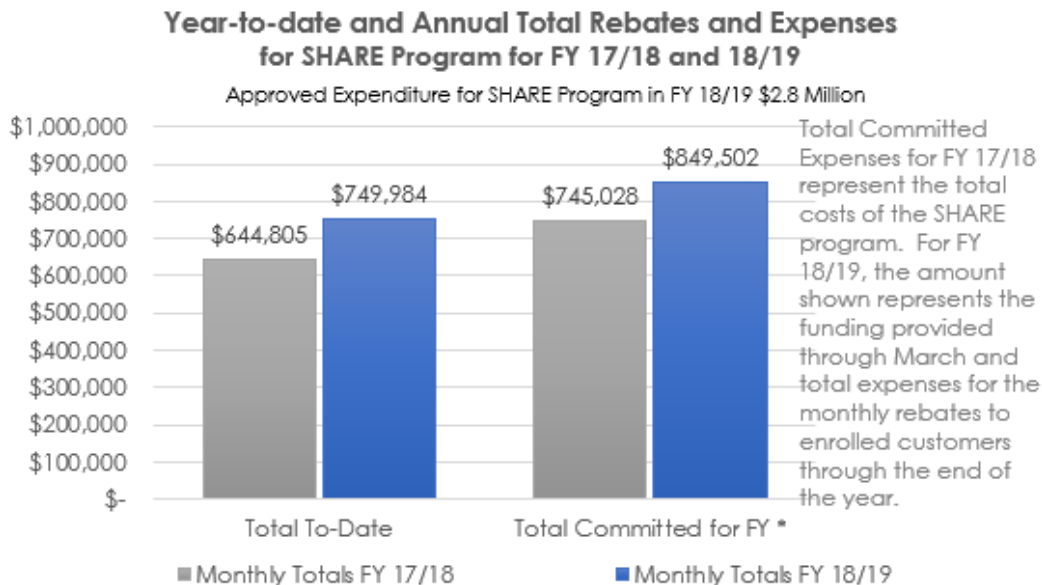


At the outreach events, staff has made contact with over 300 customers, provided information on utility assistance and rebate programs, energy efficiency and water conservation. Customers received brochures, SHARE applications conservation kits, LED 9-watt light bulbs, a water hose nozzle and Go Green reusable shopping bags.

The outreach at the Janet Goeske Senior Center provided the opportunity to intake SHARE applications on-site. Dates are planned in the future to continue and increasing program awareness and participation.

In regards to the funding for the program, the SHARE program continued expenses in FY 18/19 is increasing as expected when compared to FY 17/18 for costs for the same period. As noted in previous months, this was anticipated by staff as the program soft launched and the rebate provided to customers transitioned to fewer receiving the once-annual lump-sum \$150 emergency or deposit assistance and all customers receiving monthly assistance. As customers enroll in the program for the monthly assistance, the costs will increase throughout the year as is now occurring.

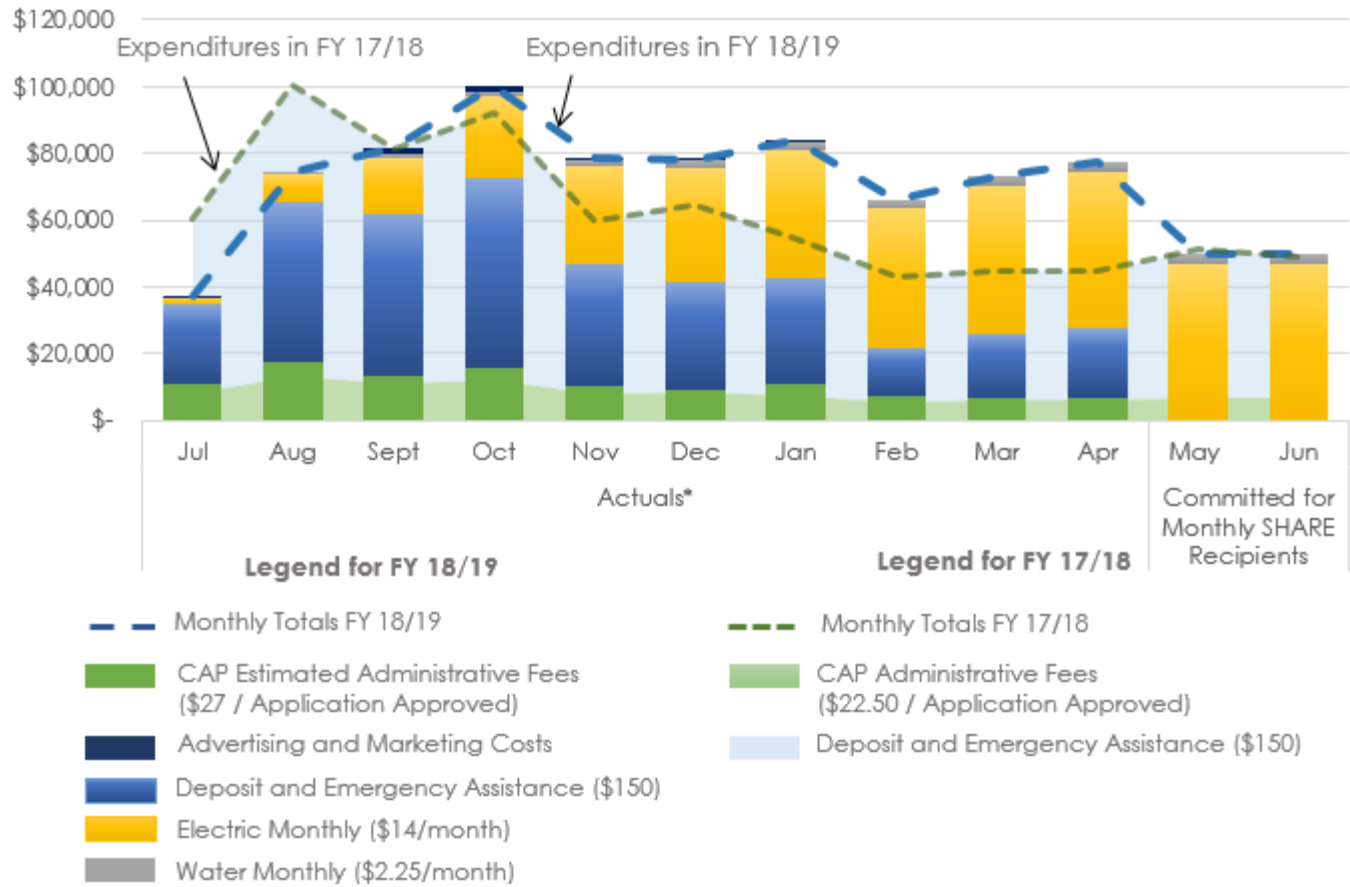
In FY 17/18, the SHARE program cost was \$172.50 per customer, which included the customer rebate of \$150 and the administration cost of \$22.50 for the application processing services provided by the County's CAP. Program costs in FY 18/19 will vary month to month, particularly in this first year of the enhanced program. Until the enhanced SHARE program has been running for a full 12 months, the monthly average per customer will increase as more customers enroll in the monthly rebate programs. Expenses associated with the rebates per customer are spread throughout the year as customer receive their monthly rebates. The amount expended per customer as of the end of April 2019 was \$199.62. The cost per customer for end of the fiscal year is expected to be \$226.11 (the amount includes monthly payments for enrolled customers through the end of the current fiscal year). Additionally, for FY 18/19, costs include the increased CAP administration cost of \$27 per approved application and marketing expenses.



The Energy Savings Assistance Program (ESAP) has increased participation by over 400% when compared to the same period in FY 17/18. Approximately 442 customers have been served between July 2018 and April 2019. The total program budget is \$500,000. As of April 2019 expenditures were \$260,645.30 with a total energy savings of 968,392 kWhs.

The chart on the following page provides detail on the history and current progress of the SHARE program participants, expenditures, overhead costs and program goals. CAP administrative expenses are shown in green with the lighter color representing FY 17/18. In April 2019, there was a 44.1 percent difference in costs between the monthly electric rebate and the flat emergency/deposit assistance (shown as light blue for FY 17/18 and darker blue for FY 18/19). This reflects the monthly payments (shown in yellow) increasing as participation increases throughout the year.

Comparison of FY 17/18 and FY 18/19 (to-date) Expenses Associated with the SHARE Program



* CAP Administrative Fee for FY 18/19 is Estimated based on Approved Applications.