



2009 Meeting Minutes Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Committee

- December 17, 2009
- November 12, 2009
- October 14, 2009
- September 25, 2009
- August 12, 2009
- July 8, 2009
- June 10, 2009
- May 1-2, 2009
- March 11, 2009
- February 11, 2009

**Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)
EITC Issue Committee
Thursday, December 17, 2009 10:30am EST**

Designated Federal Official (DFO)
Ferree, Nancy TAP Program Manager, Plantation, FL

Members Present

Akbar, Sandra
Alvarado, Frank
Birge, Eileen
Cabusora, Haidee
Granger, Jacqueline
Hayes, Herbert
Patterson, Robert
Stepner, Gerald
Tatum, Sue
Villarreal, Josefina
Webber, Erica

Members Absent

Armstrong, Charles

Program Owners

Foley, Barbara
Obrien Mary
Lee, Pat

Staff Present

Fields, Anita, TAP Secretary
Powers, Donna, TAP Analyst



Welcome & Roll Call/Quorum

Eileen Birge opened the meeting and asked Nancy Ferree to introduce herself and her staff. Pat Lee shared that Verlinda Paul will not be attending the meeting today, but she is looking forward to working with this group.

Introduction of Guest

None

Approval of Previous Minutes

The committee agreed by consensus to approve November's minutes during the February teleconference.

EITC Office

Introduction to EITC— Barbara Foley explained different aspects of the EITC Program office. She gave the definition of Due Diligence as it relates to EITC. It is important to give guidance to preparers to have due diligence. She also explained that EITC represents diversity including geographic views on EITC compliance issues, identifies barriers and burdens to Taxpayers and offers solutions.

TAP Committee effects on EITC—

2010 Committee Goals—Lee shared that in her experience, people who engage in EITC will get the bug and become involved in the program. Lee gave a presentation on EITC. Lee shared that the EITC office received the Culley Award Her presentation included:

- **The definition of EITC**—EITC is a refundable tax credit for individuals and families who do not earn a high income.
- **The EITC program**—is one of the largest antipoverty programs: 23.7 million claim \$49.3 billion and lifts millions out of poverty each year. Per the U.S. Census 9/10/2009 release the increase in the poverty rate (13.2 percent) was the highest since 1997.
- **EITC's history**--This year is the 35th year of EITC helping lift individuals and their families out of poverty. Congress enacted EITC in 1975. The intent was to offset the burden of the Social Security tax on low-income workers and provide an incentive for individuals to work.
- **The 2009 Income Limits and Maximum Credit**—Here is how the increase for married couples and for the additional child looks for the 2009-tax year. The annual indexing adjustments are also included in this chart. Last year the difference between a single person and a couple filing a joint return was 3,000; this increased to \$5,000 for 2009 and 2010.
 - \$43,279 (\$48,279 married filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children maximum credit \$5,657
 - \$40,295 (\$45,295 married filing jointly) with two qualifying children maximum credit \$5,028
 - \$35,463 (\$40,463 married filing jointly) with one qualifying child maximum credit \$3,043
 - \$13,440 (\$18,440 married filing jointly) with no qualifying children maximum credit \$457
- **Who can claim the EITC, Qualifying Child Rules**—All individuals claiming the EITC must have a valid Social Security number; not file as "married filing separate"; not file Form 2555 or Form 2555-EZ; meet the investment income limitation; must have earned income or disability income classified as "earned income"; cannot be the qualifying child of another person; and generally, must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien for the entire year.
- **Rules for taxpayers without a qualifying child**— to be a qualifying child for EITC, the child must meet all of the following tests, Relationship, Residency, Age and Joint Return.
- **EITC Program Strategy**—is to increase awareness to the 20 - 25% of eligible EITC recipients that do not claim the credit and to reduce the 1 in 4 EITC claims made in error by improving our products so only those who truly qualify claim the credit.



- **EITC Error**— IRS estimates one in four EITC claims contain some type of error, costing the U.S. Treasury \$11 billion to \$13 billion per year in erroneous payments. The tax preparation community is crucial in stemming these errors.
- **Eligibility**— Determining eligibility can be very difficult: The requirements are truly complex; Much of the needed information is not available on tax returns or reported to IRS by third parties; Supporting documentation (such as school records) is not always available; Final determination may require looking into living situation of taxpayer; Wide variation in American living arrangements makes it especially difficult.
- **Most Common Errors**—are claiming a child that does not meet the age, relationship, residency or joint return requirements; Married taxpayers incorrectly using the single or head of household filing status; Over or under-reporting of income.
- **Strategy to reduce Error-Individuals**—is to conduct Upfront Processing Checks, Audits, Income Reporting by Third Parties, Criminal Investigations and Outreach and Education.
- **Strategy to reduce Error-Return Preparers**—is to conduct Due Diligence Visits, Knock and Talk Visits, Streamlined Injunctions, Criminal Investigations and Outreach and Education.

Lee shared TAP's 2010 Projects Focus is reducing error by improving tools for preparers. The EITC office would like to panel to:

- Develop requirements for a supplemental training module for volunteer tax return preparers.
- Develop recommendations on content for future EITC presentations for educational purposes.

Introductions

The panel members introduced themselves around the room.

2009 Accomplishments

TAP's 2009 Projects, helped increase awareness by improving our partner tools and communication.

- They reviewed IRS's current on-line partner sites and provided input on how to improve.
- They collected feedback and made recommendations about improving communication between the IRS and its partners.

The EITC awareness day is January 29, 2010.

There is a strategy or plan within the IRS to assist people with disabilities to prepare their taxes.

Erica Webber reported on the accomplishments of 2009. She stated the committee was charged with conducting surveys of the EITC partner sites. During the face-to-face meeting, Birge gave a superb presentation of recommendations to improve the work of the EITC partner sites.

Office Report

-Establish Meeting Dates—the monthly meetings will be the 4th Wednesday of each month at 1pm EST.

-Establish Possible F2F Locations—the face-to-face dates are 25-27 April. Birge would like to consider Philadelphia and Baltimore as possible locations.

-Establish Meeting Quorum—Quorum is set as 50% +1.

-Review Program Office—Ferree explained the responsibilities of the program office. She informed that the office is there to support the committee for your needs.

Elections

Jo Villarreal was elected as Chair and Erica Webber as Vice Chair.



Subcommittee Assignment

Volunteer Preparer Training subcommittee consists of, Haidee Cabusora, Jo Villarreal, Gerald Stepner, Robert Patterson, Frank Alvarado and Herbert Hayes.

EITC Presentations subcommittee consists of Jackie Granger, Sue Tatum, Sandra Akbar, Eileen Birge and Erica Webber.

Subcommittee Report-Out

Questions/Comments/Closing/Remarks

The next meeting is a teleconference on January 27, 2010, 1:00pm EST.

***Certification: These minutes were approved by the committee by consensus.**



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
November 12, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EDT)**

Program Owner

- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis, TAP Manager

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen - Chair
- Patterson, Robert
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

- Armstrong, Charles
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Cooper, Dale
- Rodgers, John
- Villarreal, Josefina
- Webber, Erica

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose
- Jenkins, Audrey
- Odom, Meredith

Other Attendees

- Greenbaum, Elaine

Welcome/Self Introductions

Birge welcomed everyone to the meeting, reviewed the agenda and thanked everyone for their participation on EITC this year, hard work, and reaching mandates. Returning members can remain on the same committee if they wish. Webber will represent Birge next week at the joint committee teleconference meeting.

EITC Office Report

Foley asked if anyone is considering changing committees and thanked everyone for their time and efforts.



The EITC Office is continuing to improve the tool kit and will be much better next year. The suggestions that the Partnership Subcommittee submitted will receive a formal response and the committee will kept up to date as to when the changes will be implemented. Jenkins asked that the committee receive a combined report for both subcommittees in one document.

The EITC Office is looking forward to seeing everyone in December. Going forward, the EITC Office took what was learned from committee members and will use those as projects for 2010. There is a possibility there will be a third subcommittee if next year's committee is large. The third subcommittee will be working on a Due Diligence Training module. This will consist of taking some information from members and developing it into a supplemental training module. EITC will also be working on a request from members on an EITC presentation for educational purposes.

Subcommittee Report Out

Website - Patterson

Last month reports were approved to go to EITC office. A summary was provided for inclusion with the Annual Report to the TAP Chair. The subcommittee was empowered due by having two face to face meetings and seeing that some of their suggestions were already in place. Working with Foley was a great idea, she did a great job. Patterson hopes most members are returning and thinks they worked very well as a team.

Partnership - Webber

The Partnership subcommittee final report, that was spearheaded by Birge, was approved to be submitted to the EITC office.

Public Participation

None

Closing Remarks

Birge looks forward to seeing members at the Annual Meeting which begins on December 17th. Patterson mentioned that the committee has fewer members than other committees and said he thinks it is something to explore. Jenkins stated that past EITC Directors have requested less members to keep the committee more manageable.

Morizio stated that a number of factors are considered including the number of people that volunteers for the committee. In addition, the TAP staff tries to match members closely to particular committees based on their backgrounds.

Morizo informed Foley that the meeting room being provided at the annual meeting will have audio visual capabilities.

Morizio thanked everyone for their hard work, members of the committee, EITC program office for providing outstanding support, and his staff for outstanding support all around.

Next meeting will be in Washington, DC – TAP Annual Business Meeting (12/14 – 12/18).



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
October 14, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EDT)**

Program Owner

- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Markman, Robert
- Rodgers, John
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

- Armstrong, Charles
- Cooper, Dale
- Patterson, Robert
- Villarreal, Josefina

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose
- Jenkins, Audrey

Other Attend Public

- Amy Matsui, National Women Law Center – Washington, DC.

Welcome

Birge welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

EITC Office Report

Foley stated that her office is working on implementing suggestions received from the Website for EITC Awareness Day. On the EITC tool kit there is a new phone message for partners.

Subcommittee Report Out- WEB

Vanderver reported in Patterson's absence. The report was based the face to face meeting. Most of the details needed are in the report. An introductory and summary paragraph is needed. Morizio stated that since the report is complete, the full committee should take a vote. If the full committee approves it, it can be sent to the EITC office. Brige stated that the beginning of the report needs a



paragraph similar to the partnership subcommittee that sets the contact. It should state what the issue committee is.

There was consensus to approve the subcommittee report with suggestions.

Partnership Subcommittee

Webber discussed the face to face meeting in September held in New York. A segment of the discussion at the face to face required some input from members:

- Stepner has secured a quote/ description of the ambassador's program
- Villarreal will check the source of the quote from the paid preparer in the text book for correctness.
- Jenkins circulated an email to members on an electronic file of the partnership subcommittee report saved in Word 2003 format.
- Birge will work on the VITA check list of items to discuss with new and returning partners.
- Birge will incorporate revisions to the final report and circulate to the subcommittee.
- Webber will be on time to prepare a brief summary of the subcommittee's work suitable for inclusion in the 2009 Annual Report based on the format of the 2008 report.
- Webber will review report changes at October 28 subcommittee meeting and submit to entire committee for approval at November 12th full committee meeting.

Action Items

As the chair of the EITC committee, Birge will submit to Jenkins a cover memo to attach to the Annual Report for 2008.

Birge stated that at the next meeting, web subcommittee members should start thinking about their contributions to the annual report for 2009

Jenkins will be in contact with Matsui to share partnership information.

Closing Remarks

Morizio and Birge thanked members for attending the meeting.

Next Meeting: The next teleconference has been moved to Thursday, November 12, at 1:00pm due to Veterans Holiday.



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
Friday, September 25-26, 2009
New York Face to Face Meeting**

- Friday, September 25, 2009
- Saturday, September 26, 2009

Friday – September 25, 2009

Program Owner

- Patricia Lee, EITC Program Manager

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis, TAP Program Manager

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen - Chair
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Cooper, Dale
- Patterson, Robert
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Villarreal, Josefina – Vice Chair

Committee Members Absent

- Markman, Robert
- Rodgers, John
- Webber, Erica

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose, Management Assistant
- Jenkins, Audrey, Analyst
- Odom, Meredith, Analyst

Other Attendees

- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office
- O'Brien, Mary, Analyst, EITC Office

Quorum

Met



Welcome/Self Introductions – Eileen Birge

Birge welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Birge informed everyone that most of this face to face meeting will be a working meeting. There will also be a discussion on what will be worked on in 2010 and time for questions and answers.

Program Owner Comment – Patricia Lee

Lee informed members and staff that due to other duties, Verlinda Paul could not attend this face to face meeting. Lee also mentioned that Verlinda stated that because of the progress made at the first face to face meeting in June 2009, it was important to host another face to face meeting.

Program Analyst Presentation (EITC Committee Recommendations and Responses) – Barbara Foley

Foley reviewed a PowerPoint Presentation with members and touched on the following:

- TAP recommended Potential EITC Committee Projects for 2009
- Develop an effective tool kit to make it easier for communities/charitable organizations to increase awareness in EITC Program and improve tax returns.
- Web-Based Tools – IRS place more emphasis on communicating the availability of the sites
- Implement some straightforward suggestions and incorporated remainder of recommendations into WESTAT study.
- Some changes suggested for 2010 will be implemented
- Training / Education- TAP will provide specific recommendations on what to include in the due diligence training module. Beta version of Due Diligence module available on EITC Central, Preparer toolkit.
- Ad-Hoc – TAP recommended specific terminology changes and suggested having all rules into simple yes or no format.
- EITC – incorporate recommendations into newly designed publication 3524.

Multilingual Marketing Campaign – PowerPoint Presentation Mary O’Brien

O’Brien reviewed a PowerPoint presentation and touched on the following. The EITC Office tries to reach the pockets of people who do not take the credit. The EITC Office looked at certain demographics last year that didn’t take the credit. New people were qualified. Last year’s augmentation through radio spots and television advertisements and a marketing firm that sends out material were effective in getting the word out on EITC to targeted areas. There were 57,000 airings on EITC campaign adds.

O’Brien reviewed the following:

- Knowledge of EITC has increased as a result of advertisements
- Those who’ve seen information about EITC are more likely to file
- Communication is reaching the right people
- Lack of knowledge is a barrier to filing for EITC

Program Owner Presentation – Patricia Lee

Lee provided the members with an overview of a PowerPoint presentation on 2009 Tax Year and the EITC Office initiatives and she touched upon the following:

- ARRA expanded EITC for Tax Years 2009 and 2010
- Increased income limits for married couples
- 2009 Income Limits and maximum credit
- 2010 EITC Challenges
 - Economic Environment
 - Census Data
 - Changes to the Tax Law



- Since preparers are responsible for over 70% of EITC returns, we have an opportunity to increase taxpayer compliance by focusing efforts on return preparers
- EITC preparer programs are successful at improving preparer behavior and protecting revenue
- First time paid preparer (FTPP) treatments have the potential to protect revenue as a low cost treatment option for return preparers
- EITC Office is building upon their solid foundation of return preparer treatments
- Future IRS sites will be integrated and applied using risk based data driven decisions
- A preparer's Risk Profile will be the basis for determining the appropriate "Treatment Stream"
- The objective of the FY 2010 FTTPP study is to test alternate treatment streams to determine the effectiveness of letters and phone calls as a compliance treatment
- The FY2010 Integrated Return Preparer Strategy recommendations articulate the EITC Office's goals, direction and solutions focused on return preparers and align with Service wide efforts

Saturday, September 26, 2009

Louis Morizio, DFO officially opened the meeting at 8:00 AM.

Program Owner

- Patricia Lee, EITC Program Manager

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis, TAP Program Manager

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen - Chair
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Cooper, Dale
- Patterson, Robert
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Villarreal, Josefina - Vice Chair

TAP Staff Present

- Babb, Rose, Management Assistant
- Jenkins, Audrey, Analyst

Other Attendees

- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office
- O'Brien, Mary, Analyst, EITC Office

Quorum

Met



Sub-Committee Report Out Web Subcommittee– Patterson

There were minor changes made to the previous report. The sub-committee report found that overall the site was very good. Tax professionals said that they were pleased with the IRS website. Some observations of the website from the sub-committee were:

- On Fact Sheet, dates need to be modified
- On Partner Toolkit under what's new for XXXX (where XXX is respective Year), make the first link a link to the EITC Eligibility Checklist for XXXX year.
- Consider adding information about eitc website on Tax Tips and E-News for Tax Professionals in order to publicize changes and updates and even the existence of the eitc website.

Partnership Subcommittee- Birge

- Birge will incorporate revisions to the final report from discussion at face to face.
- Villarreal will check on the source of quote from paid preparer and geography for correctness.
- Stepner will work on getting a description of the Ambassador's program.
- Jenkins will provide an electronic file of the partner subcommittee report from Word 2003 format to Birge.
- Birge will prepare a brief sum O'Brien of the subcommittee's work for inclusion of the 2009 annual Report.

Annual Report – Eileen Birge

The 2009 Annual Report should come out earlier this year. Suggestions or ideas are being solicited now for 2010. Vanderver stated that emphasis on better education is important and should be emphasized at the grass root level of EITC.

Birge suggested that a social event is being considered as part of the annual meeting in December to welcome new members- details are to be worked out.

Patterson suggested that names and issue committee(s) should be placed on each member's identification card.

Self Assessment (What worked well and not so well)

- Members are able to implement recommendations as they go along
- Everyone listens to suggestions on finding a better way
- Exceptional leader both chair and subcommittee chairs
- Every member participates
- Clear direction on project objectives at annual meeting
- Great staff support including attendance at most meetings.
- Stress setting up separate TAP email addresses at or before annual meeting
- Reminder of next meeting, dates should be on the agenda
- Let staff know when you can't attend meeting
- Better participation on participation from subcommittee members
- Subcommittee members chairs should send out reminders 24 hours before meetings
- Make sure everyone has the code if there are changes (call in number)
- Have subcommittee meetings before main meeting



Closing Remarks

- Morizio told members that he was pleased with progress and their committee's objective.
- Birge thanked members for attending the meeting.

Next Meeting: October 14, 2009 at 1:00pm - EDT via teleconference.



Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
August 12, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EDT)

Program Owner

- Barbara Foley, EITC Program Analyst

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis, TAP Program Manager

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen – Chair
- Cooper, Dale
- Rodgers, John
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

- Armstrong, Charles
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Markman, Robert
- Patterson, Robert
- Stepner, Gerald
- Villarreal, Josefina

TAP Staff

- Jenkins, Audrey TAP Analyst

Other Attendees

None

Quorum

Not met

Office Report - Jenkins

- Please be sure to always copy Meredith Odom on all emails.
- Respond to Jenkins' email as to the amount of surveys submitted to be sure all surveys have been received and accounted for.
- Submit all completed surveys on time
- Each subcommittee has a folder in the reading room under the EITC committee on TapSpace and all responses will be posted there.



EITC Office Report – Foley

- ARRA has refundable credits which is now part of the EITC Office.
- The EITC Office is working on the toolkit, not the partner toolkit. What's new and hot?
- The EITC Office is working on partner side waiting for the committee's ideas.

What is the purpose of the second face to face meeting?

- finalize reports
- make recommendations that relate to EITC relations and effective outreach
- present recommendation to the EITC staff

Subcommittee Report Out

Website Committee- Jenkins

Committee met and all surveys are due to Jenkins by September 1, 2009 for consolidation.

Partnership Subcommittee- Webber

All surveys have been executed and are due August 27, 2009. Jenkins is in the process of consolidating data and will scan all faxed surveys and place them on TapSpace.

Ensure that individuals' travel information is given to Rose Babb so she can make the travel arrangements for the 2nd face to face. The committee will meet on Friday, September 25, 2009 in the IRS building and in the Brooklyn Marriott hotel on the second day, September 26, 2009.



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
July 8, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EDT)**

Program Owner

- Paul, Verlinda, Director, EITC Office (Absent)
- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen, Chair
- Cooper, Dale
- Markman, Robert
- Patterson, Robert
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Webber, Erica
- Patterson, Robert

Committee Members Absent

- Armstrong, Charles
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Rodgers, John
- Villarreal, Josefina, Vice-Chair

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose
- Jenkins, Audrey (Absent)
- Odom, Meredith

Other Attendees

- Jean-Charles, Stephanie

Welcome/Self Introductions

Birge welcomed every one to the meeting.

EITC Office Report

Foley said that EITC office is very busy at their seminar. She apologizes for any inconvenience to TAP internet subcommittee but, they are changing the tool kit to keep them updated. There two seminars that EITC sponsor, it deals with the following:



Basic tips and tools for EITC, Due Diligence for tax preparers, roundtable discussion which sponsors feed back from preparers on what the new due diligence requirements regulations mean. There is a new Due Diligence training module; the data version is being tested.

Subcommittee Report Out – Web

Patterson said that the subcommittee is in the process of getting questionnaires filled out; he plans to speak to people. He will put together something before the next face to face meeting in September.

Subcommittee Report Out-Partnership

Webber said that she contacted a number of EITC Partners including Philadelphia Campaign for Working Families and submitted a survey via email attachment to Jenkins. She also completed the write up for the Washington DC Territory Fairfax Community Connection, and will send an email to EITC Subcommittee members to request a timeline for all completed surveys. Birge has volunteered to prepare a first draft once all EITC Partner Subcommittee Members have completed the research phase of the project. This draft should be ready for the second face to face meeting in September. Stepner sent Jenkins completed surveys via fax. Cooper submitted his EITC Partnership survey to Jenkins.

Vanderver said that he discovered that Social services agencies were not familiar with EITC website Birge asked Foley what is the mechanism that EITC uses to publicize on websites. Morizio said that since people are not familiar with the website, the committee may want to include a comment in the EITC report that this situation exists and provide recommendations to improve this situation.

Second Face to Face meeting

Brige reminded members to contact Babb if there are any changes to their travel profile. They should do so as soon as possible so that travel arrangements can be made for them.

Round Robin

Cooper completed SPEC survey and submitted it today to Jenkins.

Markman has two interviews scheduled for next week; people are reluctant to give him information.

Stepner, due to summer vacations, has not been able to reach his contacts but he is still trying.

Morizio said that he spoke to Armstrong and made him aware of the monthly meetings.

Action Items: Webber will send out an email to the partnership subcommittee to find out when the subcommittee will be finished with the interview process to start working on the report.

Jenkins should consider cancelling the full committee meeting in September due to the face to face preparation.

Odom will follow up with Jenkins to find out if there is an EITC website publication or brochure.

Closing Remarks

Birge thanked members for attending the meeting

Next Meeting: August 12, 2009 at 1:00 PM.



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
June 10, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EDT)**

Program Owner

- Mary O'Brien, EITC Analyst

Designated Federal Official

- Jenkins, Audrey, TAP Analyst

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen – Chair
- Patterson, Robert
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Villarreal, Josefina – Vice Chair
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

- Armstrong, Charles
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Cooper, Dale
- Markman, Robert
- Rodgers, John
- Stepner, Gerald

TAP Staff

- Odom, Meredith, TAP Analyst

Other Attendees

Stephanie Jean-Charles, Center on Budget Policy Priorities

Quorum

Not met

Welcome/Self Introductions

Eileen Birge welcomed all members and public to the call.

EITC Office Report

The EITC office has contacted SPEC and is in the process of identifying the partners that should be reached out to execute the survey.

The EITC Office was impressed with the committee's focus and has offered to fund a second face to face meeting in New York. Birge will send out a few dates.



EITC Social Event

In the past at the Annual meetings there have been organized dinners. This year there is an Annual Meeting Committee formed and is requesting suggestions. Robert Patterson suggests a private room for dinner and mingling. Birge was thinking about something a little less formal.

Subcommittee Report Out-Partnership

Erica Weber – The survey has been slightly revised to accommodate SPEC’s requests for rewording and removing of certain questions. For example, the survey now includes:

- Are there any products the EITC office could provide?
- What do you need?
- What are some of your best practices with outreach to get the EITC client?

Subcommittee Report Out- Website

Patterson - Website is going forward with their survey. Some members have existing relationships with identified partners and have been in contact with them.

Round Robin

Patterson – since Erica lives in the area, she should send out a list of restaurants to choose from at the Annual Meeting.

Josefina Villareal – Please post the revised partner survey on TapSpace

Public Participation

None

Action Item

- Weber will choose some restaurants for the Annual Meeting
- Birge will send out a few dates for the second EITC face to face meeting in New York
- Patterson will send out an email to the Website subcommittee reminding them to go forward with executing their survey
- Audrey Jenkins will post revised Partner Subcommittee Survey to TapSpace
- Jenkins will send out an email of the SPEC contacts once the list has been finalized

Closing Remarks

Birge thanked everyone for their time and closed the meeting at 1:38 pm. EDT.

Next Meeting: July 8, 2009 at 1:00 PM via teleconference



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
Face to Face
Brooklyn, New York
8:00-4:30 pm (EDT)**

- Friday, May 1, 2009
- Saturday, May 2, 2009

Friday, May 1, 2009

Program Owner

- Paul, Verlinda
- Lee, Patricia

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis, TAP Program Manager

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen - Chair
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Cooper, Reuben
- Leggett, John – Vice Chair
- Markman, Robert
- Patterson, Robert
- Rodgers, John
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderveer Stephen
- Villarreal, Josephine
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

None

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose - Management Assistant
- Jenkins, Audrey - Program Analyst
- Odom, Meredith - Program Analyst

Other Attendees

- OBrien, Mary, Analyst EITC Office
- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office

Welcome/Self Introductions

Eileen Birge welcomed everyone to the face to face meeting.



National Office Update – Louis Morizio

TAP has received over 901 applications for the 2009 recruitment period. National Office staff will review and rank them in Washington, DC during the week of May 15, 2009. The applicants who make the ranking cut off score will be contacted for a telephone interview. The interview teams will be comprised of TAP managers, Local Taxpayer Advocates and TAP members.

The National Taxpayer Advocate, Nina had the 3rd and final Town Hall Meeting this week in Albany, NY. It was held at the Albany Law School Low Income Tax Clinic. The turn out was great, there was approximately 58 people in attendance. The two previous Town Hall meetings were in Little Rock AR and Oklahoma City, OK.

The 2008 TAP Annual Report is currently being prepared by Hank Mosler, former TAP Chair.

Two of TAP's inventory system will be moving to SAMSII (Systemic Advocacy Management System II) which is the replacement for the current system SAMS (Systemic Advocacy Management System). We will soon be merging the two different databases to this new system. It is also a good opportunity to stream line the outflow.

EITC Overview

Verlinda Paul informed the committee that she was very enthusiastic to have met volunteers in Arlington, Virginia last December at the TAP annual meeting. The work done by Barbara Foley and Mary O'Brien along with Patricia Lee as one of the leaders over the last few months was very good. The Earned Income Tax Credit will celebrate 35 years of existence this year and Patricia Lee will celebrate her 35th year anniversary this year with the IRS.

The EITC Office can do many things to administer programs but, needs the view from the taxpayers prospective. Volunteers can see different sides of issues, especially with respect to Disabled Taxpayers.

Verlinda Paul's goals this year for marketing is to make sure basic needs are met, since 1 in 4 workers are eligible for EITC. Special thanks to Markman, Vanderver and Webber for their EITC work. Despite Ice storm, Vanderver did a radio show.

Markman while doing VITA research, found married couples with adult children that are disabled become eligible for EITC. He also stated that there are serious cases of disabilities in the process of amending EITC returns. Cooper stated that this is a systematic issue and suggested writing 2 paragraphs on the description of who is a disabled taxpayer and submit to joint committee for comments. Patricia Lee informed the committee that there is a study on the way for qualified disabled children over 24 years old that have exceeded the growth for SSI or dependence on the return which the Office of Management and Budget is also interested in. The study is looking for definition/filters something from a doctor- medical terms, SSI letter, Veteran's Administration, there are lots of options. Patricia Lee is not sure if the IRS Publications have laid out what those definitions are. There are language barriers and under representation as far as the Earned Income Tax Credit is concerned.

There were 116,000 notices issued from NYC that were sent to taxpayers for prefilled 1040X with respect to EITC taxpayers. Those taxpayers who did not respond were denied. Patricia Lee mentioned that an AARP refundable credit reduced income threshold, programs are not new. Taxpayers are confused on what to do. There will be challenges with under withholding health care. Office of Management and Budget will take a look at how credits are administered.

Subcommittee Breakouts

EITC Partners Web Tools

Erica Webber – Chair Dale Cooper



Gerry Stepner Bob Rodgers
Eileen Birge Robert Patterson - Chair
Haidee Cabusora Stephen Vanderver
Josephina Villarreal Robert Markman

Round Robin – Louis Morizio

Robert Markman - learned a lot.

Dale Cooper - face to face meetings are good to have, a lot of work gets done because there is input from everyone.

Rodgers - concurs

Joe Villarreal - last year there was no set agenda on what the roles were. She commends that Brooklyn staff and Birge for direct assignments.

Cabusora – the first day of meeting was real interesting. She suggested that there is a chance to get other people’s thoughts by increasing marketing.

Gerald Stepner - the partnership subcommittee survey only received 10 responses very disappointing.

Stephen Vanderver - being new and busy with taxpayers, was still able to learn a lot.

Erica Webber – this face to face was very informative on how to proceed with the assignment. Face to face contact is good!

Eileen Birge - thanks for the hard work today.

Meeting ended for 5/1 at 5:00pm

Saturday, May 2, 2009

Meeting Opening

Birge welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Roll Call – Quorum met

- Birge, Eileen, Chair
- Cabusora, Haidee
- Cooper, Reuben
- Markman, Robert
- Patterson, Robert
- Rodgers, John
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver Stephen
- Villarreal, Josephine, Vice Chair
- Webber, Erica

Subcommittee Report Out

Web Tools (Robert Patterson) – previously the subcommittee was not clear on what the definition of a user and what the definition of a partner were. Now that has been provided. The subcommittee will execute a survey to evaluate the current systems determine the needs of EITC preparers.



Partnership Subcommittee- (Erica Webber) – the partnership subcommittee executed their survey but received poor results after circulating it to the full TAP. Because of this, the EITC office is going to contact the SPEC organization to get a list of their contacts for the subcommittee to interview.

Round Robin

Eileen Birge - said that if you see something, get it to the escalated staff they can make an appendix for final report

Dale Cooper - some partners may not use the site but said the feed back would be helpful. Will make a list of things he saw that needs improvement.

Robert Patterson – anticipates the Web Tools subcommittee to be complete and have a report by June.

John Rodgers - had his staff go through the EITC links and were pleased with the performance of website.

Robert Markman - had problems with the search engine and that it may have a problem with the IRS website.

Public Participation

None

Meeting Wrap up

Louis Morizio - all items should go through Audrey Jenkins if you see something wrong on the website. Email comments to Meredith Odom to include in Subcommittee report.

Closing Remarks

Eileen Birge thanked everyone for attending and wished everyone a safe trip home.



Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
March 11, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EDT)

Program Owner

- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen, Chair
- Cooper, Reuben
- Markman, Robert
- Patterson, Robert
- Rodgers, John
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderveer Stephen
- Villarreal, Josephine, Vice-Chair
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

- Cabusora, Haidee
- Markman, Robert
- Reuben, Cooper (Dale)

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose - Management Assistant
- Jenkins, Audrey - Program Analyst
- Odom, Meredith - Program Analyst

Other Attendees

- OBrien, Mary, Analyst, EITC Office

Welcome/Self Introductions

Birge welcomed everyone to the meeting.

EITC Office Update

Barbara Foley informed the committee that there are no new changes to EITC office. Forms and publications will be updated with the new changes to reflect that amount of credits for married couples will increase. Federal government will increase income for filing status. Will update to reflect and put on the tool kit with marketing materials.



Subcommittee Report Out:

Website Subcommittee - Jenkins

The committee met and clarified the definition of what is a partner as well as who will be interviewed to gather information to develop criteria to look at the websites. Based on the criteria defined, this will help to launch the website then take it back to the group to see if it meets their standard.

Partnership Subcommittee - Weber

The committee developed the survey questions were discussed changes were made and sent to Jenkins on 3/2. Jenkins posted the survey questions. Morizio said once a subcommittee approves it, their also should be a full committee approval. Currently waiting on full committee to approve survey questions. The main goal is to get everyone on the subcommittee to go to their partner sites and work those survey questions and complete before the deadline.

Morizio informed Rodgers that if he has an affiliation with an organization that prepares EITC returns, he should use those organizations since the link does not include Alaska. The same does apply to members who already has an affiliation with an organization or if they are VITA volunteer.

The Subcommittee discussed survey questions and Jenkins has posted the questions along with this meeting's agenda. Webber also said that they are waiting on the full committee approval. Once the approval is obtained, partners should execute before income tax deadline April 15. Webber made a motion to approve the questionnaire, all were in favor. Jenkins will write an introduction paragraph to explain the survey for Webber's signature to be distributed with the survey. Partnership subcommittee suggested the survey be executed by the full EITC Committee. Patterson disapproved and stated that it would seem as if the Website Subcommittee members would be working in two subcommittees. Committee decided by consensus to approve the Partnership Subcommittee survey to be posted on TapSpace for full voluntary TAP membership input.

Office Report

Morizio - TAP Director approved the face to face meeting for April 30 through May 2. The first full day of the EITC face to face will be May 1st at the IRS Office in Brooklyn- the computer room has been secured for the Website committee. The Saturday session on May 2, will be held at the New York Marriot, at Brooklyn.

Jenkins- when the program owner assigns projects, it is divided into subcommittees. The subcommittees does fact finding and develops a finished product for full committee input and approval.

Jenkins said that she will have subcommittee chairs included in the meetings. Will also make sure everyone is clear on the recommendation process.

Meeting Reminder:

Website subcommittee meets every first Thursday at 1:00 pm eastern, the call in number is 1-866-606-4717, access code 615584.

Partnership subcommittee meets every fourth Thursday at 1:00 pm eastern, the call in number is 1-866-606-4717, access code 2975013.

Subcommittee Chairs will send out courtesy reminders prior to the call.

Closing: Birge thanked everyone for attending the meeting. Next meeting will be the face to face meeting in New York.



**Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
February 11, 2009
Teleconference
1:00 – 2:00 pm (EST)**

Program Owner

- Foley, Barbara, Analyst EITC Office

Designated Federal Official

- Morizio, Louis, TAP Program Manager

Committee Members Present

- Birge, Eileen - Chair
- Cooper, Dale
- Rodgers, John
- Stepner, Gerald
- Vanderver, Stephen
- Villarreal, Josefina
- Webber, Erica

Committee Members Absent

- Cabusora, Haidee
- Leggett, John – Vice Chair
- Markman, Robert
- Patterson, Robert

TAP Staff

- Babb, Rose, Management Assistant
- Jenkins, Audrey, Program Analyst
- Odom, Meredith, Program Analyst

Other Attendees

- O'Brien, Mary , Program Analyst, EITC Office

Welcome/Self Introductions

Birge welcomed everyone to the meeting

Office Report: Face to Face 4/30 – 5/2/09

Morizio - the face to face meeting estimates came out much cheaper to host in New York City. The recommendation will be for the meeting to be held in New York but that recommendation is still subject to final approval by the TAP Director. We can secure meeting space and access to our computer training room. The benefit of having the face to face in the IRS office is that the subcommittee can log on to the web site while developing recommendations. The Friday part of the meeting will be held at our office, but, on Saturday we are looking at securing other space. Getting into federal buildings on the weekends can be costly for security, utilities etc.



Prior to making this recommendation, Morizio spoke to Foley and the EITC office is fine with coming to New York for the meeting.

EITC Committee Update

Dale informed the committee that due to a heavy work schedule he is going to step down as the subcommittee chair. Eileen will send out an email soliciting volunteers for the position. Audrey will email the responsibilities of subcommittee chair to all members.

Subcommittee Report-Out

Jenkins-The Web-site Review Subcommittee met earlier this month; Patterson led the meeting. Subcommittee would like some insight from program office on what specific items on the website they want feedback on it any. The committee needs to determine what they will use as performance measurements.

Foley wants comments on feasibility. As a preparer, one would have a different perspective and the committee should look at it from the user/partner viewpoint to try to get the information they need. The main purpose of the partner tool kit is to help them communicate with EITC awareness.

Some new subcommittee members expressed concern as to the ability to carry out the project because of a lack of partner experience. Dale suggested that each member go on the website and navigate through it to see if they are able to locate information. Then get together as a group and find out what is going to be their testing criteria and summarize their report.

Partnership relationships with EITC committee1

Webber - the subcommittee met on January 22nd. The committee discussed how to approach generating survey questions for EITC partners. Everyone on the committee will generate survey questions that they identified in their state. This will be emailed to Webber by Monday, February 16th. The subcommittee will discuss and review the survey questions on the next subcommittee call on Thursday, February 26th. Since the tax deadline is 4/15, the committee will try to finalize the survey some they can receive the feed before face to face in New York.

EITC Office Update

Foley informed members that there were quite a few events across the nation for EITC Awareness Day. Her Director participated in lots of interviews with the satellite media tour, television stations and a few radio stations, congressional representatives etc.

Susan Gilbert will send a copy of the article on TAS/TAP EITC participation.

Action Item

Partnership Subcommittee

- Survey questions to Webber Feb 16th

Web Subcommittee needs a chair, and is asking for volunteers.

Web Subcommittee

- Look at a process and methodology on how to critique the website, which will be discussed at the next meeting

April Face to Face Meeting

Thursday, April 30th is the travel day and Friday May 1st is the first full day of the meeting. Saturday, May 2nd will be a half-day meeting as well as the travel day home.



Closing remarks:

Partner Subcommittee will meet on the first Tuesday of the month, beginning March 3rd at 2:00pm.

The next full EITC meeting will be Wednesday, March 11th at 1:00 pm EST.