

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR COMMISSION STAFF CONFERENCE

July 24, 2023

The Regular Commission Staff Conference of the North Carolina Utilities Commission was held on Monday, July 24, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., with Chair Mitchell presiding.

The following were present:

COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Brown-Bland
Commissioner Clodfelter
Commissioner Duffley
Commissioner Hughes
Commissioner McKissick
Commissioner Kemerait

COMMISSION STAFF: Mr. Watson, Mr. Green, Ms. Fennell, Ms. Duffy, Ms. Webb-Shackleford, Ms. Hilburn, Mr. Barber, Ms. Forrest; Ms. Winstead; Mr. McCoy

PUBLIC STAFF: Ms. Edmondson, Ms. Luhr, Ms. Coxton, Mr. Bernier; Ms. Boswell, Mr. McLawhorn, Mr. D. Williamson, Mr. Metz, Mr. Michna, Mr. Puglisi, Ms. Darden, Ms. Bhatta

ATTORNEY GENERAL:

COURT REPORTER: Ms. Vines

WATER AND WASTEWATER*ORDER APPROVING TARIFF REVISION***DFHC Corporation, Inc.**

1. Docket No. W-1315 Sub 8 – Application for Authority to Amend Its Tariff to Increase Rates for Water Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Water from the City of Greensboro and Amend Its Tariff to Increase Rates for Wastewater Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Wastewater from the Town of Jamestown (Bhatta/Coxton)

On June 21, 2023, DFHC Corporation, Inc. (DFHC), filed a verified request with the Commission requesting authority to amend its tariff for the purpose of passing along to its metered water and wastewater customers in Gardner Hill Station in Guilford County an increase in the cost of purchasing water service from the City of Greensboro (City) and sewer service from the Town of Jamestown (Town). N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-133.11(a) provides that the Commission shall allow a water or sewer utility to adjust its rates approved pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 62-133 to reflect changes in its costs based solely on changes in the rates imposed by third-party suppliers of purchased water or sewer service.

DFHC stated that, effective July 1, 2023, the City increased its water billing and availability fees charged to DFHC by \$5.72 per month from \$55.80 per month to \$61.52 per month and water usage rate by \$1.18 per 1,000 gallons from \$11.43 per 1,000 gallons (equal to \$8.55 per CCF) to \$12.61 per 1,000 gallons (equal to \$9.43 per CCF). One centum cubic foot (CCF) of water is approximately 748 gallons.

DFHC also stated that effective July 1, 2023, the Town increased its sewer usage rate charged to DFHC by \$1.67 per 1,000 gallons from \$5.68 per 1,000 gallons (equal to \$4.25 per CCF) to \$7.35 per 1,000 gallons (equal to \$5.50 per CCF). DFHC requested to increase the usage charge applicable to these customers for service rendered on or after July 1, 2023, to pass along the increase in the cost of purchasing water from the City and sewer from the Town.

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed the City's and Town's rates and DFHC's request.

The Public Staff recommended that the Commission approve the tariff revision at the proposed rates for bills rendered on and after the date of this order and require customer notice.

It was moved and passed that the Public Staff's recommendation be adopted.

*ORDER APPROVING TARIFF REVISION***Old North State Water Company, Inc.**

2. Docket No. W-1300 Sub 93 – Application for Authority to Amend Its Tariff to Increase Rates for Water Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Water from the Town of Stedman (*Bhatta/Coxton*)

On July 3, 2023, Old North State Water Company, Inc. (ONSWC), filed a verified request with the Commission pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-133.11, requesting authority to amend its tariff for the purpose of passing along to its metered water customers in the Blawell subdivision in Cumberland County an increase in the cost of purchasing water service from the Town of Stedman. N.C.G.S. § 62-133.11(a) provides that the Commission shall allow a water or sewer utility to adjust its rates approved pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 62-133 to reflect changes in its costs based solely on changes in the rates imposed by third-party suppliers of purchased water or sewer service.

ONSWC stated that, effective June 1, 2023, the Town of Stedman increased its usage charge for water service by \$1.00 per 1,000 gallons, increasing the rate from \$4.00 to \$5.00 per 1,000 gallons. ONSWC requested to increase its usage charge to its customers in the Blawell subdivision to pass along this increase in the cost of purchasing water service from the Town of Stedman.

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed the Town of Stedman's rates and the Company's request

The Public Staff recommended that the Commission approve the tariff revision at the proposed rates for service rendered on and after the date of this order and require customer notice.

It was moved and passed that the Public Staff's recommendation be adopted.

*ORDER ESTABLISHING GENERAL RATE CASE AND SUSPENDING RATES***Conleys Creek Limited Partnership, LLC**

3. Docket No. W-1120 Sub 9– Application for Authority to Adjust and Increase Rates for Water and Sewer Utility Service in Smoky Mountain Country Club Subdivision in Swain County, North Carolina

On June 13, 2023, Conleys Creek Limited Partnership (Applicant) filed an application with the Commission seeking authority to increase its rates for providing water and sewer utility services in the Smoky Mountain Country Club subdivision in Swain County, North Carolina. On July 5, 2023, the Applicant filed an Amended Application (the application and amended application are hereinafter collectively referred to as the Application).

The Public Staff recommended that the Application be found to constitute a general rate case and that the proposed new rates should be suspended pending investigation.

It was moved and passed that the Public Staff's recommendation be adopted.

ORDER REQUIRING CUSTOMER NOTICE

Pluris, LLC

4. Docket No. W-1282, Sub 20 – Application of Pluris, LLC for Transfer of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Wastewater Utility Systems Serving Various Subdivisions in Onslow County, North Carolina, to the Onslow Water and Sewer Authority, Owner Exempt (Darden/Bernier)

On June 26, 2023, Pluris, LLC (Pluris) filed an application with the Commission seeking authority to transfer Pluris' wastewater treatment plant and wastewater utility systems in Onslow County to the Onslow Water and Sewer Authority, which is exempt from Commission regulation.

The Public Staff recommended that Pluris should be required to provide notice to all affected customers of the Application, including the applied for rates.

It was moved and passed that the Public Staff's recommendation be adopted.

ORDER REQUIRING CUSTOMER NOTICE

Pluris Webb Creek, LLC

5. Docket No. W-1314, Sub 5 – Application for Transfer of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Wastewater Utility Systems Serving Various Subdivisions in Onslow County, North Carolina, to the Onslow Water and Sewer Authority, Owner Exempt (Darden/Bernier)

On June 26, 2023, Pluris Webb Creek, LLC (Pluris Webb Creek) filed an application with the Commission seeking authority to transfer Pluris' wastewater treatment plant and wastewater utility systems to the Onslow Water and Sewer Authority of Onslow County, which is exempt from Commission regulation.

It was moved and passed that the Public Staff's recommendation be adopted.

The Minutes of the Regular Commission Staff Conference of June 19, 2023, were approved.

James McLawhorn, Director of the Public Staff's Energy Division, introduced new staff member Andrew Puglisi, Utilities Engineer.

Minutes prepared by Le Anne Ackerman.