

1 STAFF CONFERENCE

April 18, 2022

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: Good morning. Let's come  
3 to order and go on the record, please. I'm  
4 Charlotte Mitchell, Chair of the Utilities  
5 Commission. With me this morning are Commissioners  
6 Brown-Bland, Gray, Clodfelter, Duffley, Hughes and  
7 McKissick.

8 In compliance with the State Government  
9 Ethics Act, I remind members of the Commission of  
10 our duty to avoid conflicts of interest, and inquire  
11 at this time as to whether any member of the  
12 Commission has a known conflict of interest with  
13 respect to matters coming before us this morning?

14 (No response)

15 The record will reflect no conflicts have  
16 been identified, so we will proceed with Public  
17 Staff, Item 1.

18 MR. AKPOM: Good morning. My name is  
19 Charles A. Akpom with the Public Staff, Accounting  
20 Division. This item is Docket E-22, Sub 613, an  
21 Application by DENC for approval of the Inventory  
22 Purchase and Sale Agreement between DENC and DPSC.

23 The Public Staff has reviewed the  
24 Agreement and recommends Commission approval subject

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1 to the conditions set forth in the proposed order.  
2 Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval  
4 of the recommendation.

5 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

6 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
7 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
8 the Public Staff. Are there any questions or  
9 discussion on the motion? Commissioner McKissick?

10 COMMISSIONER MCKISSICK: Yes, one quick  
11 question. And it looks very straight forward, but  
12 the name Dominion Privatization South Carolina, just  
13 I was curious what type of entity is it, if you  
14 could tell me. The name just seemed a bit unique.  
15 I mean, I have no objections to this, what's  
16 proposed, and it looks as if the order is  
17 appropriate, but can you tell me something about  
18 that entity itself. I guess they're related.

19 MR. AKPOM: Let me look into it and I will  
20 get back with you. I'm not, you know, too confident  
21 exactly what it stands for.

22 CHAIR MITCHELL: I see a representative of  
23 the company is approaching, so why don't you come on  
24 up and introduce yourself.

1 MS. KELLS: Good morning. Andrea Kells on  
2 behalf of Dominion Energy North Carolina.

3 Commissioner McKissick, Dominion  
4 Privatization South Carolina is an LLC that was  
5 formed to basically operate the electric system at  
6 Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and it is one of  
7 several LLCs that are subsidiaries of Dominion  
8 Privatization Holdings, Inc., which are LLCs around  
9 the country that manage these military installation  
10 electric systems.

11 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: That's very  
12 helpful. I was just curious. The name caught my  
13 attention so I was just wanting some clarity I guess  
14 so I would be aware.

15 MS. KELLS: And Privatization comes from  
16 Utilities Privatization Contracts which is derived  
17 from a federal government effort for utilities to  
18 manage in military installations.

19 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: In military  
20 installations?

21 MS. KELLS: Yes, sir.

22 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: Thank you very  
23 much. I appreciate it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

24 CHAIR MITCHELL: Any additional questions?

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1 (No response)

2 I'll call the roll for -- actually all  
3 those in favor of the motion indicate by saying aye.

4 (All Commissioners say aye)

5 CHAIR MITCHELL: Is there anyone opposed?

6 (No response)

7 The motion carries.

8 (MOTION PASSES)

9 CHAIR MITCHELL: We will proceed to Public  
10 Staff, Item Number 2.

11 MR. FLOYD: My name is Jack Floyd with the  
12 Energy Division of the Public Staff. Item 2 is a  
13 filing by Duke Energy Carolinas in Docket E-7, Sub  
14 1251 for approval to revise their service  
15 regulations to allow certain customers who are on  
16 customized meter reading schedules prior to the  
17 deployment of the Customer Connect billing systems  
18 to be able to retain their billing schedules.

19 The Public Staff has reviewed the request  
20 and recommends that the Commission issue our  
21 proposed order approving it as filed.

22 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval  
23 of the recommendation.

24 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

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1 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
2 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
3 the Public Staff. Questions or discussion on the  
4 motion? Commissioner McKissick?

5 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: Thank you, Chair  
6 Mitchell. One point of clarification if you could.  
7 I have no objection to what's being proposed but I  
8 noticed that there was some problem with the billing  
9 cycle. I think it was a number of days went up to  
10 35 days, something of that sort. What was the  
11 unique hardship that was placed upon the entity? I  
12 guess there's only one entity that's really seeking  
13 relief under this particular proposal, if you could  
14 share with me what that was.

15 MR. FLOYD: That's true. There's one  
16 customer who was impacted by this request. As a  
17 result of your May 2021 Waiver Order in this docket,  
18 that Order brought into consistency the billing  
19 periods between Duke Carolinas and Duke Progress to  
20 the 26 to 34-day billing period. Rather than have a  
21 waiver on a case-by-case basis, they, Duke Carolinas  
22 redrafted the language to accommodate this one  
23 customer. Here going forward this is not going to  
24 be an issue. But that request was made of this --

1 on behalf of this one customer who asked to have a  
2 longer billing period than the service regulation  
3 would allow.

4 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: So, it gives them  
5 up to 35 days? Is that what it is?

6 MR. FLOYD: It's greater than 30 -- it's  
7 35 or better, I'm not exactly sure.

8 COMMISSIONER McKISSICK: Okay. Thank you.  
9 I just wanted some context. No objections.

10 CHAIR MITCHELL: Any additional questions  
11 or discussion?

12 (No response)

13 Hearing none, all in favor indicate with  
14 an aye.

15 (All Commissioners say aye)

16 CHAIR MITCHELL: Is there anyone opposed?

17 (No response)

18 The motion carries.

19 (MOTION PASSES)

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Floyd.  
21 Thank you, Mr. Akpom.

22 MR. JUNIS: All right. Charles Junis,  
23 Director of the Public Staff - Water, Sewer and  
24 Telephone Division. It's my understanding that Item

1 3 has been pulled. So, we'll move onto Item 4 which  
2 is filed in Docket Number W-218, Sub 526A. Aqua  
3 North Carolina, Inc., filed an Application for  
4 approval to implement Secondary Water Quality System  
5 Improvement.

6 The Public Staff recommends that the  
7 Commission issue the proposed order authorizing Aqua  
8 to implement its proposed filtration project at  
9 Foxboro Estates to comply with Secondary Water  
10 Quality Standards.

11 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval  
12 of the recommendation.

13 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

14 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
15 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
16 the Public Staff? Questions, discussion on the  
17 motion?

18 (No response)

19 All those in favor indicate with an aye.

20 (All Commissioners say aye)

21 CHAIR MITCHELL: Is there anyone opposed?

22 (No response)

23 The motion carries.

24 (MOTION PASSES)

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1 MR. JUNIS: Thank you. Item 5, well  
2 formerly known as 5, Docket Number W-1297, Sub 16,  
3 HISCO East, LLC, formerly known as Harker's Island  
4 Sewer Company, LLC, filed an Application seeking  
5 authority to increase its rates for providing sewer  
6 utility service at Westbay, James Creek, By The Bay,  
7 Harkers Point, Harkers Village Phases I and II, Cape  
8 Lookout National Seashore, Island Road Extension,  
9 and Beach Hammock service areas in Carteret County.  
10 HISCO East serves approximately 133 flat rate sewer  
11 customers. This is the first time HISCO East has  
12 come before to the Commission requesting an  
13 adjustment and increase in its rates.

14 The Public Staff recommends that the  
15 Commission issue the proposed order establishing a  
16 general rate case and suspending rates.

17 COMMISSIONER BROWN-BLAND: Move approval  
18 of the recommendation.

19 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Second.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: It's been moved and  
21 seconded that the item be approved as recommended by  
22 the Public Staff. Questions or discussion?

23 (No response)

24 All in favor indicate with an aye.

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1 (All Commissioners say aye)

2 CHAIR MITCHELL: Is there anyone opposed?

3 (No response)

4 That motion carries.

5 (MOTION PASSES)

6 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Junis.

7 MR. JUNIS: Now, I'd like to introduce our  
8 new engineer. Come take a seat. Shashi Bhatta is a  
9 new public utilities engineer of the Water, Sewer  
10 and Telephone Division. Shashi comes to us from the  
11 Department of Environmental Quality where she has  
12 been a plan review team leader and has worked for  
13 over 19 years. She has a Bachelor's Degree in  
14 chemical engineering and a Master's Degree in  
15 environmental engineering, both from Michigan State  
16 University, so now the Spartans are well represented  
17 here before the Commission. She might have bragging  
18 rights here eventually, we'll see. They've had a  
19 rough go here but we'll see. She's a  
20 certified B-Well Operator and Professional Engineer  
21 in North Carolina. So, we are very happy to have  
22 her on our staff, so I would just like to welcome  
23 her.

24 MS. BHATTA: Thank you very much. And I'm

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1 great to be here. I'm looking forward to working  
2 with all of you.

3 CHAIR MITCHELL: Well, it's great to meet  
4 you. We're glad you're here with us and look  
5 forward to hearing more from you from that very  
6 seat.

7 MS. BHATTA: Of course, thank you.

8 MR. JUNIS: Thank you.

9 CHAIR MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Junis.  
10 Any additional business for the  
11 Commission? I see Mr. Jirak back there.

12 MR. JIRAK: Good morning again, Chair  
13 Mitchell, Commissioners. I wanted to take this  
14 opportunity to briefly introduce you to one final  
15 new team member on the North Carolina Regulatory  
16 Team for Duke Energy. This is Jason Higginbotham.  
17 Jason comes to us from Florida Power & Light and has  
18 a wealth of experience on the regulatory space in  
19 Florida and, in addition, has a wealth of experience  
20 in the independent transmission development space as  
21 well in his prior roles, and so we're super excited  
22 to have Jason joining us.

23 He's going to be relocating with his  
24 family and three kids from Florida and be moving in

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1 the Charlotte area but will be making frequent trips  
2 here to Raleigh to appear before you-all. We're  
3 very excited to have Jason joining us.

4 And I will say, because of fun facts,  
5 Jason's, all three of his kids were born in  
6 different states so he's had some quite the  
7 adventures over the past few years. And also his  
8 paternal aunt was an astronaut and who has actually  
9 been to space, so if you want to know or have the  
10 personal view of what it's like to travel to space  
11 you can talk to Jason.

12 But we're super excited to have Jason to  
13 be appearing before you-all tomorrow in the  
14 reliability docket. He will be very involved in a  
15 host of other regulatory matters including the  
16 Carbon Plan as well. So, thank you for this chance  
17 to introduce Jason.

18 MR. HIGGINBOTHAM: Thank you all. I look  
19 forward to meeting you.

20 CHAIR MITCHELL: Well, thank you very  
21 much, Jack, Mr. Jirak. And it's very nice to meet  
22 you. Good to see you here with us and look forward  
23 to also hearing more from you from that seat.

24 MR. HIGGINBOTHAM: Thank you.

1 MR. JIRAK: Mostly on this side of the  
2 room, I think.

3 CHAIR MITCHELL: All right.

4 MR. JIRAK: That's where we typically get  
5 stuck but sometimes we like to get on that side of  
6 the room when we can. But we're almost often stuck  
7 here --

8 CHAIR MITCHELL: Any additional -- thank  
9 you, Mr. Jirak.

10 MR. JIRAK: Thank you.

11 MR. HIGGINBOTHAM: Thank you.

12 CHAIR MITCHELL: Before I forget, the  
13 Commission has before us our minutes of the March  
14 28th Staff Conference for approval. I'll take a  
15 motion.

16 COMMISSIONER GRAY: Move approval.

17 COMMISSIONER DUFFLEY: Second.

18 CHAIR MITCHELL: Any questions or  
19 discussion?

20 (No response)

21 All in favor of approving those minutes,  
22 indicate with an aye.

23 (All Commissioners say aye)

24 CHAIR MITCHELL: Anyone opposed?

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(No response)

Our minutes are approved. Before we  
adjourn, anything else from the room?

(Pause).

Thank you very much everybody. We're  
adjourned. Let's go off the record, please.

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WHEREUPON, this conference is adjourned.

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

I, KIM T. MITCHELL, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that  
the Proceedings in the above-captioned matter were  
taken before me, that I did report in stenographic  
shorthand the Proceedings set forth herein, and the  
foregoing pages are a true and correct transcription  
to the best of my ability.

Kim T. Mitchell

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