

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR COMMISSION STAFF CONFERENCE

September 18, 2023

The Regular Commission Staff Conference of the North Carolina Utilities Commission was held on Monday, September 18, 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. Duffy, Ms. Jarvis, Ms. Hicks, Ms. Hilburn, Mr. Barber, Ms. Jayasheela, Mr. Barley; Mr. Keshar; Ms. Winstead; Mr. McCoy

PUBLIC STAFF: Mr. Ayers, Ms. Edmondson, Ms. Jost, Ms. Coxton, Mr. Bernier, Ms. Newell, Mr. Junis, Ms. Darden, Mr. Houser, Ms. Bhatta, Ms. Wade

ATTORNEY GENERAL:

COURT REPORTER: Ms. Mitchell

WATER AND WASTEWATER*ORDER APPROVING TARIFF REVISION AND REQUIRING CUSTOMER NOTICE***Aqua North Carolina, Inc.**

1. Docket No. W-218, Sub 600 – Verified Petition to Amend Its Tariff to Adjust Rates for Water Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Water from Johnston County in 55 Subdivisions in Johnston County, North Carolina (*Darden/Lentz/Newell*)

On August 11, 2023, Aqua North Carolina, Inc. (Aqua or Company) filed a verified petition 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 55 subdivisions in Johnston County an increase in the cost of purchasing water service from the Johnston County Department of Public Utilities (County). (Aqua has not been issued a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Whitley Corner at Flowers in Docket No. W-218, Sub 542, and does not presently serve any customers in Whitley Corner at Flowers. Therefore, Whitley Corner at Flowers was not included in the revised tariff and the number of subdivisions was reduced from 56 to 55.)

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed the County's rates and the Company's request

The Public Staff recommended that the Commission approve the tariff revision at the Public Staff's 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.

Aqua North Carolina, Inc.

2. Docket No. W-218, Sub 599 – Verified Petition to Amend Its Tariff to Adjust Rates for Water Utility Service for the Decreased Cost of Purchased Water from the Town of Pittsboro in Chapel Ridge, Laurel Ridge, and The Parks at Meadowview in Chatham County, North Carolina (*Bhatta/Feasel/Jost*)

On June 23, 2023, Aqua North Carolina, Inc. (Aqua or Company) filed a verified request with the North Carolina Utilities Commission (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 Chapel Ridge, Laurel Ridge, and The Parks at Meadowview service areas in Chatham County an increase in the cost of purchasing bulk water service from the Town of Pittsboro (Pittsboro).

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed Pittsboro's rates and the Company's amended 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.

David Drooz, Counsel for Aqua, responded to questions from the Commission.

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

Carolina Water Service, Inc. of North Carolina

3. Docket No. W-354, Sub 426 – Verified Petition to Amend Its Tariff to Adjust Rates for Water Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Water from the Town of Franklin in Riverbend Estates Service Area in Macon County, North Carolina (*Bhatta/Feasel/Holt*)

On August 9, 2023, Carolina Water Service, Inc. of North Carolina (Company) filed a verified petition with the North Carolina Utilities Commission (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 Riverbend Estates service area in Macon County an increase in the cost of purchasing water service from the Town of Franklin.

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed the Town of Franklin'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.

Dillsboro Water Utilities, Inc.

4. Docket No. W-1327, Sub 3 – Verified Petition to Amend Its Tariff to Change Rates for Water and Sewer Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Water and Sewer Service from Tuckaseegee Water and Sewer Authority in the BP/Subway, Holiday Inn Express, Microtel and Dillsboro Crossing Apartment service areas in Jackson County, North Carolina (*Bhatta/Feasel/Bernier/Newell*)

On July 19, 2023, Dillsboro Water Utilities, Inc. (Dillsboro) filed a letter with the North Carolina Utilities Commission (Commission) requesting authority to amend its tariff for the purpose of passing along to its water and sewer customers in the BP/Subway, Holiday Inn Express, Microtel, and Dillsboro Crossing Apartments service areas in Jackson County an increase in the cost of purchasing water and sewer service from Tuckaseegee Water and Sewer Authority (TWSA). On August 3, 2023, Dillsboro filed a verification pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-133.11.

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed TWSA's rates, TWSA's new billing process for Dillsboro and the Company's request and recommended modified tariff revisions. The Public Staff stated that the recommended tariff revisions better match the costs of purchased water and sewer services to the rates to be charged by Dillsboro to its customers.

The Public Staff recommended that the tariff revisions be approved as modified and indicated that Dillsboro agrees with the Public Staff's recommended rates.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

ANNUAL STATE CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIERS

5. Docket No. P-100, Subs 133L, 133N, and 171 – Certification of Eligible Telecommunications Carriers to Continue to Receive Federal Universal Service High-Cost Support (*Wade/Coxton*)

The Public Staff presented a list of 21 eligible telecommunications carriers that filed sworn affidavits attesting that all federal high-cost support funding has been and will be used only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended.

The Public Staff recommends that, pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.314 and Section 245(e) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the Commission submit certification to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) by October 1, 2023, so that the named carriers may receive Federal Universal Service High-Cost Support for calendar year 2024.

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

INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT

Town of Pineville dba Pineville Telephone Company

6. Docket No. P-120, Sub 28 – Interconnection agreement between Town of Pineville dba Pineville Telephone Company, and Level 3 Communications, LLC (*Houser/Coxton*)

On August 2, 2023, Town of Pineville d/b/a Pineville Telephone Company and Level 3 Communications, LLC (collectively, the Parties) filed an interconnection agreement for Commission approval.

The Public Staff recommended that the agreement be approved.

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

7. Docket No. P-120, Sub 29 – Interconnection agreement between Town of Pineville dba Pineville Telephone Company, and Teleport Communications of America, LLC (*Houser/Coxton*)

On July 12, 2023, Town of Pineville d/b/a Pineville Telephone Company and Teleport Communications of America, LLC (collectively, the Parties) filed an interconnection agreement for Commission approval.

The Public Staff recommended that the agreement be approved.

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

The Minutes of the Regular Commission Staff Conference of August 28, 2023, were approved.

Minutes prepared by Le Anne Ackerman.