

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. E-35, SUB 51

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of		
Application of Western Carolina University)	ORDER ADOPTING
for an Adjustment of Rates and Charges)	PROCEDURES FOR
for Electric Service in North Carolina)	REMOTE HEARING

BY THE CHAIR: On March 9, 2020, Western Carolina University (WCU) filed an application with the Commission requesting authority to adjust its rates for retail electric service in its service area in Jackson County, North Carolina. WCU filed an amended application on June 24, 2020. WCU operates an off-campus electric distribution system that serves approximately 3,170 residential customers and 230 commercial customers. The present rates have been in effect since 2016, with annual purchased power adjustments.

On July 17, 2020, the Commission issued an Order scheduling a remote hearing in this proceeding on Thursday, September 10, 2020, solely for the purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses and scheduled the hearing to resume on Monday, September 14, 2020, at 2 p.m. and continuing as required for testimony and cross-examination of witnesses for WCU, the Public Staff, and other intervenors. That Order also provided that the Commission would issue a further order setting forth the procedures for a remote expert witness hearing or confirming that the expert witness hearing will be held in the Commission Hearing Room and directed the parties to file a statement on or before Monday, August 10, 2020, consenting to the Commission holding the hearing by remote means, or a statement objecting to the same.

On August 6, 2020, WCU filed a statement consenting to the holding of a remote hearing.

On August 10, 2020, the Public Staff filed a statement consenting to the holding of a remote hearing.

In March through July 2020, Governor Roy Cooper issued a progression of Executive Orders that declared a State of Emergency in North Carolina to coordinate response and protective actions to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). The Executive Orders place restrictions on business operations and mass gatherings including limiting face-to-face meetings to no more than ten people and requiring social distancing between individuals of at least six feet. On August 5, 2020, Governor Cooper issued Executive Order No. 155 that declared these restrictions would remain in effect until September 11, 2020, unless repealed or modified by a subsequent Executive Order.

Based on the record and the current state of uncertainty regarding future requirements to assist in preventing the spread of COVID-19, the Chair finds good cause to confirm the expert witness hearing currently scheduled in this docket will be held by remote means and will be subject to the following conditions:

- (1) On or before Monday, August 24, 2020, all parties shall send the email addresses of the attorneys, witnesses, and other persons that will participate in the hearing on the party's behalf to the following address: ncucwebex@ncuc.net;
- (2) On or before Monday, September 7, 2020, each party shall file a list of its potential cross-examination exhibits for the hearing. Each party must also provide an electronic copy of its potential cross-examination exhibits which have been labeled with the party name and numbered sequentially notwithstanding the number of witnesses to the Commission and all other parties to the docket. For example, Public Staff 1, Public Staff 2, Public Staff 3, and so forth;
- (3) On or before Friday, September 11, 2020, each party shall file a list of any potential redirect exhibits for the hearing. Each party must also provide an electronic copy of its potential redirect exhibits labeled with the party name and numbered sequentially notwithstanding the number of witnesses to the Commission and all other parties to the docket;
- (4) Within two days after the hearing, parties shall file their cross-examination and redirect exhibits used in the hearing marked as indicated during the hearing; and
- (5) Parties and witnesses will be required to refrain from disclosing confidential information during the hearing, including during direct examination, cross-examination, and redirect examination. If a party believes that this requirement will materially affect the party's presentation of evidence or examination of a witness, the party shall bring this to the attention of the Presiding Commissioner at the beginning of the hearing.

IT IS, THEREFORE, SO ORDERED.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 14th day of August, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION



Kimberley A. Campbell, Chief Clerk