

Natural Gas Company, Inc. (Piedmont), respectively, in the Affordability Collaborative being conducted pursuant to the DEC and DEP Rate Orders.

On June 4, 2021, DEC and DEP filed with the Commission an Update on the Collaborative on the Affordability of Electric Service for Low-Income Customers (Update). DEC and DEP identified a list of participants for the Affordability Collaborative, which was accepted by the Commission by order dated June 28, 2021. DEC and DEP also explained the plan to engage a third party to facilitate the Affordability Collaborative, stating that they had issued a request for proposals to a list of potential facilitators. DEC, DEP, and the Public Staff ultimately secured Guidehouse, Inc., to serve as a third-party facilitator for the Affordability Collaborative.

On July 16, 2021, Duke Energy filed with the Commission a second update on the Collaborative identifying three additional participants as well as the contact for the NAACP. The updated participant list was accepted by the Commission by order dated July 21, 2021.

On September 27, 2021, DEC, DEP, and the Public Staff filed the required 180-day Progress Report on the Affordability Collaborative. Participants in the Affordability Collaborative representing 34 separate organizations held a kickoff meeting on July 29, 2021, and were tasked with developing a set of recommendations for a suite of energy affordability program options to address the affordability of electric service for low-income customers for Commission consideration in accordance with the DEC and DEP Rate Orders. The participants planned to meet every six weeks for a total of nine workshops. The second workshop was held on September 16, 2021. During this workshop, experts from DEC and DEP presented an initial analysis of North Carolina customer demographic data, and the participants formed four subteams to focus on the following issues: customer challenges; affordability metrics; rates and programs; and Collaborative coordination.

On January 18, 2022, DEC, DEP, and the Public Staff filed a Quarterly Progress Report on the Affordability Collaborative. The Collaborative met on November 12 and December 9, 2021. In addition to the nine workshops originally planned, the Collaborative now intends to host two additional sessions: 1) a joint workshop on January 26, 2022, with members of Duke Energy's Demand-Side Management and Energy Efficiency and the Comprehensive Rate Review collaboratives, and 2) a special session during which new income-qualified programs being proposed by Collaborative members can be presented to the group. The following persons were named as co-leaders of the four subteams:

Subteam A – Customer Challenges
Rory McIlmoil, Appalachian Voices
Arnie Richardson, Duke Energy

Subteam B – Affordability Metrics
La'Meshia Whittington, Advance Carolina
Conitsha Barnes, Duke Energy

Subteam C – Rates and Programs
Ken Szymanski, Apartment Association of North Carolina
Detrick Clark, North Carolina Community Action Association

Subteam D – Collaborative Coordination
Paula Hemmer, NC Department of Environmental Quality
Thad Culley, Sunrun

Individual subteams have convened weekly or bi-weekly, as determined by members of each of the subteams and have begun working through specific tasks with the goal of generating findings or framing recommendations that will eventually be presented to the Collaborative for decisions or endorsement.

To further the goal of keeping the Commission apprised of the progress of the Affordability Collaborative, the Commission desires a briefing by the co-leaders of the four subteams on Monday, February 21, 2022, directly following the Commission's regularly scheduled Staff Conference. If no Staff Conference is held that day, the briefing will begin at 10:00 a.m.

The limited purpose of the briefing is to allow the subteam co-leaders to update the Commission on the work of the Collaborative and to allow Commissioners an opportunity to ask questions, not for Collaborative participants to argue before the Commission substantive issues discussed at the Collaborative meetings. Each subteam will be allowed ten minutes for its presentation, and it is anticipated that the total briefing will not exceed one hour. The briefing will be held remotely via Webex. A link for other Collaborative participants and interested members of the public to view the briefing will be posted to the Commission's website.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED that DEC and DEP, together with the co-leaders of the Affordability Collaborative's four subteams, are directed to present a briefing to the Commission on the work of the Collaborative on Monday, February 21, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., or directly following Staff Conference; and that DEC and DEP shall provide the name, email, and phone number for each presenter to ncucwebex@ncuc.net on or before Thursday, February 17, 2022.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 4th day of February, 2022.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION



Joann R. Snyder, Deputy Clerk