

**NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF REGULAR COMMISSION STAFF CONFERENCE**

**May 28, 2024**

The Regular Commission Staff Conference of the North Carolina Utilities Commission was held on Monday, May 28, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., with Chair Mitchell presiding.

The following were present:

**COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Hughes  
Commissioner McKissick  
Commissioner Kemerait  
Commissioner Brawley

**COMMISSION STAFF:** Mr. Watson, Ms. Fennell, Ms. Duffy, Ms. Murrell, Ms. Walker, Ms. Olive, Ms. Hilburn, Mr. Barber, Ms. Jayasheela, Ms. Winstead, Mr. McCoy

**PUBLIC STAFF:** Mr. Ayers, Ms. Edmondson, Ms. Holt, Ms. Jost, Mr. Creech, Ms. Luhr, Ms. Keyworth, Ms. Boswell, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Lentz, Mr. McLawhorn, Mr. D. Williamson, Mr. Nader, Ms. Patel, Mr. Thomas, Mr. Puglisi, Mr. Hill, Ms. Debnam, Mr. Junis, Ms. Bhatta

**ATTORNEY GENERAL:**

**COURT REPORTER:** Ms. Mitchell

**ELECTRIC***CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY***Duke Energy Progress, LLC**

1. Docket No. SP-47711, Sub 0 – Application of Timber Mill Solar, LLC for a CPCN for an 80-MWAC solar photovoltaic generating facility and registration statement in Pitt County, North Carolina (*Thomas/Keyworth*)

On January 5, 2024, Timber Mill Solar, LLC (Applicant), filed an application seeking a certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-110.1(a) for construction of an 80 MW<sub>AC</sub> solar photovoltaic generating facility, co-located with 32 MW of battery storage, to be located at Ravenwood Lane, Pollocksville, Jones County, North Carolina. The Applicant plans to sell the electricity generated by this facility to Duke Energy Progress, LLC (DEP).

Contemporaneously with the CPCN application, the Applicant submitted a registration statement for a new renewable energy facility.

The Public Staff stated that the application meets the requirements of N.C.G.S. § 62-110.1(a) and Commission Rule R8-64. The Public Staff further stated that the registration statement contains the certified attestations required by Commission Rule R8-66(b).

The Public Staff recommended approval of the certificate and registration for the facility.

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

**NATURAL GAS***GREENEDGE PROGRAM RIDER ANNUAL REPORT***Piedmont Natural Gas, Inc.**

2. Docket No. G-9, Sub 784 – Piedmont's 2023 Annual Report on the GreenEdge<sup>SM</sup> Program Rider (*Lentz/Nader/Jost*)

On March 15, 2021, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-138 and Commission Rule R1-5, Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. (Piedmont), filed a Petition for Approval of Appendix G to its North Carolina Service Regulations (Appendix G or Rider). The Rider is a voluntary program designed to enable residential customers and small general service customers to offset the carbon emissions associated with their natural gas usage through direct funding of Piedmont's purchase of environmental attributes (Program).

On February 29, 2024, Piedmont filed its second annual report on the Green Edge Program performance for calendar year 2023.

The Public Staff stated that, based on its investigation of the Company's 2023 Annual Report, it recommends that the Program continue, subject to conditions outlined in their proposed order.

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

#### *INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT RIDER*

##### **Piedmont Natural Gas, Inc.**

3. Docket No. G-9, Sub 840 – Application of PNG for approval of IMRR biannual adjustment and deferred account true-up (*Puglisi/Johnson/Jost*)

On April 29, 2024, Piedmont filed the computation for the IMRR bi-annual rate adjustment effective June 1, 2024, based on the Company's Integrity Management (IM) Plant Investment through March 31, 2024. In addition, the Company proposed a true-up rate adjustment effective June 1, 2024, for the IM Deferred Account based on the actual account balance as of March 31, 2024.

On May 15, 2024, Piedmont filed schedules showing the computation of the proposed IM rate adjustment for each rate schedule and the revised tariffs effective June 1, 2024.

The Public Staff stated it had reviewed the application and the proposed IM rate adjustments.

The Public Staff recommends approval as filed.

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

#### *BENCHMARK COST OF GAS AND DEMAND TEMPORARIES*

##### **Piedmont Natural Gas, Inc.**

4. Docket No. G-9, Sub 841 – Application of PNG for approval of an increase the demand charge component of its rates and to track changes in its wholesale cost of gas (*Puglisi/Johnson/Jost*)

On May 17, 2024, Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. (Piedmont or Company), filed a petition pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-133.4, Commission Rule R1-17(k)(3), and Appendix A of its North Carolina Service Regulations, requesting authority to decrease its rates and charges, effective June 1, 2024, as a result of the net effect of (1) a proposed decrease in its Benchmark Cost of Gas from the current rate of \$3.00 per dekatherm (dt) to a rate of \$2.75 per dt and (2) an increase in the demand charge component of its rates.

The Public Staff stated that it reviewed the proposed rate changes.

The Public Staff recommends approval as filed.

Brian Franklin, counsel for Piedmont, introduced John Robson, Director Gas Distribution Finance, Duke Energy Corporation, to respond to questions from the Commission.

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

## **WATER AND WASTEWATER**

### *ORDER APPROVING TARIFF REVISION AND REQUIRING CUSTOMER NOTICE*

#### **Aqua North Carolina, Inc.**

5. Docket No. W-218, Sub 610 – Application for Authority to Amend Its Tariff to Increase Rates for Water Utility Service for the Increased Cost of Purchased Water from the Fayetteville Public Works Commission in 18 subdivisions in Cumberland County, North Carolina (*Bhatta/Feasel/Jost*)

On May 7, 2024, 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 water customers in 18 subdivisions in Cumberland County an increase in the cost of purchasing water service from Fayetteville Public Works Commission (FPWC). Section 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.

The Public Staff stated that it had reviewed FPWC'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 that Aqua provide customer notice.

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

The Minutes of the Regular Commission Staff Conference of May 20, 2024, were approved.

Minutes prepared by Le Anne Ackerman.