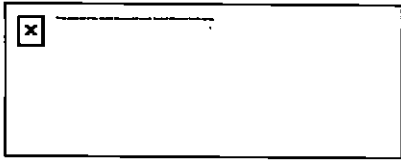


Grant, Lakisha

From: Sandra, Fellowship Administrator. <booneuuoffice@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 31, 2023 10:47 AM
To: Statements
Subject: Docket No. E-34, Sub 54 and 55, Consumer Statement of Position
Attachments: Boone UU Fellowship Letter to NCUC July 2023.pdf

Please see attached. Thank you.

Sandra Diaz she/her/hers, Office Administrator
Office number: 828-264-4456 booneuuoffice@gmail.com
<https://www.buuf.net/>



381 E King St, Boone, NC 28607

*Boone N.C. occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Tsalaguwetiyi (Cherokee, East) and Moneton peoples.**

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Jul 31 2023



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July 26, 2023

N.C. Utilities Commission
430 N. Salisbury St.
Raleigh, NC 27603

Consumer Statement of Position regarding New River Light and Power Company
Docket No. E-34, Subs 54 and 55

Dear Commissioners,

The Board of the Boone Unitarian Universalist Fellowship was recently made aware of New River Light & Power's (NRLP) proposed changes to its rate structure by a member of our congregation. Because we believe the proposed policy on rooftop solar will hinder the transition to clean energy in our community and is inconsistent with the character of our town and the wishes of its residents, we are providing this consumer statement to the commission in response to statements made by NRLP witnesses during the evidentiary hearing held on July 10-11.

But first, a little about our fellowship. Among the core principles of Unitarian Universalism is a "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." Many in our congregation believe that climate change represents the greatest threat to that interdependent web of life and we are always looking for ways to reduce our congregation's and our community's dependence on fossil fuels, the primary driver of climate change.

Concerns About the Supplemental Standby Charge

Our main concern about NRLP's proposed rate structure is that it drastically reduces and in some cases eliminates the ability of all but the very wealthiest of our congregants to invest in solar on their homes and businesses. It also creates a situation where solar customers are unfairly penalized and forced to pay more than their fair share of our local electric grid.

Allow us to provide a simple example to illustrate why NRLP witnesses were in error when they stated that solar customers would not be forced to cross-subsidize non-solar customers under the proposed rate structure. If one of our congregants installed a 10kW system under NRLP's policy, they would be required to pay an



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extra \$59.20 per month in supplemental standby charges on top of a \$14.50 basic facilities charge for a total of \$73.70 per month before ever using a single kWh of energy from the grid. This is more than double NRLP's own estimate of the average cost of \$36/month to serve a meter in Boone, demonstrating that some solar customers would be forced to cross-subsidize non-solar customers under this policy.

We want to be clear that our fellowship is concerned about housing and energy affordability for low-income people in our community and we would not support a policy in which poor customers who can't afford solar are forced to pay higher costs to subsidize wealthier customers that can afford it. While NRLP's policy accomplishes that goal, it vastly overshoots the mark and effectively penalizes people for installing solar. A simple remedy would be to reduce NRLP's proposed supplemental standby charge of \$5.92 per month to no more than \$1 to \$2 per month.

Response to Testimony Regarding NRLP's Green Power Program

We also want to address some of the statements that witness Ed Miller made about NRLP's Green Power program. Our fellowship does not currently participate in the program and while we are grateful for the intention to provide a clean energy option, it is our understanding that this program is not adding renewable energy to the grid and therefore not reducing emissions. Furthermore, as New River customers, there has been no indication that signing up for this program would lead to New River developing new renewable energy projects or expanding the program in any way.

We believe our fellowship is representative of many other businesses and nonprofits in town that support a transition to clean, renewable and locally-produced energy and would be willing to pay higher energy costs to obtain it.

Thank you for your consideration,

Richard Tidyman, President
Boone Unitarian Universalist Fellowship