

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. W-1314, Sub 4

In the Matter of:)
Pluris Webb Creek, LLC Application for)
Rate Increase)

REPORT REGARDING CUSTOMER HEARING

Pursuant to the Order Scheduling Hearing and Requiring Customer Notice entered in this docket on August 10, 2020, Pluris Webb Creek, LLC (“Pluris”) provides this Report addressing customer concerns expressed at the customer hearing held on September 24, 2020, on the WebEx platform.

None of the customers who submitted emails to the Commission, nor any of the customers who testified at the customer hearing, made any complaint about the quality of service provided by Pluris. In fact, several customers who testified provided positive comments regarding Pluris, including one by customer Phillips who made a statement to the effect that “Pluris is a community oriented company and has done many good things.”

Although no quality of service issues were raised by any customer, Pluris would like to address several concerns voiced by customers.

1. *“Pluris built a new and expensive WWTP without public input or notice.”* Construction of the new membrane bio-reactor (“MBR”) wastewater treatment plant by Pluris was both reasonable and prudent, particularly given the history of extensive non-compliance with environmental requirements at the legacy Webb Creek wastewater treatment plant (over 400 DENR/DEQ Notices of Violation issued to Webb Creek). In addition, committing to construct the new MBR plant and acquiring the land necessary to do so was a *de facto* requirement for Pluris to be granted a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to serve the legacy Webb Creek service area.¹

¹ See *Order Requiring Specific Conditions to be Satisfied Concerning the Granting of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Pluris Webb Creek, LLC* issued June 28, 2018 in Docket Nos. W-864, Sub 11 and W-1314, Sub 1, Findings 26 and 31 (“*Conditions Order*”)

And, as found by the Commission in the *Conditions Order*:

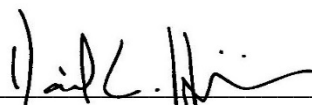
Both the Public Staff and DEQ support this plan, as installation of an MBR plant to serve the Webb Creek service area would be a significant upgrade and is desirable from both an environmental perspective and because it would enable the system to be brought into full compliance with DEQ requirements.

(*Conditions Order* p. 18).

2. “*Why wasn’t the community connected to Onslow County Water and Sewer Authority (“ONWASA”)?*”
Public Staff approached ONWASA and it rejected the opportunity to take over the Webb Creek sewer system.
3. “*Why didn’t Pluris secure grant funding to cover part of the cost of the new plant?*” Grant funding of the type available to counties, municipalities and service authorities is not available to public utilities.
4. “*Pluris was not responsive to calls and complaints about the roads; why is Pluris not taking care of the roads in the development like the former operator did?*” The owner of the former utility (Webb Creek Water and Sewage, Inc.), was both the utility operator and the developer. Pluris is a public utility providing sewer service and is not responsible for the roads in its service area. Having said that, when Pluris replaced and/or rehabilitated failed manholes in the legacy Webb Creek system, Pluris extended the street asphalt paving as much as 25 feet beyond what was required at some manhole sites, in order to patch distressed areas. In addition, Pluris filled in and paved a number of other distressed pavement areas; all of which was done in an effort to address some of the road issues facing the community.

Respectfully submitted, this the 29th day of September, 2020.

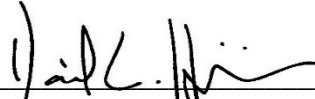
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this the 29th day of September, 2020, a true and exact copy of the foregoing document was duly served on the Public Staff and any other parties to this docket by either depositing same in a depository of the United States Postal Service, first-class postage prepaid, or by electronic delivery.

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