STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION RALEIGH

DOCKET NO. W-1034, SUB 13

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of	
Application by Water Resources, Inc.,)
for Authority to Adjust and Increase) ORDER REQUIRING FILING OF
Rates for Water Utility Service in Rocky) SUPPLEMENTAL VERIFIED
River Plantation Subdivision in Cabarrus) RESPONSE TO CUSTOMER
County and River Walk Subdivision in) CONCERNS
Mecklenburg County, North Carolina	j ,

BY THE HEARING EXAMINER: On December 29, 2023, Water Resources, Inc. (Applicant or WRI), filed an application with the Commission seeking authority to increase its rates for providing water utility service in the Rocky River Plantation Subdivision (Rocky River) in Cabarrus County and the River Walk Subdivision (River Walk) in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina (Application). On January 3, 2024, the Applicant filed an amended application. On January 22, 2024, the Applicant filed a letter with the Commission updating the proposed effective date of the rates requested in its amended application. The Applicant provides water utility service to approximately 115 residential customers in the Rocky River service area and approximately 39 residential customers in the River Walk service area.

On March 1, 2024, the Commission issued an Order Scheduling Hearings, Establishing Procedural and Filing Requirements, and Requiring Customer Notice (Scheduling Order), which among other things, set this matter for a public witness hearing on Monday, March 25, 2024, at the Mecklenburg County Courthouse in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Scheduling Order directs WRI to file a verified report addressing all customer service and service quality complaints expressed during the public witness hearing held on March 25, 2024, within 14 days of the conclusion of the public hearing. The Scheduling Order also directs the Public Staff to file a verified response and any comments to WRI's report on or before April 22, 2024.

On April 8, 2024, WRI filed its verified Report of Dennis Abbott for WRI on Customer Testimony and stated that WRI received the transcript of the public witness hearing late in the day on Friday, April 5, 2024, therefore, to comply with the Commission's deadline, its verified report responds to the exhibits submitted by customers with service-related concerns appearing at the March 25, 2024 public witness hearing.

On April 22, 2024, Public Staff filed its verified response indicating that the purpose of the Public Staff's response is to provide the results of the Public Staff's review of WRI's verified report regarding the public witness hearing, and the Public Staff's opinion on

whether WRI's responses adequately address the customers' concerns. In addition, the Public Staff summarized that WRI generally addresses the concerns raised by four customers at the hearing, and subsequently addresses customer concerns outlined in the consumer statements of position filed by eight additional customers. The Public Staff concluded that WRI's verified report adequately addressed the primary customer concerns expressed at the public witness hearing; however, WRI's response is based on customer statements rather than all customer concerns expressed at the public witness hearing. Specifically, WRI did not directly address a statement from the Highland Ridge Homeowner's Association (HOA) requesting the implementation of online billing and payment processing. Therefore, the Public Staff recommends that WRI supplement its report to include a response to the Highland Ridge HOA statement, which was read into the record by public witness Don Stremovihtg at the public witness hearing and was filed into the docket as Stremovihtg Exhibit 2 on April 8, 2024. Further, the Public Staff recommends that after WRI has fully reviewed the public witness hearing transcript that WRI supplement its previously filed report as necessary. Finally, the Public Staff requests the opportunity to review the supplemental report filed by WRI and to address such report as necessary.

Based on the foregoing, the recommendation of the Public Staff, and the entire record herein, the Hearing Examiner finds good cause to require WRI to file a supplemental verified report addressing the Highland Ridge HOA statement read into the record by public witness Don Stremovihtg. Further, the Hearing Examiner finds that WRI may include in its supplemental verified report a response to any other customer concerns expressed at the public witness hearing not previously addressed by WRI in its April 8, 2024 report.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED as follows:

- 1. That WRI shall file with the Commission a supplemental verified report addressing the Highland Ridge HOA statement filed as Stremovihtg Exhibit 2 on or before Thursday, May 9, 2024;
- 2. That WRI may include in its supplemental verified report a response to any of the customer concerns expressed at the public witness hearing, which have not previously been addressed by WRI in its report filed on April 8, 2024; and

3. That Public Staff may file a verified response to WRI's supplemental verified report on Friday, May 10, 2024 or, in the alternative, Public Staff witness Evan M. Houser shall provide a verbal response to the Commission as sworn testimony during the expert witness hearing.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 6th day of May, 2024.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

Tamika D. Conyers, Deputy Clerk