

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

## Inter-Department Communication

**DATE: 13 March 2014****AT (OFFICE): NHPUC**

NHPUC 13MAR'14PM12:58

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**FROM:** Tom Frantz – Director, Electric Division

**SUBJECT:** DE 13-304; Petition by Newbury Elderly Housing, Inc. and Community Action Program Belknap-Merrimack Counties, Inc. to Waive Puc 303.02; Master Metering

**TO:** Chair Ignatius and Commissioners Scott and Honigberg  
Executive Director Howland

On October 18, 2013, a Joint Request of Waiver of the Commission's Master Metering provision of the Puc 300 rules, Rule Puc 303.02, was filed by Newbury Elderly Housing and Community Action Program Belknap-Merrimack Counties, Inc. The Joint Request for waiver of the Commission's Master Metering rule was supported by an affidavit of Ralph Littlefield, Executive Director of Community Action Program Belknap-Merrimack Counties, Inc. (BM-CAP). BM-CAP states that the request "will serve the public interest, and that compliance with the rule would be onerous or inapplicable given the circumstances of the affected party." Staff supports the waiver request.

Newbury Elderly Housing is a non-profit corporation that will own and operate a new elderly housing development project in the Town of Newbury. The one building, thirty-four unit project will be developed by BM-CAP, a not-for-profit corporation that operates many social programs, including its role as the statewide operator of the Electric Assistance Program. The project received a grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Based on the terms of the grant, BM-CAP must operate the facility as subsidized elderly housing for the full 40-year term of the contract with HUD.

In support of its waiver, BM-CAP states that the installation of individual meters in this multi-tenant building will increase costs by at least \$30,000 and that the meters may be of no use when the contract with HUD ends. The additional cost of wiring and installing meters for each unit is considered an additional utility cost and utility costs must be included in the rent and subsidies of the tenants according to BM-CAP. As BM-CAP states and the Commission knows, the purpose of Puc 302.02 is to encourage the efficient use of electricity by the ability of residents of multi-tenant buildings to be aware of and pay for their electricity consumption. BM-CAP states that the residents of the Newbury Elderly Housing facility will not receive information regarding their individual consumption of electricity nor will they pay an individual electric bill. BM-CAP does state, however, that the design for the Newbury Elderly Housing project will incorporate

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the most up to date energy efficiency measures. Some of the measures mentioned include closed spray foam exterior wall insulation, windows with low-e glazing, Energy Star appliances and lighting, high “R” value roof insulation and a closed loop geothermal system for heating and cooling.

Staff agrees with BM-CAP that the link between energy consumption and knowledge of usage by the tenants of Newbury Elderly Housing will be broken and that the installation of individual meters for each of the 34-units will only add costs to the project. The Commission has approved similar waiver requests in the past, including in DE 10-067, a waiver request of the Commission’s Master Metering rule by PSNH and BM-CAP for an elderly housing project in Pembroke.

Staff believes that this request should also be granted for the same reasons: the link between billing and individual consumption of electric usage at each of the units will not exist, the building will utilize numerous energy efficient measures in its construction and operation and that the additional costs to wire and install the meters will add a cost for a low-income project that is not warranted.

BM-CAP should be on notice that if the Newbury Elderly Housing facility no longer meets its contractual obligation with HUD, it should promptly notify the Commission and the Commission may wish to re-visit this waiver at that time.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter.

**SERVICE LIST - EMAIL ADDRESSES - DOCKET RELATED**

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**Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.11 (a) (1): Serve an electronic copy on each person identified on the service list.**

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Docket #: 13-304-1      Printed: March 13, 2014

**FILING INSTRUCTIONS:**

- a) Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.02 (a), with the exception of Discovery, file 7 copies, as well as an electronic copy, of all documents including cover letter with:**

DEBRA A HOWLAND  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
NHPUC  
21 S. FRUIT ST, SUITE 10  
CONCORD NH 03301-2429

- b) Serve an electronic copy with each person identified on the Commission's service list and with the Office of Consumer Advocate.**
- c) Serve a written copy on each person on the service list not able to receive electronic mail.**