



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, N.H. 03301-2429

September 17, 2021

Dianne Martin, Chairwoman
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission
21 South Fruit Street
Concord, NH 03301-2429

**Re: DE 21-004 Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities
2021 Least Cost Integrated Resource Plan
Proposed Procedural Schedule**

Dear Chairwoman Martin:

On April 11, 2021, the Commission approved a procedural schedule for the above-referenced proceeding. On June 15, 2021, the Staff of the Commission (now, Department of Energy Regulatory Support Division, or, "Energy") filed an assented to request to suspend the procedural schedule, citing recent Staff attrition and a related lack of access to engineering expertise as the basis for its request.

In response to the assented to request, on August 20, 2021, the Commission granted a tailored extension of the procedural schedule, and directed the parties to file a proposed revised procedural schedule with the Commission by September 17, 2021.

After extensive internal review and consultation with the Attorney General's Office, on September 16, 2021, Energy issued a request for proposals (RFP) for electric distribution system engineering and planning expertise. The timeline defined within the RFP for proposal review, contractor selection, and contract execution provides for a tentative contract effective date of November 22, 2021.

In light of that tentative contract effective date, the possibility that the actual contract effective date may be delayed, and the need to on-board any electric distribution system planning and engineering consultant that may be chosen, Energy proposes, with the agreement of the parties, a schedule that reanimates this proceeding in January 2022.¹

¹ Relatedly, the Commission held a hearing in DE 20-002 regarding Unital's 2020 Least Cost Integrated Resource Plan (LCIRP) on January 22, 2021. A Commission decision on the settlement in that case would allow the parties to better understand the Commission's expectations for what satisfies RSA 378:37-:40, providing greater certainty for the parties as they navigate all remaining near-term electric LCIRP proceedings. The same is true for Order No. 26,358, which provided guidance relating to near-term electric LCIRPs, and was suspended by Secretarial Letter on July 22, 2020 pending Commission consideration of issues raised in a motion for rehearing of that Order. To the extent the Commission can provide greater certainty on such issues prior to the reanimation of this procedural schedule, it would be greatly appreciated.

The parties have agreed to recommend the following procedural schedule to the Commission:

Action or Event	Date or Deadline
Set 5 Data Requests to Liberty	January 28, 2022
Liberty Responses to Set 5 Data Requests	February 11, 2022
NWS Proposal Filing	February 18, 2022
Set 6 Data Requests to Liberty	February 22, 2022
Liberty Responses to Set 6 Data Requests	March 8, 2022
Technical Session	March 17, 2022
Set 7 Data Requests to Liberty	March 24, 2022
Liberty Responses to Set 7 Data Requests	April 7, 2022
Technical Session	April 15, 2022
Energy/OCA/Intervenor Testimony	May 9, 2022
Data Requests to Division/OCA/Intervenors	May 17, 2022
Division/OCA/Intervenor Responses to Data Requests	May 31, 2022
Technical Session/Settlement Conference	June 8, 2022
Technical Session/Settlement Conference	June 10, 2022
Hearing Date Range	Two full days during the first two weeks of July 2022

Energy, on behalf of the parties, respectfully requests that the Commission approve the proposed procedural schedule for this proceeding.

I certify that a copy of this letter will be served electronically on the parties on the service list at the same time it is filed with the Commission.

Sincerely,

/s/ Brian D. Buckley

Brian D. Buckley
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New Hampshire Department of Energy

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