

1 **STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**
2 **PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

3
4 **October 9, 2019** - 9:14 a.m.
5 Concord, New Hampshire

NHPUC 1NDV19am11:00

6
7 **RE: DE 17-136**
8 **ELECTRIC AND GAS UTILITIES:**
9 **2018-2020 New Hampshire Statewide**
10 **Energy Efficiency Plan.**
11 **(Prehearing conference)**

12
13 **PRESENT:** Cmsr. Michael S. Giaimo, Presiding
14 Cmsr. Kathryn M. Bailey

15 Sandy Deno, Clerk

16
17 **APPEARANCES:** **Reptg. Public Service Company of**
18 **New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy:**
19 Matthew J. Fossum, Esq.

20 **Reptg. Unitil Energy Systems, Inc.**
21 **and Northern Utilities, Inc.:**
22 Patrick H. Taylor, Esq.

23 **Reptg. Liberty Utilities (Granite**
24 **State Electric) and Liberty Utilities**
 (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) d/b/a
 Liberty Utilities:
 Michael J. Sheehan, Esq.

Reptg. New Hampshire Electric
 Cooperative:
 Mark W. Dean, Esq.

 Court Reporter: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52
 (Transcribed from audio file)

**CERTIFIED
ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT**

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

APPEARANCES: (C o n t i n u e d)

Reptg. Conservation Law Foundation:
Meredith A. Hatfield, Esq.

Reptg. The Way Home:
Raymond Burke, Esq. (N.H. Legal Asst.)

**Reptg. New Hampshire Department of
Environmental Services:**
Rebecca Ohler

Reptg. Residential Ratepayers:
D. Maurice Kreis, Esq., Consumer Adv.
Christa Shute, Esq.
Office of Consumer Advocate

Reptg. PUC Staff:
Paul B. Dexter, Esq.
Brian D. Buckley, Esq.
Elizabeth Nixon, Electric Division
Jay Dudley, Electric Division

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

I N D E X

PAGE NO.

STATEMENTS OF PRELIMINARY POSITION BY:

Mr. Fossum	8
Mr. Taylor	11
Mr. Sheehan	12
Mr. Dean	12
Ms. Hatfield	12
Mr. Burke	13
Ms. Ohler	13
Mr. Kreis	14
Mr. Dexter	16

P R O C E E D I N G

1
2 CMSR. GIAIMO: Hello. We are here
3 this morning in Docket DE 17-113, with respect
4 to the 2020 update to the 2018 through 2020
5 Statewide Energy Efficiency Plan.

6 In the September 25th Order of
7 Notice, the Commission notified the electric
8 and gas utilities that they are required to
9 publish a notice in a newspaper with general
10 circulation throughout the state. I note that
11 we are aware that the affidavits of publication
12 were received and posted on the Commission
13 website from Liberty and Eversource. And,
14 between Liberty and Eversource, notice that was
15 published in the Eagle Tribune, the Keene
16 Sentinel, the Valley News, and the Union
17 Leader. So, we're all set in that regard.

18 Beyond the utilities and the OCA,
19 earlier in this docket we approved the
20 intervention requests of the Department of
21 Environmental Services, the New Hampshire
22 Sustainable Energy Association, The Way Home,
23 the Conservation Law Foundation, and the Acadia
24 Center.

1 With respect to interventions earlier
2 this month, Attorney Birchard submitted a
3 Petition for Intervention and Appearance on
4 behalf of Sunrun.

5 Before we turn our attention to that
6 intervention, let's take appearances.

7 Mr. Fossum.

8 MR. FOSSUM: Good morning,
9 Commissioners. Matthew Fossum, here for Public
10 Service Company of New Hampshire, doing
11 business as Eversource Energy.

12 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you.

13 MR. TAYLOR: Good morning,
14 Commissioners. Patrick Taylor, on behalf of
15 Unitil Energy Systems and Northern Utilities,
16 Inc.

17 MR. SHEEHAN: Good morning,
18 Commissioners. Mike Sheehan, for Liberty
19 Utilities (Granite State Electric) and Liberty
20 Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas).

21 MR. DEAN: Good morning. Mark Dean,
22 representing the New Hampshire Electric
23 Cooperative.

24 MS. HATFIELD: Good morning.

1 Meredith Hatfield, for Conservation Law
2 Foundation.

3 MR. BURKE: Good morning. Raymond
4 Burke, from New Hampshire Legal Assistance,
5 representing The Way Home.

6 MS. OHLER: Good morning. Rebecca
7 Ohler, for the Department of Environmental
8 Services.

9 MR. KREIS: Good morning. I'm D.
10 Maurice Kreis, the Consumer Advocate, here on
11 behalf of residential customers of all of these
12 utilities.

13 MR. DEXTER: Good morning,
14 Commissioners. On behalf of the Commission
15 Staff, Paul Dexter and Brian Buckley.

16 CMSR. GIAIMO: Did we miss anyone?

17 *[No indication given.]*

18 CMSR. GIAIMO: Okay. So, let's
19 start. Are there any objections to the
20 intervention request?

21 MR. DEXTER: Staff has no objection.

22 CMSR. GIAIMO: No objections. Okay.
23 I don't see Sunrun, Attorney Birchard here.
24 Okay.

1 All right. We'll take that issue
2 under advisement.

3 Are there any preliminary issues we
4 need to take up?

5 MR. DEXTER: Commissioners, about a
6 week or so ago, I received an email from
7 Madeleine Mineau, of the -- Executive Director
8 of the Clean Energy New Hampshire, who is a
9 party to the case. And the essence of the
10 email was that she wouldn't be able to be here
11 today, but didn't want anyone to take her
12 absence, and her entire organization's absence,
13 as a lack of interest in the case.

14 I offered to read her statement into
15 the record, with your permission, to that
16 effect. But, then, in the meantime, she
17 submitted a letter to the Executive Director,
18 which you might have already.

19 If you have the letter, there's no
20 reason for me to read it. It's three
21 sentences. I would be happy to read it in.

22 CMSR. GIAIMO: I do not have the
23 letter. So, you can read it. And it will be
24 included in the record that's posted.

1 MR. DEXTER: Very good. So, it says
2 "Clean Energy New Hampshire regrets that, due
3 to previously scheduled obligations, none of
4 our staff is able to attend the prehearing
5 conference for Docket DE 17-136 regarding the
6 proposed EERS 2020 Plan Update. Due to our
7 absence, we wanted to assure the Commission and
8 parties that we are very much interested and
9 committed to continue fully participating in
10 this docket, and to be active stakeholders in
11 the EERS 2020 Plan Update review and approval
12 process. We look forward to engaging in this
13 process at the next opportunity to do so.
14 Sincerely, Madeleine Mineau."

15 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you, Mr. Dexter.

16 MR. DEXTER: You're welcome.

17 CMSR. GIAIMO: All right. Let's go
18 with preliminary positions.

19 Mr. Fossum, can you start us off
20 please.

21 MR. FOSSUM: Thank you, and good
22 morning.

23 We are here today, as has been noted,
24 to review and, hopefully, ultimately approve

1 the 2020 Update Plan that has been filed by the
2 utilities relative to the three-year EERS Plan
3 that was previously approved by the Commission.

4 I wanted to note that some years ago
5 my daughter participated in gymnastics. And,
6 while we were there, in the parent viewing
7 area, there was a very prominently displayed
8 sign to remind the parents that -- it said that
9 "Comparison is the thief of joy."

10 And the point of that was to make
11 sure that the people who are viewing took into
12 account that, you know, different children
13 mature in different ways, have different levels
14 of interest and skill and ability. And that we
15 shouldn't be distracted by those differences,
16 but should instead look at the successes that
17 our children are having.

18 I offer that little anecdote because
19 I believe, based on some relatively recent
20 information, it may be that people are looking
21 to, perhaps, probably unfairly compare New
22 Hampshire to what is going on in other places
23 in the country. And I don't believe that
24 comparison is particularly helpful. And I

1 believe a distraction of success that New
2 Hampshire has seen since the implementation of
3 the EERS.

4 This 2020 Update Plan continues the
5 tradition that we have established under the
6 EERS. We have set meaningful goals for energy
7 efficiency, and we are continuing to meet them,
8 to benefit the customers, the electric and gas
9 customers of the State of New Hampshire.

10 This Plan Update moves us forward in
11 that regard. It continues the successful
12 programs that have been implemented. It offers
13 a few adjustments where it seems appropriate,
14 for instance, the Residential Demand Response
15 offering that's included in the filing. We
16 think this is a good plan, and we think it's a
17 beneficial plan for New Hampshire.

18 Now, I know I said that we shouldn't
19 compare. But, if we're going to do it anyway,
20 I think it's important to have a complete view.
21 And, in that regard, I wanted to thank the
22 Commission for supporting this EERS over these
23 last few years, because, without the support
24 for these programs, it's possible that New

1 Hampshire might be further behind its peers
2 around the country.

3 That all said, we're prepared and we
4 will, as we always have, to work cooperatively
5 with the other stakeholders in this process
6 expeditiously, to get this filing ready for
7 2020 implementation, to prepare for the real
8 benefits to offer to New Hampshire customers,
9 and to prepare for the real work that is to
10 come with the new three-year plan next year.

11 So, with that, I would ask that the
12 Commission approve this 2020 Update Plan,
13 including the rate requests within it. And
14 that it do so in enough time that we can
15 continue these programs without interruption
16 beginning January 1, 2020.

17 Thank you.

18 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you, Mr. Fossum.
19 Attorney Taylor.

20 MR. TAYLOR: Good morning. Thank
21 you.

22 As is typically the case in these
23 dockets, I can't improve upon what Mr. Fossum
24 just laid out for you. So, with the exception

1 of his personal anecdote, which I can't claim
2 as my own, you know, I'd like to echo the
3 comments and sentiments that he just gave to
4 you.

5 Like Eversource, we think this is a
6 good plan, and we recommend that the Commission
7 approve the 2020 Update Plan.

8 Thank you.

9 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you.

10 MR. SHEEHAN: For Liberty, I can be
11 even shorter. I repeat what was spoken by
12 Mr. Fossum and Mr. Taylor.

13 Thank you.

14 CMSR. GIAIMO: Okay. Thanks. Mr.
15 Dean.

16 MR. DEAN: New Hampshire Electric
17 Cooperative has nothing additional to add at
18 this point.

19 Thank you.

20 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you. Ms.
21 Hatfield.

22 MS. HATFIELD: Thank you. Thank you,
23 Commissioner.

24 CLF looks forward to working with the

1 other parties over the coming two months, to be
2 before the Commission in December, so that the
3 programs can begin on January 1st.

4 Thank you.

5 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you. Mr. Burke.

6 MR. BURKE: Thank you, Commissioner.

7 Likewise, The Way Home looks forward
8 to working with the parties to review the 2020
9 Plan Update. We take no position at this time,
10 but would just like to take a brief moment to
11 say that we appreciate all of the hard work
12 that went into the working groups over the past
13 year, and the time and effort of the parties
14 and the consultants. We think it was fruitful
15 and productive work that will not only benefit
16 the 2020 Plan, but future plans in the years
17 ahead.

18 Thank you.

19 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you. Ms. Ohler.

20 MS. OHLER: The Department of
21 Environmental Services will echo the last two
22 comments. We appreciate the work that the
23 utilities have done. And we look forward to
24 finalizing this plan in time to implement in

1 January.

2 Thank you.

3 CMSR. GIAIMO: Great. Thank you.

4 Mr. Kreis.

5 MR. KREIS: Thank you.

6 So, my daughter is a dressage rider.
7 And this past summer she competed in the North
8 American Youth Championships down in suburban
9 New York City. And this is a big international
10 competition, she was very proud to participate
11 in it. And, lo and behold, when all was said
12 and done, she placed, I believe, sixth, in a
13 group of eight people that she was competing
14 with. And when she achieved that result, which
15 didn't result in, I guess, a championship for
16 her, I didn't hear her say "comparison is the
17 thief of joy". I heard her promise to be back
18 again in that competition in two years, so that
19 she can improve her result.

20 And, in that spirit, I am very
21 committed, and the Office of the Consumer
22 Advocate is very committed, to improving New
23 Hampshire's record when it comes to energy
24 efficiency. Not because we really care how we

1 place in relation to other states, according to
2 the American Council for an Energy Efficient
3 Economy or according to anybody else's
4 benchmarks, but because the citizens of this
5 state and the ratepayers of this state deserve
6 the achievement of what we have all already
7 committed to achieve, which is all
8 cost-effective energy efficiency. And we are
9 throwing everything we have in the direction of
10 making that a reality. We are not there yet.

11 Nevertheless, the 2020 Update is but
12 one step on that path to all cost-effective
13 energy efficiency. And, relative to the step
14 that we'll be undertaking over the next six to
15 nine months, I refer to the developing and
16 filing of the next triennial plan covering 2021
17 through 2023, this proceeding that we're in
18 right now is of relatively lesser magnitude.
19 And, so, I do look forward to a swift and
20 amicable resolution of any issues that might be
21 raised by the utilities' filing, and a
22 settlement agreement that the Commission can
23 speedily approve.

24 CMSR. GIAIMO: Thank you. Mr.

1 Dexter.

2 MR. DEXTER: Thank you,
3 Commissioners.

4 Staff is generally supportive of the
5 proposed Plan Update. There are a few issues
6 that we will pay special attention to in the
7 short time allowed by the procedural schedule.
8 One of them is the proposed demand response
9 initiatives put forth by the Company.

10 As you will recall from the last Plan
11 Update, the utilities implemented a -- two of
12 the utilities implemented a demand response
13 initiative, targeted at commercial/industrial
14 customers. The results of that program,
15 according to the schedule we set out last time,
16 have not yet been provided in detail. They
17 will be provided shortly after -- early in
18 2020, is my understanding.

19 The Companies have proposed to extend
20 that initiative in the 2020 year. And we're
21 generally supportive of that. But we will be
22 looking closely at the results that will be
23 filed, even though that will come after this
24 phase of the case is finished.

1 The utilities have recommended or
2 proposed to extend demand response initiatives
3 into the residential sector. So, that is an
4 area that Staff will want to take a close look
5 at.

6 And, probably more of an issue for
7 the next *triennium* than this one, but the
8 overall question of "whether or not demand
9 reduction initiatives belong in the SBC-funded
10 portion of a utility's operations versus some
11 other area?" But, as I said, that's probably
12 more of an issue for the next *triennium*.

13 Over the course of the last couple of
14 years, the Lost Base Revenue Work Group
15 concluded its work, submitted a report, and
16 developed a framework by which lost base
17 revenues would be collected. And those
18 calculations are included in the filing that
19 was made September 13th.

20 So, Staff will be looking to make
21 sure that the calculations are in conformance
22 with the report, the consensus report that was
23 filed last year.

24 And this filing contains, for the

1 first time, the results of the Performance
2 Incentive Work Group. The recommendations of
3 the group are included in the filing, again, a
4 largely consensus recommendation. And the
5 calculations presented in the September 13th
6 filing reflect the results of that working
7 group and that report. So, we'll just be
8 making sure that everything lines up in that
9 regard.

10 Other than those issues, we see this
11 largely as a continuation of the Plan that has
12 been approved twice now. And, like the rest of
13 the parties, we hope that this can move forward
14 through a settlement presented to you in time
15 for approval by the end of the year.

16 Thank you.

17 CMSR. GIAIMO: All right. Well, let
18 me thank everyone for all their effort to date
19 and the effort going forward.

20 Unless there's anything else? And
21 I'll pause to see if anyone has anything else?

22 *[No indication given.]*

23 CMSR. GIAIMO: Seeing none. We'll
24 adjourn the prehearing conference and leave you

1 to your technical session. Thank you.

2 ***(Whereupon the prehearing***
3 ***conference was adjourned at***
4 ***9:29 a.m., and a technical***
5 ***session was held thereafter.)***

6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24