

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 23-021

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
d/b/a EVERSOURCE ENERGY**

**Petition for Approval of Change in
Regulatory Reconciliation Adjustment Mechanism Rate**

COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDING AND NOTICE OF HEARING

On March 1, 2023, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource or the Company) filed a petition requesting the Commission to open a new docket to review and approve a revised Regulatory Reconciliation Adjustment Mechanism (RRA) rate for effect on August 1, 2023. In support of its petition, Eversource filed the direct testimony of Robert D. Allen, Eversource Energy Service Company's (ESC) Manager of Vegetation Management, Elli Ntakou, ESC Manager of System Resilience and Reliability Planning, and Russel D. Johnson, ESC Director of Distribution Engineering (Direct Testimony), regarding Eversource's vegetation management (VM) activities and reliability performance during calendar year 2022. The petition and subsequent docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, are available on the Commission's website at www.puc.nh.gov/regulatory/Docketbk/2023/23-021.html.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Eversource was authorized to implement an RRA pursuant to the settlement agreement that the Commission approved in Order No. 26,433 (December 15, 2020) (Settlement Agreement), issued in Docket No. DE 19-057. See Order No. 26,433 at 14-15, 21-22. The RRA is a component of distribution rates that allows Eversource to

recover or refund the following relating to the prior calendar year(s): (1) annual Commission regulatory assessments and special assessments for consultants retained by the Commission or the Office of the Consumer Advocate; (2) the Company's VM program variances; (3) property tax over- or under-recoveries as compared to the amount included in base distribution rates; (4) lost-base distribution revenues associated with net metering; and (5) storm cost amortization final reconciliation and annual reconciliations updated for the actual cost of long-term debt. Settlement Agreement, Subsection 9.1.

The Settlement Agreement required Eversource to submit a filing to the Commission containing the Company's VM activities and reliability statistics for the prior calendar year, as well as request to open a new docket to consider the filing and other RRA issues, by March 1 of each year. Settlement Agreement, Subsection 9.3. Eversource must update its filing with information relating to the other aspects of its RRA filing, including the proposed adjustment to the RRA rate, by May 1. *See Id.* Once approved by the Commission, the revised RRA rate would become effective August 1. *Id.*

Eversource filed its first petition to approve an RRA rate in Docket No. DE 21-029. The Commission provisionally approved the RRA rate in Order No. 26,503 (July 30, 2021). In Order No. 26,503, the Commission requested that, in the future, parties provide it with live spreadsheets for all work papers relating to requests for rate recovery or any other financial recovery. Order No. 26,503 at 5.

In the above-captioned matter, Eversource submitted its petition and preliminary information regarding the Company's VM activities and reliability performance for calendar year 2022. Mr. Allen testified that this information shows an over-recovery in the amount of \$1,586,392 as of March 1, 2023. Direct Testimony at

Bates Page 22. Eversource stated that it would complete its filing on or before May 1, 2023 and requested the Commission to schedule a hearing no later than June 30, 2023.

On May 1, 2023, Eversource filed additional testimony and supporting attachments from Marisa B. Paruta, ESC Director of New Hampshire and Connecticut Revenue Requirements, and Scott R. Anderson, ESC Manager of Rates, explaining the various cost components included in its RRA rate filing. According to this testimony, Eversource calculated its RRA revenue requirement for effect August 1, 2023 as \$2,593,483, which is a .5% increase in the total RRA revenue requirement when compared to last year. Paruta and Anderson Testimony at Bates Page 7. The proposed average RRA rate is \$0.00033 per kWh. *Id.* at 12.

II. ISSUES PRESENTED

This proceeding presents, *inter alia*, the following issues: whether Eversource's annual RRA filing complies with the terms of the Settlement Agreement; whether Eversource appropriately calculated the proposed RRA rate; and whether implementation of the proposed RRA rate is likely to result in just and reasonable rates, as required by RSA 374:2, and RSA 378:5 and :7. The proceeding also presents issues related to the transition in property tax adjustment needed in the RRA as a result of the sunset of RSA 72:8(e). Accordingly, an adjudicative proceeding will be convened to address these issues.

The Commission will be conducting any hearings scheduled in this matter in person. The Commission will consider requests to conduct hearings using a hybrid format to permit remote participation by a specific individual only if the Commission has determined that a sufficient reason has been provided for why that individual would be unable to attend in person. Any party requesting that a specific individual be

permitted to participate remotely should file a written request with the Commission's Clerk's Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing date. If the Commission determines that one or more individuals will be permitted to appear remotely, then individuals in the Commission's hearing room, including the Commissioners, will be broadcast on a web-enabled platform.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that an adjudicative proceeding be commenced for the purpose of reviewing and resolving the foregoing issues pursuant to RSA chapter 541-A, RSA 374:2, and RSA 378:5 and :7, and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a hearing in this matter at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on June 29, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. Three hours shall be allotted for this hearing; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any entity or individual may petition to intervene and seek to be admitted as a party in this proceeding. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any entity or individual seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to Eversource and any other parties on the service list, on or before June 16, 2023. The petition shall state the facts demonstrating how the petitioner's rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before June 26, 2023; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that parties shall file any proposed exhibits, written testimony, motions, or other documents intended to become part of the record in this proceeding with the Commission. Pursuant to the secretarial letter issued on March 17, 2020, which is posted on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Secretarial%20Letters/20200317-SecLtr-Temp-Changes-in-Filing-Requirements.pdf>, all Commission rules requiring the filing of paper copies are suspended until further notice. Parties may elect to submit any filing in electronic form unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. Filings will be considered filed as of the time the electronic copy is received by the Commission; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that in order to have the hearing on the scheduled date, the New Hampshire Department of Energy (DOE) shall file a report from DOE Audit Division Staff showing the results of an audit of the costs proposed for recovery in this proceeding by June 12, 2023; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that routine procedural inquiries may be made by contacting the Commission's Clerk's Office at (603) 271-2431 or ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov. All requests to the Commission should be made in a written pleading filed with the Commission. Unless otherwise authorized by law, *ex parte* communications are prohibited; and it is

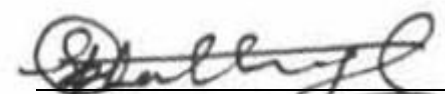
FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, Eversource shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before May 23, 2023. In addition, the Clerk shall publish this order of notice on the Commission's website no later than two business days after the date of issue; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any hearings in this matter shall be conducted in accordance with the attached hearing guidelines.

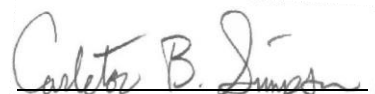
So ordered, this fifth day of May, 2023.



Daniel C. Goldner
Chairman



Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner



Carleton B. Simpson
Commissioner

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.

Service List - Docket Related

Docket#: 23-021

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