

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 24-101

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE d/b/a EVERSOURCE ENERGY
AND NEW HAMPSHIRE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Joint Petition to Alter Franchise Boundaries in the Town of Landaff

Order Approving Petition

ORDER NO. 27,094

January 16, 2025

On September 12, 2024, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource) and New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC) filed a joint petition to alter their franchise boundaries in the Town of Landaff, New Hampshire pursuant to RSA 374:22 and RSA 374:26. Specifically, they seek to transfer one lot from Eversource's franchise area to NHEC's on the grounds that, due to the locations of their respective distribution infrastructure, NHEC can provide service to the lots at less cost than Eversource. The New Hampshire Department of Energy (DOE) filed a technical statement recommending that the Commission approve the petition. For the reasons that follow, the Commission **APPROVES** the joint petition consistent with the ordering clause below. All docket filings, other than those subject to confidential treatment, are available on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2024/24-101.html>.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Commission draws the following facts from the parties' filings, including the joint petition and attachments, the petitioners notice of customer consent, and the DOE's technical statement. None of the facts appear to be in dispute. Eversource is a public utility under RSA 362:2, I with a franchise area that includes parts of Landaff.

NHEC is a rural electric cooperative with a franchise area that includes parts of Landaff. The joint petition concerns a single lot in Chester.

Lot 3-17 is an undeveloped lot which sits entirely within the Eversource franchise area. The owner of the lot intends to build a residence on it and seeks electric service. Eversource and NHEC represent that, given the location of the two utilities' respective electric distribution facilities, it would be more efficient for NHEC to extend an electric line to the lot and provide service to the new residence than it would be for Eversource to do so. *See* Joint Petition, Attachment B (showing the location of the utilities' respective distribution facilities). They therefore request that the Commission approve a boundary change to move Lot 3-17 into NHEC's territory. *See* Joint Petition, Attachment A (showing the proposed boundary changes). The DOE's technical statement represents that the cost for NHEC to extend electric lines to Lot 3-17 would be less expensive than Eversource doing so. *See* DOE Technical Statement at 2. In addition, the owner of the lot consents to the franchise boundary change.

II. LEGAL STANDARD

The Commission has a general obligation to ensure that every electric public utility furnishes such service and facilities as shall be reasonably safe and adequate and in all other respects just and reasonable. RSA 374:21. In addition, public utilities must obtain approval from the Commission before they alter their franchise boundaries. *See* RSA 374:22, I. In order to approve a change in franchise boundaries, the Commission must find that it would be for the public good. RSA 374:26. The Commission may grant such permission without a hearing when "all interested parties are in agreement" that the franchise change is appropriate. *Id.* Although RSA 374:22 does not apply to NHEC under RSA 362:2, II, this transaction is subject to the Commission's review because Eversource is a public utility under RSA 362:2, I.

III. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

Based on the parties' representations in their filings, the Commission finds that the proposed alterations to the franchise boundaries are for the public good. The Commission accepts the parties' representations that NHEC can extend service to the lot at a lower cost than Eversource because the former company's existing distribution facilities are closer. Significantly, there is nothing in the record suggesting that the proposed boundary change would negatively affect the public good. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed alteration to the petitioners' franchise areas are in the public good consistent with RSA 374:22 and RSA 374:26.


Finally, because all interested parties—the petitioners, the DOE, and the customers—support the franchise boundary changes, the Commission finds it appropriate to approve the petition without a public hearing. RSA 374:26.

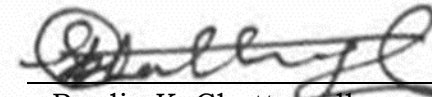
Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that the petition is **APPROVED**; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Eversource and NHEC shall file updated franchise maps with the Commission on or before February 17, 2025, in accordance with New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules, Puc 1603, noting the approved change, annotated with this order and the effective date herein.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this sixteenth day of January, 2025.


Daniel C. Goldner
Chairman


Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner

Service List - Docket Related

Docket#: 24-101

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Email Addresses

ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov
gary.m.cronin@energy.nh.gov
Energy-Litigation@energy.nh.gov
paul.b.dexter@energy.nh.gov
emerson@primmer.com
sandra.gagnon@eversource.com
alexandra.k.ladwig@energy.nh.gov
Katie.I.McLaughlin@energy.nh.gov
nhregulatory@eversource.com
elizabeth.r.nixon@energy.nh.gov
amanda.o.noonan@energy.nh.gov
ocalitigation@oca.nh.gov
david.wiesner@eversource.com