

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**DE 25-006**

**LIBERTY UTILITIES (GRANITE STATE ELECTRIC) CORP. d/b/a LIBERTY**

**Petition to Increase the Storm Recovery Adjustment Factor**

**COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDING, NOTICE OF PREHEARING  
CONFERENCE, AND SUSPENSION OF TARIFF**

On January 28, 2025, Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty (Liberty) filed a petition to increase their Storm Recovery Adjustment Factor (SRAF) to \$0.00377 per kWh to be effective March 1, 2025. In support of its petition, Liberty filed the Direct Testimony of Robert Garcia and supporting documents. All docket filings, other than any information subject to confidential treatment, are available on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2025/25-006.html>. This order also suspends the proposed tariff for a period of three months.

**I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

In Order No. 24,777 in Docket No. DG 06-107, the Commission approved a settlement agreement that required Liberty to create a storm contingency fund (Storm Fund) to pay for operation and maintenance costs Liberty incurred as a result of major storms. The Storm Fund is funded at a fixed annual amount by ratepayers. Liberty is required to file annual Storm Fund reports detailing the collections credited to the fund, details of any qualifying major storm costs that were charged to the fund during the preceding calendar year, and a description of qualifying storm events including a summary of the damage to the distribution system and the number and length of outages.

On January 28, 2025, Liberty filed a request to adjust its rates through the SRAF to alleviate the under collection of the Storm Fund and replenish the negative balance of (\$3,428,209). Liberty proposes an SRAF rate of \$0.00377 per kWh to be collected over the 12-month period of March 1, 2025, through February 28, 2026.

On February 4, 2025, the New Hampshire Department of Energy (DOE) filed an assented-to motion to suspend Liberty's requested tariffs, stating that the DOE needs more time to investigate the request and that Liberty's 2024 storm costs have not been reviewed for prudence. The DOE argues that no recovery of 2024 storm costs should take place until such review is complete.

## **II. ISSUES PRESENTED**

The filing presents, *inter alia*, the following issues: whether Liberty's proposed increase in rates would result in rates that are just, reasonable, and in the public interest; and whether the proposed increase is consistent with the purpose and requirements of the Storm Fund, as laid out in the settlement agreement in Docket No. DG 06-107 and the relevant tariff provisions on the Storm Fund. 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, RSA 378 and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, the Liberty's proposed SRAF rates are hereby suspended for a period of not to exceed 12 months pursuant to RSA 378:6, I(a), pending investigation and further order of the Commission; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that the Commission will hold a prehearing conference in this matter at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on May 13, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., at which each party should be prepared to address any of the issues set forth in Puc 204.07; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that the New Hampshire Department of Energy is requested to file its position regarding Liberty's petition, including the reasons for this position, on or before May 1, 2025; 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 RSA 541-A:32, Puc 204.08, and Puc 203.06, any entity or individual seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to Liberty and any other parties on the service list, on or before March 18, 2025. 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 Puc 204.08; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before March 28, 2025; and it is

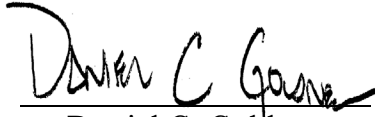
**FURTHER ORDERED**, that parties shall file any proposed exhibits, written testimony, motions, or other documents intended to become part of the record in this proceeding with the Commission in accordance with the Commission's administrative rules. Parties may elect to submit any filing in electronic 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 routine procedural inquiries may be made by contacting the Commission's Clerk's Office at (603) 271-2431 or [ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov](mailto: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

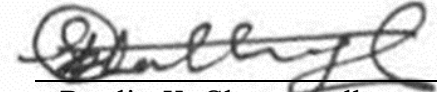
**FURTHER ORDERED**, that pursuant to Puc 204.04, Liberty shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before February 28, 2025, 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.

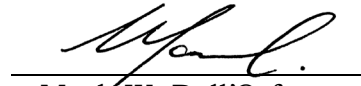
So ordered, this nineteenth day of February, 2025.



Daniel C. Goldner  
Chairman



Pradip K. Chattopadhyay  
Commissioner



Mark W. Dell'Orfano  
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#: 25-006

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