

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

July 19, 2013 - 1:39 p.m.  
Concord, New Hampshire

NHPUC AUG01'13 AM 9:38

RE: DW 13-128  
PITTSFIELD AQUEDUCT COMPANY:  
Notice of Intent to File Rate Schedules.  
(Prehearing conference)

PRESENT: Chairman Amy L. Ignatius, Presiding  
Commissioner Robert R. Scott  
Commissioner Michael D. Harrington

Clare Howard-Pike, Clerk

APPEARANCES: Reptg. Pittsfield Aqueduct Company:  
Thomas B. Getz, Esq. (Devine, Millimet...)

Reptg. Residential Ratepayers:  
Rorie E. P. Hollenberg, Esq.  
Office of Consumer Advocate

Reptg. PUC Staff:  
Marcia A. Brown, Esq.  
Mark Naylor, Director/Gas & Water Division  
Robyn Descoteau, Gas & Water Division  
Michael Sheehan, Esq.

Court Reporter: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52

ORIGINAL

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**P R O C E E D I N G**

CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good afternoon. I'd like to open the hearing in Docket DW 13-128. This is Pittsfield Aqueduct Company's permanent rate case. Pittsfield filed on May 31st a request for increase to its permanent rates, and also seeking a waiver from certain filing provisions, which I had forgotten we had already granted in the order of notice. So, I won't go through that process again today. It also seeks temporary rates, although this isn't the temporary rate proceeding today.

The requested increase for permanent rates would be an increase of 63,000 -- almost \$64,000 in gross operating revenues, or a 9.34 percent increase effective July 1st, 2013. The temporary rate request asks for a 7 percent increase on a reconcilable basis. And, by order of notice dated June 20th, we called for a prehearing conference this afternoon and opportunity for interventions.

So, let's begin first with appearances.

MR. GETZ: Good afternoon, madam Chair and Commissioners. I'm Tom Getz, of the law firm of Devine, Millimet & Branch, on behalf of Pittsfield Aqueduct Company. Also present today with the Company are John Patenaude, the Chief Executive Officer; Don Ware, the

1 Chief Operating Officer; Larry Goodhue, the Chief  
2 Financial Officer; Charles Hoepper, Director of Regulatory  
3 Affairs; and John Boisvert, the Chief Engineer.

4 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good afternoon. Ms.  
5 Hollenberg.

6 MS. HOLLENBERG: Good afternoon. Rorie  
7 Hollenberg here on behalf of the Office of Consumer  
8 Advocate.

9 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good afternoon.

10 MS. BROWN: Good morning -- good  
11 afternoon, Commissioners. Marcia Brown, on behalf of  
12 Staff. And, with me today is Mark Naylor, Robyn  
13 Descoteau, and Attorney Mike Sheehan. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good afternoon,  
15 everyone. And, do we have a customer here or other person  
16 seeking to participate?

17 MR. OKRENT: Good afternoon. My name is  
18 Fred Okrent. I'm a customer. And, I'm here to observe.

19 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: All right. Welcome.  
20 And, can you spell your last name please, sir?

21 MR. OKRENT: O-k-r-e-n-t.

22 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Thank you. And,  
23 you're a customer of Pittsfield?

24 MR. CAMERINO: Pittsfield Aqueduct, yes.

1                   CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Great. Thank you  
2 very much. Glad you're here.

3                   I don't see any requests for  
4 intervention in the file, and it doesn't appear there's  
5 anyone here. Is anyone aware of anyone who's seeking to  
6 intervene?

7                   MR. GETZ: We are not.

8                   CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Okay. And, we  
9 received the publication affidavit. Thank you very much  
10 for that. Are there any other administrative matters we  
11 should take care of before going to positions?

12                   (No verbal response)

13                   CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: I don't see any.  
14 So, why don't we go ahead, Mr. Getz, with a sort of  
15 summary of where you are in this case and what you  
16 anticipate being significant as we work through it.

17                   MR. GETZ: Thank you, madam Chair. We  
18 really don't have anything to offer in addition to the  
19 summary that you've already made from the suspension  
20 order. We have been talking to Staff and the Consumer  
21 Advocate about the best way to make sure that the  
22 procedural schedules among the three cases work together.  
23 And, so, we will continue to do that when we go to the  
24 technical session this afternoon. But there are no other

1 specific issues to point out at this time.

2 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: All right. Thank  
3 you. Ms. Hollenberg?

4 MS. HOLLENBERG: Thank you. The OCA has  
5 no position at this time on the Company's filing.

6 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: All right.  
7 Ms. Brown?

8 MS. BROWN: Good afternoon. This may  
9 sound redundant, because we've had three -- or, three  
10 prehearings in close succession involving similar  
11 companies. But, for Pittsfield Aqueduct Company, this is  
12 the first post acquisition rate case, and there are some  
13 unique accounting treatments that Staff will be taking  
14 special care to review during this rate case.

15 As with traditional rate cases, Audit  
16 Staff conducts a full audit of the Company's books and  
17 records, and that will be done in this proceeding or in  
18 conjunction with this proceeding. And, with the audit in  
19 mind, Staff and the parties will be developing a  
20 procedural schedule that incorporates knowledge of the  
21 findings of those, of the audit report, in time so that we  
22 can at least have one round of discovery after those  
23 findings are made. So that, if there are any issues found  
24 in the audit, we can resolve them in this proceeding, or

1       also flesh out issues and resolve them in this proceeding.

2               As Attorney Getz alluded to, we've  
3       already discussed a preliminary procedural schedule. So,  
4       it's Staff's hope that we will finish that procedural  
5       schedule discussion in the tech session, and we will file  
6       a procedural schedule shortly with the Commission.

7               Staff would offer its position on  
8       permanent and temporary rates likely through testimony at  
9       the appropriate time, pursuant to the procedural schedule.  
10      Thank you.

11              CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: All right. Thank  
12      you. And, I know, Ms. Brown, you've said at other times  
13      that you're always willing to work with customers, and the  
14      OCA I'm sure as well, work with customers to understand  
15      ways they can participate, even if they're not full  
16      intervenors. And, if you haven't had a chance to talk to  
17      Mr. Okrent yet, you know, that would be probably a good  
18      idea, so he understands the ways -- the different levels  
19      of participation and how to take advantage of those.

20              MS. BROWN: Yes. OCA and Staff have at  
21      least contacted or spoken to prior to the prehearing. So,  
22      we'll continue that. Thank you.

23              CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good. Thanks a lot.  
24      So, I don't think we have anything else for our part of

1       it. We'll leave you to the tech session and development  
2       of the schedule and beginning the sorting out of the  
3       issues in a way that's efficient on coming up with a  
4       schedule for the duration of the case. And, we'll respond  
5       to that when it's filed.

6                       So, with that, we will adjourn this  
7       hearing and leave you to the tech session.

8                       **(Whereupon the prehearing conference**  
9                       **ended at 1:45 p.m., and the Parties and**  
10                      **Staff conducted a technical session**  
11                      **thereafter.)**