

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 17-043

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

**Calendar Year 2016 Reliability Enhancement and Vegetation
Management Plan Results and Reconciliation**

ORDER OF NOTICE

On March 15, 2017, Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities (Liberty) filed the results of its reliability enhancement plan (REP) and vegetation management plan (VMP) for calendar year 2016. The filing was made pursuant to a settlement agreement approved in Order No. 25,638 (March 17, 2014). Liberty also filed supporting testimony and related exhibits.

The filing contains: (1) a report on the actual spending on REP and VMP operation and maintenance (O&M) and REP capital investment for 2016, including an explanation of the difference between the actual amounts and the budgeted amounts reviewed by Commission Staff, (2) a request to refund to customers \$44,620 from an over-collection of \$76,104 related to 2016 O&M spending and an under-collection of \$31,484 from the reconciliation of the 2015 O&M, (3) a request to recover \$120,019 in revenue requirement associated with \$849,390 in capital investment in 2016, and (4) a summary of reliability performance for 2016.

Liberty created its O&M budget with the assumption that FairPoint would make a contribution to vegetation management pursuant to a memorandum of understanding between the two companies. The total program spent for 2016 for O&M was \$1,633,896, which includes \$1,541,561 for CY 2016 and \$92,335 of carryover for 2015. After subtracting \$350,000 for amounts billed to FairPoint for vegetation management, the net O&M spending was \$1,283,896.

As compared to the base level in rates of \$1,360,000, the net result including the reconciliation of the 2015 O&M is a refund to customers in the amount of \$44,620.

For a customer taking energy service from Liberty, the total bill impact of the REP/VMP rates proposed in this filing as compared to rates in presently in effect, is a monthly bill decrease of \$0.16, or a decrease of 0.15%. The primary reason for the decrease is that the actual O&M charged for 2016 is less than the O&M amount in in base rates for 2016.

The petition and subsequent docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, will be posted to the Commission's website at <http://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2017/17-043.html>.

The filing raises, *inter alia*, issues related to whether Liberty appropriately accounted for the costs of its REP and VMP and whether the resulting rates are just and reasonable as required by RSA 378:5 and RSA 378:7. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

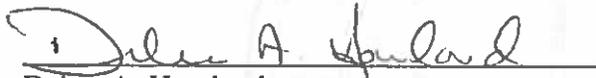
ORDERED, that a Hearing, pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, be held before the Commission located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire on April 11, 2017 at 10:30 a.m.; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, Liberty shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this Order of Notice no later than March 31, 2017, in a newspaper with general circulation in those portions of the state in which operations are conducted, publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before April 7, 2017; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that consistent with N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any party seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall submit to the Commission seven copies of a Petition to Intervene with copies sent to Liberty and the Office of the Consumer Advocate on or before April 7, 2017, such Petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities or other substantial interest may be affected by the proceeding, as required by N.H. Code Admin. Rule Puc 203.17; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a Petition to Intervene make said Objection on or before April 11, 2017.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-seventh day of March, 2017.



Debra A. Howland
Executive Director

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, 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 - EMAIL ADDRESSES- DOCKET RELATED

Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.11 (a) (1): Serve an electronic copy on each person identified on the service list.

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FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

- a) Pursuant to N.H. Admin Rule Puc 203.02 (a), with the exception of Discovery, file 7 copies, as well as an electronic copy, of all documents including cover letter with:**
- DEBRA A HOWLAND
EXEC DIRECTOR
NHPUC
21 S. FRUIT ST, SUITE 10
CONCORD NH 03301-2429
- b) Serve an electronic copy with each person identified on the Commission's service list and with the Office of Consumer Advocate.**
- c) Serve a written copy on each person on the service list not able to receive electronic mail.**