

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DG 22-015

**LIBERTY UTILITIES (ENERGYNORTH NATURAL GAS) CORP.
d/b/a LIBERTY UTILITIES – KEENE DIVISION**

Summer 2022 Cost of Gas

**COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDING
AND NOTICE OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE AND HEARING**

On March 15, 2022, Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities – Keene Division (Liberty Keene) submitted a Summer 2022 Cost of Gas (COG) filing outlining its proposed COG rates for the summer period (May 1, 2022 through October 31, 2022). In support of its petition, Liberty Keene filed the combined direct testimony of Deborah M. Gilbertson, Liberty Utilities Service Corp. (LUSC) Senior Manager of Energy Procurement, and Catherine A. McNamara, LUSC Rates and Regulatory Affairs Analyst (Direct Testimony), as well as revised tariff pages and schedules in support of the proposed rates. The initial filing 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/2022/22-0XX.html.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Liberty Keene's proposed Summer 2022 COG rate is \$1.6643 per therm, a \$0.4822 per therm increase when compared to the 2021 summer period's initial approved rate of \$1.1821 per therm. See Order No. 26,475 (April 30, 2021). This rate is based on the projected usage of both propane air and compressed natural gas (GNG) in Keene. The proposed change to the residential COG rate is expected to increase a typical residential heat and hot water customer's total summer bill from \$216.95 last

summer to approximately \$245.68 this summer, an increase of \$28.73, or approximately 13.2 percent over the summer period using a weighted monthly average. The projected impact of the COG rate change, standing alone, would be an increase from \$83.67 last summer to approximately \$108.17 this summer, an increase of \$24.50, or 29.3 percent in the gas component of the average customer bill compared to the 2021 summer period.

II. ISSUES PRESENTED

The filing presents issues related to RSA 374:2, RSA 378:5, and RSA 378:7, including: the justness and reasonableness of rates, fares, and charges; the forecasting of sales, supplier prices, and transportation prices; weather normalization; operational issues; purchasing decisions related to current and past supplies; capacity and revenue projections related to transportation services and released capacity; the reconciliation of prior period costs and revenues; the revenue and rate impacts resulting from the proposed rate change; the calculation of per therm costs for both propane air and CNG; and incremental savings and costs. 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 April 1, 2022. 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, RSA 378:5, and RSA 378:7, and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a prehearing conference, pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.15, at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on April 4, 2022, at 9:00 a.m., at which each party should be prepared to address any of the issues set forth in N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.15; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that during the prehearing conference, the Commission will consider the matters listed in Puc 203.15(c) and (d); and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that immediately following the prehearing conference, Liberty Keene make appropriate personnel available for the parties to hold a technical session to review the filing; 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 Liberty Keene and any other parties on the service list, on or before April 1, 2022—if such a party wishes to have a decision on the petition prior to the April 4, 2022 technical session—or otherwise on or before April 12, 2022. 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 April 22, 2022; 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 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

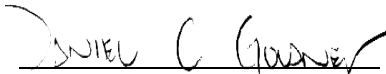
FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, Liberty Keene shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before April 1, 2022. 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

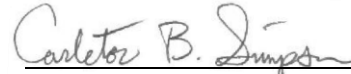
FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a hearing in this matter at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on April 26, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. Three hours shall be allotted for this hearing; and it is

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

So ordered, this twenty-ninth day of March, 2022.


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# : 22-015

Printed: 3/29/2022

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