

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

DW 18-026

**ABENAKI WATER COMPANY, INC., HAMPSTEAD AREA WATER COMPANY, INC.
and
LAKES REGION WATER COMPANY, INC.**

Return on Equity Petition

ORDER OF NOTICE

On February 27, 2018, Abenaki Water Company, Inc. (Abenaki), Hampstead Area Water Company, Inc. (HAWC), and Lakes Region Water Company (Lakes Region) (collectively, Petitioners) filed a joint petition for a declaratory ruling or, in the alternative, a Commission rulemaking to provide for “an appropriate small size premium to be used by the Commission when determining the rates and authorized return on equity (ROE) for small satellite water systems serving fewer than 3,330 residents pursuant to RSA [Chapter] 378.” 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/2018/18-026.html>.

In support of their petition, the Petitioners presented the testimony of Donald J.E. Vaughan, Harold Morse, Stephen P. St. Cyr, and Pauline M. Ahern. Ms. Ahern’s testimony presents the theoretical underpinnings of the Petitioners’ preferred ratemaking methodology to incorporate the “small size premium” on ROE and rates.

The filing raises, *inter alia*, issues related to justness and reasonableness of rates pursuant to RSA Chapter 378, and whether the proposed ratemaking methodologies presented by the Petitioners would produce just and reasonable rates. Furthermore, as a threshold matter, the

Commission has determined that it must decide the best procedural approach for this case, either: (1) a generic Commission investigation of this petition and the issues arising therefrom; (2) a declaratory judgment proceeding, as governed by the standards and procedures of N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 207.01; or, (3) a rulemaking. The Commission invites the Petitioners and other interested persons to provide arguments regarding the best approach at the prehearing conference for this matter. 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 Prehearing Conference, pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.15, be held before the Commission located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire on April 13, 2017 at 10:00 a.m., at which each party will provide a preliminary statement of its position with regard to the petition and any of the issues set forth in N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.15, and arguments regarding the best procedural approach to be taken by the Commission in this proceeding, as indicated above; and it is

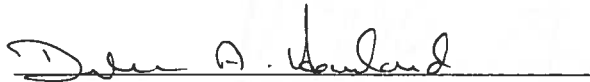
FURTHER ORDERED, that, immediately following the Prehearing Conference, Abenaki, HAWC, Lakes Region, the Staff of the Commission and any Intervenors hold a Technical Session to review the petition; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, Abenaki, HAWC, Lakes Region shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this Order of Notice no later than April 4, 2018, 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 11, 2018; 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 Abenaki, HAWC, Lakes Region and the Office of the Consumer Advocate on or before April 11, 2018, such Petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities or other substantial interest may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with 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 13, 2018.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-ninth day of March, 2018.


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.