

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 19-051

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

**Calendar Year 2018 Reliability Enhancement Plan and Vegetation Management Plan
Results and Reconciliation**

ORDER OF NOTICE

On March 15, 2019, Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities (Liberty or the Company) filed the results of its reliability enhancement plan (REP) and vegetation management plan (VMP) for calendar year 2018, and a request to increase rates to collect the related costs. Liberty filed the results and rate change request pursuant to a settlement agreement approved in Order No. 25,638 (March 17, 2014) and Order No. 26,005 (April 12, 2017). The Company also filed supporting testimony and related exhibits.

The filing contains: (1) a report on the actual spending on VMP operations and maintenance (O&M) expense and on REP capital investments for 2018, including an explanation of the difference between budgeted and actual expenditures; (2) a request to recover \$432,479 of 2018 O&M expense (including a final reconciliation of 2017 O&M expense) over the base amount of \$1,500,000 currently collected through base rates, as approved in Order No. 26,005 (April 12, 2017); (3) a request to recover \$247,919 in revenue associated with \$1,087,000 of capital investments closed to plant in 2018 (which includes several projects started in 2017 and includes a correction to the 2017 calculation); and (4) a summary of 2018 reliability performance.

Liberty proposes an REP/VMP O&M Adjustment Factor of \$0.00047 per kWh which is lower than the charge of \$0.00059 per kWh that would have been in effect in 2018 had it not been offset as a means to flow reduced income taxes from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 back to customers. *See* Order No. 26,139 (May 31, 2018). In addition, Liberty proposes to increase base rates by .61% to recover the cost of REP investments. The monthly bill impact for a residential customer using 650 kWh per month, would be an increase of \$0.57 or 0.46%.

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 www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2019/19-051.html.

The filing raises, *inter alia*, issues related to whether Liberty appropriately accounted for the costs of its REP and VMP, whether the resulting rates are just and reasonable as required by RSA 378:5 and RSA 378:7, and whether the proposed rates will yield a just and reasonable rate of return on the prudent cost of plant, equipment, and capital improvements used and useful in Liberty's provision of service to the public as required by RSA 378:28. 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 16, 2019 at 2:00 pm; and it is

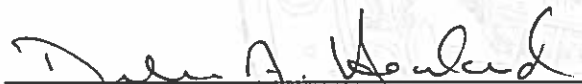
FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, Liberty shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this Order of Notice no later than April 3, 2019, in a newspaper with general circulation in those portions of

the state in which operations are conducted, publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before April 12, 2019; 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 12, 2019, 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. Rules Puc 203.17; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a Petition to Intervene make said Objection on or before April 16, 2019.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-ninth day of March, 2019.



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.