

DG 00-046

NORTHERN UTILITIES, INC.

Revenue Neutral Rate Redesign

Order Modifying Procedural Schedule

O R D E R N O. 23,598

December 12, 2000

On March 1, 2000, Northern Utilities, Inc.

(Northern) filed with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (Commission) a Notice of Intent to File Rate Schedules. On April 14, 2000, Northern submitted the proposed rate schedules.

On May 12, 2000, Northern notified the Commission that, subsequent to the submission of its April 14, 2000 filing, Northern identified certain technical errors in the cost studies used to derive its proposed rates, and filed a corrected version of those aspects of its filing which were modified as a result of the identified changes.

Pursuant to an Order of Notice issued April 27, 2000, the Commission held a Prehearing Conference and Technical Session on May 25, 2000. On June 20, 2000, Staff, with the concurrence of Northern and the Office of Consumer Advocate, filed with the Commission a proposed procedural schedule to govern the orderly progression of the proceeding, which was approved by Order No. 23,524 (July 7, 2000). The

proposed schedule provided for discovery and the filing of testimony, as well as the opportunity for filing motions to consolidate the hearing in this proceeding with that of Docket DG 00-063, *EnergyNorth Natural Gas, Inc.* pursuant to NH Admin. Rule Puc 203.08. Subsequently, testimony and discovery were filed by the Parties and Staff in accordance with the procedural schedule.

On November 15, 2000, in accordance with the procedural schedule, Staff submitted an Assented to Motion to Consolidate and Postpone Hearings in both this proceeding and Docket DG 00-063, *EnergyNorth Natural Gas, Inc.*

On November 22, 2000, the Commission, by Secretarial Letter, determined that consolidation of the hearings in Docket DG 00-046, *Northern Utilities, Inc.* and Docket DG 00-063, *EnergyNorth Natural Gas, Inc.* would promote the orderly and efficient conduct of the proceedings and that postponement could increase the opportunity for settlement. The consolidated hearings were scheduled for January 23, 2001.

On December 8, 2000, Staff notified the Commission that the Parties and Staff had agreed to establish a procedural schedule, including settlement conferences and a revised hearing date, for the remainder of the proceeding, as follows:

Settlement Conferences	December 19, 2000
(as needed)	January 3, 2001
(Commencing at 10:00 am)	January 4, 2001
	January 16, 2001
	January 17, 2001
Settlement and/or Stipulations, January 30, 2001	
if any, filed with the	
Commission	
Hearing Consolidated with	February 7, 2001
Docket DG 00-063 (on	February 8, 2001
Settlement and any	
unresolved issues)	
(Commencing at 10:00 am)	

We find that the proposed revised procedural schedule will promote the orderly and efficient conduct of these proceedings and provide the Parties and Staff the opportunity for settlement and we will, therefore, approve it for the duration of the proceeding.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that the procedural schedule delineated above is APPROVED.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New
Hampshire this twelfth day of December, 2000.

Douglas L. Patch
Chairman

Susan S. Geiger
Commissioner

Nancy Brockway
Commissioner

Attested by:

Thomas B. Getz
Executive Director and Secretary