

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

September 19, 2013 - 10:08 a.m.
Concord, New Hampshire

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RE: DE 13-177
PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE:
2013 Least Cost Integrated Resource Plan.
(Prehearing conference)

PRESENT: Chairman Amy L. Ignatius, Presiding
Commissioner Robert R. Scott
Commissioner Michael D. Harrington

Sandy Deno, Clerk

APPEARANCES: Reptg. Public Service Co. of New Hampshire:
Matthew J. Fossum, Esq.

Reptg. Residential Ratepayers:
Susan Chamberlin, Esq., Consumer Advocate
Stephen Eckberg
Office of Consumer Advocate

Reptg. PUC Staff:
Suzanne G. Amidon, Esq.

Court Reporter: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52

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P R O C E E D I N G

CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good morning. I'd like to open the hearing in Docket DE 13-177. This is Public Service Company of New Hampshire's 2013 Least Cost Integrated Resource Plan. PSNH filed its Plan on July 3rd, 2013, in accordance with statute RSA 378:38, and an order of the Commission that set forth some of the parameters of the filing, and certain waivers of requirements under the statute. And, as such, the LCIRP is limited to the subjects of transmission and distribution planning. The order of notice laid out in more detail the components of the Plan, and scheduled a hearing -- a prehearing conference this morning. That was an order of notice dated July 18th, 2013.

So, we will begin first with appearances.

MR. FOSSUM: Good morning, Commissioners. Matthew Fossum, for Public Service Company of New Hampshire.

CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good morning.

MS. CHAMBERLIN: Good morning. Susan Chamberlin, Consumer Advocate. And, with me today is Stephen Eckberg.

CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Good morning.

1 MS. AMIDON: Good morning. Suzanne
2 Amidon, for Commission Staff. With me today is Les --
3 pronounce your name for me? Stach --

4 MR. STACHOW: "Stachow".

5 MS. AMIDON: Thank you. Newly with the
6 Electric Division, I would say, a new analyst with the
7 Electric Division. And, to his left is Tom Frantz, the
8 Director of the Electric Division. And, my apologies to
9 Les.

10 MR. STACHOW: That's quite all right.

11 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: All right. Thank
12 you. The order of notice called for interventions to be
13 filed by the 17th, and I don't see any in the file. Is
14 anyone aware of any intervenors?

15 MR. FOSSUM: We are not.

16 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: All right. And, the
17 Consumer Advocate issued a letter saying that the Office
18 would be participating. Thank you for that. So, why
19 don't we begin with a description of the filing from
20 Mr. Fossum.

21 MR. FOSSUM: Thank you. I suppose I
22 don't have much to add that was not already offered by
23 Chairman Ignatius. As noted, on January 29th, the
24 Commission issued Order 25,459 on PSNH's last LCIRP. And,

1 in that order, the Commission waived the obligation to
2 file of what it deemed a "full IRP". But stated that an
3 abbreviated one was to be filed no later than
4 September 3rd of this year. And, so, consistent with that
5 requirement, PSNH filed the abbreviated LCIRP covering
6 transmission and distribution issues.

7 And, I guess, to the extent that a
8 summary is necessary, in brief, the filing lays out PSNH's
9 transmission and distribution planning over the planning
10 period of 2013 to 2017. With indications of how it would
11 intend to meet various growth requirements on the system
12 over that planning time. PSNH would request that the
13 Commission review this, what it's called the "abbreviated
14 plan", and find it adequate under RSA 378:38 through 41.

15 And, PSNH is certainly prepared to work
16 with Staff and the OCA to complete any necessary reviews,
17 so the Commission can make any determinations that it
18 needs relative to that Plan. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Thank you.
20 Ms. Chamberlin, any comments?

21 MS. CHAMBERLIN: I'm looking forward to
22 working with PSNH to flesh out the filing and work on
23 integrating the amount of detail that's needed to make it
24 a meaningful filing, and yet not require so much that it

1 is ineffectual. So, that's what we'll be working on.

2 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Thank you.

3 Ms. Amidon.

4 MS. AMIDON: Thank you. Staff has not
5 begun its review of the filing, but will review it. And,
6 we have a proposed procedural schedule, which includes a
7 couple of rounds of data requests. And, once we have
8 completed our review of the filing, we'll make a
9 recommendation with the Commission, whether it's jointly
10 with the OCA and the Company or otherwise. As I said, we
11 will plan to meet in a technical discussion after this
12 prehearing conference. And, we do have a proposed
13 procedural schedule to discuss. And, we will report back
14 to the Commission following the technical session.

15 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Thank you.

16 Commissioner Scott, a question.

17 CMSR. SCOTT: A couple quick questions.
18 Thank you. From reading your submittal for load growth
19 projections, your forecast, I just want to verify. Last
20 time we had a discussion with the Company about LCIRP, it
21 became apparent that not everything submitted was actually
22 used in planning at the Company. It does appear that, at
23 least based on the verbiage, if you could just tell me if
24 I'm right, that the load growth data and how you use it is

1 actually used on a regular basis?

2 MR. JOHNSON: That is correct.

3 MR. FOSSUM: That's accurate, yes.

4 CMSR. SCOTT: Okay. Thank you. That's
5 good to know. That goes to the, I think, "is this a
6 worthwhile exercise?" This is back to my -- I think the
7 OCA's question.

8 And, my other question was, in looking
9 at the load projections, I'm just trying to educate myself
10 a little bit more. I understand trying to forecast, but I
11 was just curious, does the Company also, for instance,
12 talk to the Chamber of Commerce and that type of thing, in
13 order to get an idea of any commercial changes? For
14 instance, obviously, if a new company comes in or one
15 leaves, that could make your forecast rather lumpy, if you
16 know what I mean.

17 MR. JOHNSON: With respect to the
18 Chamber of Commerce, not directly. However, we do solicit
19 input from our local field engineering and operating
20 staff, as well as our marketing, you know, groups who work
21 with large customers and are aware of customers coming in.
22 So, that that information is absolutely incorporated into
23 the planning document's forecast.

24 CMSR. SCOTT: And, do you get the -- I

1 hope this is not the case in New Hampshire, but do you get
2 the opposite side of that, too, of companies looking at
3 leaving?

4 MR. JOHNSON: Yes, we do.

5 CMSR. SCOTT: Okay. Hopefully, that's
6 not the case. But, thank you.

7 MR. FOSSUM: And, just for clarity, the
8 person speaking was Russel Johnson from PSNH.

9 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: Thank you. All
10 right. Then, I think we'll leave you to the technical
11 session and development of the procedural schedule. And,
12 our hope is that, I think we're all agreed that we want
13 this process to be meaningful. And, if the more limited
14 filing and really targeted inquiry helps to make it as
15 effective and efficient as possible, that would be a good
16 result all around. So, I appreciate everyone's efforts on
17 that. Unless there is anything further?

18 (No verbal response)

19 CHAIRMAN IGNATIUS: We will close this
20 and await a report of a schedule and any issues that may
21 arise in your technical session. Thank you.

22 **(Whereupon the prehearing conference was**
23 **adjourned at 10:16 a.m., and a technical**
24 **session was held thereafter.)**