

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 19-064

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

**Petition for Permanent and Temporary Rates
Request for Second Step Increase**

Order on Recovery of Battery Pilot Program Investments

O R D E R N O. 26,537

October 29, 2021

This order grants Liberty's request to recover in rates its 2020 investments in the Battery Pilot Program as of November 1, 2021.

I. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Following a hearing on June 24, 2021 regarding Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities' (Liberty) request for a second step adjustment, the Commission issued Order No. 26,494 on July 1, 2021, in which it denied Liberty's recovery of its \$1,232,187 investment in the Battery Pilot Program (the Program). *Id.* at 6-7. The Commission stated that it would consider allowing recovery of this investment in a future rate case after it had received and reviewed the additional information that had been requested as part of Exhibit 80. *Id.* at 6-7. The Commission's record request to be answered in Exhibit 80 required Liberty to provide data regarding the battery installation for each Liberty customer, with customer names redacted, so that the Commission could review the progress and effectiveness of the Program. Order No. 26,512 at 7 (August 29, 2021).

Liberty submitted its responses to the record request, marked as Exhibit 80, on July 15, 2021. On July 30, 2021, Liberty filed a motion for rehearing, in which it

contested, among other things, the Commission's denial of its recovery of its investments in the Program. In its order on Liberty's motion for rehearing, the Commission found that Liberty had not complied with the record request to be answered in Exhibit 80, because it had filed aggregated data for the 60 customers in question. Order No. 26,512 at 7 (August 29, 2021). The Commission nonetheless granted Liberty's motion for rehearing in part, ruling that it would not be necessary for Liberty to wait until its next rate case, but the Commission would review Liberty's investment in the Program upon receipt of a conforming Exhibit 80. *Id.* at 7-8.

Liberty filed Exhibit 80A, on September 16, 2021. On October 19, 2021, Liberty filed a letter requesting the Commission to approve the recovery of its investments in the Program in rates as of November 1, 2021.

II. POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES

A. Liberty

Liberty stated that it has now filed a conforming version of Exhibit 80 and requested the Commission to allow it to recover its investments in the Program in accordance with Order No. 26,512 (August 29, 2021). It asked that the Commission approve the recovery of these investments through rates beginning November 1, 2021.

B. Other Parties

None of the other parties has taken a position regarding Liberty's request.

III. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

The Commission finds that Exhibit 80A, which Liberty filed on September 16, 2021, complies with the Commission's previous requests for this information, so that the Commission may now authorize recovery for Liberty's investments in the Program. Based on its review of the records submitted by Liberty on September 16, 2021 and the previous evidence introduced during the June 24, 2021 hearing, the Commission

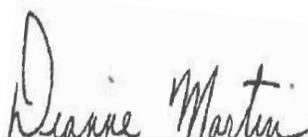
has determined that Liberty's 2020 capital investments and implementation of the Program were consistent with the Commission's authorizations and directives in Docket No. DE 17-189, and finds pursuant to RSA 378:28 that the identified capital costs may be included in rate base. Accordingly, the Commission authorizes Liberty to place in rate base, and recover in rates a revenue requirement associated with, the identified 2020 Program investments in the amount of \$1,232,187, see Order No. 26,494 at 8, less the CIAC (Contributions in Aid of Construction) offset reduction of \$46,062, see Order No. 26,512 at 7, for a total of \$1,186,125, as of November 1, 2021.

In addition, based on our review of Exhibit 80A, we find an interim review of the Program in Docket No. DE 17-189 to be warranted. The Commission will issue a further procedural order in that docket in due course.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that Liberty is authorized to recover in rates the revenue requirement associated with its 2020 Battery Pilot Program investments, as discussed in the body of this order, beginning November 1, 2021.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-ninth day of October, 2021.



Dianne Martin
Chairwoman



Daniel C. Goldner
Commissioner

Service List - Docket Related

Docket# : 19-064

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