

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 25-048

**LIBERTY UTILITIES (GRANITE STATE ELECTRIC) CORP., d/b/a LIBERTY and
NEW HAMPSHIRE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**

Joint Petition to Alter Franchise Areas in the Towns of Langdon and Charlestown

**COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDING
AND NOTICE OF PREHEARING CONFERENCE**

On July 22, 2025, Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp., d/b/a Liberty (Liberty) and New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NHEC) filed a joint petition to alter their franchise areas in the Towns of Langdon and Charlestown. All docket filings, other than any information subject to confidential treatment, are available on the Commission's website at

<https://www.puc.nh.gov/VirtualFileRoom/Docket.aspx?DocketNumber=DE%2025-048>.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Liberty is a public utility with a franchise area that includes parts of Langdon and Charlestown. NHEC is a rural electric cooperative with a franchise area that includes separate parts of Langdon and Charlestown. Their petition concerns a parcel at 481 Route 12A which straddles the Langdon-Charlestown town line (the Property).

The Property sits entirely within the NHEC franchise area. The owner of the Property intends to build a residence on it and seeks electric service. Liberty and NHEC represent that, given the location of the two utilities' respective electric distribution facilities, it would be more efficient for Liberty to provide electric service to the new residence on the lot and therefore request that the Commission transfer the

Property to Liberty's franchise area. See Petition, Attachment 1 (showing the location of the utilities' respective distribution facilities).

The petitioners' proposed boundary changes are reflected in Attachment 1 to the petition. The petitioners represent that the new customer on the Property assents to the boundary changes.

II. ISSUES PRESENTED

The filing presents, *inter alia*, the following issues: whether the modification of Liberty's and NHEC's franchise areas to transfer 481 Route 12A to Liberty's franchise area would be for the public good and thus permissible under RSA 374:22 and RSA 374:26. Accordingly, an adjudicative proceeding will be convened to address these issues.

The Commission notes, as do the petitioners, that RSA 374:26 authorizes the Commission to grant permission for certain extensions of utility service without hearing when all interested parties are in agreement. The Commission will assess whether exercising this statutory authority to grant permission pursuant to RSA 374:26 without hearing is appropriate after the deadline for interventions has passed and the positions of all parties are known. Specifically, the Commission will require verification that the owner of the lot assents to the boundary change in order to rule via order *nisi*. This is the process the Commission followed in Docket No. DE 22-077, in which the Commission approved a similar request by Eversource and NHEC to alter their franchise boundaries by order *nisi* after receiving the DOE's recommendation that the change was in the public interest, that the owners of the relevant lots assented to the boundary changes, and that approval by order *nisi* was appropriate.

The Commission will be conducting the prehearing conference and any hearings scheduled in this matter in person. The Commission will consider requests to conduct

hearings using a hybrid format to permit remote participation by a specific individual only if the Commission has determined that a sufficient reason has been provided for why that individual would be unable to attend in person. Any party requesting that a specific individual be permitted to participate remotely should file a written request with the Commission's Clerk's Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the prehearing conference or hearing date. If the Commission determines that one or more individuals will be permitted to appear remotely, then individuals in the Commission's hearing room, including the Commissioners, will be broadcast on a web-enabled platform.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that an adjudicative proceeding be commenced for the purpose of reviewing and resolving the foregoing issues pursuant to RSA chapter 541-A, RSA 374:22, RSA 374:26, and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a prehearing conference, pursuant to Puc 204.07, at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on September 16, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., at which each party should be prepared to address any of the issues set forth in Puc 204.07; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the petitioners shall circulate a Structuring Statement to the parties on or before September 5, 2025 and file the Structuring Statement with the Commission no later than September 12, 2025;

FURTHER ORDERED, that the New Hampshire Department of Energy is requested to file its position regarding the Joint Petition, including the reasons for this position, with a recommendation regarding whether the Commission should resolve this matter by issuing an order *nisi*, on or before August 29, 2025; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that during the prehearing conference, the Commission will consider the matters listed in Puc 204.07(f), including the establishment of a procedural schedule governing the remainder of the proceeding. Parties and potential parties are encouraged to facilitate the development of a procedural schedule by conferring prior to the prehearing conference, so that the presiding officer can address any matters on which there is disagreement during the prehearing conference; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, immediately following the prehearing conference, the petitioners shall make appropriate personnel available for the parties to hold a technical session to review the filing; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any entity or individual may petition to intervene and seek to be admitted as a party in this proceeding. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with RSA 541-A:32, Puc 204.08, and Puc 203.06, any entity or individual seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to the petitioners and any other parties on the service list, on or before August 25, 2025. The petition shall state the facts demonstrating how the petitioner's rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with Puc 204.08; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before September 5, 2025; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the parties may submit a stipulation containing a discovery schedule, statement of any additional issues not identified in this order of notice, and at least three dates on which they would be available for a final hearing in

this matter, including how much time will be required, with a request that the prehearing conference and technical session be cancelled, on or before September 2, 2025. The Commission may cancel the prehearing conference and technical session upon approval of such a stipulation; and it is

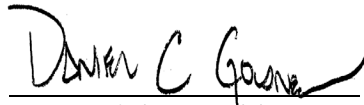
FURTHER ORDERED, that parties shall file any proposed exhibits, written testimony, motions, or other documents intended to become part of the record in this proceeding with the Commission in accordance with the Commission's administrative rules. Parties may elect to submit any filing in electronic form unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. Filings will be considered filed as of the time the electronic copy is received by the Commission; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that routine procedural inquiries may be made by contacting the Commission's Clerk's Office at (603) 271-2431 or www.puc.nh.gov/about-us/contact-us. All requests to the Commission should be made in a written pleading filed with the Commission. Unless otherwise authorized by law, *ex parte* communications are prohibited; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to Puc 204.04, the petitioners shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before August 4, 2025. In addition, the Clerk shall publish this order of notice on the Commission's website no later than two business days after the date of issue; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any hearings in this matter shall be conducted in accordance with the attached hearing guidelines.

So ordered, this twenty-ninth day of July, 2025.



Daniel C. Goldner
Chairman



Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner



Mark W. Dell'Orfano
Commissioner

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the 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.

Service List - Docket Related

Docket#: 25-048

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Email Addresses

amanda.o.noonan@energy.nh.gov

ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov

eemerson@primmer.com

Energy-Litigation@energy.nh.gov

karen.sinville@libertyutilities.com

Kendra.Burroughs@libertyutilities.com

mcnairs@nhec.com

Meredith.Verner@libertyutilities.com

Nichole.Thibodeau@libertyutilities.com

ocalitigation@oca.nh.gov

regulatory.nh@libertyutilities.com

Robert.Garcia@libertyutilities.com