

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 20-036

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

**Calendar Year 2019 Reliability Enhancement Plan and Vegetation Management Plan
Results and Reconciliation**

ORDER OF NOTICE

On March 13, 2020, 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 2019, with a request to increase rates to collect the related costs. Liberty filed the results and rate change request pursuant to settlement agreements 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) expenses and on REP capital investments for 2019, including an explanation of the difference between budgeted and actual expenditures; (2) a request to recover \$74,984 of 2019 O&M expenses (including a final reconciliation of 2018 O&M expenses) 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 \$210,503 in revenue associated with \$1,837,934 of capital investments closed to plant in 2019 (which includes several projects started in 2018); and (4) a summary of 2019 reliability performance.

Liberty proposes an REP/VMP O&M Adjustment Factor of \$0.00008 per kilowatt hour (kWh), which is lower than the charge of \$0.00052 per kWh approved for 2018 activities. *See* Order No. 26,244 (April 30, 2019). In addition, Liberty proposes to increase base rates by

.5 percent to recover the cost of REP investments. The monthly bill impact for a residential customer using 650 kWh per month would be a decrease of \$0.06 or 0.05 percent.

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 <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2020/20-036.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, consistent with Governor Christopher T. Sununu's Emergency Order #12, the Commission will hold a web-enabled remote hearing, pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, on April 27, 2020 at 9:00 am. Members of the public who wish to access the hearing may do so by registering at the following link: <https://nhgov.webex.com/nhgov/onstage/g.php?MTID=e1f8849dd5aa2925c0ac14abf7b017b48>. **If you have any difficulty obtaining access to this remote event, please notify the Commission by calling (603) 271-2431 as soon as possible.** Parties will be provided with additional instructions prior to the hearing; and it is


FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, Liberty shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than one day after the date of issue. In addition, the Executive Director

shall publish this order of notice on the Commission's website no later than one day after the date of issue; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any party seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to Liberty and the Office of the Consumer Advocate on or before April 24, 2020, such petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17. Pursuant to the secretarial letter issued on March 17, 2020, which is posted on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Secretarial%20Letters/20200317-SecLtr-Temp-Changes-in-Filing-Requirements.pdf>, any party seeking to intervene may elect to submit this filing in electronic form; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before April 27, 2020.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this eighth day of April, 2020.



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.

Service List - Docket Related

Docket# : 20-036

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