In Re:

DW 09-291 FRYEBURG WATER COMPANY, INC.

RATE HEARING February 4, 2011

SUSAN J. ROBIDAS, LCR NO. 44

Original File 020411DW09291.txt

Min-U-Script® with Word Index

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1	STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE	1	PROCEEDINGS
2	PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION	2	CHAIRMAN GETZ: Good afternoon,
3		3	everyone. We'll open the hearing in Docket
4		4	DW 09-291.
5	February 4, 2011 - 2:00 p.m.	5	On December 31, 2009, Fryeburg Water
6	Concord, New Hampshire	6	Company filed with the Commission a notice of intent
7	RE: DW 09-291	7	to file rate schedules. On January 4th, Fryeburg
8	FRYEBURG WATER COMPANY, INC. Notice of Intent to File Rate Schedules	8	filed for approval of a rate increase with the Maine
9	[Rate Hearing]	9	Public Utilities Commission, which was approved on
10		10	April 16th.
11	PRESENT: Chairman Thomas B. Getz, Presiding	11	And on August 11th, Fryeburg filed the
12	Commissioner Clifton C. Below Commissioner Amy L. Ignatius	12	results of the Maine proceeding with the Commission,
13	Sandy Deno, Clerk	13	along with the petition for temporary rates.
14		14	An order of notice was issued on
15	APPEARANCES:	15	August 31 and set a prehearing conference that was
16	Reptg. Fryeburg Water Company, Inc.: Justin C. Richardson, Esq. (Upton, Hatfield)	16	held on October 5, subsequent to which a procedural
17	Reptg. PUC Staff:	17	schedule was approved and culminating in a hearing
18	Marcia Thunberg, Esq. James Lenihan, Gas & Water Division	18	which was originally set for December 8th and
19	Douglas Brogan, Gas & Water Division Jayson LaFlamme, Gas & Water Division	19	rescheduled to today. And I'll note that a
20		20	stipulation between the Company and Staff was filed
21		21	on February 3rd.
22	COURT REPORTER: Susan J. Robidas, LCR NO. 44	22	So, can we take appearances, please.
23		23	MR. RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr.
24		24	Chairman. Justin Richardson, with Upton & Hatfield.
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Page 5 Page 7 note on the process for today's presentation is that 1 Q. Okay. And I turn your attention to Schedule JA-1. 1 Company and Staff are going to be alternating direct And I'll just give you the numbers. Fair to say that 2 3 questions and friendly cross, I guess, of each 3 that schedule shows that there was 179,000,000 gallons sold to Poland Springs in that 4 other's witnesses. And we've worked out which issues 4 5 we're going to be covering, so we'll be going back an 5 forth. Thank you. A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, that's right. 6 6 CHAIRMAN GETZ: We'll try to keep up. 7 Q. And in 2009 that dropped to 86,000,000? 7 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes. 8 MS. THUNBERG: Okay. MR. RICHARDSON: I've only got a page 9 Q. Okay. And what is the current status of the sales to 9 and a half, so it won't be very long. 10 Poland Springs? 10 11 **EXAMINATION** 11 A. (Ms. Andrews) Volume is up about 15 percent over last 12 BY MR. RICHARDSON: 12 year, but about 45 percent down from the test year. 13 Q. Ms. Andrews, could you please state your name and **13** Q. And what percentage of the Company's revenues came your position with the Company, for the record. from the Poland Springs sales during the test year? 14 14 15 A. (Ms. Andrews) My name's Jean Andrews. I am the 15 A. (Ms. Andrews) During the test year, the percentage of 16 treasurer and newly-appointed vice-president of revenue was about 60. 16 17 Fryeburg Water Company. **17** Q. And so what is it currently? **18** Q. And on August 10 -- or August 11th you submitted **18** A. (Ms. Andrews) In 2009, it was around 40 percent. 19 testimony. Are you familiar with that? **19** Q. Okay. And what impact has that had on the Company? 20 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, I am. 20 I think you explained already, but if you could 21 Q. And do you have your exhibits there? I'm going to 21 summarize. show you Exhibit 1, which is your prefiled testimony. (Ms. Andrews) Well, it's-- we've had a loss three 22 22 A. 23 Is that testimony true and accurate, to the best of 23 years consecutive. 24 your knowledge? 24 Q. Okay. And how does that impact the Company's ability Page 6 Page 8 1 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, it is. to provide service to its customer? 1 (Ms. Andrews) Well, we've been running a very tight 2 Q. I believe your testimony refers to there being 2 A. approximately 67 customers. How many customers -- in ship, and we had to -- we haven't been able to make 3 3 New Hampshire, how many customers are there very many capital improvements. It's pretty much 4 4 currently? just running on, you know, very thin ice here. 5 5 **6** A. (Ms. Andrews) Currently, we have 62 customers. O. Okay. 6 **7** Q. And why is there a change? **EXAMINATION** 7 BY MS. THUNBERG: 8 A. (Ms. Andrews) We've had several foreclosures and seasonal customers that currently are not receiving Q. Mr. Naylor, I'd like to pick up with you and have you 9 just state your name and position with the Commission 10 service. 10 11 O. Okay. So, with that change, do you adopt that as for the record. 11 12 your testimony in this proceeding? 12 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes. My name is Mark Naylor, and I am 13 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, I do. 13 the director of the Gas and Water Division here at the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission. **14** Q. What led the Fryeburg Water Company to seek a rate 14 case, if you can summarize? 15 O. And as the director of the Gas and Water Division, 15 what are your general responsibilities? 16 A. (Ms. Andrews) Over the past three years we've had 16 losses. Beginning in 2007, approximately in \$10,000 (Mr. Naylor) I am the director of the division. I 17 17 A. 18 loss; 2008, \$65,000; and '09, \$57,000. This is manage the staff and am responsible for all the work 18 primarily due to our bulk water customers not 19 product prepared by staff at the Commission for 19 20 receiving the quantities they had over the test water, sewer and gas dockets. 20 period -- the test-year period for the last rate 21 Q. Mr. Naylor, what do you consider your area of 21 case. So our revenues are down. 22 22 expertise? 23 Q. And what was the test year for your last rate case? 23 A. (Mr. Naylor) I have an accounting background.

24 A. (Ms. Andrews) 2006.

24 Q. Have you testified before the Commission prior to

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- 1 today?
- 2 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes, I have.
- 3 Q. And has that testimony been within your area of
- expertise or within your area of responsibilities at 4
- the Commission?
- 6 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes. Yes to both.
- Q. And can you please describe your involvement with this particular docket?
- A. (Mr. Naylor) I've been involved with this docket 9
- since it was originally filed. I have conducted a 10
- 11 review of the Company's requests. I have conducted
- 12 discovery and worked with the Company to develop the
- stipulation that we are presenting today. 13
- 14 Q. I'd like to show you a document and have you identify 15 it for the record, please.
- 16 (Ms. Thunberg presents document
- 17 to the witness.)
- A. (Mr. Naylor) This is a data request and response. 18
- 19 It's labeled "Request Staff 1-1," and the responding
- 20 witness was Ms. Andrews.
- 21 Q. And when you said you conducted discovery in this
- docket, does that discovery include the document you 22
- 23 have in front of you?
- 24 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes. Yes. And to clarify, this is a

- 1 Q. Are you familiar with the terms of the Stipulation
- 2 Agreement?
- 3 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, I am.
- **4** Q. And is the Company okay with the change that Mr.
- Naylor has identified? 5
- 6 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, we are.
- 7 Q. Thank you.
- 8 And Mr. Naylor, I'd like to have you turn to
- 9 Exhibit 2, Page 9 of 11. And I direct your attention to the paragraph entitled "Approval of Permanent 10
- 11 Rates." And I'd like to get Staff's opinion as to
- 12 why it supports the proposed rate increase -- I mean
- 13 increase in revenues.
- 14 A. (Mr. Naylor) Certainly. The Company's rate request
- 15 has been reviewed in full by the Maine Public
- Utilities Commission. The rate case in Maine 16
- 17 included all the plant, serving both in Maine and in
- New Hampshire, so that the rates that are established 18
- 19 in that case are compensatory to the Company for all
- 20 of its customers, including New Hampshire customers.
- 21 And in addition to that, the Company has certified in
- this document that there is no Construction Work in 22
- 23 Process in the rates approved in the Maine case.
- 24 Q. Mr. Naylor, I'd like to draw your attention to

Page 10

- packet of questions, not just 1-1. It's the Staff's
- set that was asked of the Company back in October of 2
- 2010. 3

1

- 4 Q. Thank you. Mr. Naylor, you mentioned that you had
- worked on a Stipulation Agreement. Do you have a 5
- copy of what we've premarked for identification as 6
- Exhibit 2 in front of you? 7
- 8 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes, I do.
- Q. And that Stipulation Agreement -- I'll ask a general
- question. Did you participate, or was it drafted 10
- under you direct supervision? 11
- 12 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes.
- 13 Q. And are you aware of any changes or corrections that
- 14 need to be made to that Stipulation Agreement?
- **15** A. (Mr. Naylor) One small correction should be made on
- 16 Page 7 of 11 in Section G, No. 1. The word "or"
- should be inserted after the semicolon to make it 17
- 18 clear that the choices there, one, two, or three --
- one of those three actions would occur in that event. 19
- 20 Q. Ms. Andrews, I have a question for you concerning 21 Exhibit 2.
- 22 Did you participate in the preparation of the
- 23 Stipulation Agreement?
- 24 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, I did.

- 1 Attachment A to the Stipulation Agreement, Page 2 of
- 14. And there is a paragraph entitled "Revenue 2
- Requirement." And just let me know when you're 3
- 4 there.
- 5 A. (Mr. Naylor) I am there.
- Q. There's a notation of the annual operating revenues 6
- 7 and the increase. And with the Stipulation Agreement
- that the Staff and Company are presenting to the 8
- 9 Commission today, is it the intent of the parties to
- have the Commission approve the revenue increase 10
- that's indicated here? 11
- (Mr. Naylor) Yes, it is. 12 A.
- 13 Q. And of this revenue increase, do you have an opinion
- 14 as to the use and usefulness of any plant that was
- 15 used in calculating this number?
- 16 A. (Mr. Naylor) I have no concern regarding the plant,
- 17 based on the ruling of Maine Commission that included
- in rate base is in service and used and useful. 18
- 19 O. Now I'd like to turn back to Page 9 of 11 of the
- 20 Stipulation Agreement to the Approval of Permanent Rates paragraph, and direct the question to Ms.
- 21 Andrews concerning the September 29th, 2010, date 22
- 23 that's included there.
- 24 Ms. Andrews, could you please explain how that

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3

- date or how the Company proposed this date? 1
- **2** A. (Ms. Andrews) Yup. We bill quarterly, and bills were
- October 1st. Meter readings in East Conway took
- place on September 29th. So we felt that that was 4
- the best date to use.
- 6 Q. Now, has the Company, Ms. Andrews, notified the
- customers of the potential rate increase in this
- 8 proceeding?
- A. (Ms. Andrews) We have. We notified them on a couple different occasions. 10
- 11 Q. And I'd like to show you two pages of a document that
- 12 we have asked to be identified -- marked for
- 13 identification as Exhibit 4 and have you identify
- them for the record. 14
- 15 (Ms. Thunberg presents document 16 to the witness.)
- 17 A. (Ms. Andrews) The first letter is from the Fryeburg
- 18 Water Company, dated July 1st, notifying customers of
- 19 the rate case being resolved by the Maine Public
- 20 Utilities Commission. This was sent out to all of
- 21 our customers, and it also notifies them that the
- case is now before the New Hampshire Public Utilities 22
- 23 Commission for review. We sent that to Maine and New
- 24 Hampshire customers.

1 excess from September 29th through January 1st, which

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Page 16

- would be billed at the new rate. And that's what 2
 - this spreadsheet here is.
- 4 Q. Now, I notice on the far right-hand column there's a
- 5 Recoupment column, and there's some negative numbers.
- 6 Can you just explain whether that's something to be
- 7 billed and collected from the customer or if it's a
- refund? 8
- 9 A. (Ms. Andrews) That's a loss that the Company had. So 10 it would be billed to the customer.
- 11 Q. Thank you for that clarification.
- I'd like to have you identify for the record 12
- 13 what we've asked to be marked for identification as 14
 - Exhibit 3.
- 15 A. (Ms. Andrews) We have our tariff page, New Hampshire
- 16 PUC No. 8, Page 11, Second Revision, signed by Hugh
- 17 Hastings, effective January 1st, 2009. These are the
- current rates being charged to New Hampshire 18 19
- customers and the proposed, effective September 29th, 20 2010, Fryeburg Water Company, PUC No. 8, Third
- 21 Revision, Page 11, superseding the second revised
- Page 11. 22
- 23 Q. And the tariff that's dated September 29th, these are
- 24 the proposed rates?

Page 14

- 1 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- **2** Q. And of the 62 customers that the Company has, can you
- please just identify, since there are a number of 3
- different charges, where do those 62 customers fall? 4
- **5** A. (Ms. Andrews) The majority of them fall -- are
- quarterly-rate customers. We do have a seasonal 6
- 7 customer as well.
- 8 Q. I'm sorry. You said one seasonal?
- 9 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes.
- 10 Q. I have a couple questions regarding the Stipulation
- Agreement, if you could have that in front of you. 11
- 12 And on the Stipulation Agreement, Attachment A,
- 13 Page 8 of 14, if you could turn to that.
- (Ms. Andrews) I'm there. 14 A.
- 15 O. I'd like to draw your attention to Paragraph III(4),
- Tariff Sheets Approved. 16
- Now, correct me if I'm wrong. The State of 17
- 18 Maine -- or the Maine Public Utilities Commission
- 19 approved Sheet No. 1, Sheet No. 2, Sheet No. 3 that
- are listed there; is that correct? 20
- 21 A. (Ms. Andrews) That is correct.
- And if I were to turn further into this attachment. 22 O.
- 23 on Page 12 of 14, 13 of 14, and 14 of 14, are these
 - the tariff pages that the Maine PUC approved?

And the other is from the Fryeburg Water 1

- 2 Company, dated August. It's blank. This was a
- letter to New Hampshire customers only notifying them 3
- of -- excuse me -- notifying them of the rate 4
- increase and our request, effective October 1st, 5 2010. 6
- 7 Q. And Ms. Andrews, did both of these notices get sent
- 8 out to the customers prior to the September 29th
- effective date?
- 10 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, they were.
- 11 Q. Do you have a copy of the Stipulation Agreement in
- 12 front of you?
- 13 A. (Ms. Andrews) I do.
- 14 Q. And I'd like to have you turn to Attachment B.
- 15 That's the last two pages of the Stipulation
- 16 Agreement. And I'd like to ask you a general
- question of the proposed revenue increase that's 17
- 18 requested in the Stipulation Agreement.
- How does the Company plan to implement that 19 20 revenue increase among its customers?
- 21 A. (Ms. Andrews) I went through all 62 customers and
- 22 took a look at their readings. We would go forward
- 23 with a minimum charge, beginning October 1st, with 24 the new rate charge, the new rate, and look at any

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- 1 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, they are.
- 2 Q. And is it -- am I correct, in that Sheet No. 2, Fifth
- Revision, which is on Page 13 of this exhibit, this
- is not a charge that the Fryeburg Water Company 4
- charges in New Hampshire? Is that correct?
- 6 A. (Ms. Andrews) That is correct.
- 7 Q. And turning to Page 14 of Attachment A, which is
- Sheet No. 3, Fourth Revision, is this also a charge
- that does not apply in New Hampshire?
- 10 A. (Ms. Andrews) That is correct.
- 11 Q. So, of the Maine-approved tariffs, it's just Page 1,
- 12 Fifth Revision, that would apply to New Hampshire; is
- 13 that correct?
- 14 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- 15 Q. Ms. Andrews, do you have an opinion as to the just
- 16 and reasonableness of the rates that the Company
- 17 plans to charge? Do you consider them just and
- 18 reasonable?
- 19 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, I do.
- 20 Q. And Mr. Naylor, do you have an opinion as to whether
- 21 the rates that are proposed for the customers as a
- result of the revenue increase are just and 22
- 23 reasonable?

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24 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes, I do. I believe they are just and

- 1 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, it will.
- 2 Q. Okay. And then, looking at the next page where it

Page 19

Page 20

- says Notice to the Commission, what's your
- understanding of how this settlement agreement will 4
- operate, in terms of the notice that you'll provide 5
- 6 once you've filed in Maine?
- 7 A. (Ms. Andrews) The notice to New Hampshire customers
 - or to --
- 9 Q. Well, in this case, talking about how the Company 10 plans to operate in terms of notifying the Commission
- 11 in New Hampshire.
- 12 A. (Ms. Andrews) We will send a notice of intent.
- 13 Q. Okay. And then, what in general has been your
- 14 experience with how long the Maine PUC takes to
- 15 review rates?
- **16** A. (Ms. Andrews) Again, I haven't been involved in very
- 17 many. But the last one took approximately three
- 18 months.
- 19 Q. And how many proceedings have you been involved in?
- 20 A. (Ms. Andrews) Two.
- 21 Q. Two? Okay. And does that -- it's your understanding
 - that that's not atypical?
- 23 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- 24 Q. And what typically -- do you have temporary rates in

Page 18

- MR. RICHARDSON: Do The Commissioners 2
- have a copy of the Stipulation Agreement, just as I 3
- go through asking these questions? Okay. Thank you. 4
 - **EXAMINATION**
- BY MR. RICHARDSON: 6

reasonable.

- Q. Jean, if you could turn to Page 4 of 11 of the
- Stipulation Agreement -- that's Exhibit 2, where it 8
- says in Section III, Subsection A-1, Notice to 9
- Customers -- and just tell the Commission what the 10
- current practice is for providing notice when you 11
- 12 file in Maine for a rate increase. What do you
- generally do? 13
- **14** A. (Ms. Andrews) I haven't been involved in too many of
- the rate cases. But what I've always done is, when I 15
- file in Maine, I like to file it with New Hampshire 16
- as quickly as possible, just so that they have the 17
- 18 information as well. We hear back and notify
- customers, so any intervenors can petition the PUC. 19
- 20 Q. And what is the -- is it the Company's practice to
- 21 send the notices of the Maine proceeding also to the
- New Hampshire customers? 22
- 23 A. (Ms. Andrews) I have always done so.
- 24 Q. And that practice will continue on this?

- 1 Maine, or does the Commission approve it effective as
 - of what date?
- 3 A. (Ms. Andrews) They approve it as effective -- well,
- it lists the date that we requested at this point. 4
- However, they did approve it on April 16th, effective 5
- April 1st. 6
- 7 Q. Okay. So it's more or less the time of the
- settlement agreement. That's been your experience.
- (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- 10 Q. Okay. And let's look at the next section. And this
- is the Section B, Request to Change in Permanent 11
- Rates. It says no longer than 60 days after filing 12
- 13 its notice of intent. What is -- what's the
- Company's intention for how quickly it's going to 14
- 15 move, once it's filed in Maine, with then filing its
- schedules in New Hampshire? 16
- 17 A. (Ms. Andrews) Well, as soon as we receive our order
- of notice we'd like to file the schedule. 18
- 19 O. But I mean, I guess what I'm saying is, when you file
- in Maine, it's your understanding that, in this 20
- 21 Subparagraph B, that you'll essentially take your Maine filing and provide that to the Commission in 22
- 23 New Hampshire as its New Hampshire filing?
- (Ms. Andrews) Correct. 24 A.

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Page 21

- 1 Q. Now, what is -- I'm going to skip over C for a
- moment, the Order of Notice, and focus on Paragraph D
- 3 on Page 6 of 11.
- What does the Company plan to do once it 4 receives its Maine PUC approval?
- A. (Ms. Andrews) We will submit any additional 6
- information to New Hampshire, as well as the order 7
- from the Maine PUC and our schedules, as well as 8
- 9 proposed tariff schedules for New Hampshire
- 10 customers.
- 11 Q. Hmm-hmm. And the schedules that you'll be providing
- 12 will actually be the ones that were approved by the
- 13 Maine PUC?
- 14 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- 15 Q. And those differ slightly from the New Hampshire
- 16 ones?
- 17 A. (Ms. Andrews) We hope not.
- 18 Q. Okay. I mean in terms of the format --
- **19** A. (Ms. Andrews) Oh, format. Absolutely.
- 20 O. -- of the information that's provided.
- 21 Okay. And so that is the purpose behind the
- waiver provision that's in Paragraph E? 22
- 23 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- 24 Q. And what is the Company's hope, in terms of how the

- 1 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.
- **2** Q. And what -- how does that benefit the Company?

Page 23

Page 24

- 3 A. (Ms. Andrews) Well, it streamlines the process,
- saving a lot of time and money. And it just gets the 4
- rates effective, hopefully, sooner. 5
- **6** Q. And why is time an issue?
- 7 A. (Ms. Andrews) Well, we're a very small company, and
- we wear many hats. And if we're concentrating on a
- 9 long process, then we can't concentrate in other
- 10 areas.
- 11 Q. Are you a full-time employee of the Company?
- (Ms. Andrews) I am not full-time, no. 12 A.
- 13 Q. How many employees does the Company have?
- 14 A. (Ms. Andrews) Four.
- 15 Q. Four. Okay. And what are their responsibilities?
- 16 A. (Ms. Andrews) The others?
- 17 Q. Yes.
- **18** A. (Ms. Andrews) We have a president, a superintendent 19
 - and an assistant superintendent, as well as myself.
- 20 Q. So it's your feeling that allowing the Maine rate to
- 21 be adopted will benefit the Company and its customers
- by allowing you to focus more on essentially the core 22
- 23 operations?
- 24 A. (Ms. Andrews) Correct.

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New Hampshire PUC process would then proceed?

- **2** A. (Ms. Andrews) We hope that the whole procedure will
- be streamlined, saving time and hopefully costs 3
- associated with a rate case.
- **5** Q. But is it your understanding that this provision
- provides for temporary rates to take effect at the 6
- Maine PUC rate, based on Staff recommendation? 7
- A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes.
- Q. Okay. And that would be where it says -- that's
- discussed in Paragraph G on Page 7 of 11? 10
- 11 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes.
- 12 Q. Okay. Why do you think it's in the customer's
- interest to proceed in that fashion and not simply do 13
- a full rate case in New Hampshire? 14
- 15 A. (Ms. Andrews) We feel that it's going to save
- 16 customers money, with there only being 62 customers
- in New Hampshire. Having a full rate case can be 17
- expensive. 18
- 19 Q. So you think that, as a general matter, then, it
- 20 provides benefits to the New Hampshire customers to
- 21 apply the Maine rate --
- 22 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes.
- 23 Q. -- as opposed to having to do a rate case and a

24 surcharge?

MR. RICHARDSON: Do you want to proceed or ask Mark questions at this point?

MS. THUNBERG: I'm prepared to ask.

MR. RICHARDSON: Okay. 4

EXAMINATION

BY MS. THUNBERG: 6

- 7 Q. Mr. Naylor, with respect to the Stipulation
- Agreement, we've got a pretty detailed document here, 8
- 9 and I'm not asking you to go into detail and describe
- every step that's in here. Jean Andrews has already 10
- done some of that. But I think it would be helpful 11
- to get the 10,000-foot-level view of, with the 12
- process that's proposed in this document, and knowing 13
- your history of being here, what is a -- if you could 14
- 15 please describe what is a new process and what is, in
- this document, consistent with the old process of 16
- handling Fryeburg rate cases. 17
- (Mr. Naylor) Well, I think what's new is we have put 18 A.
- down on paper some of the steps that we may have 19 20 taken in previous cases, but perhaps not as cleanly
- as we might have in terms of ensuring notice to 21
- customers and providing the Company a clear structure 22
- 23 to use when they seek a rate proceeding. The Company 24
 - has indicated in its filing and in its discussions

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Page 25

with Staff its desire to streamline the process, and 1 2 we certainly agree with that. This Commission has 3 adopted the Maine rates in previous cases, but it 4 hasn't always been as easy as we hoped it would be, 5 and perhaps should be. The last case that was done, 6 I believe, was in '07. There's no prohibition on Construction Work in Progress in Maine. The Company 7 8 had a small amount of CWIP in its rates in Maine, and 9 so the Commission here had a much more lengthy 10 review. And that ultimately generated a fair amount

customers here in New Hampshire.

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So I think what we've done is to present to the Commission today a process which will streamline how the Company can seek new rates, make sure that we have adequate notice to the New Hampshire customers of the ongoing proceeding in Maine, and at the same time we'll open our docket here through the acceptance of a notice of intent from the Company. The Company will make its Maine filing with us here, and we will have a docket ready to receive the Company's approval or final order from the Maine Commission and then make a recommendation on it from that point. So it certainly should be a much cleaner

of rate case expense which had to be borne by the 67

1 adjustment, pursuant to R.S.A. 378:27-29. And I was 2 hoping you could explain to me how you see that

(Mr. Naylor) Well, this particular section of the 4 A. agreement permits the Company to put into rates --5 put into effect the rates that it's been granted in 6 7 Maine at the same time the rates are permitted to go into effect in Maine. In the event that Staff were 8 9 to make a recommendation that the Commission open a 10 proceeding for further review, it seems only logical 11 that there would certainly be some basis for opening 12 the review. And so it makes sense that the rates for 13 the New Hampshire customers that have taken effect 14 and gone into effect be subject to modifications. 15 The only way to really do that is to treat them as temporary rates. And so that's the purpose of this. 16 17 I think, from a practical sense, the only thing that 18 would really be -- excuse me -- that's really of 19 significant concern for Staff is the fact that 20 Construction Work in Progress is not permitted in New 21 Hampshire. So that, to me, at least sitting here 22 today, that's the only thing that really causes me a 23 lot of concern, would be if they were CWIPing the 24 rates approved in Maine. Then, that would certainly

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1 be the major issue that we would take up and

and easier process. This company's not a large 1 2

company overall. I think it has about 800 or so

- customers in total. So it's important, I think, to 3
- try to make this a cleaner process and easier and 4 5
 - less expensive. So I think that's what we've
- accomplished in this agreement. 6
- 7 Q. Mr. Naylor, do New Hampshire customers lose any rights under this proposal? 8
- A. (Mr. Naylor) They do not. And this Commission will 9 10 always retain the ability to review the Company's 11 rates as approved in Maine, to look at any aspect of 12 the Company's cost structure, its operations. The Commission does not cede any jurisdiction whatsoever 13
- 14 with respect to Fryeburg's service in New Hampshire.
 - **EXAMINATION**

BY MR. RICHARDSON: 16 17 Q. I just have a brief question for Staff, if I could. 18 Mark, in Paragraph G on Page 7 of 11, and then spilling over onto 8, it says that, in the event 19 20 Staff recommends that the Commission issue an order suspending the rates approved by the MPUC, Staff 21 22 agrees to recommend that the Commission allow 23 Fryeburg to charge the rates approved by the MPUC as 24 temporary rates, subject to reconciliation or

- 2 recommend the Commission issue a suspension order.
- But this gives the Company the ability to put into 3
- effect the approved rates from Maine for all of its 4
- customers at the same time. The Company was 5
- 6 concerned about that aspect of treating all of its 7 customers the same. And so this is the approach that
- 8 we agreed on to make that happen.
 - Q. Thank you.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. THUNBERG:

- **12** Q. Mr. Naylor, I have one other follow-up. With respect 13 to having the rate increase go into effect for all of 14 the customers at the same time, does that minimize 15 any shifting of the burden? Would it, I guess, 16 eliminate Maine customers bearing a disproportionate 17 amount of the revenue increase until the New Hampshire customers caught up? 18
- 19 A. (Mr. Naylor) It certainly could. And that's really a 20 fairness issue that the Company has raised to us in 21 our discussions about this. They felt that the Company should be treating all of its customers the 22
- 23 same way, and if there is a change in rates, that that change should take effect for all customers at 24

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DW 09-291 FRYEBURG WATER COMPANY, INC. Page 29 Page 31 the same time. So we agreed with that. And from 1 standards appear to be pretty much the same, in terms 1 that standpoint, that's why we included this of how we look at rate base and used and useful 2 2 3 provision. 3 standard. Expenses are treated very similarly, in MS. THUNBERG: Thank you. It appears terms of what's allowed in and what's not and what 4 4 that we have no further questions for the panel. kind of pro forma adjustments can be made. So I 5 5 6 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. 6 don't think we have any issues there that are of 7 Commissioner Ignatius. 7 concern. CMSR. IGNATIUS: Thank you. 8 Q. Ms. Andrews, one other thing I wanted to check with 8 INTERROGATORIES BY CMSR. IGNATIUS: you on. If you'd look at Exhibit 3, which is the 10 Q. Good afternoon. Ms. Andrews, at times there have proposed new tariff, and compare it to the existing 10 11 been issues with Fryeburg regarding water quality and 11 tariff. Do you have those? 12 some customer service issues. Are there currently 12 A. (Ms. Andrews) I do. 13 any pending matters with the environmental regulators 13 O. There are a couple of things that I wonder if they're in either Maine or New Hampshire, as far as you know? typos, and make sure if they are, they're cleaned up 14 14 15 A. (Ms. Andrews) No. there are not. 15 before they're filed. 16 Q. And how about any open customer issues that are being If you look at the quarterly rates in the top 16 17 looked at by either of the two jurisdictions? 17 block of the proposed rates, for over 72,000 cubic **18** A. (Ms. Andrews) No, there are not. 18 feet per quarter, the number is .779; in the two 19 Q. Assuming this settlement is approved, the Company 19 blocks below it's just .79. Should it be .79? 20 would still file an annual report with the New 20 A. (Ms. Andrews) No. And we brought that up. It was Hampshire PUC? 21 21 investigated, because we caught that as well. 22 A. (Ms. Andrews) That's correct. What happened in the Maine PUC case is, at the 22 23 Q. And it would still be subject to the New Hampshire 23 last minute, the public advocate wanted to take 24 assessment? 24 \$10,000 off the requested increase. And in order to Page 30 Page 32 1 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes. 1 accomplish that, Malcolm Horton, our auditor at the **2** Q. Mr. Naylor, a question about the waiver provisions on 2 time, came up with these figures. Unfortunately, he Page 6 of the Stipulation Agreement, Exhibit 2. The is no longer with us to get maybe some more 3 3 document lists a number of our administrative rules documentation on how he did that. But it has been 4 4 to be waived because there are similar provisions in 5 double-checked, and his notes have been 5 Maine, and it would be -- you'll get to the same double-checked, and that is correct. 6 6 7 information with Maine documents and not require 7 O. Okay. That's fine. So that's correct. duplicative filings in New Hampshire; correct? 8 And then the very bottom line on that proposed **9** A. (Mr. Naylor) That's correct. sheet has the 6-inch-pipe meter size going down 9 10 Q. Sometimes our administrative rules reference compared to the current rates, when every other 10 11 statutory requirements as well as administrative number on the sheet seems to go up. So I wondered if 11 12 rules that we've created to further implement that was intentional or a typographical error. Do 12 statutory requirements; correct? 13 you see the \$686.35 on the proposed? Compare that to 13 14 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes, that's correct. 14 \$759.72 in the existing. 15 Q. Have you looked to see if any of the things through 15 A. That, too, was questioned, and it was -- again, it 16 which waiver is being sought are actually statutory was believed to have been just, without having Mr. 16 requirements which we don't have the authority to Horton here to answer that for us. But that was 17 17

19 A. (Mr. Naylor) Yes, we certainly went through all of
20 the administrative rules. I don't recall anything
21 implicated with respect to statutes. Seems like the
22 biggest burden to bring together this stipulation was

the anti- -- the so-called anti-CWIP provision. But

in reviewing the orders issued in Maine, the

20 Q. The monthly charge is proposed to be just under \$300.
21 A. (Ms. Andrews) 298.45. Yes.
22 Q. So I would assume the quarterly charge would be just under \$900.
24 A. (Ms. Andrews) That would make sense.

customer with a 6-inch.

questioned. We don't have -- I think we have one

waive?

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Page 33 Page 35 1 Q. You might just double-check -that? 2 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yeah. 2 A. (Ms. Andrews) Did you say Page 8? 3 O. -- and if there needs to be a revision to the tariff 3 O. Page 8 of 11. And it's in Paragraph H. sheet, have that submitted so there's no confusion. (Witness reviews document.) 4 Thank you. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, that's my understanding. A. (Ms. Andrews) Thank you. (Mr. Naylor) Yes, I agree. 6 6 CHAIRMAN GETZ: I think that can be 7 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Okay. Thank you. I 7 done as a compliance matter. take it there's nothing further for the witnesses, so 8 8 INTERROGATORIES BY CHAIRMAN GETZ: 9 you're excused. Thank you. 10 Q. Just a couple of questions, Ms. Andrews. (WHEREUPON the witnesses were 10 11 If I do my math correctly, it looks like the 11 excused.) 12 East Conway customers are 7 to 8 percent of the CHAIRMAN GETZ: I note that the 12 13 Fryeburg customers overall. Does that sound about 13 exhibits were marked for identification as described right? by counsel. Any objections to striking 14 14 15 A. (Ms. Andrews) Sounds about right. 15 identifications and admitting them into evidence? **16** Q. And are all of the customers in East Conway MS. THUNBERG: None. 16 17 residential? 17 MR. RICHARDSON: None. **18** A. (Ms. Andrews) The majority, yes. We have a couple CHAIRMAN GETZ: They'll be admitted 18 19 businesses and one farm. 19 into evidence. (WHEREUPON exhibits marked for 20 Q. And I assume in the Fryeburg, Maine customer base, 20 21 there's more business and industry and commercial 21 identification now admitted into evidence.) customers? CHAIRMAN GETZ: So, opportunity for 22 22 23 A. (Ms. Andrews) Yes, there are. 23 closings. 24 Q. Is it likely that the revenues in the -- or usage in 24 MS. THUNBERG: Thank you, Page 34 Page 36 East Conway is less than 7 percent overall? 1 1 Commissioners, for your consideration of the proposal 2 A. (Ms. Andrews) It is. 2 today. 3 Q. All right. That's all I have. In looking back at the prior rate 3 Is there anything else for the witnesses? cases of this Company, just to give a summary, back 4 4 MS. THUNBERG: None. in 1976, the Company sought a rate increase and did 5 5 MR. RICHARDSON: I had one follow-up not seek rate case expenses. Six years later, in 6 6 question in response to a question raised by 7 7 1982, there was another rate case; again, no rate Commissioner Amidon [sic]. And it's almost as much a 8 case expenses. And in both of those cases, '76 and 8 9 statement as a question, but I'll pose it to the 9 '82, the Commission appeared to have just adopted the Maine rates with a streamlined review in New 10 witness. 10 **EXAMINATION** Hampshire. 11 11 BY MR. RICHARDSON: There was another rate case in 1989. 12 13 Q. On Page 8 of the settlement agreement, you see where 13 again, it was streamlined; no rate case expenses. In Section VIII is -- Section H, the last sentence in 1992, there was a rate case that had no expenses. I 14 14 the first paragraph, says that, in the event that the 15 couldn't discern whether it was as streamlined as the 15 16 effective date of any change in rates approved by the prior rate cases. And a couple more, just to 16 MPUC does not comply with notice requirements under continue. In 2000, there was a rate review, and the 17 17 New Hampshire law or this agreement, Fryeburg shall 18 18 Company expressly agreed not to recover rate case revise the effective date of its New Hampshire tariff 19 expenses. The anomaly is, as Commissioner Ignatius 19 20 schedules accordingly. alluded to, in 19 -- in 2007, rather, there was a 20 And so my question, for actually both witnesses, 21 water-quality issue. And that rate case was dealing 21 22 is that this agreement is really intended to use the 22 with water-quality issues at the time. There were --23 initial order of notice in order to meet the 23 also, there was a CWIP issue and there were rate case 24 statutory notice requirements; would you agree with expenses incurred. But looking at the history of 24

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this Company and how the Commission has treated it in the past, it's been more of a streamlined process. So, with this particular case, Staff and the Company thought it would be best to let's expressly identify what that streamline process should be and put it in a document. So that was the genesis of the proposal that you have before you, is to just document what has happened in the past.

Mr. Richardson.

So, going forward, I know Ms. Andrews testified the benefits of the customers and the benefit to the Company are reduced costs for both the Company and rate case expense for the customers. Staff supports this. Staff has thoroughly reviewed -- even though this particular rate case proceeding was more of a streamlined nature, it thoroughly reviewed what occurred in Maine and is comfortable with the revenue requirement adopted there. It is less than what the Company proposed initially, and Staff is comfortable with how that revenue requirement is allocated to the customers. And with that, we respectfully request you approve the Stipulation Agreement today. Thank you.

the Company and its customers in the same shoes, because the customers in Maine are really receiving a benefit from the Maine rate review and the Company's willingness to charge those rates, because what -you know, what they're getting is essentially the rates that are approved, the rates that are just and reasonable. The difference between Maine rates and New Hampshire rates hasn't been all that great in the past. And so what we're -- it sounds like a cliche for a company to say that this is in its customer's best interests. But in this case, I really think it is, because those 62 customers now -- used to be 67 -- are really there and are being served not because it's in Fryeburg Water's financial best interest to do that. It's really a historical accident. If you go back and look at the history, the Company's source of supply was a reservoir that was in East Conway. That reservoir was discontinued, and the Company continued to serve them. Of course, the geography and the economics of water systems being what they are -- you know, we're not a large customer. It's very difficult to operate in a distinct regulatory environment with only 60 or 70 customers that you can amortize the regulatory

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MR. RICHARDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really haven't prepared much of a closing statement. But I'd just like to briefly say that the Company appreciates the Commission's review and Staff's review in this case.

CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you.

Obviously, the Company has lost money in the three years of 2009, 2008 and 2007. And it's important, if you're going to run a water company and provide the quality of water that people expect, that you're also entitled to a reasonable return upon the investment. And so this agreement accomplishes that, in terms of a rate case. And I think that's good, and I think that the Company has really done a lot to help both its Maine customers and its New Hampshire customers. Going forward, I think that that's the real interesting part in all of this.

And, of course, as you know, we came into this proceeding asking for an open-ended, essentially, authority to charge the Maine rates. But we kept an open mind, and we came up with a process that we think operates within the confines of New Hampshire law and really provides a tremendous benefit. I mean, it puts -- this case and this agreement are unusual, in that it really puts both

expenses over.

So what this will allow the New Hampshire customers to do is to receive the benefit of essentially a very similar rate review. And it allows the Company to benefit because it can take all the resources that it would spend getting New Hampshire rates approved and going through a full rate case and use those to focus on its core operations. It obviously has a very small staff. Ms. Andrews is part-time.

And so what we end up with is really the best of both worlds. And we think that we have gone through and we've met all the requirements for notice that are statutorily based. We looked very hard at 378:3. And what we did in order to meet that requirement was we had the Company submit its schedules in Maine as part of its New Hampshire filing, more or less simultaneously. And then there's an order of notice that gets issued. And that order of notice will be issued by this Commission, and it will be served by the Company. So everyone will have knowledge of what's happening, and they'll have the legal notice of the rate request that's been made. At that point, this Commission

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Page 41 will have the opportunity to conduct its own 1 2 investigation, and the Company will continue to 3 respond to any information request, as any regulated utility would. 4 What will happen is, once the Maine 5 rates are approved, using that prior order of notice 6 that was served on the New Hampshire customers, it 7 8 will then move very quickly to some form of a settlement, either through quick issues through a 9 suspension order; or, if the Staff is inclined to 10 11 recommend it -- and they don't have to. They're free 12 to recommend whatever they would like to under New Hampshire law -- they'll come out with that 13 14 recommendation to simply adopt the Maine rate, which 15 we think is what's going to happen. So, in effect, 16 from the outside, from a customer's perspective, this 17 settlement agreement is going to look and feel just 18 like a regular rate case. They're going to receive 19 an order of notice. It's going to tell them that 20 they can provide comments to this Commission. Staff 21 can consider those. This Commission can consider 22 those. Once the Maine approval is known, we're going 23 to move hopefully fairly quickly, and we hope that 24 we'll have rates that match what New Hampshire law Page 42 requires so that they can be implemented on a 1

Company-wide basis. Ad that's really what the 2 3 objective is here. And we hope that in reviewing this you'll reach the same conclusions. Thank you. 4 5 CHAIRMAN GETZ: All right. Thank you. 6 We will close the hearing and take the matter under 7 advisement. 8 (WHEREUPON, the hearing was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.) 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

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CERTIFICATE

I, Susan J. Robidas, a Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter and Notary Public of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of my stenographic notes of these proceedings taken at the place and on the date hereinbefore set forth, to the best of my skill and ability under the conditions present at the time.

I further certify that I am neither attorney or counsel for, nor related to or employed by any of the parties to the action; and further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed in this case, nor am I financially interested in this action.

> Susan J. Robidas, LCR/RPR Licensed Shorthand Court Reporter Registered Professional Reporter N.H. LCR No. 44 (RSA 310-A:173)

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