

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**DW 15-199**

**ABENAKI WATER COMPANY**

**Petition for Sewer Rate Adjustment**

**Order Authorizing Surcharge for the Recovery of Uncollected Revenue**

**ORDER NO. 26,257**

**June 11, 2019**

This order authorizes Abenaki Water Company, Inc., to assess two monthly surcharges to its Lakeland Sewer System customers to recover increased sewer rates charged by the City of Laconia and incurred from December 1, 2018, through February 28, 2019.

**I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

On February 28, 2019, the Commission issued Order No. 26,223, authorizing Abenaki Water Company, Inc. (Abenaki or the Company), to increase sewer rates for its Lakeland Sewer System (Lakeland) customers in Belmont. That increase reflected an adjustment in the City of Laconia's sewer rates charged to Abenaki, because the Lakeland system "collects wastewater and discharges it to the City of Laconia for treatment in the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program." *Abenaki Water Company, Inc.*, Order No. 25,905 at 4 (June 3, 2016). Order No. 26,223 authorized an annual increase of \$6,966 in Lakeland's sewer rates effective December 1, 2018, the same effective date as the City's rate increase. To recoup the necessary revenue for payment of the increased City sewer charges incurred between December 1, 2018, and the issuance of the order on February 28, 2019, the Commission authorized a recoupment surcharge. The Commission directed Abenaki to file, within 30 days, documentation in support

of its uncollected revenue for that period and propose an appropriate customer surcharge for the recovery of those revenues.

On April 1, 2019, Abenaki filed its proposed recoupment. On May 2, 2019, Commission Staff (Staff) filed its recommendation.

The petition and subsequent docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, are posted to the Commission's website at <http://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2015/15-199.html>.

## **II. POSITIONS OF ABENAKI AND STAFF**

### **A. Abenaki**

Abenaki proposed recovery of a total of \$1,178 from the Lakeland sewer customers via a one-time surcharge. The Company provided schedules containing the individual surcharge computation for each Lakeland sewer customer based on actual usage during the recoupment period. The proposed one-time recoupment charges would range from \$2.42 to \$9.67 under Abenaki's proposal.

### **B. Staff**

Staff concurred with the overall recoupment amount calculated by the Company, but proposed recovery over a two-month period. Staff supported its position by stating that it had reviewed similar surcharge amounts previously approved by the Commission and found that the individual surcharges approved for single-family residential customers have ranged between \$1.25 and \$6.43 per billing period. Staff indicated that the surcharges for single-family residential customers under its proposed two-month collection period would range between \$1.21 and \$4.84 per month. Staff noted that both the Office of the Consumer Advocate (OCA) and Abenaki concurred with its recommendation.

### III. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

We find that Abenaki's overall request to recoup previously uncollected revenue in the amount of \$1,178 is appropriate and conforms to the Commission's previous authorization and direction provided in Order No. 26,223. The Commission previously determined that the recoupment of those revenues was just and reasonable. Relying on Staff's recommendation, we find that the overall recoupment is mathematically appropriate and conforms with the mechanism previously approved in Order No. 26,223. As such, we approve an overall revenue recoupment of \$1,178.

We further agree with Staff's recommendation, which received the concurrence of Abenaki and the OCA, that Abenaki should recover this amount from the individual Lakeland sewer customers over a two-month period. We believe that the resulting monthly surcharge ranging between \$1.21 and \$4.84 will be less onerous to the single-family residential customers of the Lakeland sewer system.

**Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby**

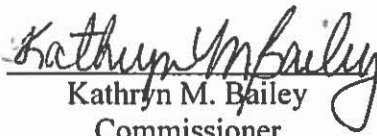
**ORDERED**, that Abenaki Water Company's requested revenue recoupment totaling \$1,178, is APPROVED; and it is

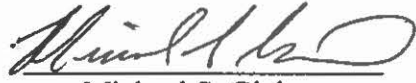
**FURTHER ORDERED**, that Abenaki is authorized to recover this amount from the customers of Lakeland Sewer System via a surcharge to be assessed over two monthly billing periods; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 1603, Abenaki shall submit properly annotated supplemental tariff pages consistent with this order within 15 days of the date of this order.

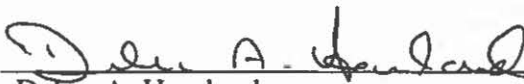
By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this eleventh day of June,  
2019.

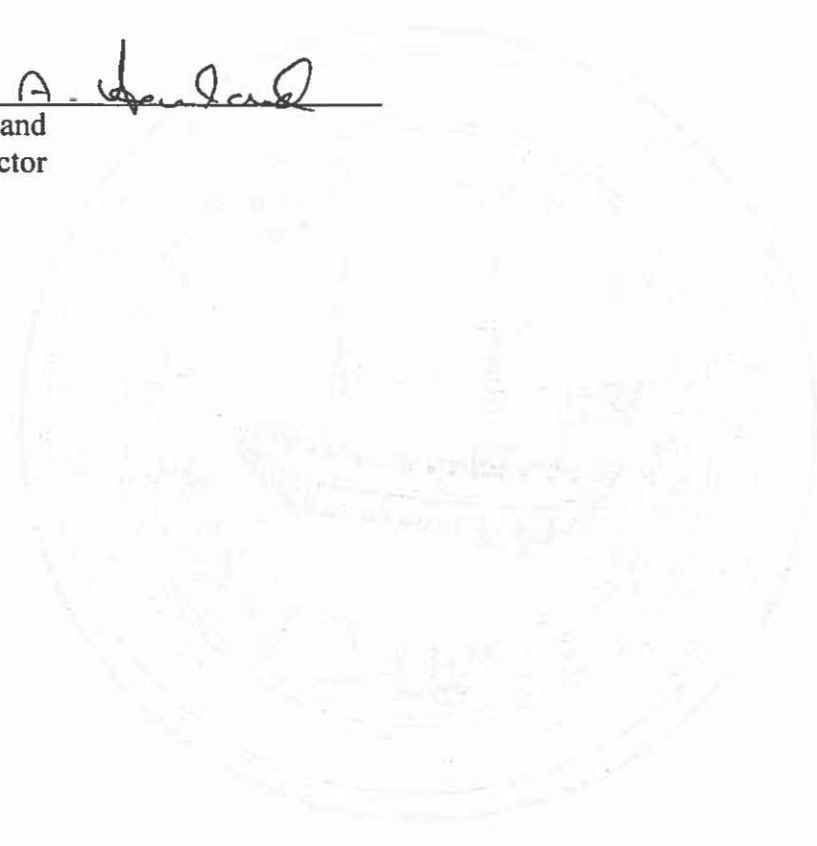
  
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Martin P. Honigberg  
Chairman

  
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Kathryn M. Bailey  
Commissioner

  
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Michael S. Giaimo  
Commissioner

Attested by:

  
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