

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
UNITIL ENERGY SYSTEMS, INC.



DE 16-463

2016 Least Cost Integrated Resource Plan

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This Settlement Agreement concerning Least Cost Integrated Resource Planning (Settlement Agreement) is entered into this day by and between Unitil Energy Systems, Inc. (Unitil), and the Staff of the Public Utilities Commission (Staff), together the Settling Parties, and is intended to resolve all outstanding issues in the above-captioned docket.

I. INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A. On April 19, 2016, Unitil filed its 2016 Least Cost Integrated Resource Plan (LCIRP) document. With its filing, Unitil included a Motion for Confidential Treatment and Protective Order for certain information provided on a confidential basis.

B. The filing stated that the Unitil franchise territory is comprised of two electric distribution systems: (1) the Unitil Capital System, and (2) Unitil Seacoast System. Unitil Service Corp., a service company for Unitil, performs various and ongoing planning activities for Unitil's franchise area. The activities are intended to assess the short-term and long-term requirements and capabilities of Unitil's electric distribution system. Those activities include distribution system planning to evaluate primary distribution circuits and substations, electric system planning to evaluate UES's subtransmission facilities and system supply points, joint system planning to evaluate the external delivery system which provides Unitil access to regional transmission and generation resource, and participation in statewide and regional transmission

planning efforts. Unitil's LCIRP filing contains an overview of Unitil's planning procedures along with related appendices, including Unitil's distribution planning and design guidelines, separate evaluations of Unitil's Capital distribution system planning and Unitil's Seacoast distribution system planning, load history and ten-year design forecasts for both the Capital and Seacoast regions, separate reliability studies for the Capital and Seacoast regions, and Unitil's demand side management report.

C. By letter dated May 9, 2016, the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) notified the Commission that it would be participating in this proceeding on behalf of residential ratepayers consistent with RSA 363:28. There were no other intervenors in the docket.

D. On August 15, 2016, the Commission issued an Order of Notice scheduling a prehearing conference on September 12, 2016. The Commission by secretarial letter approved a procedural schedule for the docket on November 14, 2016. Staff issued written discovery to Unitil. Unitil and Staff met in technical session and entered settlement discussions. This Settlement Agreement is a result of those discussions.

II. TERMS OF SETTLEMENT

A. Unitil and Staff agree that Unitil's LCIRP filing is consistent with the provisions of RSA 378:38 and that the Commission should accept the filing.

B. This Settlement Agreement does not propose any waiver of any statutory requirement for Unitil's next-filed LCIRP. Unitil reserves the right to seek such waiver pursuant to RSA 378:38-a prior to its next LCIRP filing.

C. In addition to the categories of information Unitil provided in the instant filing, the settling parties agree that Unitil shall include the following information in its next LCIRP filing:

- i. The most recent list of proposed capital projects presented to management during the most recent planning session; and
- ii. Detail regarding the steps taken through each stage of the planning process for each of the three highest-cost distribution capital projects with a status of In Service, Under Construction, or Planned, within the prior two years. This information shall include the comprehensive area study which was performed to ensure that the most reliable and cost effective alternative was chosen, and that the planning considered net present value, peak demand effectiveness, reliability, power quality, environmental impact, system losses, operating costs, and contingency effectiveness. Unitil shall include the list of alternatives considered for each project, e.g., elements of transmission, substation, distribution line, conservation and load management, “smart grid” technologies and/or distributed generation.

III. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. This Settlement Agreement is expressly conditioned upon the Commission’s acceptance of all its provisions, without change or condition. If the Commission does not accept this Settlement Agreement in its entirety, without change or condition, or if the Commission makes any findings that go beyond the scope of this Settlement Agreement, and any of the Settling Parties is unable to agree with the changes, conditions or findings, this Settlement Agreement shall be deemed to be withdrawn and shall not constitute any part of the record in this proceeding and shall not be used for any other purpose.

B. Under this Settlement Agreement, the Settling Parties agree to this joint submission to the Commission, which represents a compromise and liquidation of all issues in this proceeding.

C. The Settling Parties agree that the Commission's acceptance of this Settlement Agreement does not constitute continuing approval of, or precedent for, any particular issue in this proceeding. Acceptance of this Settlement Agreement by the Commission shall not be deemed to constrain the Commission's exercise of its authority to promulgate future orders, regulations or rules that resolve similar matters affecting other parties in a different fashion.

D. The resolution of any specific issue in this Settlement Agreement does not indicate the Settling Parties' agreement to such resolution for purposes of any future proceedings.

E. The rights conferred and the obligations imposed on the Settling Parties by this Settlement Agreement shall be binding on or inure to the benefit of any successors in interest or assignees as if such successor or assignee was itself a signatory party. The Settling Parties agree to cooperate in advocating that this Settlement Agreement be approved by the Commission in its entirety and without modification.

F. This Settlement Agreement is the product of confidential settlement negotiations. The content of these negotiations, including any documents prepared during such negotiations for the purpose of reaching a settlement, shall be privileged and all offers of settlement shall be without prejudice to the position of any party presenting such offer.


G. This Settlement Agreement may be executed in multiple counterparts, which together shall constitute one agreement.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Settling Parties affirm that the proposed Settlement Agreement is reasonable.


Staff of the Public Utilities Commission

Date: *April 6, 2017*

By 
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Unitil Energy Systems, Inc.



Date: April 6, 2017

By _____

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