

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 24-035

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
d/b/a EVERSOURCE ENERGY**

**Petition for Approval of Change in
Regulatory Reconciliation Adjustment Rate**

**Order *Nisi* Approving Revised Regulatory Reconciliation
Adjustment Rates on an Interim Basis**

O R D E R N O. 27,021

June 20, 2024

In this order, the Commission approves Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy's (Eversource) proposed revised Regulatory Reconciliation Adjustment (RRA) rates, for effect on August 1, 2024, on a *nisi* and interim basis, pending further review and hearing.

I. BACKGROUND

On May 31, 2024, the Commission issued a procedural order stating that it required an audit of four of the RRA rate elements to ensure a complete record. It requested the parties' input by June 10, 2024 regarding the use of an independent third-party auditor if the New Hampshire Department of Energy's (DOE) Audit Division was unable to perform this audit, in which audit sampling rather than a full audit would suffice.

The DOE stated in its response that it generally opposed the use of independent third-party auditors and reiterated that no audit of the 2023 vegetation management costs, the 2023 lost base distribution revenues, and the 2023 property tax would be done in this docket, though these items may be reviewed in Eversource's rate case in

Docket No. DE 24-070. Eversource responded that its RRA rates were based on storm costs through December 2018, which were audited in prior dockets. Further, Eversource opined that an audit regarding a reconciling rate mechanism was not necessary given the Company's existing controls and validation processes.

The DOE also filed an assented-to proposed procedural schedule, which did not include any audit deadlines, and notified the Commission that one of its witnesses was not available on June 26, 2024, the date of the scheduled hearing. It requested that two of its other witnesses, Ronald D. Willoughby, who is based in North Carolina, and Joseph J. DeVirgilio, Jr., who is based in Florida, be permitted to participate remotely during the hearing, to which neither Eversource nor the Office of the Consumer Advocate objected.

II. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

The Commission must base its findings of fact “exclusively on the evidence and on matters officially noticed” on the record. *See* RSA 541-A:31, VIII. To make the findings of fact necessary to issue a final order on Eversource's petition, the Commission has determined that an audit sampling of the 2023 vegetation management costs, 2023 lost base distribution revenues, and 2023 property tax expenses will be required. The Commission would prefer that the DOE conduct this audit. *See* RSA 12-P:2, III; RSA 12-P:5, VII. However, in this docket, as an alternative, Eversource, shall retain an independent third-party auditor on or before August 1, 2024 to conduct the aforementioned audit sampling. The Company shall file the results, based on the audit sampling, with the Commission on or before September 3, 2024. Additionally, the DOE shall file any information relevant to audits of Eversource's storm costs through December 2018 in this docket by September 3.

Based on our initial review, we find that Eversource's proposed revised RRA rates are just and reasonable, pursuant to RSA 374:2, RSA 378:5, and RSA 378:7, and we approve them on an interim, *nisi* basis, effective August 1, 2024, subject to further review. The June 26, 2024 hearing in this docket is canceled and rescheduled to September 12, 2024. The Commission will discuss the audit sampling results during the hearing and then issue a final order. The Commission does not approve the DOE's proposed procedural schedule to the extent it is inconsistent with the foregoing audit deadline and new hearing date.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED *NISI*, that subject to the effective date below, Eversource's revised RRA rates are APPROVED on an interim basis, effective August 1, 2024, pending further review and hearing; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the June 26, 2024 hearing is CANCELLED and rescheduled to September 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. Three hours are allotted for this hearing. Mr. Willoughby and Mr. DeVirgilio are permitted to appear remotely at this hearing and any other hearings scheduled in this docket; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Eversource shall file the results of the independent third-party audit sampling on or before September 3, 2024; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the DOE shall file any information relevant to audits of Eversource's storm costs through December 2018 in this docket on or before September 3, 2024; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Eversource shall post a copy of this order on the Company's website within two business days of the date of this order, with an affidavit of publication to be filed with this office on or before July 5, 2024; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that all persons interested in responding to this order be notified that they may submit their comments or file a written request for a hearing, stating the reason and basis for a hearing, no later than July 12, 2024 for the Commission's consideration; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party interested in responding to such comments or request for hearing shall do so no later than July 22, 2024; and it is


FURTHER ORDERED, that this order shall be effective August 1, 2024, unless Eversource fails to satisfy the publication obligation set forth above or the Commission provides otherwise in a supplemental order issued prior to the effective date; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Eversource shall file a compliance tariff with the Commission regarding the interim RRA rates on or before August 8, 2024, in accordance with New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules, Part Puc 1603.


By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twentieth day of June, 2024.



Daniel C. Goldner
Chairman



Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner



Carleton B. Simpson
Commissioner

Service List - Docket Related

Docket#: 24-035

Printed: 6/20/2024

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