

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DG 24-100

**LIBERTY UTILITIES (ENERGYNORTH NATURAL GAS) CORP.
d/b/a LIBERTY-KEENE DIVISION**

Winter 2024-2025 Cost of Gas

COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDING AND NOTICE OF HEARING

On September 9, 2024, Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty-Keene Division (Liberty Keene or Company) submitted its Winter 2024–2025 Cost of Gas (COG) filing for rates effective November 1, 2024. In support of its petition, Liberty Keene submitted the pre-filed direct testimony of its employees Sarah B. Grant, Robert Garcia, and Adam R.M. Yusuf (Joint Testimony), supporting schedules, and revised tariff pages reflecting the proposed changes. On September 12, 2024, the New Hampshire Department of Energy (DOE) submitted an assented-to procedural schedule. All docket filings, other than any information subject to confidential treatment, are available on the Commission’s website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2024/24-100.html>.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

In its filing, Liberty Keene has proposed a winter 2024—2025 non-fixed price option (Non-FPO) COG rate of \$1.5390 per therm for residential customers, which is a \$0.1383 or 10 percent increase from the winter 2023-2024 rates. Joint Testimony at 14. The Company proposed a fixed-price option (FPO) rate of \$1.5590 per therm for residential customers, which is a \$0.1383 or 10 percent increase from the winter 2023–2024 rates. *Id.* Liberty Keene stated that the main reason for these projected

increases is a smaller over-collection balance as compared to last year and a slight decrease in projected sales which gas costs remain relatively consistent. *Id.*

II. ISSUES PRESENTED

The filing presents, *inter alia*, issues related to RSA 374:22, RSA 378:5, and RSA 378:7, including: the justness of and reasonableness of rates, fares, and charges; the forecasting of sales, supplier prices, and transportation prices; weather normalization; operational issues; purchasing decisions related to current and past supplies; cost and revenue projections; the revenue and rate impacts resulting from the proposed rate change; and the calculation of per therm costs. Accordingly, an adjudicative proceeding will be convened to address these issues.

The Commission will be conducting the prehearing conference and any hearings scheduled in this matter in person. The Commission will consider requests to conduct hearings using a hybrid format to permit remote participation by a specific individual only if the Commission has determined that a sufficient reason has been provided for why that individual would be unable to attend in person. Any party requesting that a specific individual be permitted to participate remotely should file a written request with the Commission's Clerk's Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the prehearing conference or hearing date. If the Commission determines that one or more individuals will be permitted to appear remotely, then individuals in the Commission's hearing room, including the Commissioners, will be broadcast on a web-enabled platform.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that an adjudicative proceeding be commenced for the purpose of reviewing and resolving the foregoing issues pursuant to RSA chapter 541-A, RSA 374:22, RSA 378:5, and RSA 378:7, and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission APPROVES the DOE's proposed procedural schedule, except for the date of date of the hearing; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a hearing in this matter at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on October 29, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with the approved procedural schedule and modified hearing date, the New Hampshire Department of Energy will file its position regarding Liberty Keene's petition, including the reasons for this position, on or before October 18, 2024; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that during the prehearing conference, the Commission will consider the matters listed in Puc 203.15(c) and (d), including the establishment of a procedural schedule governing the remainder of the proceeding. Parties and potential parties are encouraged to facilitate the development of a procedural schedule by conferring prior to the prehearing conference, so that the presiding officer can address any matters on which there is disagreement during the prehearing conference; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, immediately following the prehearing conference, Liberty Keene shall make appropriate personnel available for the parties to hold a technical session to review the filing; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any entity or individual may petition to intervene and seek to be admitted as a party in this proceeding. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any entity or individual seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to Liberty-Keene and any

other parties on the service list, on or before October 23, 2024. The petition shall state the facts demonstrating how the petitioner's rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before October 25, 2024; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that parties shall file any proposed exhibits, written testimony, motions, or other documents intended to become part of the record in this proceeding with the Commission. 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>, all Commission rules requiring the filing of paper copies are suspended until further notice. Parties may elect to submit any filing in electronic form unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. Filings will be considered filed as of the time the electronic copy is received by the Commission; and it is


FURTHER ORDERED, that routine procedural inquiries may be made by contacting the Commission's Clerk's Office at (603) 271-2431 or ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov. All requests to the Commission should be made in a written pleading filed with the Commission. Unless otherwise authorized by law, *ex parte* communications are prohibited; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, Liberty Keene shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before October 9, 2024. In addition, the Clerk shall publish this

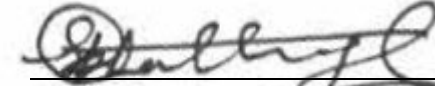
order of notice on the Commission's website no later than two business days after the date of issue; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any hearings in this matter shall be conducted in accordance with the attached hearing guidelines.

So ordered, this third day of October, 2024.



Daniel C. Goldner
Chairman



Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the 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#: 24-100

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