

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

<p>The Narragansett Electric Co. d/b/a National Grid) - Tariff Advice to Amend Street and Area Lighting) - Customer Owned Equipment Provision, RIPUC) No. 2142 (S-05))</p>	Docket No. 4685
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COMMENTS BY
PRISM STREETLIGHTS, INC. d/b/a PRISM,
THE RI LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS
AND
THE WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

By its attorneys, Prism Streetlights, Inc. (PRISM), the RI League Of Cities Towns and the Washington County Regional Planning Council submit these comments. These comments are from the Washington County Regional Planning council, The RI League of Cities and Towns, and PRISM Streetlights, a RI nonprofit aggregator of municipal energy services.

We support the proposed changes to the S-05 Rate Tariff for Customer-owned Streetlights, but request two changes in the language. As proposed by National Grid, the definition of eligible customers is broadened from "...any municipal city or town" to "any municipal city or town, any fire district, any municipal water utility board, Kent County Water Authority, Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, Quonset Development Corporation, Rhode Island Airport Corporation, Narragansett Bay Commission, and the State of Rhode Island, (collectively, and each individually hereinafter referred to as "Customer"). . .As far as it goes, this list is acceptable to the municipalities. However, it leaves out two situations that exist in many communities across Rhode Island.

First, Regional School Systems are not included. While not paying for large numbers of lights, these systems do pay for streetlights on public roadways. In informal conversations, National

Grid has stated that these would be sold to/purchased by the towns. National Grid is correct in the case of school departments, such as Providence, Westerly, and others where the school system is operated as a department of the municipality. However, regional school systems like Exeter-West Greenwich and Chariho (Charlestown/Richmond/Hopkinton) are not part of municipal government but operate independently and therefore must be treated separately in this tariff. [NOTE: Here's what Grid said in its response to PUC's data request in this docket – "After a review of its billing inventory, the Company determined that the municipal purchases to date already include the street and area lighting assets serving the regional school districts and the housing authorities, so there was no need to include those public entities in the S-05 Tariff." – so, let's be sure of this point] We ask to amend the list to read "...any fire district, any regional school system..."

The less clear situation involves regular cobra-head lights on utility poles that provide light directly onto public roadways but, for various historical reasons, are charged not to the municipality but to a private citizen, usually a neighbor. Some of these lights can and should be purchased when a town buys its streetlighting assets from National Grid. Obviously, not every private light, especially the much more prevalent floodlights that light private property, should be included here. We suggest amending the list to add, "...at a Town's option, any streetlight used primarily to light a public road but that is currently billed to a private customer..." [NOTE: if the Town wants/allows it to be included in the inventory to be purchased don't they inherently agree? If they don't want it can't they exclude it from the purchased inventory on the grounds that it's a private light?]

In its response to the Commission's data request, National Grid objects to further expansion only for safety reasons. It states:

The ownership of street and area lighting mounted to utility poles in the electrical distribution space and attached to underground structures in manholes raises serious safety concerns, such as requiring the expertise of qualified electrical workers meeting

requirements established by OSHA and other industry standards. (Response to PUC 1-1, at p. 2)

And:

For the same reasons, including the heightened safety concerns, the S-05 Tariff should not be broadened by simply changing the wording of the tariff to “streetlight customer,” as suggested by Prism Streetlights, Inc. (PRISM). . . (Response to PUC 1-1, at p. 3)

As the entities that negotiated National Grid’s proposed attachment agreement these entities know that all such safety concerns were copiously and thoroughly addressed in the agreement that any streetlight customer buying and operating lights must enter with the Company. The customers that now own their lights have strictly complied with those standards. To cite safety concerns as the principal argument against allowing any such additional expansions is unfounded given the painstaking care taken to require very high safety standards for any work on customer-owned streetlights in the required attachment agreement.

The only other explanation offered by National Grid for its objection is that a statute designed for public entities should not be opened up to private entities. They write:

The Company strongly disagrees with adding any private customers to the S-05 Tariff, which is intended only for those specific public entities who are, in fact, government entities and currently take unmetered lighting service under the Company’s General Street and Area Lighting Rate S-14 or Decorative Street and Area Lighting Service Rate S-06. (Response to PUC 1-1, at p. 3)

The fact is that the municipal streetlight investment act was designed to be used by municipalities.

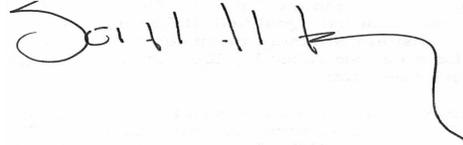
The same logic that applies to expanding its application to other public entities applies to streetlights used to light public streets if a municipalities’ preference is to own and operate those lights. In fact, we would argue that municipalities’ have a greater claim of consistency with the statute’s intent when they seek to reclaim ownership of private lights used to illuminate public roads under the “Municipal

Streetlight Investment Act” than do any other public entities.

Respectfully submitted,

PRISM STREETLIGHTS, INC.

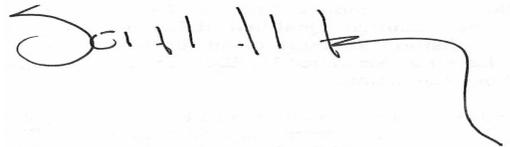
By their attorney,



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on April 6, 2017, I sent a true copy of the document by electronic mail to the PUC and the service list and filed the original pleading and 9 photocopies with the PUC.



Seth H. Handy