

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Public Utilities Commission

Minutes of Open Meeting Held October 24, 2011

Attendees: Chairman Elia Germani, Commissioner Mary Bray, Commissioner Paul Roberti, Cindy Wilson-Frias and Dilip Shah, Nick Ucci and Luly Massaro. Staff Patricia Lucarelli, Alan Nault, Sharon Colby Camara, Nick Ucci and Luly were not present.

Chairman Germani called the open meeting to order at 2:00 P.M. in the first-floor hearing room of the Public Utilities Commission. A quorum was present.

1725 – Rules Governing the Termination of Residential Electric, Gas and Water Utility Service: The Commission discussed and considered RI Office of Energy Resources' ("OER") letter dated October 12, 2011 and The George Wiley's letter dated October 20, 2011 requesting that the Commission temporarily modify the Commission's rules governing the termination of gas and electric utility service. They request that the Commission modify the rules to allow LIHEAP eligible households to restore their gas and electric service with a 10% down payment of the customer's unpaid balance for the 2012 home heating season.

After review, Commissioner Bray moved to find that there exists eminent peril to the public health, safety or welfare that requires modification of the Termination Rules with less than 30 days notice. Commissioner Roberti seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed. **Vote 3-0.**

Commissioner Bray summarized OER's and the Wiley Center's proposals with their differences. She noted that a delay in LIHEAP certification would delay the implementation of the arrearage forgiveness plan. The goal is to get as many ratepayer's service restored in the least amount of time. There is not enough time to fully research the effect of the 10% down payment proposal. Commissioner Bray proposed the continuation of 2010, 2009 and 2008 tiered program requiring a 20%, 15% and 10% down payment of the customer's unpaid balance to have their service restored by National Grid subject to the satisfaction of certain specified condition. Commissioner Bray moved to implement emergency regulation as proposed in the Open Meeting Notice effective October 25, 2011 through December 15, 2011. Chairman Germani seconded the motion and Commissioner Roberti concurred. **Vote 3-0.**

The following summarizes the rules proposed in the notice::

(G) Restoration of Utility Service Based on Imminent Peril to Public Health, Safety and Welfare from October 25, 2011 through December 15, 2011

From October 25, 2011 through December 15, 2011, a residential customer whose utility service has been terminated by National Grid for non-payment or who has a Termination date scheduled by National Grid, will be entitled to have such service restored by National Grid upon satisfaction of two of the following conditions:

- (a) for a customer owing less than \$1000, 20% of the balance owed must be paid and the remainder of that balance must be paid within 18 months;
- (b) for a customer owing at least \$1000 but less than \$2500, 15% of the balance owed must be paid and the remainder of that balance must be paid within 24 months;
- (c) for a customer owing \$2500 or more, 10% of the balance owed must be paid and the remainder of that balance must be paid within 36 months unless the Company chooses to extend such time period;
- (d) the customer requesting a payment plan under this provision, Part V, Section 4(G) either did not participate in one of the plans listed in Part V, Section 4(G)(a)-(c) in a prior year or did participate and currently has a balance due on his or her account that is the same or less than that customer had upon enrollment in a prior year plan listed in Part V, Section (4)(G)(a)-(c).

In addition to the down payments specified above, customers must pay current bills within the time period allowed by National Grid. A formal commitment to receive funds from any social service agency by December 15, 2011 for either all or part of the down payment required above shall be considered as compliance with the provisions of this rule provided that customer has satisfied the other conditions set forth above.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 P.M.