

Commission Business Meeting Notes

March 25th, 2020

Post-Meeting Summary Notes, Drafted and Presented by Rob Bockman

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Thank you for joining us for today's post-meeting summary. These Commission Business Meetings are held each Wednesday at 2 p.m. and all agendas and materials are posted to the Docket Management System prior to each meeting. If you have questions about Commission business, we encourage you to reach out to us at robert.bockman@psc.sc.gov or via social media by following the SC Utility Consumer program on Twitter at @UtilityConsumer and on Facebook at SC Utility Consumer.

Today's business meeting started at 2:05 p.m. with Commissioners Howard, Hamilton, and Ervin calling in, and began with item one on today's supplemental agenda: a request for an ex parte presentation to discuss a confirmatory order to Duke Energy issued by the NRC. Commissioner Ervin made the motion to instruct the Clerk's Office of the PSC to set up a virtual ex parte presentation in order for Duke to explain this order. This motion carried.

Item two was a request for a stay and toll of all deadlines in Docket No. 2019-393-E, requested by Dominion Energy South Carolina and the Solar Business Alliance in order to continue settlement discussion. These parties have agreed that they will not initiate discovery during a 30-day period and that the Commission would be updated in a timely manner at the end of this period. Commissioner Howard moved to approve this stay, which carried.

Moving on to today's utility agenda: items one through ten were requests to approve amendments to a series of interconnection agreements. Commissioner Hamilton moved to grant these requests in a single motion, which carried.

Item eleven was carried over.

Item twelve was a request made by a telecommunications company to amend its name to reflect a recent rebrand and marketing campaign of its parent company. Commissioner Belser made the motion to accept this request, and her motion carried.

Items thirteen through fifteen were requests for petitions to intervene in three dockets, which were granted following motions made by, respectively, Commissioners Hamilton, Ervin, and Belser.

Item sixteen was a request for an attorney to be granted admission pro hac vice in Docket No. 2020-1-E, which was granted following a motion made by Commissioner Ervin.

Item seventeen was a petition to intervene in Docket No. 2020-83-E, which was granted following a motion made by Commissioner Whitfield.

Item eighteen was carried over.

Item nineteen was a request in Docket No. 2020-67-E for a declaratory order finding that a portion of a 230-kV transmission line does not require the issue of a Certificate of Environmental Capability and Public

Convenience. Commissioner Belser moved to approve this request, noting that the 230-kV line is “the replacement of an existing facility with a like facility” under SC Code Annotated 58-33-110(1), and thus no certificate is required. This motion carried.

Item twenty was a request to amend shared solar riders “so that they more closely align with the intent of the Shared Solar Program and further encourage low-income customer participation.” Commissioner Ervin moved to approve this request, noting that the Office of Regulatory Staff does not object to the request and that the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy support the request. This motion carried.

Items twenty-one and twenty-two were taken together and were motions to withdraw current counsel and substitute a replacement. Commissioner Whitfield moved to grant these requests, and his motion carried.

Item twenty-three involved the appointment of a hearing officer in Docket No. 2018-321-E, with Commissioner Howard moving to appoint Josh Minges as hearing officer. This carried.

At this point, Commissioner Belser asked that the Commission revisit item 20 and reopen discussion, noting that the request’s effective date was December 2019, and the tariff would then extend past March 2020. Thus, she moved, to have that tariff amended to December 2019 and a revote be held. The revote was unanimous.

Item twenty-four was a request to stay the scheduling of prefile testimony and hearing date. Commissioner Ervin moved to grant the request and stay any filing deadlines or hearing date “until such time that we may receive a specific request from a party to do so.” This carried.

Item twenty-five was a request to approve a settlement agreement, which carried following a motion made by Commissioner Belser.

Item twenty-six concerned Blue Granite Water Company’s request for rate adjustment. Commissioner Belser proposed a motion, the full text of which is available on the Commission’s website. The final order will be issued on the second of April. Commissioner Belser read the comprehensive motion, after which Chairman Randall extended his thanks and recognized Commissioner Ervin, who likewise thanked the staff and parties involved in this case and noted the public pushback from the attendees and witnesses at the Commission’s series of public hearings. Commissioner Belser’s motion carried.

Item twenty-seven was a request for five additional days prior to the issuance of an order in Docket No. 2019-290-WS. Commissioner Belser moved to grant this request, and her motion carried.

Item twenty-eight was a request to stay all proceedings in Dockets No. 2019-281-S and 2020-106-A, which carried following a motion from Commissioner Whitfield, who noted that the Commission will instruct staff to contact the parties to discuss and establish a new procedural schedule. He also underlined his gratitude to the utility for agreeing to this stay. Commissioner Whitfield’s motion carried.

Item twenty-nine involved Blue Granite Water Company’s request involving Commission Order No. 2020-240, including the allowance for the Commission to “issue its final order and address any petitions for rehearing or reconsideration in due course. In the meantime, Blue Granite states that it would commit to not putting new rates into effect until September 1, 2020.” Commissioner Belser moved to grant this, which carried.

Finally, item thirty dealt with a request for utilities to file their reports with a thirty day grace period due to the outbreak of COVID-19. Commissioner Howard moved to, pursuant to SC Code Ann. Regs. 103-803, waive the filing of annual reports for thirty days. This carried, with Commissioner Belser noting there's a discrepancy in some filing dates as mandated by SC law.

In addition to these items, Commissioners were also briefed on fifty-six other issues related to utilities in South Carolina. The complete list of these items, as well as links to dockets and all materials, is available on the Docket Management System at dms.psc.sc.gov.

Moving on to the transportation agenda: today's single item was an application for a class-c certificate, which was granted following a motion made by Commissioner Hamilton.

In addition to the items discussed in detail, Commissioners were advised on six other transportation-related issues. The complete list of these, as well as links to dockets and materials, can be found on the Docket Management System at dms.psc.sc.gov.

The next regular Commission Business Meeting is set for Wednesday, April 1st at 2 p.m. You can access the livestream broadcast of that meeting by visiting our site at www.psc.sc.gov and clicking on "livestream." If you have questions about today's proceedings, please follow us on social media—on Twitter at @PSCofSC and at @UtilityConsumer or on Facebook at Public Service Commission of South Carolina or SC Utility Consumer—or call the offices of the PSC at 803.896.5100. Thank you.