

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF THE REGULATION OF
THE PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT
CLAUSE CONTAINED WITHIN THE RATE
SCHEDULES OF OHIO CUMBERLAND GAS
COMPANY AND RELATED MATTERS.

CASE No. 20-211-GA-GCR

ENTRY

Entered in the Journal on July 10, 2020

{¶ 1} Ohio Cumberland Gas Company (Cumberland) is a natural gas company, as defined by R.C. 4905.03, and a public utility, as defined by R.C. 4905.02, and, as such, is subject to the jurisdiction of this Commission.

{¶ 2} R.C. 4905.302 and Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-07 provide that the Commission shall conduct, or cause to be conducted, periodic audits of each gas or natural gas company under the Commission's jurisdiction. Such audits shall review each company's compliance with the gas cost recovery (GCR) mechanism as delineated in Ohio Adm.Code Chapter 4901:1-14.

{¶ 3} Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-08 provides that the Commission shall hold a public hearing at least 60 days after the filing of each GCR audit report required under Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-07. Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-08(C) specifies the requirement for notice of a GCR hearing, which each company should cause to be published between 15 and 30 days prior to the date set for its hearing. The notice may be provided by publication of a display ad in a newspaper (in a section other than the legal notice section), bill message, bill insert, or direct mailing to the customers.

{¶ 4} By Entry issued January 29, 2020, the Commission initiated this proceeding; established the financial audit period of August 1, 2017, through July 31, 2019; set the due date by which the financial audit report must be filed; and directed that Staff conduct the audit required pursuant to Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-07. The January 29, 2020 Entry also scheduled this matter for a hearing to be held on May 26, 2020, at the offices of the

Commission, 180 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793 and directed Cumberland to publish notice of the hearing pursuant to Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-08(C).

{¶ 5} On March 9, 2020, the governor signed Executive Order 2020-01D (Executive Order), declaring a state of emergency in Ohio to protect the well-being of Ohioans from the dangerous effects of COVID-19. As described in the Executive Order, state agencies are required to implement procedures consistent with recommendations from the Department of Health to prevent or alleviate the public health threat associated with COVID-19. Additionally, all citizens are urged to heed the advice of the Department of Health regarding this public health emergency in order to protect their health and safety. The Executive Order was effective immediately and will remain in effect until the COVID-19 emergency no longer exists. The Department of Health is making COVID-19 information, including information on preventative measures, available via the internet at coronavirus.ohio.gov/.

{¶ 6} Pursuant to R.C. 3701.13, the Ohio Department of Health has supervision of “all matters relating to the preservation of the life and health of the people” and the “ultimate authority in matters of quarantine and isolation.” On March 12, 2020, the Director of the Ohio Department of Health issued an Order indicating that “all persons are urged to maintain social distancing (approximately six feet away from other people) whenever possible.”

{¶ 7} By Entry dated April 27, 2020, the hearing in this matter was rescheduled to commence on July 7, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., at the offices of the Commission, 180 East Broad Street, 11th Floor, Hearing Room 11-C, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793.

{¶ 8} Beginning on or about June 4, 2020, prior to the 15 to 30 day notice period required under Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-08(C), Cumberland issued bill inserts notifying its customers of an in-person hearing to take place on July 7, 2020, at the Commission’s offices, in Columbus, Ohio.

{¶ 9} In light of the continuing guidance issued by the Executive Order and the Department of Health, to socially distance, the attorney examiner directed, by Entry issued June 25, 2020, that the hearing be rescheduled for August 26, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., to be conducted via remote access technology. Cumberland was directed to notify customers that the hearing had been rescheduled. The June 25, 2020 Entry also specified that the Commission would direct Cumberland to issue a new public notice of the rescheduled hearing, detailing the requirements to participate in the hearing using remote access technology by telephone and/or live video on the internet.

{¶ 10} Accordingly, at this time, the attorney examiner notes that the hearing in this matter will occur, as rescheduled, on August 26, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. Due to the continued state of emergency, and given the passage of Am. Sub. H.B. 197, the hearing will be held using remote access technology, as follows:

- (a) The hearing will be held on August 26, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., and will be conducted through Webex, which will enable the parties and interested persons to participate by telephone and/or video on the internet.
- (b) Access information for the hearing will be provided to the parties at their electronic mail address of record.
- (c) Interested persons that wish to provide testimony or that plan to join the Webex event must register with the Commission before 12:00 p.m., on August 25, 2020, at <https://bit.ly/20-211> or by calling the Commission at 1-800-686-7826. Interested individuals will be required to provide their full name, home address, telephone number, and electronic mail address, if available; state that they wish to register for the public hearing in Case No. 20-211-GA-GCR; specify whether they plan to join the Webex event by internet or by telephone; and indicate whether they intend to

offer testimony. Individuals that plan to attend the Webex event through internet access must have a computer or smart device with a microphone and speakers, an electronic mail address, and reliable internet service.

- (d) On the day of the hearing, individuals who have registered to testify will be asked to speak beginning shortly after 10:00 a.m., so all those who have registered to testify should be prepared to speak at that time. For individuals who are speaking by telephone, the Commission's staff will contact those individuals by telephone when it is time for their testimony and connect them to the hearing. If access or other issues are experienced during the hearing, individuals should immediately use the chat function within Webex or contact the Commission's legal department at 1-614-466-6843 for assistance.
- (e) If individuals wish to supplement their testimony with an exhibit for the Commission's consideration, a copy of the document, along with a reference to the case number, must be provided to the Commission by August 25, 2020, by electronic mail to contactPUCO@puco.ohio.gov or by mail to Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, 180 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.
- (f) Public comments can be provided in writing on the Commission's web site at <https://puco.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/puco/help-center/contact-us>, by electronic mail to contactPUCO@puco.ohio.gov, or by mail to Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, 180 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio

43215. Written comments should reference the case number for this matter.

{¶ 11} Additionally, the attorney examiner directs Cumberland to modify the notice of its GCR hearing set forth in the January 29, 2020 Entry. Cumberland shall publish notice of the hearing at least 15 days and not more than 30 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. Cumberland shall submit the notice to Staff for review before it is issued. The revised notice should be in substantially the following form.

LEGAL NOTICE

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio has set for public hearing Case No. 20-211-GA-GCR to review the gas cost recovery rates of Ohio Cumberland Gas Company and the operation of its purchased gas adjustment clause, and related matters. The hearing is scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m., on August 26, 2020, using remote access technology that facilitates participation by telephone or live video on the internet. Interested members of the public that wish to provide testimony or that plan to attend the hearing must register with the Commission before 12:00 p.m. on August 25, 2020, at <https://bit.ly/20-211> or by calling the Commission at 1-800-686-7826. Further information may be obtained by viewing the Commission's web page at www.puco.ohio.gov or contacting the Commission's hotline at 1-800-686-7826 or, for speech and hearing impaired customers, 7-1-1.

{¶ 12} Cumberland is directed to file its proof of publication of the hearing with the Commission by no later than August 21, 2020.

{¶ 13} It is, therefore,

{¶ 14} ORDERED, That the hearing in this matter be held on August 26, 2020, and conducted in accordance with Paragraph 10. It is, further,

{¶ 15} ORDERED, That Cumberland publish notice of the hearing, in accordance with Paragraph 11, and file its proof of publication with the Commission by no later than August 21, 2020. It is, further,

{¶ 16} ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served upon Cumberland and upon all parties and interested persons of record.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

/s/Greta See

By: Greta See
Attorney Examiner

MJA/hac

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

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in

Case No(s). 20-0211-GA-GCR

Summary: Attorney Examiner Entry ordering that the hearing in this matter be held on August 26, 2020 and that Cumberland publish notice of the hearing electronically filed by Heather A Chilcote on behalf of Greta See, Attorney Examiner, Public Utilities Commission