

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF THE REGULATION OF
THE PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT
CLAUSE CONTAINED WITHIN THE RATE
SCHEDULES OF DUKE ENERGY OHIO,
INC.

CASE No. 20-218-GA-GCR

IN THE MATTER OF THE UNCOLLECTIBLE
EXPENSE RIDER OF DUKE ENERGY OHIO,
INC.

CASE No. 20-318-GA-UEX

IN THE MATTER OF THE PERCENTAGE OF
INCOME PAYMENT PLAN RIDER OF DUKE
ENERGY OHIO, INC.

CASE No. 20-418-GA-PIP

ENTRY

Entered in the Journal on July 12, 2021

{¶ 1} Duke Energy Ohio, Inc. (Duke or Company) 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} On December 21, 2005, the Commission authorized Duke to establish an uncollectible expense (UEX) rider. *In re The Cincinnati Gas & Elec. Co.*, Case No. 05-732-EL-MER, et al., Finding and Order (Dec. 21, 2005). In accordance with the Commission's previous directives, Duke's independent financial auditor is to audit the UEX rider in conjunction with Duke's GCR audit. *In re Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.*, Case No. 10-726-GA-UEX, Finding and Order (June 23, 2010).

{¶ 5} Furthermore, the Commission has authorized Duke to recover percentage of income payment plan (PIPP) arrearages associated with providing natural gas service through its PIPP rider. *In re Review of PIP Plan Riders*, Case No. 88-1115-GE-PIP, et al., Finding and Order (Dec. 2, 1993).

{¶ 6} By Entry issued March 11, 2020, the Commission initiated these proceedings; found that Duke's PIPP rider should be audited in the course of the Company's GCR and UEX audits; established the financial audit periods for the GCR mechanism and UEX and PIPP riders; set the due date by which the financial audit reports must be filed; and provided instructions for Duke's selected auditor. The March 11, 2020 Entry also scheduled this matter for a public hearing to be held on January 19, 2021, and directed Duke to publish notice of the hearing pursuant to Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-08(C).

{¶ 7} 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 were 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 were urged to heed the advice of the Department of Health regarding the public health emergency in order to protect their health and safety. The Executive Order was effective immediately and was to remain in effect until rescinded. The Department of Health is making COVID-19 information, including information on preventative measures, available via the internet at coronavirus.ohio.gov/.

{¶ 8} Due to the COVID-19 state of emergency that remained in effect at the time, the attorney examiner issued an Entry on December 15, 2020, which canceled the previously scheduled public hearing and stated that a new hearing date would be established by future entry.

{¶ 9} On June 15, 2021, Duke and Staff filed a joint stipulation and recommendation for the Commission's consideration.

{¶ 10} At this time, the attorney examiner finds that the public hearing should be held on August 26, 2021, at 10:00 a.m., at the offices of the Commission, 180 East Broad Street, Hearing Room 11-C, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793. The parties and all interested persons wishing to provide testimony should register at the lobby desk and then proceed to the 11th floor to participate in the hearing. Consistent with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidelines and the May 17, 2021 Ohio Department of Health Order, individuals who are not fully vaccinated should continue to wear a face covering and socially distance. Any accommodations necessary to ensure availability of social distancing and plexiglass dividers should be made in advance of the hearing. As pandemic restrictions are evolving, additional instructions regarding further safety requirements or accommodations for the hearing room will either be posted on the Commission website or communicated to the parties.

{¶ 11} Additionally, the attorney examiner directs Duke to modify the notice of its GCR hearing set forth in the March 11, 2020 Entry. Duke shall publish notice of the hearing at least 15 days and not more than 30 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. 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. 20-218-GA-GCR, to review the gas cost recovery rates of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., the operation of its purchased gas

adjustment clause, and related matters. This hearing is scheduled to begin at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 26, 2021, at the offices of the Commission, 180 East Broad Street, Hearing Room 11-C, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793. All interested parties will be given an opportunity to be heard. Further information may be obtained by viewing the Commission's web page at <http://www.puco.ohio.gov> or contacting the Commission at (800) 686-7826 or for hearing or speech impaired customers 7-1-1.

{¶ 12} It is, therefore,

{¶ 13} ORDERED, That the public hearing in these matters be held on August 26, 2021, and conducted in accordance with Paragraph 10. It is, further,

{¶ 14} ORDERED, That Duke publish notice of the hearing, in accordance with Paragraph 11. It is, further,

{¶ 15} ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served upon all parties of record.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

/s/David M. Hicks

By: David M. Hicks
Attorney Examiner

JRJ/kck

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Case No(s). 20-0218-GA-GCR, 20-0318-GA-UEX, 20-0418-GA-PIP

Summary: Attorney Examiner Entry ordering that the public hearing in these matters be held on August 26, 2021, and conducted in accordance with Paragraph 10 and ordering that Duke publish notice of the hearing, in accordance with Paragraph 11.
electronically filed by Kelli C. King on behalf of David M. Hicks, Attorney Examiner, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio