

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC. FOR AUTHORITY TO AMEND ITS FILED TARIFFS TO INCREASE THE RATES AND CHARGES FOR GAS SERVICES AND RELATED MATTERS.

CASE NO. 21-637-GA-AIR

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC. FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE FORM OF REGULATION.

CASE NO. 21-638-GA-ALT

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC. FOR APPROVAL OF A DEMAND SIDE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR ITS RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS.

CASE NO. 21-639-GA-UNC

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO, INC. FOR APPROVAL TO CHANGE ACCOUNTING METHODS.

CASE NO. 21-640-GA-AAM

ENTRY

Entered in the Journal on June 3, 2022

{¶ 1} Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. (Columbia or the Company) is a natural gas company and a public utility as defined by R.C. 4905.03 and R.C. 4905.02, respectively. As such, Columbia is subject to the jurisdiction of this Commission pursuant to R.C. 4905.04, 4905.05, and 4905.06.

{¶ 2} The fixation of rates for public utilities in the state of Ohio is governed by R.C. Chapter 4909. The statutory requirements for an application to increase a public utility's rates are enumerated in R.C. 4909.17, 4909.18, 4909.19, and 4909.43. Also, pursuant to R.C. 4901.13, 4909.04(C), and 4909.18, the Commission adopted Ohio Adm.Code 4901-7-01 and its Appendix (Standard Filing Requirements). These Standard Filing Requirements

specify the format for filing all information required in an application for an increase in rates and define the information that the Commission requires pursuant to R.C. 4909.18(E).

{¶ 3} Further, pursuant to R.C. 4929.05(A), a natural gas company may request approval of an alternative rate plan by filing an application to establish or change a rate under R.C. 4909.18.

{¶ 4} On May 28, 2021, Columbia filed separate notices of its intent to file an application for an increase in rates and an application for approval of an alternative rate plan. First, in accordance with Ohio Adm.Code 4901-7-01, Appendix A, Chapter I(B), the Company filed notice of intent to file an application for an increase in rates. Second, pursuant to Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-19-06(A), the Company filed a notice of its intent to file an application for approval of an alternative rate plan.

{¶ 5} Also, on May 28, 2021, Columbia filed a motion to establish a test year and date certain and for waiver of certain filing requirements pursuant to R.C. 4909.15(C) and Ohio Adm.Code 4901-7-01 and 4901:1-19-02(D), respectively. By Entry issued July 7, 2021, the Commission approved the test year and date certain and granted in part and denied in part the requested waiver of specified Standard Filing Requirements.

{¶ 6} On June 30, 2021, Columbia filed a combined application to increase rates and charges and for approval of an alternative rate plan pursuant to R.C. 4909.18 and R.C. 4929.05, respectively.

{¶ 7} On August 10, 2021, Staff filed a Review and Recommendation in Case No. 21-637-GA-AIR stating that Columbia's application substantively conformed with the Standard Filing Requirements found in Ohio Adm.Code 4901-7-01, Appendix A.

{¶ 8} By Entry dated August 25, 2021, the Commission found that Columbia's application for an increase in rates and for an alternative rate plan be accepted for filing as of June 30, 2021.

{¶ 9} Staff conducted an investigation of the facts, exhibits, and matters relating to Columbia's applications. On April 6, 2022, Staff filed a comprehensive written report of its investigation in the above-captioned case dockets.

{¶ 10} By Entry dated April 14, 2022, the attorney examiner issued a procedural schedule. The Entry indicated that local public hearings would be scheduled, and publication required, by subsequent entry.

{¶ 11} On May 11, 2022, an Entry was issued scheduling the local public hearings and rescheduling the prehearing conference.

{¶ 12} On May 19, 2022, an Entry was issued which scheduled an additional local public hearing and rescheduled the prehearing conference to be held on June 1, 2022.

{¶ 13} On various dates, motions for intervention were filed by Ohio Energy Group (OEG), Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy (OPAE), Interstate Gas Supply, Inc. (IGS), Retail Energy Supply Association (RESA), Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC), Ohio School Council (OSC), Ohio Manufacturers' Association Energy Group (OMAEG), Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC), The Kroger Co. (Kroger), Citizens' Utility Board of Ohio (CUB), and Industrial Energy Users-Ohio (IEU-Ohio). No memoranda contra were filed. The attorney examiner finds that the motions are reasonable and should be granted.

{¶ 14} On May 20, 2022, Columbia filed a Motion for Continuance of the evidentiary hearing until July 13, 2022. Columbia notes that there is agreement among the parties that more time is needed for settlement discussions. Columbia requests an expedited ruling of its motion. Furthermore, Columbia certifies that no other party opposes its motion, and no other party opposes an expedited ruling.

{¶ 15} At this time, the attorney examiner finds that the evidentiary hearing previously scheduled for June 15, 2022, shall be rescheduled. The rescheduled evidentiary hearing will commence on July 13, 2022, at 10:00 a.m., in Hearing Room 11-A at the offices

of the Commission, 180 East Broad Street, 11th Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793. The parties should register at the lobby desk and then proceed to the 11th floor to participate in the hearing.

{¶ 16} 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 be forthcoming, either posted on the Commission's website or communicated to the parties.

{¶ 17} It is, therefore,

{¶ 18} ORDERED, That the motions to intervene in these proceedings filed by OEG, OCC, OPAAE, IGS, RESA, NOPEC, OSC, OMAEG, ELPC, Kroger, CUB, and IEU-Ohio be granted. It is, further,

{¶ 19} ORDERED, That the evidentiary hearing be rescheduled for July 13, 2022, as indicated in Paragraph 15. It is, further,

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

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

/s/ Jacky Werman St. John

By: Jacky Werman St. John
Attorney Examiner

MJA/mef

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**Case No(s). 21-0637-GA-AIR, 21-0638-GA-ALT, 21-0639-GA-UNC, 21-0640-GA-
AAM**

Summary: Attorney Examiner Entry rescheduling the evidentiary hearing for July 13, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. and granting the motions for intervention electronically filed by Ms. Mary E. Fischer on behalf of Jacky Werman St. John, Attorney Examiner, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio