

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 22-4100-TF

Tariff filing of Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc. for approval of a 14.19% rate increase effective on a service-rendered basis commencing November 1, 2022	
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Order entered: 10/27/2022

ORDER OPENING INVESTIGATION INTO TARIFF FILING

I. INTRODUCTION

On September 16, 2022, Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc. (“WEC” or the “Company”) filed revised rate schedules and tariff documents with the Vermont Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) reflecting a proposed 14.19% increase in its rates and customer charges. The tariff changes are proposed to take effect on a service-rendered basis beginning November 1, 2022.

The Vermont Department of Public Service (“Department”) was notified of this tariff filing via the Commission’s electronic case management system, ePUC, at the time of the Company’s filing. Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. § 225, the Department must investigate the justness and reasonableness of a proposed change to a rate schedule immediately upon receipt of notice of the change.

On October 17, 2022, the Department recommended that the Commission open an investigation into WEC’s tariff filing.

II. DISCUSSION

Section 225 of Title 30 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated requires the Commission to open an investigation into a tariff filing if the Department opposes the change in rates. In this case, the Department has recommended that we open an investigation into WEC’s tariff filing. Accordingly, we are opening an investigation.

Section 226(b) of Title 30 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated provides that the Commission may not suspend the effectiveness of a tariff of a municipal or cooperative utility and that such a utility may implement a proposed rate increase pending a Commission

investigation provided that the utility “refund revenues collected in excess of those which are finally determined to be just and reasonable.” Section 226(b) further provides that “[a]ny increase in the rates of a municipality or cooperative shall be implemented by means of an identical percentage increase to each class or division of ratepayers.” In light of this statutory language, WEC may implement the tariff by means of an identical 14.19% surcharge to each class of ratepayers, subject to the requirement that it refund any amounts collected that are in excess of the amount finally determined to be just and reasonable by the Commission.

Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 20 and 21, WEC will be responsible for court reporter costs incurred by the Commission during the course of this proceeding and billed back to WEC.

III. ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED by the Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) of the State of Vermont that:

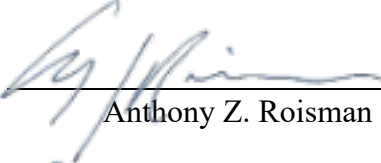
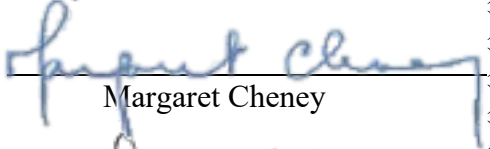
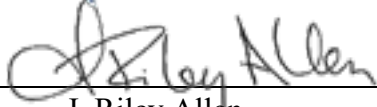
1. Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 225 and 227(a), the Commission opens an investigation into the justness and reasonableness of Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.’s (“WEC”) proposed tariff revisions as filed with the Commission on September 16, 2022.

2. Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. Section 226(b), until a final determination is made in this proceeding, increased rates shall be implemented by means of an identical 14.19% surcharge to each class of WEC’s ratepayers under the tariffs previously approved by the Commission. Any revenues collected in excess of those that are finally determined to be just and reasonable shall be refunded to WEC’s ratepayers.

3. Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 10 and 11(a)(2), a scheduling conference will be noticed separately in this case.

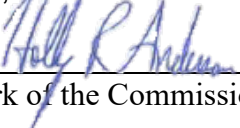
4. The Commission requests that the Department and WEC file a procedural schedule for the investigation no later than the day before the scheduling conference. If WEC and the Department are unable to stipulate to a procedural schedule, then the Commission requests that the parties file separate proposed schedules as soon as possible and no later than the day before the scheduling conference.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 27th day of October, 2022.

 _____)) PUBLIC UTILITY
Anthony Z. Roisman)	
_____)	
 _____)) COMMISSION
Margaret Cheney)	
_____)	
 _____)) OF VERMONT
J. Riley Allen)	

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Filed: October 27, 2022

Attest: 

 Clerk of the Commission

Notice to Readers: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Commission (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: puc.clerk@vermont.gov)

PUC Case No. 22-4100-TF - SERVICE LIST

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