

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Request for approval to increase meter installation fees to conform to the current cost in Marion County by Windstream Utilities Company.

DOCKET NO. 020248-WU  
ORDER NO. PSC-02-1167-PAA-WU  
ISSUED: August 26, 2002

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

LILA A. JABER, Chairman  
J. TERRY DEASON  
BRAULIO L. BAEZ  
MICHAEL A. PALECKI  
RUDOLPH "RUDY" BRADLEY

NOTICE OF PROPOSED AGENCY ACTION  
ORDER APPROVING METER INSTALLATION FEE

BY THE COMMISSION:

NOTICE is hereby given by the Florida Public Service Commission that the action discussed herein is preliminary in nature and will become final unless a person whose interests are substantially affected files a petition for a formal proceeding, pursuant to Rule 25-22.029, Florida Administrative Code.

BACKGROUND

Windstream Utilities Company (Windstream or utility) is a Class B utility which provides water service to approximately 742 customers in three separate service areas in Marion County. These areas include the Windstream-Carriage Hills system, the Majestic Oaks-Pigeon Park system, and the Paddock Downs-Sun Country Estates system. All systems have separate water treatment plants and distribution systems. The wastewater service to these areas is provided by septic tanks. The utility's 2001 annual report shows an annual operating revenue of \$290,974 and a net operating income of \$20,913.

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FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

On March 14, 2002, the utility filed an application to implement a meter installation fee. By Order No. PSC-02-0653-PCO-WU, issued May 13, 2002, we suspended the tariff filing pending further investigation. This Order addresses the requested meter installation increase. We have jurisdiction pursuant to Section 367.091, Florida Statutes.

TARIFF REVISION

The utility filed a tariff request for approval to implement a new meter installation fee of \$180. Section 367.091(6), Florida Statutes, authorizes the utility to file an application to establish, increase, or change a rate or charge other than monthly rates or service availability charges. However, the application must be accompanied by cost justification. The utility did not provide cost justification with its original filing. We requested a bid tabulation to justify the cost. In response, the utility provided the following information:

	<u>Actual Cost</u>
METER	\$85
LABOR	\$45
PARTS	<u>\$35</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$165</u>

As shown above, the utility provided documentation showing the actual cost of the new meter installation. We find that the utility's cost justification does not justify the requested \$180 meter installation fee. Rather, the utility justified a \$165 meter installation fee. Therefore, Original Sheet No. 21.1 filed on March 14, 2002 shall be denied as filed. We find it appropriate to approve a meter installation fee of \$165. If the utility files a revised tariff sheet within 30 days of the effective date of the Order which is consistent with our decision herein, our staff will administratively approve the revised tariff sheet upon staff's verification that the tariff is consistent with our decision. If the revised tariff sheet is filed and approved, the meter installation fee shall become effective for connections made on or after the stamped approval date on the tariff sheet, pursuant to

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Rule 25-30.475(2), Florida Administrative Code, if no protest is filed.

Upon expiration of the protest period, if a timely protest is not filed, a Consummating Order will be issued and the docket shall remain open for 30 days from the issuance date of the Consummating Order, to allow the utility time to file the revised tariff sheet. Upon staff's verification that the tariff sheet complies with this Order, the tariff sheet will be stamped approved and the docket shall be closed administratively. In the event that a timely protest is filed, the tariff shall remain in effect and the applicable revenues shall be held subject to refund pending resolution of the protest.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Windstream Utilities Company's Original Tariff Sheet No. 21.1 filed on March 14, 2002 is denied as filed and a meter installation fee of \$165 is hereby approved. It is further

ORDERED that if the utility files a revised tariff sheet within 30 days of the effective date of the Order which is consistent with our decision herein, our staff will administratively approve the revised tariff sheet upon staff's verification that the tariff is consistent with our decision. If the revised tariff sheet is filed and approved, the meter installation fee shall become effective for connections made on or after the stamped approval date on the tariff sheet, pursuant to Rule 25-30.475(2), Florida Administrative Code, if no protest is filed. It is further

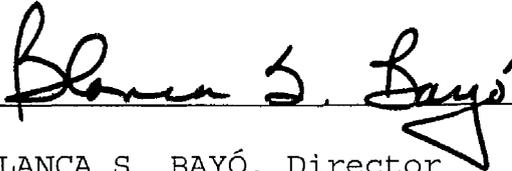
ORDERED that upon expiration of the protest period, if a timely protest is not filed, a Consummating Order will be issued and the docket shall remain open for 30 days from the issuance date of the Consummating Order, to allow the utility time to file the revised tariff sheet. In the event that a timely protest is filed, the tariff shall remain in effect and the applicable revenues shall be held subject to refund pending resolution of the protest. It is further

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ORDERED that the provisions of this Order, issued as proposed agency action, shall become final and effective upon the issuance of the Consummating Order unless an appropriate petition, in the form provided by Rule 28-106.201, Florida Administrative Code, is received by the Director, Division of the Commission Clerk and Administrative Services, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on the date set forth in the "Notice of Further Proceedings" attached hereto. It is further

ORDERED that in the event this Order becomes final, this docket shall be closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 26th day of August, 2002.

  
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BLANCA S. BAYÓ, Director  
Division of the Commission Clerk  
and Administrative Services

( S E A L )

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NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.569(1), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing that is available under Section 120.57, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Mediation may be available on a case-by-case basis. If mediation is conducted, it does not affect a substantially interested person's right to a hearing.

The action proposed herein is preliminary in nature. Any person whose substantial interests are affected by the action proposed by this order may file a petition for a formal proceeding, in the form provided by Rule 28-106.201, Florida Administrative Code. This petition must be received by the Director, Division of the Commission Clerk and Administrative Services, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on September 16, 2002.

In the absence of such a petition, this order shall become final and effective upon the issuance of a Consummating Order.

Any objection or protest filed in this/these docket(s) before the issuance date of this order is considered abandoned unless it satisfies the foregoing conditions and is renewed within the specified protest period.