

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Application for increase in water and
wastewater rates in Pasco County by Labrador
Utilities, Inc.

DOCKET NO. 080249-WS
ORDER NO. PSC-09-0539-PCO-WS
ISSUED: August 4, 2009

ORDER ESTABLISHING PROCEDURE

I. Case Background

On December 4, 2008, Labrador Utilities, Inc. (Labrador or Utility) completed filing its application for increased water and wastewater rates, and this date was set as the official date of filing. In its application, the Utility sought a revenue increase of \$146,521 (94.07 percent) for its water service and \$181,228 (50 percent) for its wastewater service. The Utility requested that its application be processed using the proposed agency action (PAA) procedures set forth in Section 367.081(8), Florida Statutes (F.S.). Pursuant to that section, our staff conducted its investigation and held a customer meeting in the Utility's service area.

Subsequently, the Commission issued Order No. PSC-09-0462-PAA-WS (PAA Order) on June 22, 2009, in which the Commission proposed to allow an increase of \$101,242 (65 percent) for water and \$135,306 (37.33 percent) for wastewater, for total revenues of \$257,003 and \$497,755 for water and wastewater, respectively. However, before that PAA Order could become final, the Office of Public Counsel (OPC) filed its Notice of Intervention and a separate timely Petition on Proposed Agency Action (Protest) on July 13, 2009, in which it objected to the PAA Order and requested a formal evidentiary hearing. In its Protest, OPC raised specific issues on the Utility's quality of service, appropriate calculation of rate base, the appropriate calculation of water and wastewater operating expenses, and the appropriate test year revenues. Also, although OPC specifically stated that it was not objecting to our calculation of rate case expense through the PAA Order, it did reserve the right to object to additional rate case expense the Utility may propose to collect from its customers.

On July 22, 2009, pursuant to Rule 25-22.029(3), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), the Utility filed its timely Cross Petition. In its Cross Petition, the Utility raised the issues of whether Operations and Maintenance (O&M) expenses were understated because the Commission erroneously removed the Utility's Price Index adjustments and understated the Utility's rental expense. Also, the Utility stated "that the proper rate case expense amount includes amounts requested by the Utility and set out in its rate case expense schedule submitted to Staff on April 2, 2009, plus the rate case expense associated with the formal administrative hearing."

Pursuant to OPC's Protest, two customer service hearings (customer testimony) and a technical hearing (expert testimony) have been scheduled to be held in the Utility's service area. The service hearings will begin on the morning of January 12, 2010, and at 6:00 p.m. that evening. The technical hearing will start between the two service hearings (time permitting), and

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will continue on January 13, and 14, 2010 (if both days are needed to complete the hearing). The beginning times for the the next day(s) of the technical hearing will be announced at the conclusion of the previous day's hearing.

This Order is issued pursuant to the authority granted by Rule 28-106.211, F.A.C., which provides that the presiding officer before whom a case is pending may issue any orders necessary to effectuate discovery, prevent delay, and promote the just, speedy, and inexpensive determination of all aspects of the case.

The scope of this proceeding shall be based upon the issues raised by the parties and our staff up to and during the prehearing conference, unless modified by the Commission. The hearing will be conducted according to the provisions of Chapter 120, F.S., and all administrative rules applicable to this Commission.

II. **General Filing Procedures**

In accordance with Rule 25-22.028, F.A.C., parties filing documents in this proceeding shall submit the original document and the appropriate number of copies to the Office of Commission Clerk for filing in the Commission's docket file. Filings may be made by mail, hand delivery, courier service, or in some instances electronically. Please refer to the rule for the requirements of filing on diskette for certain utilities. To the extent possible, all filings made electronically or on diskette shall be provided in Microsoft Word format. Filings pertaining to this docket should identify the assigned docket number and should be addressed to:

Office of Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850

III. **Notice and Public Information**

The utility shall comply with the requirements of Rule 25-22.0407, F.A.C. The notice required by Rule 25-22.0407, F.A.C., shall also include a statement that any customer comments regarding the utility's service or the proposed rate increase should be addressed to the Commission Clerk, Office of Commission Clerk, Florida Public Service Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, and that such comments should identify the docket number assigned to this proceeding.

In addition to the requirements of Rule 25-22.0407(6)(b), F.A.C., the utility shall give written notice of the date, time, location, and purpose of the hearing to each of its customers no greater than 30 days and no less than 14 days prior to the first day of the hearing. The utility shall utilize first class mail for notices sent to customers with out-of-town mailing addresses.

IV. **Prefiled Testimony and Exhibits**

Each party shall file, in writing, all testimony and exhibits that it intends to sponsor, pursuant to the schedule set forth in Section IX of this Order. An original and 15 copies of all testimony and exhibits shall be filed with the Office of Commission Clerk, by 5:00 p.m. on the date due. A copy of all prefiled testimony and exhibits shall be served by regular mail, overnight mail, or hand delivery to all other parties and staff no later than the date filed with the Commission. Failure of a party to timely prefile exhibits and testimony from any witness in accordance with the foregoing requirements may bar admission of such exhibits and testimony.

Testimony shall be typed on 8 ½ inch x 11 inch transcript-quality paper, double-spaced, with 25 numbered lines, on consecutively numbered pages, with left margins sufficient to allow for binding (1.25 inches).

Each exhibit sponsored by a witness in support of his or her prefiled testimony shall be:

- (1) Attached to that witness' testimony when filed;
- (2) Sequentially numbered beginning with 1 (any exhibits attached to subsequently filed testimony of the same witness shall continue the sequential numbering system);
- (3) Identified in the upper right-hand corner of each page by the docket number, a brief title, and the witness' initials followed by the exhibit's number; and
- (4) Paged by showing in the upper right-hand corner of each page the page number followed by the total number of pages in the exhibit.

An example of the information to appear in the upper right-hand corner of the exhibit is as follows:

Docket No. 080249-WS
Calculation of Rate Base
Exhibit BLW-1, Page 1 of 2

After an opportunity for opposing parties to object to introduction of the exhibits and to cross-examine the witness sponsoring them, exhibits may be offered into evidence at the hearing.

V. **Discovery Procedures**

A. **General Requirements**

Discovery shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 120, F.S., and the relevant provisions of Chapter 367, F.S., Rules 25-22, 25-30, and 28-106, F.A.C., and the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure (as applicable), as modified herein or as may be subsequently modified by the Prehearing Officer.

Unless subsequently modified by the Prehearing Officer, the following shall apply:

- (1) Discovery shall be completed by January 5, 2010.
- (2) Discovery requests shall be served by e-mail, hand delivery, or overnight mail. If a request is served electronically, a hard copy of the request shall be served by hand-delivery, U.S. Mail, or overnight mail on the day that the request is served electronically.
- (3) Sets of interrogatories, requests for admissions, requests for production of documents, or other forms of discovery shall be numbered sequentially in order to facilitate their identification.
- (4) Within each set, discovery requests shall be numbered sequentially, and any discovery requests in subsequent sets shall continue the sequential numbering system.
- (5) Discovery responses shall be served within (identify turnaround time for discovery up to 30 days) calendar days (inclusive of mailing) of receipt of the discovery request. If responses are served electronically, a hard copy of the responses shall be served by hand-delivery, U.S. Mail, or overnight mail on the day that responses are served electronically.
- (6) Each page of every document produced pursuant to requests for production of documents shall be identified individually through the use of a Bates Stamp or other equivalent method of sequential identification. Parties should number their produced documents in an unbroken sequence through the final hearing.
- (7) Copies of discovery requests and responses shall be served on parties other than the party from whom discovery is sought to the extent required by the applicable provisions of the Florida Rules of Civil Procedure. In addition, copies of all responses to requests for production of documents shall be provided to the Commission staff at its Tallahassee office unless otherwise agreed.

Unless subsequently modified by the Prehearing Officer, the following shall apply:

- (1) Interrogatories, including all subparts, shall be limited to 150.
- (2) Requests for production of documents, including all subparts, shall be limited to 150.
- (3) Requests for admissions, including all subparts, shall be limited to 50.

When a discovery request is served and the respondent intends to seek clarification of any portion of the discovery request, the respondent shall request such clarification within 10 days of service of the discovery request. Further, any specific objections to a discovery request shall be made within 15 days of service of the discovery request. These procedures are intended to reduce delay in resolving discovery disputes.

B. Confidential Information Provided Pursuant to Discovery

Any information provided to the Commission staff pursuant to a discovery request by the staff or any other person and for which proprietary confidential business information status is requested pursuant to Section 367.156, F.S., and Rule 25-22.006, F.A.C., shall be treated by the

Commission as confidential. The information shall be exempt from Section 119.07(1), F.S., pending a formal ruling on such request by the Commission or pending return of the information to the person providing the information. If no determination of confidentiality has been made and the information has not been made a part of the evidentiary record in this proceeding, it shall be returned to the person providing the information. If a determination of confidentiality has been made and the information was not entered into the record of this proceeding, it shall be returned to the person providing the information within the time period set forth in Section 367.156, F.S. The Commission may determine that continued possession of the information is necessary for the Commission to conduct its business.

When a person provides information that it maintains as proprietary confidential business information to the Office of Public Counsel pursuant to a discovery request by the Office of Public Counsel or any other party, that party may request a temporary protective order pursuant to Rule 25-22.006(6)(c), F.A.C., exempting the information from Section 119.07(1), F.S.

When a party other than the Commission staff or the Office of Public Counsel requests information through discovery that the respondent maintains as proprietary confidential business information, or when such a party would otherwise be entitled to copies of such information requested by other parties through discovery (e.g., interrogatory responses), that party and respondent shall endeavor in good faith to reach agreement that will allow for the exchange of such information on reasonable terms, as set forth in Rule 25-22.006(7)(b), F.A.C.

VI. Prehearing Procedures

A. Prehearing Statements

All parties in this docket and the Commission staff shall file a prehearing statement pursuant to the schedule set forth in Section IX of this Order. The original and seven copies of each prehearing statement shall be filed with the Office of Commission Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on the date due. A copy of the prehearing statement shall be served on all other parties and staff no later than the date it is filed with the Commission.

Each party's prehearing statement shall set forth the following information in the sequence listed below:

- (1) The name of all known witnesses whose testimony has been prefiled or who may be called by the party, along with subject matter of each such witness' testimony;
- (2) A description of all prefiled exhibits and other exhibits that may be used by the party in presenting its direct case (including individual components of a composite exhibit) and the witness sponsoring each;
- (3) A statement of the party's basic position in the proceeding;
- (4) A statement of each question of fact, question of law, and policy question that the party considers at issue, along with the party's position on each issue, and, where applicable, the names of the party's witness(es) who will

address each issue. Parties who wish to maintain “no position at this time” on any particular issue or issues should refer to the requirements of subsection C, below;

- (5) A statement of issues to which the parties have stipulated;
- (6) A statement of all pending motions or other matters the party seeks action upon;
- (7) A statement identifying the party’s pending requests or claims for confidentiality;
- (8) Any objections to a witness’ qualifications as an expert. Failure to identify such objection will result in restriction of a party’s ability to conduct voir dire absent a showing of good cause at the time the witness is offered for cross-examination at hearing; and
- (9) A statement as to any requirement set forth in this order that cannot be complied with, and the reasons therefore.

Failure of a party to timely file a prehearing statement shall be a waiver of any issue not raised by other parties or by the Commission. In addition, such failure shall preclude the party from presenting testimony in support of its position on each such issue.

B. Attendance at Prehearing Conference

Pursuant to Rule 28-106.209, F.A.C., a prehearing conference will be held January 6, 2010, at the Betty Easley Conference Center, 4075 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee, Florida. Unless excused by the Prehearing Officer for good cause shown, each party (or designated representative) shall personally appear at the prehearing conference. Failure of a party (or that party’s representative) to appear shall constitute waiver of that party’s issues and positions, and that party may be dismissed from the proceeding.

C. Waiver of Issues

Any issue not raised by a party either before or during the Prehearing Conference shall be waived by that party, except for good cause shown. A party seeking to raise a new issue after the Prehearing Conference shall demonstrate each of the following:

- (1) The party was unable to identify the issue because of the complexity of the matter.
- (2) Discovery or other prehearing procedures were not adequate to fully develop the issue.
- (3) Due diligence was exercised to obtain facts touching on the issue.
- (4) Information obtained subsequent to the Prehearing Conference was not previously available to enable the party to identify the issue.
- (5) Introduction of the issue would not be to the prejudice or surprise of any party.

Specific reference shall be made to the information received and how it enabled the party to identify the issue.

Unless a matter is not at issue for that party, each party shall take a position on each issue by the time of the Prehearing Conference or by such later time as may be permitted by the Prehearing Officer. If a party is unable through diligence and good faith efforts to take a position on a matter at issue for that party, it shall explicitly state in its Prehearing Statement why it cannot take a position. If the Prehearing Officer finds that the party has acted diligently and in good faith to take a position, and further finds that the party's failure to take a position will not prejudice other parties or confuse the proceeding, the party may maintain "no position at this time" prior to hearing and thereafter identify its position in a post-hearing statement of issues. In the absence of such a finding by the Prehearing Officer, the party shall have waived the entire issue, and the party's position shall be shown as "no position" in the Prehearing Order. When an issue and position have been properly identified, any party may adopt that issue and position in its post-hearing statement. Commission staff may take "no position at this time" or a similar position on any issue without having to make the showing described above.

D. Motions to Strike Prefiled Testimony and Exhibits

Motions to strike any portion of the prefiled testimony and related portions of exhibits of any witness shall be made in writing no later than the Prehearing Conference. Motions to strike any portion of prefiled testimony and related portions of exhibits at hearing shall be considered untimely, absent good cause shown.

E. Demonstrative Exhibits

If a party wishes to use a demonstrative exhibit or other demonstrative tools at hearing, such materials must be identified by the time of the Prehearing Conference.

F. Official Recognition

Parties seeking official recognition of materials pursuant to Section 120.569(2)(i), F.S., shall notify all other parties and staff in writing no later than two business days prior to the first scheduled hearing date. Such notification shall identify all materials for which the party seeks official recognition, and to the extent such materials may not be readily available to all parties, such materials shall be provided along with the notification.

VII. Hearing Procedures

A. Attendance at Hearing

Unless excused by the Presiding Officer for good cause shown, each party (or designated representative) shall personally appear at the hearing. Failure of a party, or that party's representative, to appear shall constitute waiver of that party's issues, and that party may be dismissed from the proceeding.

Likewise, all witnesses are expected to be present at the hearing unless excused by the Presiding Officer upon the staff attorney's confirmation prior to the hearing date of the following:

- (1) All parties agree that the witness will not be needed for cross examination.
- (2) All Commissioners assigned to the panel do not have questions for the witness.

In the event a witness is excused in this manner, his or her testimony may be entered into the record as though read following the Commission's approval of the proposed stipulation of that witness' testimony.

B. Cross-Examination

The parties shall avoid duplicative or repetitious cross-examination. Further, friendly cross-examination will not be allowed. Cross-examination shall be limited to witnesses whose testimony is adverse to the party desiring to cross-examine. Any party conducting what appears to be a friendly cross-examination of a witness should be prepared to indicate why that witness's direct testimony is adverse to its interests.

C. Use of Confidential Information at Hearing

It is the policy of this Commission that all Commission hearings be open to the public at all times. The Commission also recognizes its obligation pursuant to Section 367.156, F.S., to protect proprietary confidential business information from disclosure outside the proceeding. Therefore, any party wishing to use any proprietary confidential business information, as that term is defined in Section 367.156, F.S., at the hearing shall adhere to the following:

- (1) When confidential information is used in the hearing, parties must have copies for the Commissioners, necessary staff, and the court reporter, in red envelopes clearly marked with the nature of the contents. Any party wishing to examine the confidential material that is not subject to an order granting confidentiality shall be provided a copy in the same fashion as provided to the Commissioners, subject to execution of any appropriate protective agreement with the owner of the material.
- (2) Counsel and witnesses are cautioned to avoid verbalizing confidential information in such a way that would compromise confidentiality. Therefore, confidential information should be presented by written exhibit when reasonably possible.

At the conclusion of that portion of the hearing that involves confidential information, all copies of confidential exhibits shall be returned to the proffering party. If a confidential exhibit has been admitted into evidence, the copy provided to the court reporter shall be retained in the Office of Commission Clerk's confidential files. If such information is admitted into the evidentiary record at hearing and is not otherwise subject to a request for confidentiality filed with the Commission, the source of the information must file a request for confidential

classification of the information within 21 days of the conclusion of the hearing, as set forth in Rule 25-22.006(8)(b), F.A.C., if continued confidentiality of the information is to be maintained.

VIII. Post-Hearing Procedures

If the Commission (or assigned panel) does not render a bench decision at the hearing, it may allow each party to file a post-hearing statement of issues and positions pursuant to the schedule set forth in Section IX of this Order. In such event, a summary of each position of no more than 50 words, set off with asterisks, shall be included in that statement. If a party's position has not changed since the issuance of the prehearing order, the post-hearing statement may simply restate the prehearing position. However, the position must be reduced to no more than 50 words. If a post-hearing statement is required and a party fails to file in conformance with the rule, that party shall have waived all issues and may be dismissed from the proceeding.

Pursuant to Rule 28-106.215, F.A.C., a party's proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law, if any, statement of issues and positions, and brief, shall together total no more than 40 pages and shall be filed at the same time, unless modified by the Presiding Officer.

IX. Controlling Dates

The following dates have been established to govern the key activities of this case:

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| (1) Utility's testimony and exhibits | September 9, 2009 |
| (2) Intervenors' testimony and exhibits | November 17, 2009 |
| (3) Staff's testimony and exhibits, if any | December 3, 2009 |
| (4) Rebuttal testimony and exhibits | December 17, 2009 |
| (5) Prehearing Statements | December 23, 2009 |
| (6) Discovery Deadline | January 5, 2010 |
| (7) Prehearing Conference | January 6, 2010 |
| (8) Service Hearings | January 12, 2010 |
| (9) Technical Hearing | January 12-14, 2010 |
| (9) Briefs | February 11, 2010 |

In addition, all parties should be on notice that the Prehearing Officer may exercise the discretion to schedule additional prehearing conferences or meetings of the parties as deemed appropriate. Such meetings will be properly noticed to afford the parties an opportunity to attend.

Based upon the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by Commissioner Nancy Argenziano, as Prehearing Officer, that the provisions of this Order shall govern this proceeding unless modified by the Commission.

By ORDER of Commissioner Nancy Argenziano, as Prehearing Officer, this 4th day of August, 2009.



NANCY ARGENZIANO
Commissioner and Prehearing Officer

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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 or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, 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 or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Any party adversely affected by this order, which is preliminary, procedural, or intermediate in nature, may request: (1) reconsideration within 10 days pursuant to Rule 25-22.0376, Florida Administrative Code, if issued by a Prehearing Officer; or (2) judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court, in the case of an electric, gas or telephone utility, or the First District Court of Appeals, in the case of a water or wastewater utility. A motion for reconsideration shall be filed with the Office of Commission Clerk, in the form prescribed by Rule 25-22.0376, Florida Administrative Code. Judicial review of a preliminary, procedural or intermediate ruling or order is available if review of the final action will not provide an adequate remedy. Such review may be requested from the appropriate court, as described above, pursuant to Rule 9.100, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.