

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition by Tampa Electric Company for approval of extension of small power production agreement with City of Tampa.	DOCKET NO. 090146-EQ ORDER NO. PSC-10-0248-FOF-EQ ISSUED: April 22, 2010
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The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

NANCY ARGENZIANO, Chairman
LISA POLAK EDGAR
NATHAN A. SKOP
DAVID E. KLEMENT
BEN A. "STEVE" STEVENS III

ORDER ACKNOWLEDGING VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL OF PETITION

BY THE COMMISSION:

Tampa Electric Company (TECO) filed a petition on March 23, 2009, requesting our approval of an extension to a small power production agreement with the City of Tampa. The power is produced at the City's McKay Bay Refuse to Energy Facility, a municipal solid waste-fired steam turbine generator, located in Hillsborough County, Florida. At our September 15, 2009, Agenda Conference, we deferred consideration of TECO's petition upon the assertion by TECO that the parties would review the proposed contract and attempt to renegotiate some of its terms. Those additional negotiations were not successful, and on March 16, 2010, TECO filed its Notice of Withdrawal of Petition for Approval of Extension of Small Power Production Agreement, in which it voluntarily withdrew its petition without prejudice to refile at a later date.

We have jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Sections 366.051 and 366.81, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and we hereby acknowledge TECO's voluntary withdrawal as a matter of right.

The law is clear that a plaintiff's right to take a voluntary dismissal is absolute if the dismissal is taken before the fact-finding process is completed and the matter is not yet before the decision-maker for final resolution. Fears v. Lunsford, 314 So. 2d 578, 579 (Fla. 1975). It is also established civil law that once a timely voluntary dismissal is taken, the trial court loses its jurisdiction to act and cannot revive the original action for any reason. Randle-Eastern Ambulance Service, Inc. v. Vasta, 360 So. 2d 68, 69 (Fla. 1978). Both of these legal principles have been recognized in administrative proceedings.¹ In Saddlebrook Resorts, Inc. v. Wiregrass Ranch, Inc., 630 So. 2d 1123, 1128 (Fla. 2d DCA 1993), the court concluded that "the jurisdiction of any agency is activated when the permit application is filed . . . [and] is only lost

¹ Orange County v. Debra, Inc., 451 So. 2d 868 (Fla. 1st DCA 1983); City of Bradenton v. Amerifirst Development Corporation, 582 So. 2d 166 (Fla. 2d DCA 1991); Saddlebrook Resorts, Inc. v. Wiregrass Ranch, Inc., 630 So. 2d 1123 (Fla. 2d DCA 1993) aff'd, 645 So. 2d 374 (Fla. 1994).

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by the agency when the permit is issued or denied or when the permit applicant withdraws its application prior to completion of the fact-finding process.”

In this case, we had not reached a final decision on whether to approve TECO’s extension of its small power production agreement with the City of Tampa. Thus, TECO can dismiss its petition as a matter of right. This is consistent with our prior decisions.² We acknowledge TECO’s voluntary withdrawal of its petition. That withdrawal divests this Commission of further jurisdiction in this docket.

² See Order No. PSC-07-0725-FOF-EU, issued September 5, 2007, in Docket No. 060635-EU, In re: Petition for determination of need for electrical power plant in Taylor County by Florida Municipal Power Agency, JEA, Reedy Creek Improvement District, and City of Tallahassee; Order No. PSC-07-0877-FOF-EI, issued October 31, 2007, in Docket No. 070467-EI, In re: Petition to determine need for Polk Unit 6 electrical power plant, by Tampa Electric Co.; Order No. PSC-07-0485-FOF-EI, issued June 8, 2007, in Docket Nos. 050890-EI, In re: Complaint of Sears, Roebuck and Company against Florida Power & Light Company and motion to compel FPL to continue electric service and to cease and desist demands for deposit pending final decision regarding complaint and 050891-EI, In re: Complaint of Kmart Corporation against Florida Power & Light Company and motion to compel FPL to continue electric service and to cease and desist demands for deposit pending final decision regarding complaint; Order No. PSC-94-0310-FOF-EQ, issued March 17, 1994, in Docket No. 920977-EQ, In re: Petition for approval of contract for the purchase of firm capacity and energy from General Peat Resources, L.P. and Florida Power and Light Company; Order No. PSC-97-0319-FOF-EQ, issued March 24, 1997, in Docket No. 920978-EQ, In re: Complaint of Skyway Power Corporation to require Florida Power Corporation to furnish avoided cost data pursuant to Commission Rule 25-17.0832(7), F.A.C.; Order No. PSC-04-0376-FOF-EU, issued April 7, 2004, in Docket No. 011333-EU, In re: Petition of City of Bartow to modify territorial agreement or, in the alternative, to resolve territorial dispute with Tampa Electric Company in Polk County. But see Order No. PSC-07-0297-FOF-SU, issued April 9, 2007, in Docket No. 020640-SU, In re: Application for certificate to provide wastewater service in Lee County by Gistro, Inc. and Order No. PSC-96-0992-FOF-WS, issued August 5, 1996, in Docket No. 950758-WS, In Re: Petition for approval of transfer of facilities of Harbor Utilities Company, Inc., to Bonita Springs Utilities and cancellation of Certificates Nos. 272-W and 215-S in Lee County (voluntary dismissal cannot be utilized to divest the Commission as an adjudicatory agency of its jurisdiction granted to it by the legislature).

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Tampa Electric Company's voluntary withdrawal of its petition is hereby acknowledged. It is further

ORDERED that there are no further actions to be taken in Docket No. 090146-EQ and this docket shall be closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 22nd day of April, 2010.



ANN COLE
Commission Clerk

(S E A L)

MCB

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 the Commission's final action in this matter may request: 1) reconsideration of the decision by filing a motion for reconsideration with the Office of Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, within fifteen (15) days of the issuance of this order in the form prescribed by Rule 25-22.060, Florida Administrative Code; 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 Appeal in the case of a water and/or wastewater utility by filing a notice of appeal with the Office of Commission Clerk, and filing a copy of the notice of appeal and the filing fee with the appropriate court. This filing must be completed within thirty (30) days after the issuance of this order, pursuant to Rule 9.110, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. The notice of appeal must be in the form specified in Rule 9.900(a), Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.