## BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN RE:

DOCKET NO. 000824-EI - Review of Florida Power Corporation's earnings, including effects of proposed acquisition of Florida Power

Corporation by Carolina Power & Light.

DOCKET NO. 020001-EI - Fuel and purchased power cost recovery clause with generating

performance incentive factor.

**BEFORE:** 

CHAIRMAN LILA A. JABER

COMMISSIONER J. TERRY DEASON COMMISSIONER BRAULIO L. BAEZ COMMISSIONER MICHAEL A. PALECKI COMMISSIONER RUDOLPH BRADLEY

PROCEEDINGS:

AGENDA CONFERENCE

ITEM NUMBER:

16

DATE:

Tuesday, April 23, 2002

PLACE:

4075 Esplanade Way, Room 148

Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY:

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## **PARTICIPANTS:**

VINNIE DOLAN, H. WILLIAM HABERMEYER, and JIM MCGEE, Florida Power Corporation.

VICKI GORDON KAUFMAN, on behalf of FIPUG.

JACK SHREVE, on behalf of the Citizens of the State of Florida.

MARY ANNE HELTON, BILL MCNULTY, JOHN SLEMKEWICZ, and DAVE WHEELER, FPSC Staff.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

- <u>ISSUE 1</u>: Should the Commission approve the proposed Stipulation and Settlement, including Exhibit A? <u>RECOMMENDATION</u>: Yes. The Commission should approve the proposed Stipulation and Settlement, including Exhibit A.
- ISSUE 2: Should the Commission approve Florida Power Corporation's petition for an adjustment to reduce its fuel and purchased power cost recovery factors?

  RECOMMENDATION: Yes. The Commission should approve FPC's petition for an adjustment to reduce its fuel and purchased power cost recovery factors by \$85 million (\$83.7 million retail). FPC will reduce its levelized fuel and purchased power cost recovery factor to 2.363 cents per kilowatt-hour, effective with the May 2002 Cycle 1 billings.
- <u>ISSUE 3</u>: Should Docket No. 000824-EI be closed?

  <u>RECOMMENDATION</u>: Yes, Docket No. 000824-EI should be closed.
- ISSUE 4: Should Docket No. 020001-EI be closed? RECOMMENDATION: No. Docket No. 020001-EI is an ongoing docket and should remain open.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Item 16.

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MS. HELTON: Commissioners, Item 16 is staff's recommendation to approve the settlement between the parties that was opened in the docket in which we investigated Florida Power Corporation's earnings. Staff has reviewed the settlement, and we believe that it's in the public interest and that it should be approved.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Ms. Helton, are there any corrections or clarifications to this? I know I received a copy of a memo clarifying something from Mr. Beck, if I'm not mistaken. Would you point that out to the Commissioners as well?

MS. HELTON: Certainly. Staff sent last week a memo clarifying paragraph 13 of the stipulation. It was a little bit ambiguous as far as when the \$3 million refund could be applied to the customers, and it's in both years 2005 and 2006. Excuse me. I said that wrong. 2004 and 2005.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you.

Mr. Shreve, the last time I started on that side. You wanted to start. So do you all have a preference for the order?

Okay. Go ahead.

MR. McGEE: Madam Chairman and Commissioners, my name is Jim McGee with Florida Power. I have with me Mr. Habermeyer, Florida Power's president, and Mr. Dolan, Vice President for Regulatory Policy. And we certainly support the staff's recommendation. Mr. Habermeyer would like to make a few statements to the Commission.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Go ahead, Mr. Habermeyer.

MR. HABERMEYER: Good morning, Chairman.

Chairman Jaber and Commissioners, my purpose
this morning is to seek approval of the
settlement that you have before you. I think in
many cases it does things that certainly benefit
our customers. It significantly reduces prices,
plus provides additional value to our customers.
Through the mechanism of the settlement process,
we believe it is in the best interests of all
parties.

I thank the Chairman and the Commissioners for their strong encouragement of settlement. I think that it did have the effect that all parties desired. We did reach settlement, and it came through a very cooperative process.

This collaborative effort involved a lot of

people. It certainly involved members of the staff. It involved Jack Shreve, the Public Counsel, and his staff, and all the intervenors in this case. And through the cooperative efforts of all parties, I think we arrived at what I believe to be a very, very fair settlement.

It was an extensive process. It involved more than a thousand pages of minimum filing requirements. It involved more than 750 pages of testimony and more than 170,000 pages of responses to questions. And certainly from the standpoint of due diligence, I think the staff and all the other members who had a part in this are certainly to be commended for their strong efforts in ensuring that this issue got a very, very thorough examination.

The new agreement itself does contain what I believe to be very important benefits to the customers, a \$125 million per year rate reduction, and that equates over the term of this agreement to more than \$500 million worth of savings to our customers, a \$35 million one-time adjustment for this past year and the period leading up to the settlement, and also a

\$50 million reduction in fuel charges.

electricity rates.

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So all in all, this equates to a 9% reduction in rates to our customers, a reduction of an average cost of 1,000, kilowatt-hours of electricity from \$91.65 to \$81.62, making us among certainly the best 10%, or at least 10% below the national average in terms of

In the process of this agreement, we listened. We listened to the Public Service Commission quality of service hearings that were held, we listened to our customers directly, and we certainly listened to the members who had intervened in this particular case in terms of service quality as well as how we can better provide service to our customers. And I think that this agreement captures, both through the service quality agreement as well as through the guarantee of service quality, those elements that we heard our customers referring to.

Additionally, we look to the future in terms of our ability to meet the generation needs of this state. And as such, we are capturing in this agreement for the first two years the construction of a new power plant with

no impact to our customers, again yielding rate stability, which we think is very important to customers.

All in all, we think this is a very sound agreement. It has involved a lot of people, a lot of time, a lot of energy, and we think that the outcome is something that we can all be proud of, and we certainly recommend it to you for your approval.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you, Mr. Habermeyer.
Mr. Shreve.

MR. SHREVE: Thank you, Chairman and Commissioners. We appreciate you taking the item up this morning.

We are here to support the staff recommendation of approval. I feel this is a very beneficial settlement to the customers. As you know, we have a \$125 million rate cut, and that is a permanent rate cut until it's changed. We feel that the level of sharing is going to be very beneficial to the customers.

As you also know, the service quality was a large part of our case. Mr. Habermeyer and Power Corp, have addressed that. We think the

service issues that have been taken care of in this are going to be very beneficial to customers and are going to provide better service, and if not, provide compensation for the people who are receiving the least service. But we think it's going to really -- rather than compensating the customers, we think it's going to be beneficial to them over the entire system of improved service, and we think that's where Power Corp. wants to go.

working with all of the intervenors in this case has been very good. We've had excellent support from all of them. Vicki Kaufman, who is here with FIPUG this morning, and John McWhirter, who is not here, worked diligently with us on this settlement, as well as the other intervenors. There has excellent cooperation between them and us and Power Corp.

I would like to also thank Charlie Beck. Without the work that Charlie Beck did in this case -- as you know, if you're not properly prepared for a case, there would never be any settlement, and I think Charlie has done an excellent job in this, and I appreciate that.

I urge to you settle it. We'll be glad to

1 answer any questions you might have. We think 2 it's an excellent settlement on behalf of the 3 customers of Florida Power. 4 CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you, Mr. Shreve. 5 Ms. Kaufman. 6 MS. KAUFMAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman. 7 I'm here on behalf of the Vicki Gordon Kaufman. 8 Florida Industrial Power Users Group. We were 9 one of the intervenors in this case. 10 I would like to echo the comments of 11 Mr. Habermeyer and Mr. Shreve. I think all the 12 parties worked hard and diligently and really 13 until the eleventh hour to hammer out an 14 agreement that I think that we all are satisfied 15 with and that is in the best interests of the 16 customers and the company, and we urge you to 17 approve it this morning. Thank you. 18 CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you. Commissioners, 19 let's open it up for questions. 20 Commissioner Bradley? 21 COMMISSIONER BRADLEY: I just have some 22 comments. 23 CHAIRMAN JABER: okay. Ouestions? 24 COMMISSIONER DEASON: Madam Chairman, I do 25 have a few questions.

CHAIRMAN JABER: So do I. Go ahead.

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with a stipulation.

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COMMISSIONER DEASON: Okay. I first of all want to compliment the parties in coming forward

I have some questions. I think they're more in the line of clarifying than they are really questioning the appropriateness of the I have found that if we can get stipulation. things clarified on the front end that sometimes it avoids confusion on the back end, and so that's the effort I'm trying to enter into at this point.

First, I want to address the clarification which staff made. And I'm looking at the memo that we received from staff, and it concerns the commitment within the settlement to improve reliability as measured by the SAIDI index, which is the System Average Interruption Duration Index. And there's an objective of a 20% improvement in this index from year to year. I guess my question -- and, of course, there is a \$3 million refund if that objective is not met.

My question is, the 20%, is that cumulative, in the sense that to avoid the refund, there has to be a 20% improvement in that index? For example, if in one year, the first year, there's only a 18% improvement in the index, they have failed to meet the standard, and there would be a 3 million refund. The next year's standard, is it 20% from the 18, or is it 20% from where they should have been, but failed to meet that objective?

MR. McNULTY: Commissioner, I believe that the meeting of this 20% reduction in the SAIDI, in the index that measures the average duration for the customers, is based upon a base year of 2000. So you would yield the same number for both years 2004 and 2005. And --

COMMISSIONER DEASON: So -- go ahead. I'm sorry.

MR. McNULTY: So the number basically in 2000 was 100.6 minutes per customer, that average, and so you would basically take 20% off of that figure. And as I understand it, that number would apply for both the years 2004 and 2005, and those calculations would be provided in 2005 and 2006, and refunds would be made on an annual basis and be provided in 2005 and 2006.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: So just to make sure I'm clear and everyone is clear, it's a 20% increase from a base year which has been established and everyone agrees, and that's the standard throughout the stipulated time period? Is that -- I'm getting -- Mr. Shreve, that's your understanding?

MR. SHREVE: That's my understanding. That's to accomplish the 20%, and then that would have to be maintained.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Fine. That answers my questions.

Madam Chairman, I have just a few other questions.

CHAIRMAN JABER: That's fine.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Okav.

CHAIRMAN JABER: You may cover mine.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Okay. What I'm going to do is, I think I'm going to refer to the stipulation itself, because I made some notes on it, and that may be the most expeditious manner to proceed.

I'm looking at page 4, which is -- and paragraph 9 on that page. And this addresses the Hines Wnit 2, and I think Mr. Habermeyer

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also addressed that in his summary as well.

The question that I have, as I understand, the recovery of depreciation expense and the return on the investment associated with Hines Unit 2 is contingent upon fuel savings generated by that unit. That's correct, staff?

MR. McNULTY: It's limited by the total amount of fuel savings that would be provided. It would be the lower of, so if you --

COMMISSIONER DEASON: The lower of. So just for sake of ease of understanding, if the — and these numbers may not even be in the ballpark, but if the depreciation expense and the return on investment associated with this plant is \$10 million and the fuel savings generated from that plant is \$8 million, then Power Corp. is limited to \$8 million of fuel savings as it pertains to depreciation expense and return on investment; correct?

MR. McNULTY: Yes, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Okay. The question that I have is, under that scenario, that \$8 million, does it first go to depreciation expense, or does it go to return on investment? And the reason I'm asking the question is, is

the amount of depreciation actually booked on the company's books contingent upon what they recover through this mechanism, or are they still going to book the same amount of depreciation regardless for book purposes? That's the question, whoever feels comfortable in answering or clarifying it.

MR. SHREVE: I believe we're in agreement. That's an excellent question. But the depreciation expense is going to be incurred regardless of recovery.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: So we would continue to book the depreciation amount regardless of whether those dollars are actually recovered through this mechanism; is that correct?

MR. McNULTY: Yes, Commissioner, it is.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Okay. That addresses my concern. Thank you very much.

MR. SHREVE: We can accept that, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: I believe that you would. That's beneficial for the customers. I wanted to point that out, that that is done that way, that regardless of what is recovered through this mechanism, the depreciation expense

is going to be booked and recorded, and when we go forward in future years and look at depreciation rates, that will be the depreciation reserve which we will use to analyze future considerations of depreciation expense for this unit.

I'm getting nods of the head yes, so I appreciate that.

And, staff, I'm looking for some clarification on paragraph 10, which is found on the bottom of page 4 and the top of page 5 of the stipulation. There is going to be a credit to depreciation expense and a debit to the bottom line depreciation reserve of 62.5 million, and everyone agrees to that.

And then the question that I have is the second portion of that, which is at the company's option. And it states that at its option, it may record up to an equal annual amount as an offsetting accelerated depreciation expense and a credit to the bottom line depreciation reserve. Is the option at the company to reverse part of that entry, or is it some other entry in addition to the 62.5 million?

MR. SLEMKEWICZ: The way I understand it, it would be a reversal of that \$62-1/2 million.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: So we're not looking at anything in addition to the 62.5. The 62.5 is the maximum amount which would be permissible, and at the company's option, they could take less than the 62.5, or in essence, reverse part of that entry out.

MR. SLEMKEWICZ: That's correct.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: And the company agrees with that interpretation as well?

MR. McGEE: That's correct.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: And then I'm looking at the attachment to the stipulation, which is Exhibit A. I'm looking at paragraph 5 of that. And this has to do with the capacity cost recovery clause which is associated with the --with Power Corp.'s acquisition of retail customers in and near the City of Sebring.

Can staff explain to me your understanding of what this actually does and what it accomplishes?

MR. WHEELER: The origin of that credit in capacity had to do with when Power Corp. bought out the City of Sebring's electric system.

There was a situation created whereby there was a double recovery of the capacity costs associated with sales to the Sebring customers, so that credit was created in the capacity clause in order to avoid that double recovery situation. So ever since 1993, there has been a credit passed through capacity or given through capacity in order to make the retail customers whole for that double recovery.

The stipulation specifically stated that the new base rates that are coming out of this stipulation would not take into account that transaction so that, in other words, the base rates that are going in now are not going to result in double recovery.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: So the new rate, there's no double recovery, so there's no longer a need for the credit to be run through the clause.

MR. WHEELER: Right.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: And the parties agree with that? I'm getting shaking of the heads.

Okay. Fine. That's what I needed to know.

Madam Chairman, that's all of my questions.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you. I've got a few

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along those lines. I too commend the parties for the settlement. And I'm sure we'll all comment in the motion stage, but I have some questions as a follow-up to the service hearings as well as questions from staff's recommendation. And the first one involves the initial levelized residential rate.

Staff, clarify for me -- and perhaps this is a Mr. Habermeyer question. I'm not sure. There are parts of the recommendation as it relates to that rate structure that make it sound like some customers would see an increase in their rates, but that's not the case, is it?

MR. WHEELER: No. No, no more customers will receive an increase as a result of the inverted rate. What will happen is that relative to the new levelized rate, when you go to an inverted rate, certain customers will pay more than they would have under the new levelized rate. The breakpoint is 1,500 kilowatt-hours per month. In other words, customers who use more than that amount under the inverted rate will pay more they would have under the new levelized rate, and customers who use less than that amount will see a decrease

relative to the new levelized rate. relative to the previous existing rate, all customers will see a decrease. Right. So said CHAIRMAN JABER: differently, the inverted rate is really a conservation rate structure. MR. WHEELER: Correct. 

CHAIRMAN JABER: So customers would need to know the more they use in power, the more they might pay, but on the other hand, if they reduce their energy consumption, they'll pay less.

MR. WHEELER: That's correct.

CHAIRMAN JABER: By the same token, some customers, although all customers will see a decrease in rates, some customers, because of their usage, will not get as great a decrease. They will get a decrease in the rate, but the level of decreases are different from customer to customer based on usage.

MR. WHEELER: Right.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Company and Mr. Shreve, you agree with everything I just said?

MR. McGEE: Yes. Yes, we do.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Mr. Shreve, you agree with everything I just said?

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MR. SHREVE: Yes, I do, Commissioner. And I think all customers will receive a lower rate for that lower part of the usage, so everyone will benefit from that.

Now, as you said, when we get into a higher range, there will be a higher rate at that point, but all customers will receive a lower rate for the first 1,500 hours.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Mr. Habermeyer, it strikes me this may be a good opportunity in these bills to repeat the conservation message. I don't know. You may have already thought of that, but to the degree you haven't considered it, I would ask that you do consider it.

MR. HABERMEYER: Well, we certainly will.

And it is the intent really of the inverted rate to honor and recognize that conservation measure. We think it's a very important part of this rate structure.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. On the -- there is an increase with the lighting fixtures and the pole lighting, and that's because we have not looked at that charge in quite some time; is that correct?

MR. WHEELER: Yes. It's my understanding

from talking to the Power Corp. staff that in their initial filing they did propose increases to certain of the lighting fixtures because the relative cost between the older and the newer offerings was kind of out of whack, and they kind of wanted to fix that problem.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Are these new charges in line with what other companies are assessing?

MR. WHEELER: Yes. Lighting has always been a kind of a problematic rate class, and there has always been problems just due to the nature of the class in terms of getting the prices right. But staff agrees that by raising the rates that they're raising, the rates will make more sense across the various offerings.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. On Section 14 -- let's see. Commissioner Deason, you asked the Section 9 clarification. You didn't ask anything on Section 14, did you? I don't want to --

COMMISSIONER DEASON: I did not ask anything about 14.

CHAIRMAN JABER: On page 5 of your recommendation, staff, it sounded like you were not clear on a provision in Section 14 related

to how the refund allocations were to be made, and you propose something right there. And my question is really for the company. Do you agree what the staff has said on the bottom of page 5, because that's how they've proposed we handle it, which is, because the settlement is silent, we'll assume that the amount to be refunded has been accumulated on an even monthly basis during the interim period.

MR. DOLAN: Yes, Madam Chair, we do agree.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Now, going to some of the other questions that we all heard at the service hearings, at one of the service hearings, staff, we had a speaker discuss their desire to be on the interruptible rate. I think it was Pasco County. And my question is for you and the company. Is Pasco County excluded from the interruptible rate because the tariff — the last tariff on interruptibles for Power Corp. sort of grandfathered in existing customers; right?

MR. WHEELER: Yes. The Pasco school representative, he brought up several issues. There are currently two sets of interruptible

rates for Power Corp. There's an IS-1 rate, which has been closed to new customers since 1996. The existing customers were allowed to be grandfathered on that rate. At the time that rate was closed, a new IS-2 rate was opened. And under the stipulation, that will basically remain the status quo. The IS-1 customers will continue to be allowed as to take service under IS-1. IS-2 will still be available.

The only change really was that a minimum billing demand provision was added to the IS-2 rate, which requires that customers under that rate be billed for a minimum 500 kW per month regardless of what their actual demand during the month was. So really, that's the only -- in terms of the rate structure, that's the only change that was made.

well, there was one other change that actually adjusted the credits offered under IS-2 to reflect the new cost-effective level as filed by Power Corp. in the filing, which actually raises the credits a little bit, which, in effect, would lower the rates to those customers. The IS-1 credits remain exactly the way they were before.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. Does that mean that Pasco County can seek the IS-2 rate? Or any School Board, for that matter?

MR. WHEELER: Yes. The IS-2 rate continues to be available to all customers with a maximum demand of 500 kW or higher.

one of the things that the Pasco representative brought up was the fact that he had current IS-2 customers, or schools that were on the IS-2 rate, and he wanted to know why he couldn't take service under IS-1 for newly built schools, since they were an existing customer. It has been the staff's interpretation of that tariff that that would not be allowed, because unless it's a school that's located contiguous to an existing school, a new school would, in effect, be a new customer as defined under the rate, so they would be required to take service under IS-2 and not the IS-1 rate.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Generally speaking, when we allow the interruptible rate or the curtailable rate, the benefit that is derived from the lower rate obviously goes to the participant, but it's the general body of ratepayers, that pick up that difference, isn't

it?

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MR. WHEELER: Yes. Power Corp.'s interruptible rates are structured as a conservation program, so the credits are recovered through the energy conservation cost recovery clause.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Have we ever -- has this agency every looked at the big policy question of should we start, you know, migrating away from the interruptible and the curtailable rates, especially -- the reality -- and I suppose I should ask this of the company. The reality of interrupting a school I just don't see coming to fruition. And if that's the case, if that's the case, why allow the benefit of the interruptible rates?

MR. WHEELER: Well, I think --

CHAIRMAN JABER: Go ahead, staff.

MR. WHEELER: I think Power Corp. at one point basically threw open interruptible rates to all customers regardless of size, and I think that's when they had a lot of these nontraditional interruptible type customers such as schools sign up for the rate. I think in retrospect, that probably wasn't a real good

idea. And so I think with the imposition of the 500 kW minimum billing demand, and also they added a provision that stated that if the customer was designated an emergency shelter, they could also not take service under the interruptible rate, which I think served to disqualify some schools.

But I think you're right. To my mind, an interruptible customer is an industrial load, a process customer, a customer who can -- a fairly sophisticated customer who can plan for times when interruptions might occur, as opposed to a school. It's probably not the best idea to have schools on interruptible rates.

CHAIRMAN JABER: We don't see that in the agreement; right? We've approved the general tariff, and then it's up to whoever wants the interruptible rate to seek that from the company; right? How do we find out that there has been an arrangement?

MR. WHEELER: You mean in terms of the types of customers who are signing up?

CHAIRMAN JABER: Yes.

MR. WHEELER: There is no filing mechanism to find that out, basically. We find that out

just through conversations with the company, but there's no formal filing requirements where we know what types of customers are taking service.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Mr. Habermeyer, let me start over. The Pasco County School Board can seek the IS-2 rate?

MR. HABERMEYER: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN JABER: And in the process of getting applications for the interruptible rate, do you consider the type of customer that entity is and whether it's realistic that you'll ever interrupt them? Do you go through that --

MR. HABERMEYER: We consider them. We certainly advise them of the liability that would come from interrupting a customer such as a school. We don't have a choice to refuse it.

However, I think it is, as you suggest,
Madam Chair, is certainly an area that would be
very fruitful for examination. It's very
difficult for us, on those occasions when we do
have interruptions, to be interrupting a school
and then to recognize that that is going to
imposition a good number of our customers who
have to keep their children at home or have to

1 make other arrangements.

I believe also the prisons are on an interruptible rate, which is somewhat interesting as well.

CHAIRMAN JABER: That would be my point.

There are some customers on the interruptible program, I don't see the reality of interrupting them. This is outside the settlement, but it's a question that occurred to me as I was reading the issues over again. And my request of staff is, would you meet with Public Counsel and FIPUG in particular and start thinking about a generic review of that? It may not come to anything, but at least someone would have thought about that.

COMMISSIONER PALECKI: Chairman Jaber, along that line, I would like to see that there is a very clear signal sent to these customers that they can and will be interrupted, so that when they make the choice to go on an interruptible rate, they do it in an educated manner, because I have seen situations where customers didn't really understand when they signed up for this less expensive rate that they could and would be interrupted during times of

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shortage. And I think it's so important that the customer be well aware when they sign the application to go on the interruptible rate that they will be interrupted so they're not surprised later on.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Yes, Commissioner Palecki, I agree with you. I think I'm trying to go even further, because even if that school board is completely educated about the program, which I don't know why they wouldn't be, the reality of a company interrupting a school, regardless of how educated that customer is, I don't see a company bringing on criticism to itself for interrupting a prison or a school or a hospital or — you know, I don't know what other customers you have on the interruptible program. That's my point, that maybe the incentive really should be to not even give that choice.

COMMISSIONER PALECKI: That's an excellent point.

CHAIRMAN JABER: I don't know.

MR. DOLAN: Chairman Jaber, if I might add to that, I think it's important to point out,

Commissioner Palecki, we have gone to great

lengths as a company to inform these types of customers, but I think as Mr. Habermeyer said, ultimately the tariff is open to customers that qualify based on their demand and their use characteristics. And these schools are making economic decisions based on the rules of the tariff to place their schools on this interruptible tariff.

But we have, I will tell you, on numerous occasions, that I'm sure when we have had interruptions, schools have been impacted by that in the past. We've had less frequent interruptions of late. But that is a risk, and we point that out to any of the customers that choose to go on it.

Certainly it's an appropriate application, and it has been a good rate for the mining loads through the years, and we think that is the type of load that warrants this type of tariff. But we share the same concerns.

But quite frankly, you know, the tariff ultimately is the decision maker, and customers that have the use characteristics and the kilowatt-hour load that qualify for the tariff, we're not in a position to say no, because it's

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open to all that qualify under the current tariff. But perhaps, Chairman Jaber, as you suggested, that may be worth some reexamination, and maybe that's something we will -- we would support taking a new look at that as well.

CHAIRMAN JABER: At one of the service hearings, there was a lot of discussion, staff, about meter reading and some concerns by the customers that some meters had not been read for quite some time, and perhaps there were used meters put in place when the customer complained about the meter.

And again, this is all for the purpose of sort of completing the discussion and reflects not on the good reliability plan that the parties have come up with. I think that you have addressed that adequately. I just want to go to the specific concerns raised by the customers.

Bill, have you had an opportunity to take a look at those issues?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes, we have followed up in this rate proceeding and have issued requests for production of documents to address FPC's policies relating to meter reading. We've

reviewed that. We have some follow-up questions that were actually going to be posed at the hearing. We don't feel as though -- basically, these are in response to the Commissioners' concerns that were raised at the Clearwater service hearing, and we feel as though we can follow up on those types of concerns through a data request issued to the company, and if there are any concerns, respond back to you. Through the course of reviewing the existing testimony, we haven't found anything that hasn't either been able to be resolved or that there isn't an ongoing follow-up plan for each of the customers to address in the area of meter reading.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Do you remember that customer that thought you were Commissioner Deason?

MR. MCNULTY: Yes. I do.

CHAIRMAN JABER: He --

MR. McNULTY: I thought he was Dan Marino.

CHAIRMAN JABER: That's the one.

MR. McNULTY: Yes. I remember him well.

CHAIRMAN JABER: He asked if it was time for us to review the meter reading rule. Have you all had time to take a look at that, and is

that a request that's worth pursuing?

MR. MCNULTY: Again, we didn't find anything that would say that our existing meter reading rule is not appropriate. We do want to follow up to make sure that the procedures that are being used and the policies that are being used by Florida Power Corporation are consistent with that particular rule.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. Mr. Habermeyer, if you didn't hear personally, you've probably read the transcript by now. With respect to the complaints on meter reading, how have you addressed those concerns?

MR. HABERMEYER: I did read the transcript, Madam Chair, and we have made substantive changes in our meter reading operation as well as meter reading techniques. We have certainly trained our people further to address issues that were brought up in those hearings as well as issues that we have observed ourselves. I feel that our current statistics, which we share with the staff, bear that out, that we have made substantive improvements in the meter reading area.

MR. SHREVE: Madam Chair.

CHAIRMAN JABER: And I wouldn't doubt -I'm sorry, Mr. Shreve. And I wouldn't doubt
that you'll continue to work with staff on
resolving all of those remaining issues, and to
the degree the policy or the rule needs --

MR. HABERMEYER: That is correct.

CHAIRMAN JABER: -- to be revised, that you'll suggest changes to our staff.

MR. HABERMEYER: Most definitely.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Mr. Shreve.

MR. SHREVE: I just wanted to mention that since this was large part of our case, we've had extensive discussions with Mr. Habermeyer and Florida Power over a period of months concerning this issue. And although it's not represented in the settlement agreement, I'm convinced that the plans that Mr. Habermeyer has implemented and Florida Power has implemented are going to take care of a lot of these problems. And we will be continuing to cooperate and work with them on that, so we're comfortable with that situation.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you, Mr. Shreve.

And you don't feel precluded from raising that
issue as a service concern going forward by this

settlement; right?

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MR. SHREVE: No. If something came up that we needed to bring to the Commission's

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attention, we would feel free to do it.

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CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. Great.

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My final question goes to the tree

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trimming. We heard at almost every service

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hearing in the Central Florida area that the

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tree trimming program is something that the

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company sends employees out every three years,

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if I'm not mistaken.

CHAIRMAN JABER:

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MR. McNULTY: Yes, the three-year trimming

The Commissioners asked

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cycle.

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you at one of those service hearings,

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Mr. McNulty, to take a look at that and whether

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it should be, you know, a yearly event. Have

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you had an opportunity to look at that?

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MR. McNULTY: We have an ongoing docket

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that's open at this time relating to

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to what the definition should be and what the

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reporting standards should be for distribution

distribution reliability and rulemaking relating

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reliability, what is labeled in our rules is

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continuity.of service, things that they have to

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report on an annual basis. I think that the follow-up in terms of the adequacy of tree trimming is something that can be rolled into looking at how we address distribution reliability through either rulemaking or some other such proceeding.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Great. Mr. Habermeyer, is there anything more you need to add to that?

MR. HABERMEYER: I would say that certainly we're looking forward to working through that docket and addressing issues, including tree trimming and other reliability related issues. I know in reading through the transcripts, there were a number of issues in terms of failure to clean up areas that had been impacted during the storm particularly for which tree trimming was necessary, we have certainly taken that under advisement and will correct that issue in terms of addressing the customers' concerns. the other area that we've discussed has been evaluating our cycle of trimming, and we're certainly looking at that as well, and I think we can do it within the context of this docket.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. Good.

Commissioners, I'm going to give everyone

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an opportunity to comment, but I want to make sure there are no other questions.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Madam Chairman, I do have one question which I failed to ask earlier, and it has to do again with the recovery of costs associated with the Hines unit and that being contingent upon fuel savings. And as staff points out on page 5 of the recommendation, the stipulation is silent on the methodology that would be utilized to estimate the fuel savings. And that's fine. I don't think the stipulation has to have that.

I guess my question is, can the parties offer us any vision as to how they think this will be accomplished? Will the company make a filing as to what they believe the estimated fuel savings to be, and then the parties can review that and get additional information to verify the calculation of fuel savings?

MR. DOLAN: Commissioner Deason, in some preliminary discussions we've had with staff, I think it's our intent to run an analysis that essentially runs our system absent Hines 2 and then with Hines 2. It's probably going to be --you know, it's not as simple as that, but I

think it's fairly straightforward, that shows that we would look at that analysis, file it in the fuel docket, go through and review it with staff and the other parties as part of the fuel docket and make sure that they have adequate time to ask whatever questions they have about that.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Okay. Well, that's the key to my question. I think you've answered it. I want to make sure. You will file that, parties will be able to review that and get further information and clarification to satisfy themselves that that represents the fuel savings associated with the Hines unit.

MR. DOLAN: Absolutely.

MS. KAUFMAN: Commissioner Deason, if I could just comment on that. I think it is contemplated by the parties that to the extent it's necessary, if there is disagreement, that that would be an issue in the fuel docket.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: So the parties are free to raise that as an issue if they think that it is appropriate to do so?

MS. KAUFMAN: That's my understanding.
MR. DQLAN: We agree.

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MR. SHREVE: As well as the reasonableness and prudence of the costs that would be incurred in the plant and the fuel charges. So that would still be -- if there was some disagreement, we would bring it to you.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. Commissioner
Bradley, let's start with you. You said you had
some comments.

COMMISSIONER BRADLEY: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

First of all, let me commend the intervenors for again doing a very good job of mediating and, in my opinion, coming to a good settlement for all the parties that have an interest in the business dealings of Florida Power here in the State of Florida.

Also, I would like to state that I have been following this rate case probably a little bit more closely than some of the others, for obvious reasons. I'm from St. Petersburg, which is a major area that Florida Power serves, so I'm quite familiar with Florida Power's history as a power company, in that for years I was a ratepayer or a customer. And after listening to

some of the answers to some of the very tough questions that were asked by my fellow Commissioners Deason and Jaber, I have even -- I have more comfort with the settlement itself, and in particular, as it relates to the issues that are -- the quality of service issues that we heard as a part of our proceedings down in St. Petersburg and in Clearwater.

Therefore, I would like to commend Florida Power on reaching an agreement with all parties involved that would provide a \$125 million rate reduction to its customers. Florida Power, in my opinion, has been a very progressive company and has made progressive strides toward reliable and affordable electric service under the leadership of Bill Habermeyer. And I look forward to not only working with you presently, but in the future, Mr. Habermeyer, and I think that Florida Power's leadership is in capable hands.

Under the leadership of Mr. Habermeyer, just as an observation, Florida Power will add 150 new pay stations to provide greater access, expand hours, and in allowing the clocked payment service. That is an issue that is near

and dear to me, and I would like to commend you for extending that service so that you can better and more effectively serve your customers.

Also, Florida Power intends to add four new operating centers which will place Florida Power line service, engineering and management resources closer to the customers. This should improve time — this should improve response time and reliability, which I think ties into some of the issues that we heard quite frequently as a part of the service hearings that were held in the Clearwater and St. Petersburg area.

Also, I would like to commend Florida Power — also, I would like to state that Florida Power will be investing \$16 million in a new radio system for use throughout its service territory. This in itself should increase reliability and reduce interference from radio users, paging companies, and television networks, and I think this will add tremendously to Florida Power's ability to respond to situations such as we — such as what it encountered recently as a result of that — I

like to call it a no-name storm.

It is obvious that Florida Power's primary objective is to be a first rate power provider or energy provider to its customers. The terms reached in this rate case are a testament to their objective.

Again, I would like to congratulate
Mr. Habermeyer and Vinnie and all the other
folks in Florida Power, as well as the other
intervenors who have worked very diligently to
bring --

CHAIRMAN JABER: You just said Mr. Habermeyer and Vinnie.

COMMISSIONER BRADLEY: To bring this rate case in for a landing.

And, you know, I'll tell you, Madam Chair, that's a mistake that I should have learned a long time ago not to make, and that is never when you're commending to call names, because invariably you will leave out an important person. So anyone from Florida Power that I did not mention, please forgive me for not including you as a part of the process as it relates to the company.

But, Mr. Shreve, I would like to commend

your office, and I would like to commend the lady here who is representing some of the business customers for again working and doing a great job as it relates to bringing this in for a landing, and in my opinion, establishing and achieving the process that will benefit the ratepayers and hopefully make everyone happy.

MR. HABERMEYER: Commissioner Bradley, on behalf of all of us at Florida Power, thank you for your comments.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Commissioner Baez.

COMMISSIONER BAEZ: I'm going to keep mine short. I was Prehearing Officer on this rate case as well. Lord knows what I did at some point.

I too want to commend everyone involved, and I really do mean everyone. This was a monumental effort on the part of not just the parties, but the staff, right down to the people that picked up the hearing rooms for the service hearings. And I also want to include the customers. I think the service hearings in this particular case went a long way -- I'm not sure I've been involved in any other dockets where the public comment has had as much of an impact

as in this case, and I do commend the company
for listening and paying attention. The staff
was terrific. I'll say it again. I think they
were very, very diligent. And in sum, I think
this case is one example of what happens when

And following my good friend Commissioner Bradley's advice, I'll leave it up to you all to decide who those people were. But I do want to commend everyone on this monumental effort, and the Commissioners as well. I think they got the ball rolling, and I'm glad everybody was listening.

you put the right people together in a room.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Commissioner Palecki, do you want to, and then Commissioner Deason.

COMMISSIONER PALECKI: I believe that this settlement is beneficial to Florida Power Corporation's customers in that it not only results in a significant rate reduction, but it also addresses the reliability concerns that we heard about at the customer hearings. And Florida Power Corporation, I appreciate the commitment that you have made to resolve these concerns.

I also very much like the rate structure

that has been put in place in this settlement. This rate structure recognizes and rewards frugal customers who work hard to conserve energy and to keep their rates or their bills low. And I think it's high time that Florida utilities started recognizing those efforts that are made by the customers, and I think especially because of the large number of citizens who are on fixed incomes in your territories that this rate structure will be especially appreciated.

Commission staff, I want to commend you for the hard work you've done. Without a doubt, the questions you asked and the concerns you raised very early in this docket and all the discovery you did led the parties to this settlement.

Mr. Shreve and Office of Public Counsel, I appreciate the many thousands of hours of work and the many pages of testimony that you filed, all the discovery did you. And FIPUG, I would also like to commend you for all the work you did in this docket.

I think in Florida we're seeing a very positive trend. Our electric utilities are working to become more streamlined, more

efficient. They are better managed and afford a better quality of service, and at the same time, offer lower rates to the customers.

I think Florida's utilities or Florida's electric utilities have sent a signal loud and clear, and that is that our electric utilities stand ready and able to meet any competition that may in the future come to the State of Florida. I believe this bodes well for the citizens of the State of Florida and also for Florida Power Corporation.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DEASON: Madam Chairman, I'll be very brief. We are here and we're supposed to make decisions which are in the public interest. I think this stipulation is certainly in the public interest, and it gets my full endorsement and support, and I will be voting to approve it. And I also wish to commend the parties for the efforts that went into this.

I wish to reiterate one point that I think Mr. Habermeyer made earlier, and also one that Mr. Shreve made. Mr. Habermeyer indicated the volumes of information which had been provided in the form of discovery and the minimum filing

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requirements that were filed in this case. had early discovery by all the parties. We had testimony filed. Commissioners, we had a rate case. The only thing is, we just did not go to hearing and go through that litigious process. But we've had a rate proceeding. We've had a very thorough and extensive review of this company's operations and its rates, and we are -- even though this is a stipulation, I wouldn't want anyone to think that we have not conducted what is essentially a rate case minus the That's the only thing we've not done, hearing. is the hearing. All of the review, all the testimony and all the discovery has taken place, and I commend the parties for all of the effort that went into coming to this.

I wish to also reiterate something
Mr. Shreve said, that you cannot have a
stipulation unless you come from a position of
strength. That position of strength was because
of the fact that Power Corp. had come forward
with all the information, made the filings, and
the parties had access to all the information
and the discovery, and everyone was adequately
informed of the issues and could negotiate from

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a position of strength, and that's why we have such a good stipulation in front of us.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Thank you, Commissioner Deason.

Obviously, I agree with all the comments that were made. You know, when we started this endeavor last year, I really didn't know what to expect at the end of today. I had no idea. All I knew was opening this docket was the absolute right thing to do. There was never a doubt in my mind that this agency made the right decision in initiating this proceeding.

But you have all collectively, our staff and the Commissioners included, exceeded my expectations. I knew that there would be an opportunity for all of you to get together and sit down and talk about the issues and reach resolution. I knew that there was an opportunity to have refunds made to the customers. I knew that there was an opportunity to have the service concerns addressed. But vou have all exceeded our expectations. Staff, your diligence made this possible. Mr. Shreve, your attorneys were just beyond professionalism. They were absolutely the best in raising the

issues that we needed to look at and making sure the testimony was covered and the customers received the proper care at the service hearings.

I think, Company, that you now have a healthy respect for your customers. I vote with a clear conscience today, because I know you have a health respect for your customers. I know, Mr. Habermeyer, you've read the transcript from the service hearings, because I've seen the stipulation, and had you not read that transcript, you wouldn't have been able to come through the way you did.

But I have to suggest to you that reading the transcript and listening to them the way that we did are two different things, and I would encourage you to continue that dialogue with your customers. This has always been about the customer. The success of your company, your economic viability, although I care about that greatly, I care about that for the benefit of Florida and the benefit of the citizens of the State of Florida. So I would encourage you to continue to have that dialogue.

I would also add that you are the only one

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that received a compliment from the customers at one of the service hearings, so you should take that as an acknowledgment that you're doing the right thing. But you have a good team, so I don't want to take away from your team. I just compliment all of you.

With that, Commissioners, I would compliment Commissioner Baez once again for being the Prehearing Officer on this case, and had he not stuck to the issues and made the parties collect as often as they collected, I don't think we would be right where we are today.

Staff, words will never express the good job you're doing. This is an example of more to come. So it ain't over.

Commissioners, I need a motion.

COMMISSIONER BRADLEY: I'll do one. I'll do a motion, and my motion would be to approve the agreed-upon settlement and the staff recommendations after Madam Chair puts them in their proper order.

CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. There are two -no, there are four issues, aren't there. I
think, Commissioner, you can move the entire

staff recommendation. That would satisfy --COMMISSIONER BRADLEY: Yes. That would be my motion then, to move the entire settlement and to move all the staff recommendations. COMMISSIONER BAEZ: I can second it. CHAIRMAN JABER: There has been a motion and a second on Item 16. All those in favor say aye. (Simultaneous affirmative votes.) CHAIRMAN JABER: Okay. Aye. I went blank there for a minute. Item 16 is approved unanimously. Thank you. (Conclusion of consideration of Item 16.) 

## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

4 STATE OF FLORIDA)
5 COUNTY OF LEON )

I, MARY ALLEN NEEL, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were taken before me at the time and place therein designated; that my shorthand notes were thereafter transcribed under my supervision; and that the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 51 are a true and correct transcription of my stenographic notes.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, or relative or employee of such attorney or counsel, or financially interested in the action.

DATED THIS 29th day of April, 2002.

MARY ALLEN NEEL, RPR

100 Salem Court

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