

1 **P R O C E E D I N G S**

2 **CHAIRMAN BRISÉ:** All right. We are going
3 to go ahead and move on to Item Number 6.

4 **MS. BRUCE:** Commissioners, Sonica Bruce on
5 behalf of Commission staff.

6 Items numbered 6, 7, and 8 are requests
7 for approval of amendment to tariff sheets for
8 miscellaneous service charges in Polk County by West
9 Lakeland, Pinecrest, and Four Points Utilities.
10 These recommendations address the utilities'
11 requested charge of a \$2.50 convenience fee for
12 customers who opt to pay their utility by debit or
13 credit card via telephone.

14 Staff believes that this convenience fee
15 is reasonable, it benefits the customers by allowing
16 them to expand their payment options. Furthermore,
17 this fee will ensure the utilities' remaining
18 customers do not subsidize those customers who
19 choose to pay using this option. Therefore, staff
20 recommends that the utility's request be approved.
21 Staff is prepared to answer any questions you may
22 have.

23 **CHAIRMAN BRISÉ:** Thank you very much.

24 So I suppose that your recommendation is
25 that we would take Items 6, 7, and 8 together, since

1 it's basically the same thing, all three?

2 **MS. BRUCE:** Yes.

3 **CHAIRMAN BRISÉ:** Okay. Commissioner
4 Balbis.

5 **COMMISSIONER BALBIS:** Thank you, Mr.
6 Chairman.

7 I have a quick question concerning these
8 items, and I think it's kind of counter-intuitive,
9 because the thought should be that allowing the
10 utility to accept credit card payments should make
11 it easier for the utility and save them money.
12 Could you explain why there are additional costs
13 associated with credit card payments?

14 **MS. BRUCE:** Commissioner, based on the
15 research we've done, the utility can charge a
16 convenience fee, it's just a matter of -- it's not a
17 surcharge. And based on our research, again, he can
18 charge a convenience fee, it's just a matter of --
19 as I explained yesterday, it's just the time that it
20 takes for his staff to perform the task, and the
21 supplies, and that's pretty much what this cost
22 would be covering.

23 Did I answer your question?

24 **COMMISSIONER BALBIS:** You did. I guess
25 the question I have, you indicated that the utility

1 can charge, but should the utility charge it? Did
2 you do -- did the utility justify these costs with
3 --

4 **MS. BRUCE:** Yes, sir, the utility did
5 justify the costs based on --

6 **COMMISSIONER BALBIS:** Okay. And has there
7 ever been an analysis performed by if you have
8 customers using credit card payment, then obviously
9 they are not going to use the traditional payment,
10 and is there a reduction in cost associated with not
11 having to do the traditional process, or you just
12 had the backup and justification for these
13 additional --

14 **MS. BRUCE:** Just the backup and
15 justification, based on what he sent in. We didn't
16 do any further analysis.

17 **COMMISSIONER BALBIS:** Okay. That's all I
18 had.

19 **CHAIRMAN BRISÉ:** Thank you.

20 Any further questions or comments?

21 I'll tell you, to be honest, I struggled
22 with this item myself in looking at the breakout.
23 The only reason I'm going to support this today is
24 because it's consistent with sort of out in the
25 market in terms of the charge associated with

1 processing these fees. But, other than that, I'm
2 with you considering that if you are moving forward
3 in technology, the cost really should be reduced and
4 not go up with respect to these type of
5 transactions.

6 But considering that it's consistent with
7 what's out in the market, you know, I'm comfortable
8 supporting this particular recommendation at this
9 time on all three items.

10 Okay. I think we are ready to entertain a
11 motion.

12 Commissioner Edgar.

13 **COMMISSIONER EDGAR:** Thank you. Mr.
14 Chairman.

15 With that discussion, I move approval of
16 Items 6, 7, and 8.

17 **COMMISSIONER GRAHAM:** Second.

18 **CHAIRMAN BRISÉ:** Okay. It has been moved
19 and seconded.

20 Any further discussion? Okay. Seeing
21 none, all in favor say aye.

22 (Vote taken.)

23 **CHAIRMAN BRISÉ:** All right. Thank you
24 very much.

25

1 STATE OF FLORIDA)
 2 : CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER
 3 COUNTY OF LEON)
 4

5 I, JANE FAUROT, RPR, Chief, Hearing Reporter
 6 Services Section, FPSC Division of Commission Clerk, do
 7 hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard
 8 at the time and place herein stated.

9 IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I
 10 stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the
 11 same has been transcribed under my direct supervision;
 12 and that this transcript constitutes a true
 13 transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

14 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative,
 15 employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor
 16 am I a relative or employee of any of the parties'
 17 attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I
 18 financially interested in the action.

19 DATED THIS 30th, day of August,
 20 2013.

21 

22 _____
 23 JANE FAUROT, RPR
 24 Official FPSC Hearings Reporter
 25 (850) 413-6732