

CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF)	
FLORIDA, THROUGH THE)	IN THE FLORIDA PUBLIC
FLORIDA OFFICE OF PUBLIC)	SERVICE COMMISSION
COUNSEL,)	
)	DOCKET NOS. 20240026-EI
Appellants,)	20230139-EI
)	20230090-EI
v.)	
)	
)	NOTICE OF
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE)	ADMINISTRATIVE
COMMISSION)	APPEAL
)	
Appellee.)	
_____)	

NOTICE IS GIVEN that the Citizens of the State of Florida (“Citizens”), Appellants, through the Office of Public Counsel, appeal to the Supreme Court of the State of Florida the order of the Florida Public Service Commission, Order No. PSC-2025-0203-FOF-EI, rendered on June 11, 2025. A copy of Order No. PSC-2025-0203-FOF-EI is attached to this Notice of Administrative Appeal as Exhibit “A.”

The nature of the order is a final order and is the Order Granting in Part and Denying in Part OPC's Motions for Reconsideration and Clarification and Amending Final Order PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI.

Walt Trierweiler
Public Counsel
Fla. Bar No. 912468

/s/ Patricia A. Christensen
Patricia A. Christensen
Associate Public Counsel
Fla. Bar No. 989789
christensen.patty@leg.state.fl.us

c/o The Florida Legislature
111 West Madison Street, Suite 812
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400
(850) 488-9330

*Attorney for Citizens of the
State of Florida*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

DOCKET NO. 20240026-EI

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by electronic mail on this 30th day of June, 2025, to the following:

Adria Harper
Carlos Marquez
Timothy Sparks
Susan Sapoznikoff
Jonathan Hunt Rubottom
Samantha M. Cibula
Mary Anne Helton
Keith Hetrick
Florida Public Service
Commission
Office of General Counsel
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850
aharper@psc.state.fl.us
cmarquez@psc.state.fl.us
tsparks@psc.state.fl.us
ssapozni@psc.state.fl.us
jrubotto@psc.state.fl.us
scibula@psc.state.fl.us
mhelton@psc.state.fl.us
khetrick@psc.state.fl.us

J. Jeffrey Wahlen
Malcolm N. Means
Virginia Ponder
Ausley Law Firm
P. O. Box 391
Tallahassee, FL 32302
jwahlen@ausley.com
mmeans@ausley.com
vponder@ausley.com

Alan Lawson
Paul C. Huck, Jr.
Samuel J. Salaro, Jr.
Jason Gonzalez
Jessica Slatten
Robert E. Minchin, III
Lawson Huck Gonzalez, PLLC
215 S. Monroe St, Suite 320
Tallahassee, FL 32301
alan@lawsonhuckgonzalez.com
paul@lawsonhuckgonzalez.com
samuel@lawsonhuckgonzalez.com
jason@lawsonhuckgonzalez.com
jessica@lawsonhuckgonzalez.com
bob@lawsonhuckgonzalez.com

Paula K. Brown
Tampa Electric Company
P. O. Box 111
Tampa, FL 33601-0111
regdept@tecoenergy.com

Jon C. Moyle
Karen A. Putnal
Moyle Law Firm
118 North Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301
jmoyle@moylelaw.com
kputnal@moylelaw.com
mqualls@moylelaw.com

Robert Scheffel Wright
John T. LaVia, III
Gardner Law Firm
1300 Thomaswood Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32308
schef@gbwlegal.com
jlavia@gbwlegal.com

Stephanie U. Eaton
Spilman Law Firm
110 Oakwood Drive, Suite 500
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
seaton@spilmanlaw.com

Steven W. Lee
Spilman Law Firm
1100 Bent Creek Blvd., Suite 101
Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
slee@spilmanlaw.com

Floyd R. Self, B.C.S.
Ruth Vafek, Esq.
Berger Singerman, LLP
313 N. Monroe St. Suite 301
Tallahassee, FL 32301
fself@bergersingerman.com
rvafek@bergersingerman.com

Leslie Newton
Ashley George
Thomas Jernigan
Ebony Payton
Michael Rivera
Federal Executive Agencies
139 Barnes Drive, Suite 1
Tyndall AFB, FL 32403
leslie.newton.1@us.af.mil
ashley.george.4@us.af.mil
thomas.jernigan.3@us.af.mil
ebony.payton.ctr@us.af.mil
michael.rivera.51@us.af.mil

Bradley Marshall
Jordan Luebke
111 S. MLK Jr. Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32301
bmarshall@earthjustice.org
jluebke@earthjustice.org
flcaseupdates@earthjustice.org

Sari Amiel
Sierra Club
50 F St. NW, Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20001
sari.amiel@sierraclub.org

Nihal Shrinath
Sierra Club
2101 Webster St. Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
nihal.shrinath@sierraclub.org

/s/ Patricia A. Christensen
Patricia A. Christensen
Associate Public Counsel
christensen.patty@leg.state.fl.us

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I HEREBY certify that the foregoing is typed in Bookman Old Style 14-point font and therefore complies with the font requirements of Rule 9.045, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.

/s/ Patricia A. Christensen

Patricia A. Christensen

Associate Public Counsel

christensen.patty@leg.state.fl.us

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EXHIBIT "A"

FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

ORDER NO. PSC-2025-0203-FOF-EI

ISSUED JUNE 11, 2025

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition for rate increase by Tampa Electric Company.

DOCKET NO. 20240026-EI

In re: Petition for approval of 2023 depreciation and dismantlement study, by Tampa Electric Company.

DOCKET NO. 20230139-EI

In re: Petition to implement 2024 generation base rate adjustment provisions in paragraph 4 of the 2021 stipulation and settlement agreement, by Tampa Electric Company.

DOCKET NO. 20230090-EI
ORDER NO. PSC-2025-0203-FOF-EI
ISSUED: June 11, 2025

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

MIKE LA ROSA, Chairman
ART GRAHAM
GARY F. CLARK
ANDREW GILES FAY
GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO SMITH

ORDER GRANTING IN PART AND DENYING IN PART
OPC'S MOTIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION AND CLARIFICATION
AND AMENDING FINAL ORDER NO. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI

APPEARANCES:

J. JEFFRY WAHLEN, MALCOM MEANS, and VIRGINIA PONDER,
ESQUIRES, Ausley Law Firm, Post Office Box 391, Tallahassee, FL 32302
On behalf of Tampa Electric Company (TECO)

WALT TRIERWEILER, PATRICIA A. CHRISTENSEN, OCTAVIO SIMOES-
PONCE, CHARLES REHWINKEL, MARY A. WESSLING, and AUSTIN A.
WATROUS, ESQUIRES, Office of Public Counsel, c/o The Florida Legislature,
111 West Madison St., Suite 812, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400
On behalf of the Office of Public Counsel (OPC)

BRADLEY MARHSALL and JORDAN LUEBKEMANN, ESQUIRES,
Earthjustice, 111 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32301
HEMA LOCHAN, ESQUIRE, Earthjustice, 48 Wall St., 15th FL, New York, NY
10005
On behalf of Florida Rising, Inc. (Florida Rising) and League of United Latin
American Citizens of Florida (LULAC)

JON C. MOYLE, JR., and KAREN A. PUTNAL, ESQUIRES, Moyle Law Firm,
P.A., 118 North Gadsden Street., Tallahassee, FL 32301
On behalf of the Florida Industrial Power Users Group (FIPUG)

LESLIE R. NEWTON, ASHLEY N GEORGE, THOMAS A. JERNIGAN, and
MICHAEL A. RIVERA ESQUIRES, 139 Barnes Drive, Suite 1, Tyndall Air
force Base, FL 32403
On behalf of Federal Executive Agencies (FEA)

NIHAL SHRINATH, ESQUIRE, 2101 Webster Street, Suite 1300, Oakland, CA
94612
SARI AMIEL, ESQUIRE, Sierra Club, 50 F Street NW, Eighth Floor,
Washington, DC 20001
On behalf of Sierra Club (Sierra Club)

ROBERT SCHEFFEL WRIGHT and JOHN T. LAVIA, III, ESQUIRES,
Gardner, Bist, Bowden, Dee, LaVia, Wright, Perry & Harper, P.A. 1300
Thomaswood Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32308
On behalf of the Florida Retail Federation (FRF)

FLOYD R. SELF and RUTH VAFEK, ESQUIRES, Berger Singerman, LLP, 313
North Monroe Street, Suite 301, Tallahassee, FL 32301
On behalf of Americans for Affordable Clean Energy, Inc. (AACE), Circle K
Stores, Inc., RaceTrac Inc., and Wawa, Inc. (collectively hereinafter Fuel
Retailers)

STEPHANIE U. EATON, ESQUIRE, Spilman, Thomas & Battle, PLLC, 110
Oakwood Drive, Suite 500, Winston-Salem, NC 27103
STEVEN W. LEE, ESQUIRE, Qualified Representative, Spilman, Thomas &
Battle, PLLC, 1100 Bent Creek Blvd., Suite 101, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050
On behalf of Walmart, Inc. (Walmart)

TIMOTHY SPARKS, CARLOS MARQUEZ, and ADRIA HARPER,
ESQUIRES, Florida Public Service Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.,
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850
On behalf of the Florida Public Service Commission (Staff)

MARY ANNE HELTON, ESQUIRE, Interim General Counsel, Florida Public
Service Commission, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-
0850
Advisor to the Florida Public Service Commission

Case Background

On April 2, 2024, Tampa Electric Company (TECO or Company) filed its Petition for Rate Increase (Petition), minimum filing requirements (MFRs), and testimony.¹ TECO provides service to approximately 844,000 customers in a 2,000 square mile service territory in Hillsborough and portions of Polk, Pasco, and Pinellas counties, Florida.

TECO initially requested an increase of approximately \$296.6 million in base rates and charges effective January 1, 2025. In addition, the Company requested incremental rate increases of approximately \$100 million, effective January 1, 2026, and \$72 million, effective January 1, 2027. On August 22, 2024, the Company reduced its initial request for rates in 2025 to \$287.9 million, with the incremental rate increases also reduced to \$92.4 million and \$65.5 million, for 2026 and 2027, respectively.² TECO requested a Return on Equity (ROE) of 11.50 percent. Notably, TECO's last base rate hearing was in 2021, where we approved a unanimous settlement agreement (2021 Settlement Agreement).³

The Office of Public Counsel's (OPC) intervention in this matter was acknowledged by Order No. PSC-2024-0048-PCO-EI, issued February 26, 2024. On April 23, 2024, intervention was granted to Federal Executive Agencies; Sierra Club; Florida Rising, Inc. (FL Rising); League of United Latin American Citizens of Florida (LULAC); Florida Retail Federation (FRF); and Florida Industrial Power Users Group.⁴ On June 3, 2024, intervention was granted to Americans for Affordable Clean Energy, Inc.; Circle K Stores, Inc.; RaceTrac Inc.; and Wawa, Inc.⁵ Intervention was granted to Walmart, Inc. (Walmart) on August 8, 2024, by Order No. PSC-2024-0317-PCO-EI.

An administrative evidentiary hearing was held August 26–30, 2024. Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI addressing the requested rate increases for 2025, 2026, and 2027 was issued on February 3, 2025 (Final Order). Some issues were entirely or substantially uncontested, or rested entirely on the outcome of other issues, with little to no argument presented by some or all intervening parties and the more limited analysis contained in the Final Order on these subjects reflects that. Other issues, such as the ROE, were vigorously debated by multiple expert witnesses representing a broad range of interests and the more extensive analysis of those issues in the Final Order reflects that.

On February 18, 2025, OPC filed its Citizen's Motion for Reconsideration and Motion for Clarification of Certain Provisions (Motion) pursuant to Rule 25-22.060, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). In its Motion, OPC requested reconsideration regarding our findings on the Asset Optimization Mechanism (AOM) and the Storm Cost Recovery

¹ By Order No. PSC-2024-0096-PCO-EI, Docket Nos. 20240026-EI, 20230139-EI, and 20230090-EI were consolidated.

² Document No. 08609-2024.

³ Order No. PSC-2021-0423-S-EI, issued November 10, 2021, in Docket No. 20210034-EI, *In re: Petition for rate increase by Tampa Electric Company*.

⁴ Order Nos. PSC-2024-0121-PCO-EI, PSC-2024-0122-PCO-EI, PSC-2024-0123-PCO-EI, PSC-2024-0124-PCO-EI, and PSC-2024-0125-PCO-EI.

⁵ Order No. PSC-2024-00182-PCO-EI.

Mechanism (SCRM) as well as the ROE midpoint finding of 10.50 percent. OPC also identified potential errors in the calculation used to determine the revenue requirement. Additionally, OPC also requested clarification as to the approved parameters of the SCRM. Simultaneously with its Motion, OPC filed a motion titled “Citizens’ Request for Oral Argument on its Motion for Reconsideration and its Motion for Clarification of Certain Provisions” (Request for Oral Argument) requesting oral argument before this Commission pursuant to Rule 25-22.0022, F.A.C.

On February 25, 2025, TECO filed its Response in Opposition to the Office of Public Counsel’s Motion for Reconsideration and Clarification of Final Order in response to OPC’s Motion, arguing we properly approved both the SCRM and the AOM and properly determined the appropriate ROE midpoint. In regard to the potential errors identified by OPC, TECO stated it could not determine with precision the validity of those claims, but proposed recovering or returning any differential in the amount of revenue requirement through one of the company’s cost recovery clauses for 2025 and to account for the impact in subsequent years using the subsequent year adjustments scheduled to take place per the Final Order.

FL Rising and LULAC supported the Motion. The remaining intervenors either did not oppose or took no position on the Motion. With regard to the Request for Oral Argument, FL Rising, LULAC, FRF, and Walmart each supports it. The remaining intervenors either did not oppose or took no position on the Request for Oral Argument.

We heard Oral Argument on May 6, 2024. This Order addresses OPC’s Motion for Reconsideration and Clarification and TECO’s response thereto. We have jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Chapter 366, including Sections 366.06 and 366.076, Florida Statutes (F.S.).

Overview of Contested Aspects of Final Order

In this case, TECO petitioned for two mechanisms to be approved—the SCRM and the AOM. The SCRM establishes a process by which TECO may seek approval for a monetary surcharge and timing framework through which it recovers storm costs incurred to restore power to customers after damage caused by tropical systems, including the replenishment of the preexisting target storm reserve balance. Any restoration costs TECO incurs in expeditiously repairing the energy grid and restoring power to customers is subject to later Commission review under a prudence standard. In this way, customers are protected from TECO misusing the fund while at the same time ensuring TECO has the wherewithal to remedy the damage inflicted by tropical systems.

The AOM is a shareholder incentive program designed to encourage TECO to engage in additional activities with ratepayer-supported assets in order to generate additional net benefits that produce customer savings in the form of reductions to fuel costs. TECO shareholders benefit as the customer savings increase, encouraging the Company to maximize the benefits it can extract from its existing assets. AOM activities can include efforts such as the release of contracted gas storage space during non-critical demand seasons, the sale of fuel using existing

transportation capacity to non-TECO customers in Florida, and the sale of gas in the gas-production areas.

While the two mechanisms were initially *described* by reference to a prior settlement agreement, TECO did not rest on a precedential value argument when asking that a new SCRM and new AOM be authorized to commence on January 1, 2025. To the contrary, TECO supported its requests for the two mechanisms with sufficient evidence and testimony regarding the benefits to customers and the functioning of the mechanisms. TECO also requested that we approve the Company's sale of renewable energy credits (RECs) and the release of natural gas pipeline capacity as qualifying asset optimization activities, despite not being included in the 2021 Settlement Agreement. We similarly gave no precedential value to the old mechanisms when rendering our ultimate decision because the fact of the mechanisms' prior approvals did not make us more or less likely to approve the new SCRM and new AOM. We considered the independent evidence and factual developments since the approvals of the old mechanisms in determining which aspects of the proposed new mechanisms should be granted and which should be denied.⁶

Based on the record in this case, we approved an SCRM and an AOM that includes those activities that were beneficial to customers at numeric thresholds premised on the independent evidence presented corresponding to the achievement of those benefits.⁷ However, TECO also proposed asset optimization activities such as REC sales and natural gas pipeline capacity release sales, which we denied.⁸

Additionally, in this case TECO requested a Return on Equity (ROE) midpoint of 11.50 percent, an increase from the 10.20 percent it had been previously operating under. The ROE is the cost of common equity included in a company's calculation of its weighted average overall cost of capital used to establish a revenue requirement.

TECO's common equity is not publicly traded, therefore there were multiple variations of three financial models put forth by the Company and the parties that we considered. The models used proxy groups of publicly-traded electric companies similar to TECO to arrive at an estimated range of appropriate ROEs. While there was no dispute about the use of the models or underlying ROE methodologies, the parties offered different inputs and adjustments to the ROE range. We considered testimony from various experts for certain adjustments such as flotation costs associated with the sale and issuances of common stock, company-specific business risks, expected customer growth and requisite capital investment, and financial risks created by the introduction of debt into the capital structure. Ultimately, we authorized an ROE of 10.50

⁶ TR 105–06, 3611–14, 3123–25, 3127, 3160, 3165, 3168, 3354; EXH 29, MPN C14-1394; EXH 31, MPN C16-1516 – C16-1518.

⁷ Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, issued February 3, 2025, in Docket Nos. 20240026-EI, 20230139-EI, & 20230090-EI, *In re: Petition for rate increase by Tampa Electric Company, In re: Petition for approval of 2023 depreciation and dismantlement study, by Tampa Electric Company, & In re: Petition to implement 2024 generation base rate adjustment provisions in paragraph 4 of the 2021 stipulation and settlement agreement, by Tampa Electric Company*, pp. 171–73, 175.

⁸ *Id.* at 175–76.

percent, based on an average of the cost of equity models, including some modifications, with an additional adjustment based on TECO's specific business and weather risks as well as its flotation costs.

I. Motion for Reconsideration

Standard of Review for a Motion for Reconsideration

The appropriate standard of review for reconsideration of a Commission order is whether the motion identifies a point of fact or law that we overlooked or failed to consider in rendering the order under review. *See Stewart Bonded Warehouse, Inc. v. Bevis*, 294 So. 2d 315 (Fla. 1974); *Diamond Cab Co. v. King*, 146 So. 2d 889 (Fla. 1962); and *Pingree v. Quaintance*, 394 So. 2d 162 (Fla. 1st DCA 1981). It is not appropriate to reargue matters that have already been considered. *Sherwood v. State*, 111 So. 2d 96 (Fla. 3d DCA 1959); citing *State ex. rel. Jaytex Realty Co. v. Green*, 105 So. 2d 817 (Fla. 1st DCA 1958). Furthermore, a motion for reconsideration should not be granted "based upon an arbitrary feeling that a mistake may have been made, but should be based upon specific factual matters set forth in the record and susceptible to review." *Stewart Bonded Warehouse, Inc.*, 294 So. 2d at 317.

OPC's Arguments

In its request for reconsideration, OPC argues that (1) we overlooked the rule of law regarding administrative finality when it approved the SCRM and the AOM; (2) we overlooked the burden of proof when it approved the SCRM and the AOM; (3) we overlooked and failed to consider that increasing the midpoint ROE to 10.50 percent was unsupported by substantial and competent evidence and unnecessary; and (4) certain errors were made in the calculations for the revenue requirement used in the Final Order. Each of these claims is discussed below, along with TECO's response and our analysis and conclusion.

1. Administrative Finality and the SCRM and the AOM

OPC alleges that the "Commission overlooked the application of the doctrine of administrative finality in its decision." Specifically, OPC alleges that "[i]mporting specific provisions from the 2021 [Settlement] Agreement" violates our Order approving that settlement agreement which "approved the language that no term would have any precedential value." OPC claims that "by allowing TECO to seek and obtain adoption of the SCRM and the AOM in direct contravention of the approved 2021 Agreement prohibition language, the Commission is effectively vacating the 2021 Agreement Order three years later which would violate the doctrine of administrative finality."⁹

⁹ We note that despite the alleged pleading violation, OPC did not file a motion to enforce or compel compliance with Order No. PSC-2021-0423-S-EI. TECO filed its petition on April 2, 2024.

TECO's Response

TECO argues that we did not overlook the rule of law regarding administrative finality when approving the SCRM and the AOM, and that OPC failed to raise this argument at the evidentiary hearing held in this case as well as in its post-hearing brief and has therefore waived this argument.¹⁰ “[I]t is not an abuse of discretion to deny a motion for reconsideration which raises an issue that could have been, but was not, raised” prior to filing the motion for reconsideration.¹¹

Furthermore, TECO argues that we relied on the uncontroverted evidence presented by the Company rather than relying on our own prior approval of the 2021 Settlement Agreement as the basis for approving the SCRM and the AOM. TECO points out OPC does not cite to any pleading where TECO asserted any precedent, and the Company explicitly disclaimed doing so at the hearing. Furthermore, TECO asserts its proposal in this case was different than the mechanism contained in the 2021 Settlement Agreement, undercutting any argument that we simply approved the current AOM based only on its prior approval.

Analysis

As an initial matter, we agree with TECO that this issue could have been raised prior to the Motion, and was not, which alone justifies denying the Motion in this regard.¹² “A trial court does not abuse its discretion in denying a motion for reconsideration or rehearing which raises an issue that could have, but [was not], raised in the initial motion or at the initial hearing.”¹³ In *Kovic v. Kovic*, the Fourth District Court of Appeal stated that arguments raised for the first time in a motion for reconsideration or rehearing of an order on appeal, instead of during the hearing, are not preserved for appellate review.¹⁴ Therefore, we deny OPC's Motion with regard to administrative finality.

Nonetheless, in the alternative, OPC's arguments conflate precedential principles with the administrative finality doctrine and ignore the bases upon which we rendered our decision. We find that we did not overlook the doctrine of administrative finality in disposing of OPC's precedential value argument when we approved the SCRM and the AOM. Precedential value

¹⁰ *Chris Thompson, P.A. v. GEICO Indem. Co.*, 349 So. 3d 447, 448–49 (Fla. 4th DCA 2022) (citing *Bank cf. Am., N.A.*, 338 So. 3d at 341 n.2 (Fla. 3d DCA 2022) (“A trial court does not abuse its discretion in denying a motion for reconsideration or rehearing which raises an issue that could have, but wasn't, raised in the initial motion or at the initial hearing.”)); *see also Kovic v. Kovic*, 336 So. 3d 22, 25 (Fla. 4th DCA 2022) (finding issue not preserved for appellate review where argument was first raised in motion for rehearing of order on appeal instead of during the hearing); *Best v. Educ. Affiliates, Inc.* 82 So. 3d 143, 146 (Fla. 4th DCA 2012) (declining to consider new evidence or argument raised for the first time in a motion for rehearing in the trial court); *Trinchitella v. D.R.F., Inc.*, 584 So. 2d 35, 35 (Fla. 4th DCA 1991) (“We cannot consider the issues raised for the first time in a motion for rehearing in the trial court.”).

¹¹ *Chris Thompson, P.A.*, 349 So. 3d at 448–49.

¹² *Id.*; *Bank cf. Am., N.A.*, 338 So. 3d at 341 n.2; *Kovic*, 336 So. 3d at 25; *Best*, 82 So. 3d at 146; *Trinchitella*, 584 So. 2d at 35.

¹³ *Bank cf. Am., N.A.*, 338 So. 3d at 341 n.2.

¹⁴ *Kovic*, 336 So. 3d at 25.

pertains to the *influence* of a decision on future cases with similar facts or legal issues.¹⁵ The doctrine of administrative finality focuses on the conclusiveness of administrative decisions. Administrative finality simply means “that there must be a ‘terminal point in every proceeding . . . at which the parties and the public may rely on the decision as being final and dispositive of the rights and issues involved therein.’”¹⁶ Nothing in the Final Order operates to undo any part of the 2021 Settlement Agreement. Administrative finality upholds this Commission’s prior determinations based on the facts in those prior cases. Administrative finality does not prohibit a utility from seeking, or this Commission from approving, something in a subsequent rate case just because we approved it as part of a prior settlement.

Pursuant to the 2021 Settlement Agreement, the old SCRM and the old AOM terminated on December 31, 2024.¹⁷ In this case, TECO petitioned for two mechanisms to be approved—the SCRM and the AOM. While the two mechanisms were initially *described* in a previous settlement agreement, TECO’s request was for us to approve new versions of these mechanisms based on the evidence it offered in this case, not based on any precedential weight of the 2021 Settlement Agreement.¹⁸ Furthermore, TECO’s newly proposed AOM included the additional activities of REC sales and natural gas pipeline capacity release sales, which were not authorized in the prior settlement agreement.

As OPC points out, the 2021 Settlement Agreement requires that “[n]o *Party* will assert in any proceeding before the Commission . . . that . . . any of the terms in the 2021 Agreement . . . have any precedential *value*,”¹⁹ and in this case no party did.²⁰ OPC argues it was “entitled to rely on that order and the settlement agreement as being final and dispositive of the rights and issues involved therein,”²¹ and it was allowed to do so. We did not overlook the doctrine of administrative finality in disposing of OPC’s precedential value argument because we did not give any precedential value to the 2021 Settlement Agreement. TECO presented evidence demonstrating the actual efficacy of the proposed mechanisms at specific numerical values.

Additionally, the new SCRM does not contain all of the same terms that were included in the prior SCRM that was approved in the 2021 Settlement Agreement. OPC’s attempt at drawing parallels between TECO’s old and new mechanisms is a red herring as it improperly implies that we reached our decision in the present case simply because of the 2021 Settlement Agreement. However, our decision was based on the independent evidence introduced in this case. Moreover, references in this record to how the old mechanisms functioned since being approved allow us to

¹⁵ See e.g., *U.S. Fire Ins. Co. v. J.S.U.B., Inc.*, 979 So. 2d 871, 882–83 (Fla. 2007).

¹⁶ *Fla. Power Corp. v. Garcia*, 780 So. 2d 34, 42 (Fla. 2001) (quoting *Austin Tupler Trucking, Inc. v. Hawkins*, 377 So. 2d 679, 681 (Fla. 1979)).

¹⁷ Order No. PSC-2021-0423-S-EI, issued November 10, 2021, in Docket Nos. 20210034-EI & 20200264-EI, *In re: Petition for rate increase by Tampa Electric Company, In re: Petition for approval of 2020 depreciation and dismantlement study and capital recovery schedules, by Tampa Electric Company*, pp. 37, 46.

¹⁸ Document No. 01489-2024, TECO Petition, filed on April 2, 2024, in Docket No. 20240026-EI, pp. 17–18; see also Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, pp. 172, 175–77.

¹⁹ Order No. PSC-2021-0423-S-EI, p. 50 (emphasis added).

²⁰ The parties to the 2021 Settlement Agreement included TECO, OPC, FIPUG, FRF, FEA, Walmart, and West Central Florida Hospital Utility Alliance. *Id.* at 7.

²¹ Document No. 01008-2025, OPC Motion, filed on February 18, 2025, in Docket No. 20240026-EI, pp. 6–7.

assess how the newly proposed mechanisms would be beneficial to customers going forward. Thus we were provided with a basis to determine whether the mechanisms should be approved now. Record testimony with comparisons to any “old” versus “new” versions of the mechanisms show that our decision was not somehow based on the purported precedential value of the prior settlement, but rather, was based on what TECO was now petitioning for. Because we did not approve the SCRM or the AOM on the basis that it was bound by precedent but instead held that the proposed mechanisms were supported by evidence in the record, the doctrine of administrative finality was not violated.

Moreover, OPC’s argument reads language into the 2021 Settlement Agreement that does not exist: that TECO was prohibited from ever requesting that we authorize a similar, same, or different SCRM or AOM in a period beginning on or after January 1, 2025. TECO did not assert in its Petition or testimony that there was any precedential value to the fact that an SCRM or an AOM had previously been approved through the 2021 Settlement Agreement. TECO even disclaimed doing so at the hearing:

[TECO] is not asserting that the Commission should approve this AOM because it’s in an existing settlement agreement. We are asking you to approve it because of the facts and evidence in this case. We are in no way suggesting that because it was in the settlement agreement, it should have any more dignity or less dignity before the Commission right now.²²

TECO’s reference to the components of the two mechanisms in the 2021 Settlement Agreement, in an effort to describe the new SCRM and AOM it was requesting, is not the same as TECO arguing that precedent entitled it to an SCRM and an AOM. As shown by the Final Order, Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, we did not approve the SCRM or AOM because precedent necessitated that result.²³ Nor did we indicate we were more inclined to approve these mechanisms because they had been authorized previously. What we did was rely upon the evidence and testimony presented during the hearing regarding the functioning, structure, operation, and performance of the mechanisms as the basis for authorizing an SCRM and an AOM to commence on January 1, 2025.²⁴ OPC’s argument illogically suggests that if we approve a certain mechanism in a prior rate case, we are precluded from including such mechanism in a subsequent rate case when the facts and circumstances at issue support doing so.

²² TR 3155.

²³ Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, pp. 171–73, 175, 177.

²⁴ TR 105–06, 3611–14, 3123–25, 3127, 3160, 3165, 3168, 3354; EXH 29, MPN C14-1394; EXH 31, MPN C16-1516 – C16-1518. In its post-hearing brief, OPC asserted that “[o]utside of impermissible reliance on a term of [TECO’s] . . . settlement, there is no basis for approving an AOM.” Document No. 09619-2024, OPC Post-hearing Brief, filed October 21, 2024, in Docket No. 20240026-EI, p. 86. We rejected and responded to this when it made clear it was not approving an AOM “merely because it was part of the 2021 Settlement Agreement,” as OPC argued, but instead was approving the AOM based on the supporting evidence and testimony presented during the hearing. Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, p. 177.

We reject OPC's attempts to use the administrative finality doctrine as a vehicle to resurrect the precedential value arguments OPC already raised in the post-hearing brief.²⁵ OPC's attempt to reframe its argument for another bite at the apple is not an appropriate basis for a motion for reconsideration. We already considered essentially the same argument when issuing its decision and did not give precedential value to the 2021 Settlement Agreement and thus did not violate the doctrine of administrative finality. Therefore, we deny the Motion with respect to OPC's administrative finality argument for the reasons stated above.

2. TECO's Burden of Proof and the SCRM and the AOM

OPC alleges that "the Final Order impermissibly shifts the burden of proof to the intervenors when it states '[f]urthermore, none of the intervenors argued to change specific aspects of the Provision or put forth evidence supporting which aspects should be revised.'" OPC argues this was made even more egregious as "OPC was entitled to rely on the Commission's approval of the expiration" of the AOM and SCRM on December 31, 2024, as dictated by the language of the 2021 Agreement Order. OPC states that the Final Order acknowledges that "[n]o party provided testimony regarding this Issue" and that "TECO did not offer any independent evidence outside of the 2021 Agreement language itself to support its request." Finally, OPC states "[j]ust because the Commission has the statutory authority to approve certain provisions does not mean it can do so absent evidence independent of the prohibitive use of the 2021 Agreement provisions, nor does the Commission's inherent statutory authority to allow an activity absolve a utility of its burden to prove all elements of the rate increase request."

TECO's Response

TECO argues we did not shift the burden of proof when approving the SCRM and the AOM. TECO further argues that OPC's claim "falsely presumes that the Commission's approval of the SCRM and the AOM was based solely on the precedential value of the 2021 Agreement" and that it "ignores the 'independent evidence' that [TECO] presented to support the SCR [sic] and the AOM, namely testimony regarding the benefits of those mechanisms."²⁶ TECO argues that OPC "conflates its own failure to offer evidence in opposition to [TECO's] evidence with burden-shifting." Additionally, TECO argues that we cannot simply disregard evidence that has been presented. "Where the testimony on the pivotal issues of fact is not contradicted or impeached in any respect, and no conflicting evidence is introduced, these statements of fact cannot be wholly disregarded or arbitrarily rejected."²⁷

Analysis

We did not overlook the burden of proof when approving the SCRM and the AOM. TECO supported its requests for the SCRM and the AOM with sufficient evidence and testimony

²⁵ Document No. 09619-2024, OPC Post-hearing Brief, filed on October 21, 2024, in Docket No. 20240026-EI, pp. 83–87.

²⁶ Document No. 01114-2025, TECO Response, filed on February 25, 2025, in Docket No. 20240026-EI, pp. 6–7.

²⁷ *Guardian ad Litem Program v. K.H.*, 276 So. 3d 897, 902 n.2 (Fla. 3d DCA 2019) (quoting *Duncanson v. Serv. First, Inc.*, 157 So. 2d 696, 699 (Fla. 3d DCA 1963)).

regarding the benefits to customers and the functioning of the mechanisms.²⁸ As mentioned previously, the SCRM establishes a process by which TECO may seek approval for a monetary surcharge and timing framework through which TECO recovers storm costs incurred to restore power to customers after damage caused by tropical systems, including the replenishment of the preexisting target storm reserve balance. We have previously stated that our approval of interim storm cost recovery charges is preliminary in nature and is subject to true-up pending further review once the total actual storm restoration costs are known. After actual costs are reviewed for prudence and reasonableness, and are compared to the actual amount recovered through the interim charge, a determination will be made whether any over/under recovery has occurred and the appropriate steps to be taken for a refund or additional charge.²⁹

The AOM is a shareholder incentive program designed to encourage TECO to engage in additional activities with ratepayer-supported assets in order to generate additional net benefits and thereby produce customer savings in the form of reductions to fuel costs. TECO shareholders benefit as the customer savings increase, encouraging the Company to maximize the benefits it can extract from its existing assets. AOM activities can include efforts such as the release of contracted gas storage space during non-critical demand seasons, the sale of fuel using existing transportation capacity to non-TECO customers in Florida, and the sale of gas in the gas-production areas. We considered the admitted evidence when deciding to approve and determining what would and would not comprise both of the newly approved mechanisms.

The thrust of OPC's argument here is that the references in the Final Order to the fact that, on many issues, only TECO presented evidence indicates we shifted the burden of proof to the intervenors. That is not the case. Rather, as the finders of fact, we are tasked with weighing evidence presented and ensuring that there is sufficient evidence to support our findings.³⁰ If there is no competing evidence to weigh, the evidence that exists must still be sufficient to support any findings. Here, no one disputes that the burden of proof rested with TECO.³¹ Our decisions in this case are based on whether or not there was sufficient evidence to support TECO's requests. OPC's argument refuses to acknowledge the independent evidence that TECO presented to support the SCRM and the AOM. Two witnesses offered testimony regarding the benefits and functioning of those mechanisms, witnesses Chronister and Heisey, both on behalf of TECO. OPC cross-examined these witnesses and had the opportunity to object to any irrelevant or immaterial evidence those witnesses sought to introduce.³²

²⁸ TR 105–06, 3611–14, 3123–25, 3127, 3160, 3165, 3168, 3354; EXH 29, MPN C14-1394; EXH 31, MPN C16-1516 – C16-1518.

²⁹ Order No. PSC-2018-0125-PCO-EI, issued on March 7, 2018, in Docket No. 20170271-EI, *In re: Petition for recovery of costs associated with named tropical systems during the 2015, 2016, and 2017 hurricane seasons and replenishment of storm reserve subject to final true-up, Tampa Electric Company*, p. 3.

³⁰ *E.g.*, *So. All. For Clean Energy v. Graham*, 113 So. 3d 742, 752–53 (Fla. 2013); *GTC, Inc. v. Edgar*, 967 So. 2d 781, 785, 790 (Fla. 2007).

³¹ “The burden of proof in ratemaking cases in which a utility seeks an increase in rates rests on the utility.” *Florida Pub. Serv. Comm’n v. Fla. Waterworks Ass’n*, 731 So. 2d 836, 841 (Fla. 1st DCA 1999) (citing *So. Fla. Natural Gas Co. v. Florida Pub. Serv. Comm’n*, 534 So. 2d 695 (Fla. 1988)).

³² TR 3145–53, 3156–61, 3171–72; 3502–57, 3563, 3638.

The evidence presented by TECO was sufficient. TECO witness Chronister described how the SCRM will operate, including compliance with the storm cost recovery rules, avoidance of double collecting, the charges to replenish the target reserve liability, and describing how any over-collection would be refunded to ratepayers through a clause proceeding to avoid separate docket expense.³³ He testified that the SCRM has “served the company and its customers well by providing an efficient regulatory mechanism for review and recovery of prudent storm damage restoration and recovery costs.”³⁴ The cross-examination of TECO witness Chronister did not diminish the probative value of his testimony and supporting evidence. Thus, TECO met its burden of proof by a preponderance of evidence that the proposed SCRM should be authorized to commence on January 1, 2025.

TECO witness Heisey testified that “[t]he [AOM] was designed to create additional value for [TECO’s] customers while incenting the company to maximize gains on power transactions and optimization activities.”³⁵ The witness described the activities that TECO requested be eligible for inclusion in the AOM.³⁶ Under the proposed AOM,

[G]ains on eligible activities up to \$4.5 million are retained by customers. Gains between \$4.5 million and \$8 million are split, with 60 percent of gains allocated to the company’s shareholders and 40 percent allocated to customers. Gains above \$8 million are also split, with 50 percent of gains allocated to shareholders and 50 percent of gains allocated to customers.³⁷

TECO witness Heisey testified, “If you look at the results of the mechanism for the last six years, compared to a different mechanism for the previous six years, the benefits are almost four times higher It produces, again, a lot of benefits for customers.”³⁸ Over the last six years the prior AOMs generated over \$45 million in benefits to customers,³⁹ which equals roughly 68 percent of total gains.⁴⁰ Specifically, from 2021 through 2023, AOM activities resulted in over \$21 million in benefits to customers.⁴¹ This reveals years of successful implementation and customer benefits generated under those AOM parameters. Furthermore, TECO witness Collins testified that these gains flow directly through the fuel cost recovery clause each year and help lower customer bills.⁴² Without the AOM, TECO witness Heisey indicated skepticism about TECO’s capacity to produce similar benefits for ratepayers because,

³³ TR 3611–14; EXH 31, MPN C16-1516 – C16-1518; *see also* Order No. PSC-95-0255-FOF-EI, issued on February 23, 1995, in Docket No. 930987-EI, *In re: Investigation into currently authorized return on equity of Tampa Electric Company*, pp. 3–4 (finding target storm reserve amount of \$55 million reasonable); Order No. PSC-2018-0125-PCO-EI, p. 2 (authorizing interim replenishment of preexisting storm reserve to approximately \$55.9 million).

³⁴ TR 3354.

³⁵ TR 3127.

³⁶ TR 3123–25, 3127–30.

³⁷ TR 3123; *see also* TR 3160.

³⁸ TR 3165.

³⁹ TR 3127.

⁴⁰ EXH 29, MPN C14-1394.

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² TR 105–06.

to effectively implement the AOM, TECO had to incur additional labor costs to establish processes and manage the optimization activities.⁴³

However, we were not persuaded to include REC sales and natural gas pipeline capacity release sales as permissible asset optimization activities for TECO, and therefore we denied those aspects of the newly proposed AOM. Overall, we determined that approving a modified version of the new AOM would generate similar benefits for ratepayers. Thus, the testimony and supporting evidence from TECO witness Heisey was sufficiently probative to justify that the new AOM, as modified by us, should be authorized to commence on January 1, 2025.⁴⁴

Finally, OPC insinuates that we ordered the establishment of a generic AOM proceeding because no testimony or evidence shows how to structure TECO's new AOM. However, that assertion mischaracterizes our ruling. As we explained in our Final Order, the record before us revealed differences between the various AOMs of each electric investor-owned utility in terms of the types of asset optimization activities allowed and the revenue-sharing thresholds established.⁴⁵ We therefore felt it appropriate to investigate the dissonance and ultimately determine later whether uniformity through rulemaking was warranted.

TECO met its evidentiary burden to support the approval of the proposed SCRM and the proposed AOM, as modified by us, based on what it presented. The Final Order did not engage in burden shifting; the lack of contradictory testimony or evidence from the intervenors did not reduce TECO's burden nor did we weigh such absence in TECO's favor. Once TECO established by preponderance of reasonable and credible evidence that the mechanisms should be approved, we could not disregard the evidence simply because another party disagreed. "Where the testimony on the pivotal issues of fact is not contradicted or impeached in any respect, and no conflicting evidence is introduced, these statements of fact cannot be wholly disregarded or arbitrarily rejected."⁴⁶ We did not find TECO witness Chronister's or TECO witness Heisey's testimonies⁴⁷ regarding the mechanisms to be inconsistent, discredited, impeached, shaky, not thorough, or not credible.⁴⁸ Therefore, our observations that no intervenor provided testimony on the mechanisms simply recognizes that there was no conflicting testimony to weigh and that the evidence presented on these issues supported approving the SCRM and the AOM. After

⁴³ TR 3125, 3168.

⁴⁴ TR 3131.

⁴⁵ Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, pp. 176–77.

⁴⁶ *Guardian ad Litem Program v. K.H.*, 276 So. 3d at 902 n.2 (quoting *Duncanson*, 157 So. 2d at 699). "A court must accept evidence which . . . is neither impeached, discredited, controverted, contradictory within itself, or physically impossible." *State v. Fernandez*, 526 So. 2d 192, 193 (Fla. 3d DCA 1988) (reversing trial court for denying state's petition on basis of witness credibility when defendant's own investigator had produced corroborative evidence).

⁴⁷ We were not persuaded by TECO witness Heisey to include, at this time, REC sales or natural gas pipeline capacity sales as qualifying asset optimization activities.

⁴⁸ See *Michael Fox M.D. v. Dep't of Health*, 994 So. 2d 416, 418 (Fla. 1st DCA 2008) ("It is well-established that the [Administrative Law Judge] was not required to believe Appellant's testimony, even if unrebutted."); *Dep't of Children & Families v. J.J.*, 368 So. 3d 1017, 1022 (Fla. 5th DCA 2023) (reversing trial court for ignoring testimony of two child witnesses when it had refused to assess their credibility).

considering what was presented by TECO, we were persuaded by the probative value of the evidence and found there was sufficient basis to approve a new SCRM and new AOM.⁴⁹

3. The Midpoint ROE at 10.50 percent

OPC raises two concerns in regard to our decision on ROE: “(1) there was no citation during the deliberations or in the Final Order to substantial and competent record evidence to support a 10.50 percent ROE calculation; and (2) there was no discussion or consideration during the deliberations or in the Final Order that was based on those deliberations of how TECO’s size and severe weather risks are already mitigated through other cost-recovery mechanisms.” Specifically, OPC states that “[n]o reasonable mind would accept that the evidence in this case is adequate to support the Commission’s arbitrary conclusion that a 10.50 percent ROE would mitigate the risks expressed by the Commission while a 10.30 percent ROE would not.” Moreover, OPC noted that TECO already has other avenues, such as the Storm Protection Plan Cost Recovery Clause, to mitigate potential weather risks.

TECO’s Response

TECO argues the decision approving an ROE midpoint of 10.50 percent was supported by substantial and competent evidence, and states that OPC’s arguments regarding the decision on ROE have no merit and should be rejected. First, TECO states that “[t]he Final Order properly notes that the ‘collective range of the witnesses’ cost of equity model results was 8.85 percent to 11.91 percent.” Therefore, TECO argues, the decision “is well within the range of ROE’s supported by the expert testimony in the record” and is “well-reasoned, well-explained, and based on record evidence that includes the intervening parties’ own expert testimony.” Additionally, TECO claims OPC erroneously asks us to justify any deviation from our staff’s recommendation, a recommendation which is advice, not evidence, and which we are free to accept or reject.⁵⁰ Finally, TECO argues that OPC “erroneously asserts that the Commission failed to consider the company’s ability to recover storm restoration costs from customers as a mitigating factor in assessing the company’s financial risk.” TECO argues that the Final Order explicitly considers the mitigating impact of the SCRM when evaluating the appropriate ROE for the company.

Analysis

Our decision to select 10.50 percent as an ROE midpoint is supported by sufficient evidence. We were confronted with a considerable amount of competing testimony on this issue, including over 20 variations of financial models provided by three competing witnesses and further testimony provided by two additional witnesses. All of this testimony was subject to a lengthy discovery process and further cross examination in hearing. As argued by TECO in its Response, the Final Order extensively discusses these models and their inputs and outputs as well as a comparison of the risks between TECO and the proxy group used to estimate TECO’s

⁴⁹ By approving a new SCRM and new AOM, we continue to authorize TECO to have a storm cost recovery mechanism and an asset optimization mechanism.

⁵⁰ Order No. PSC-95-0097-FOF-EI, issued on January 18, 1995, in Docket No. 930444-EI.

market-based cost of equity.⁵¹ Because these experts provided a considerable range of differing estimates for the ROE, which were supported by a reasonable factual basis for TECO, it is within our purview to determine the appropriate weight to accord these opinions.⁵²

Additionally, TECO established through expert testimony that TECO faces unique risks due to its lack of geographic diversity, specifically having a highly concentrated service territory located in an area prone to potentially devastating hurricanes which may cause considerable damage to a high percentage of TECO's territory.⁵³ Despite his analysis indicating a specific size adjustment was not necessary, TECO witness D'Ascendis noted the "company's lack of geographic diversity due to its small size is cause for concern." He also noted that TECO's risk associated with extreme weather events is relatively high as compared to the utility proxy group.⁵⁴ Having established this risk, and with the various experts offering reasonable methods to interpret and account for the risk, we were justified in accepting or reasonably modifying those methods.⁵⁵ Considering the unique aspects of TECO's business, determining the fair and proper rate of return is particularly "a matter of opinion which necessarily had to be infused by policy considerations for which the PSC has special responsibility."⁵⁶ Furthermore, we have considerable discretion when adjusting rates within a fair rate of return range, including making adjustments to a rate within a given range.⁵⁷

Finally, OPC's second point, its assertion that there was no discussion that TECO's size and severe weather risks are already mitigated through other cost-recovery mechanisms, is misguided. As noted in the Final Order, TECO's ability to recover storm costs outside of a rate case does not entirely mitigate its risks.⁵⁸ The Final Order also notes that the increasing frequency of hurricanes and other large storms will only increase both the costs of storm recovery and the need to recover those costs.⁵⁹

4. The Revenue Requirement in the Final Order

Additionally, OPC included an attachment that lists six potential errors found in the calculations for the revenue requirement in the Final Order. OPC alleges these are the result of inconsistencies that reveal revenue requirement errors in Attachments A and C of the Final Order. Item Nos. 1, 4, and 5 address corrections to rounded adjustment amounts included in the Excel calculation of TECO's revenue requirement, while items 2, 3, and 6 were due to inadvertent errors in the underlying calculations for determining the revenue requirement.

⁵¹ See Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, pp.80–95.

⁵² See *Gulf Power Co. v. Fla. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 453 So. 2d 799, 805 (Fla. 1984); see also *Rolling Oaks Utils., Inc. v. Fla. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 533 So. 2d 770, 772 (Fla. 1988).

⁵³ TR 1885–90.

⁵⁴ TR 1887.

⁵⁵ See *Citizens of the State of Fla. v. Fla. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 440 So. 2d 371, 372 (Fla. 1st DCA 1983).

⁵⁶ See *Utils., Inc. of Fla. v. Fla. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 420 So. 2d 331, 333 (Fla. 1st DCA 1982).

⁵⁷ See *Gulf Power Co. v. Wilson*, 597 So. 2d 270, 271 (Fla. 1992); see also *United Tel. Co. v. Mann*, 403 So. 2d 962 (Fla. 1981).

⁵⁸ Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, pp. 92–93.

⁵⁹ *Id.* at 93.

TECO's Response

In regard to the potential errors identified by OPC, TECO states that it “cannot determine with precision ... whether there were errors made in the calculation of the 2025 base rate increase.” TECO argues, however, that the administrative cost and customer confusion associated with implementing small base rate changes in order to respond to OPC’s alleged calculation errors, in the middle of a calendar year, should be avoided. If corrections are necessary, TECO proposes to recover (or return) the incremental (or decremental) amount of revenue identified through one of the company’s cost recovery clauses and into any subsequent year adjustments for periods beyond 2025.

Analysis

Upon review, we agree with all proposed corrections, albeit with one adjustment. These corrections resolve mistakes of fact that we overlooked and which rendered our final decision erroneous in certain respects, as identified below. While the detailed calculations containing these mistakes were not included in the Final Order, all of the calculations are supported by and drawn from the record.

- Item No. 1, associated with the removal of the Microgrid project, should be corrected, resulting in a reduction of \$46,972 to Plant and \$1,635 to Accumulated Depreciation and Depreciation Expense.
- Item No. 4, associated with the normalization of Generation O&M Expense, should be corrected, resulting in an increase of \$86,667 to working capital and reduction of \$16,667 to O&M Expense.
- Item No. 5, associated with the reduction of corporate responsibility costs, should be corrected, resulting in a reduction of \$1,027 to O&M Expense.

The remaining corrections OPC pointed out in its motion were due to inadvertent errors in the underlying calculations of the revenue requirement. These are as follows:

- Item No. 2 is a correction to the inclusion of the common equity component in the ITC rate used to calculate the fallout interest synchronization, resulting in a decrease of \$31,918 to Income Tax Expense.
- Item No. 3, associated with the removal of Customer Digitalization projects, is a correction to the factored adjustment amount in the calculation, which included an additional “0,” resulting in an increase of \$1,566,000 to O&M Expense to correct the overstated reduction. In its attachment, OPC calculated the correction’s impact by removing \$174 from the overstated reduction of \$1,740,000, instead of \$174,000, resulting in an incorrect reference to the amount of \$1,739,826 (\$1,740,000 - \$174).
- Item No. 6, associated with the removal of half of Directors and Officers Liability insurance expense, is a correction to include a second component of the total expense removed, resulting in a decrease of \$376,500 to O&M Expense.

Conclusion on OPC's Motion for Reconsideration

In sum, these corrections result in net increases of \$41,330 to Rate Base and \$1,138,253 to Operating Expenses. In total, including corresponding adjustments to Income Tax Expense and the corresponding multiplier, these corrections result in a revenue requirement increase of \$1.1 million, which is an increase of 0.61 percent. Because the corrections result in a rate increase to the customers, we find the Energy Conservation Cost Recovery Clause (ECCR) shall be utilized to recover the 2025 impacts of the correction to TECO's revenue requirements to minimize the impact to the customers. The ECCR mimics the rate design used to establish base rates, and ECCR factors for residential and small commercial are on an energy basis (cents/kWh) and ECCR factors for demand billed customers are on a demand basis (\$/kW).

II. OPC's Motion for Clarification

OPC additionally seeks clarification regarding the SCRM and the AOM on both the specifics of these mechanisms as well as their evidentiary support. Specifically, OPC requests we clarify whether provision 8(c) of the 2021 Settlement Agreement was adopted in the Final Order and, if so, whether we intended to deny the rights of substantially affected parties from litigating earnings and cost savings offsets in future proceedings involving TECO's efforts to recover future storm costs. OPC also "seeks clarification regarding which numerical values and other terms and conditions the Commission is approving from the 2021 Agreement" in regard to the SCRM provision. Finally, OPC seeks clarification regarding the AOM provision as well as an identification of the numerical values and evidentiary support for the values, terms, and conditions approved.

TECO's Response

In response to OPC's Motion for Clarification, the company offered the following thoughts "for the Commission's consideration." The Final Order clearly reflects that we approved TECO's request that the SCRM and the AOM be approved in their entirety but did not approve the company's proposed modifications to the AOM. TECO alleges that OPC's assertion that the inclusion of certain language, specifically Paragraph 8(c), from the 2021 Agreement impairs the rights of potential future litigants in storm cost recovery proceedings is misguided, and TECO asserts we have always had the authority to determine the scope of the issues to be addressed in a proceeding.

Law

Neither the Uniform Rules of Procedure nor Commission rules specifically allow for a motion for clarification. However, we have typically applied the *Diamond Cab Co. cf Miami v. King* standard in evaluating a request for clarification when the motion actually sought reconsideration of some part of the substance of an order.⁶⁰ Where a motion sought only

⁶⁰ *Diamond Cab Co. cf Miami v. King*, 146 So. 2d 889 (Fla. 1962).

explanation or clarification of a Commission order, we have typically considered whether the order requires further explanation or clarification to fully make clear its intent.⁶¹

Analysis

As a preliminary matter, the Final Order and the discussion above regarding burden of proof are sufficiently clear about what testimony and evidence we relied upon in approving the SCRM and the AOM.⁶² No further explanation is needed regarding the numerical values in, or evidentiary support for, the two newly approved mechanisms.

However, there appears to be some confusion amongst the parties regarding what comprises the approved SCRM and AOM, which we will address in more detail below. Specifically, OPC raises concerns about whether Paragraph 8(c), from the 2021 Settlement Agreement, was incorporated into the new SCRM. That provision stated:

The Parties expressly agree that any proceeding to recover costs associated with any storm shall not be a vehicle for a “rate case” type inquiry concerning the expenses, investment, or financial results of operations of [TECO] and shall not apply any form of earnings test or measure or consider previous or current base rate earnings. Such issues may be fully addressed in any subsequent [TECO] base rate case.⁶³

Because this prohibition was not discussed in the Final Order, it was clear that we did not intend to include it in the new SCRM. Instead, the relevancy and scope of any future storm cost recovery proceedings will be guided by the rules and statutes that apply to that proceeding.

As stated above, we approved a new SCRM and new AOM to commence on January 1, 2025. To clarify what the two mechanisms are comprised of, we summarize below the SCRM and the AOM approved in the Final Order.

1. Storm Cost Recovery Mechanism

The recovery of storm costs from customers shall begin on an interim basis (subject to refund following a hearing or a full opportunity for a formal proceeding) sixty days following TECO’s filing of a cost recovery petition and tariff.⁶⁴ The petition shall be based on a 12-month

⁶¹ Order No. PSC-04-0228-FOF-TP, issued March 2, 2004, in Docket Nos. 981834-TP & 990321-TP, *In re: Petition of Competitive Carriers for Commission action to support local competition in BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.’s service territory, & In re: Petition of ACI Corp. d/b/a Accelerated Connections, Inc. for generic investigation to ensure that BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc., Sprint-Florida, Incorporated, and GTE Florida Incorporated comply with obligation to provide alternative local exchange carriers with flexible, timely, and cost-efficient physical collocation.*

⁶² Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI, pp. 171–77.

⁶³ Order No. PSC-2021-0423-S-EI, p. 37.

⁶⁴ TECO will continue to implement the Process Improvements detailed in Order No. PSC-2019-0234-AS-EI, which contribute to the safe and efficient restoration of customer outages as well as reduce the likelihood of future disputes regarding storm restoration costs. Order No. PSC-2019-0234-AS-EI, issued June 14, 2019, in Docket No.

recovery period if the storm costs do not exceed \$4.00/1,000 kWh on monthly residential customer bills. In the event TECO's reasonable and prudent storm costs exceed that level, any additional costs in excess of \$4.00/1,000 kWh per month shall be recovered in a subsequent year or years as determined by this Commission. All storm-related costs must be calculated and disposed of pursuant to Rule 25-6.0143, F.A.C., and shall be limited to (1) costs resulting from such tropical system named by the National Hurricane Center or its successor, (2) the estimate of incremental storm restoration costs above the level of storm reserve prior to the storm, and (3) the replenishment of the storm reserve to \$55,860,642.

The monthly \$4.00/1,000 kWh cap shall apply in the aggregate for a calendar year; however, TECO may petition to increase the initial 12-month recovery period to rates greater than \$4.00/1,000 kWh or for a period longer than 12 months if TECO incurs over \$100 million of qualifying storm recovery costs in a given calendar year, inclusive of the amount needed to replenish the storm reserve.

2. Asset Optimization Mechanism

TECO's Asset Optimization Activities include efforts such as:

- (1) Gas storage utilization. TECO may release contracted storage space or sell stored gas during non-critical demand seasons.
- (2) Delivered gas sales using existing transport. TECO may sell gas to Florida customers, using TECO's existing gas transportation capacity during periods when it is not needed to serve TECO's native electric load.
- (3) Production (upstream) area sales. TECO may sell gas in the gas-production areas, using TECO's existing gas transportation capacity during periods when it is not needed to serve TECO's native electric load.
- (4) Asset Management Agreement. TECO may outsource optimization functions to a third party through assignment of power, transportation, and/or storage rights in exchange for a premium to be paid to TECO.

In carrying out Asset Optimization Activities, TECO shall not require any native load customer to be interrupted in order to initiate or maintain an economy sale. Each year, TECO customers shall receive 100 percent of the gains from Asset Optimization Activities up to a threshold of \$4.5 million. Incremental gains above the \$4.5 million shall be shared between TECO and customers as follows: TECO will retain 60 percent and customers will receive 40 percent of incremental gains realized above \$4.5 million up to \$8 million; and TECO will retain 50 percent and customers will receive 50 percent of all incremental gains in excess of \$8 million.

Each year, as part of its fuel cost recovery clause (Fuel Clause) final true-up filing, TECO shall file a schedule showing its gains in the prior calendar year on short-term wholesale sales, short-term wholesale purchases, and all forms of asset optimization that it undertook in that year (the Total Gains Schedule). TECO's final true-up filing shall include a description of each asset optimization activity for which gains are included on the Total Gains Schedule for the prior year, and such measures shall be subject to review by this Commission to confirm that they are eligible for inclusion in the AOM. The customers' portion of total gains shall be shown as a reduction to the fuel costs that are recovered through the Fuel Clause factors. TECO shall recover its portion of total gains through adjustments to its Fuel Clause factors that are made in the normal course of calculating those factors and that flow through to all rate classes in the same manner as other costs recovered through the factors. However, TECO may not recover through the Fuel Clause any incremental costs incurred to add personnel, software, or associated hardware needed to manage the expanded short-term and wholesale purchases, sales programs, or asset optimization activities.

Several activities are excluded from TECO's Asset Optimization Activities, including the release of natural gas pipeline capacity by TECO directly or indirectly (e.g., via affiliate arrangements), retirement/release of railcars, and the sale of renewable energy credits.

Conclusion on OPC's Motion for Clarification

The part of OPC's Motion for Clarification related to requested numerical values and evidentiary support is hereby denied. The Final Order, together with the above discussion regarding burden of proof, is sufficiently clear on those matters. However, the part of OPC's Motion for Clarification seeking clarity regarding a description of what comprises the SCRM and the AOM is hereby granted. and the Final Order is hereby amended to include clarification language as outlined above.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that the Motion for Reconsideration is hereby granted in regard to the correction of certain errors identified within but is otherwise denied. It is further

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that the Energy Conservation Cost Recovery Clause (ECCR) shall be utilized to recover the 2025 impacts of the correction to TECO's revenue requirements to minimize the impact to the customers. It is further

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that the portion of the Motion for Clarification seeking clarity regarding a description of what comprises the Storm Cost Recovery Mechanism and the Asset Optimization Mechanism is hereby granted. The Final Order is hereby amended to include clarification language as outlined above. The Motion for Clarification is denied in all other respects. It is further

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Order No. PSC-2025-0038-FOF-EI is hereby amended and clarified to the extent outlined in the body of this Order. It is further

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that these dockets shall remain open while the appeals filed by the Office of Public Counsel, Florida Rising, Inc., and League of United Latin American Citizens of Florida are processed at the Florida Supreme Court.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 11th day of June, 2025.



ADAM J. TEITZMAN
Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
(850) 413-6770
www.floridapsc.com

Copies furnished: A copy of this document is provided to the parties of record at the time of issuance and, if applicable, interested persons.

AEH/TPS/CMM

NOTICE OF 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 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 or wastewater utility by filing a notice of appeal with the Office of Commission Clerk, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, 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.