**Exhibit No. MDF-1T**

**Dockets UE-090704/UG-090705**

**Witness: Michael D. Foisy**

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE**

**UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,**  **Complainant,****v.****PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC.,**  **Respondent.** | **DOCKET UE-090704****DOCKET UG-090705** |

**TESTIMONY**

**OF**

**MICHAEL D. FOISY**

**STAFF**

**OF**

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND**

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

***Revenue Requirement Adjustments: Miscellaneous Operating Expenses and Property Taxes***

**November 17, 2009**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. INTRODUCTION 1

II. SCOPE AND SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY 2

III. DISCUSSION 4

1. Adjustments 10.14 and 9.09, Miscellaneous Operating Expenses 4
2. Adjustments 10.15 and 9.10, Property Taxes 8

**EXHIBIT LIST**

Exhibit No. MDF-2 Staff Miscellaneous Operating Expenses Adjustment, Electric

Exhibit No. MDF-3 Staff Miscellaneous Operating Expenses Adjustment, Gas

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**Q. Please state your name and business address.**

A. My name is Michael D. Foisy. My business address is The Richard Hemstad Building, 1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive S.W., P.O. Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504. My email address is mfoisy@utc.wa.gov.

**Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

A. I am employed by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (“Commission”) as a Regulatory Analyst.

**Q. Would you please describe your educational and professional background?**

A. I graduated from Regis University in Denver, Colorado with a Bachelor of Science degree in Technical Management in 1982. In 1985, I earned a Masters of Arts degree in Personnel Management from Central Michigan University.

 I began my employment at the Commission in February 2009. During my employment at the Commission, I have performed accounting and financial analyses of regulated utility and transportation companies.

 I attended the New Mexico State University, Center for Public Utilities, “Practical Regulatory Training for the Changing Electric, Natural Gas Industries” course in September 2009.

# II. SCOPE AND SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

**Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

A. My testimony presents the results of Staff’s review of fifteen ratemaking adjustments proposed by Puget Sound Energy, Inc. (“PSE” or “the Company”) related to the Company’s electric and natural gas revenue requirements determination.

**Q. Which Company adjustments have you reviewed that are uncontested by Staff?**

A. Staff does not contest the following eleven electric and natural gas adjustments proposed by PSE:

* Adjustments 10.05 and 9.05, Tax Benefit of Pro Forma Interest
* Adjustments 10.12 and 9.09, Pass Through Revenues and Expenses
* Adjustments 10.21 and 9.14, Rate Case Expense
* Adjustment 10.18, Montana Electric Energy Tax
* Adjustments 10.22 and 9.15, Deferred Gains/Losses on Property Sales
* Adjustments 10.35 and 9.23, Fleet Vehicles

**Q. Staff does not contest Adjustments 10.05 and 9.05, Tax Benefit of Pro Forma Interest. Nevertheless, the Staff numbers do not agree with the Company’s corresponding adjustments. Please explain the reason for the difference.**

A. Although Staff agrees with the Company’s methodology, Staff’s adjustments differ from the Company’s as a result of other contested adjustments that affect gas and electric rate base. Moreover, Staff’s weighted cost of debt used in calculating the tax benefit of pro forma interest is different from the Company’s.

**Q. Please explain the tax benefit of pro forma interest.**

A. The pro forma interest adjustment adjusts the book interest expense to the amount reflected by the weighted cost of debt and rate base. The pro forma interest expense is a component in the computation of the regulatory income tax. As the rate base and cost of debt changes, the tax benefit of pro form interest also changes.

**Q. Which Company adjustments have you reviewed that are contested by Staff?**

A. Staff contests the following four Company adjustments:

* Adjustments 10.14 and 9.09, Miscellaneous Operating Expenses
* Adjustments 10.15 and 9.10, Property Taxes

**Q. Please summarize your testimony regarding these contested adjustments.**

A. For the contested adjustments identified above, Staff proposes the following:

1. Company Adjustments 10.14 and 9.09, involving Miscellaneous Operating Expenses, include increases in service contract baseline charges using estimated contract amounts. These contracts are not signed and finalized and, therefore, are not known and measurable. Staff proposes that the unadjusted test year amounts be used, instead.

2. Company Adjustments 10.15 and 9.10, involving Property Taxes, rely on estimated property taxes. Therefore, neither adjustment meets known and measurable criteria. Staff proposes that the last actual property tax amount be used instead and that the Company’s adjustments be rejected by the Commission.

**Q. Have you prepared any exhibits in support of your testimony?**

A. Yes. I have prepared the following exhibits in support of my testimony:

* Exhibit No. MDF-2, Staff Miscellaneous Operating Expenses Adjustment, Electric
* Exhibit No. MDF-3, Staff Miscellaneous Operating Expenses Adjustment, Gas

# III. DISCUSSION

## Adjustments 10.14 and 9.09, Miscellaneous Operating Expenses

**Q. Please summarize the Company’s Miscellaneous Operating Expense adjustments.**

A. For each of its electric and natural gas results of operations, PSE consolidates several small unrelated items into one larger Miscellaneous Operating Expenseadjustment.[[1]](#footnote-1) For example, the adjustments include the “amortization of deferred taxes of indirect overheads regulatory assets” and the “amortization of interest associated with the deferral of unrecovered residential exchange benefits”. Also, included within these adjustments are costs of the Wire Zone Vegetation Management Program and contractual rent for the Summit Building. Other components move the following expenses below the line: the Company store which sells items with PSE logos to employees; airport and hotel parking; and athletic events expenses. None of these items included in the Miscellaneous Operating Expenseare contested by Staff.

**Q. Please describe the components of the Miscellaneous Operating Expense adjustments that Staff does contest.**

A. Two components that are contested by Staff are the increases in service contract baseline charges for both transmission and distribution.[[2]](#footnote-2) PSE’s electric adjustment increases transmission expense by $23,515 and distribution expense by $874,539. The corresponding gas expenses increases are $3,005 for transmission and $695,231 for distribution.

 Company Adjustment 10.14 in total decreases electric expense by $682,311. Company Adjustment 9.09 in total decreases gas expense by $213,943. PSE’s adjustments increase net operating income by $994,791 on the electric side and $440,899 on the gas side.

**Q. Please explain who the contractor is and the purpose of these service contracts.**

A.Quanta/Potelco is the contractor. It provides construction-related services to PSE for both the electric and gas transmission and distribution systems. Quanta/Potelco’s services include facilities design, project management, construction and related billing for new customer construction, system construction, operation and maintenance related construction, storm response related construction, and street lighting construction.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Q. Why does Staff contest the Company’s proposal to include increases in service contract baseline charges in the Miscellaneous Operating Expense adjustments?**

A. The Company projects increases in the contract amounts based on estimates from historic data. However, no new contracts have been signed and none will be in place prior to the start of the rate year.[[4]](#footnote-4) PSE’s adjustments to service contract baseline charges, therefore, are inappropriate because they fail to meet the Commission’s “known and measurable” criteria for a pro forma adjustment.

**Q. Please explain why the Company’s adjustments for service contract expenses do not meet known and measurable criteria for a pro forma adjustment.**

A. While estimates and projections are budgetary necessities in the operations of any company, they do not meet regulatory requirements for ratemaking. WAC 480-07-510 specifies that pro forma adjustments “… give effect for the test period to *all known and measurable changes* that are not offset by other factors.” (Emphasis added). Accordingly, pro forma adjustments are not merely estimates added to test year results. Instead, they are rooted in historical data. Historical test-year data that have been affected by a measurable change may be adjusted to recognize the impact on future revenues or the impact on future costs.

In other words, pro forma adjustments are not merely forecasted estimates of future expenses based on someone’s “judgment.” Accordingly, because the Company’s service contract baseline charges adjustments are based solely on management’s judgment, they are not “known and measurable” and should be rejected by the Commission. Unadjusted test year amounts should be used instead, as Staff proposes. Had the Company and its contractors finalized a service contract with firm dollar amounts, a pro forma adjustment might be appropriate.

Staff witness Parvinen discusses in more detail these issues surrounding the proper application of a pro forma adjustment.

**Q. What effect does Staff’s removal of the increases to service contract baseline charges have on net operating income?**

A. For PSE’s electric operations, Staff’s treatment increases net operating income by $1,578,527 after income taxes and decreases the overall revenue requirement by $2,540,839. My Exhibit No. MDF-2 shows the calculation of these amounts.

 For PSE’s gas operations, Staff’s proposal increases net operating income by $1,194,096 after income taxes and decreases the overall revenue requirement by $1,920,104. My Exhibit No. MDF-3 shows the calculation of these amounts.

 The calculations of my adjustments are also reflected in Exhibit No. KHB-2, page 2.21 for the electric operations and Exhibit No. KHB-3, page 3.14 for the gas operations.

## B. Adjustments 10.15 and 9.10, Property Taxes

##

**Q. Please summarize the Company’s adjustment to its property tax expense.**

A. The Company’s Adjustments 10.15 and 9.10, Property Taxes, decrease net operating income by $1,603,695 and $850,450, respectively.

**Q. Does Staff contest the Company’s Property Tax adjustments?**

A. Yes. The Company’s adjustments utilize estimated property tax levy rates to be paid in 2009. Staff contests these adjustments because they fail to meet the Commission’s “known and measurable” criteria for a pro forma adjustment.

**Q. Did you apply the same reasoning as in the prior adjustments for Miscellaneous Operating Expenses?**

A. Yes, as stated previously, WAC 480-07-510 specifies that pro forma adjustments “… give effect for the test period to all known and measurable changesthat are not offset by other factors.” Since the Company’s property tax adjustments are estimates based on management’s judgment, they are not “known and measurable” and should be rejected by the Commission.

**Q. Do the Staff gas and electric results of operations presentations remove the Company’s property tax adjustments?**

A. Yes. The Company’s adjustments have been removed to reflect the most current actual property tax liability. This treatment returns the property tax liability to test year values.

**Q. What affect does removal of these adjustments have on net operating income?**

A. Staff disallows the Company’s Adjustments 10.15 and 9.10, therefore net operating income is unaffected. This treatment is reflected on Exhibit No. KHB-2, page 2.22 for PSE’s electric operation and Exhibit No. KHB-3, page 3.15 for PSE’s gas operations.

**Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

A. Yes, it does.

1. Exhibit No. MJS-1T at 13-16 and Exhibit No. JHS-1T at 32-37. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Exhibit No. JHS-10 at 20:14-15 and Exhibit No. MJS-9 at 9.09:10-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. PSE Response to Staff Data Request No. 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. PSE Response to Staff Data Request No. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)