

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

PUGET SOUND ENERGY,

Respondent.

DOCKETS UE-220066 and UG-
220067 (*Consolidated*)

ORDER 11

GRANTING MOTION FOR LEAVE
TO RESPOND

BACKGROUND

- 1 On January 31, 2022, Puget Sound Energy (PSE or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions to its currently effective Tariff WN U-60, Tariff G, Electric Service, and its currently effective Tariff WN U-2, Natural Gas. The Commission later consolidated these filings and suspended them for adjudication consistent with Commission rules for general rate cases.
- 2 On February 28, 2022, the Commission convened a virtual prehearing conference before administrative law judge Michael S. Howard.
- 3 On March 3, 2022, the Commission entered Order 03, Prehearing Conference Order and Notice of Hearing set for October 3-4, 2022 (Order 03). The Commission granted petitions to intervene filed by the Coalition of Eastside Neighbors for Sensible Energy (CENSE) and other intervenors. Pursuant to the Interim Agreement filed in Docket U-210595, the Commission required the parties to file any requests for case certification and notices of intent to seek funding on or before March 14, 2022. The Commission indicated that proposed budgets would be due 30 days later, on April 13, 2022. As a general matter, the Interim Agreement required the parties to set forth their request for fees and costs, the areas to be investigated, and to address other relevant factors establishing their eligibility for participatory funding.
- 4 On April 12, 2022, the Commission issued a Notice Extending Deadline for Proposed Budgets. The Commission required any proposed budgets to be filed by April 25, 2022.

- 5 On April 25, 2022, CENSE filed a Proposed Budget of CENSE in Support of Fund Grant (Proposed Budget). The Proposed Budget requests an award of \$66,000 in attorney fees, \$3,000 for support staff, and \$12,000 in expert witness and consulting fees from PSE’s Customer Representation Sub-Fund. CENSE notes that it will generally investigate and provide evidence on the prudence of PSE’s Energize Eastside transmission line, a 16-mile 230 kV transmission line. CENSE describes certain issues it plans to address, such as whether the existing and forecasted peak loads justify the Energy Eastside investment and whether studies submitted in support of the Energize Eastside investment are current and accurate. CENSE submits that the overall cost of the Energize Eastside investment is substantial, impacts all customers, and raises significant policy issues. It does not appear, CENSE notes, that other intervenors will be focusing on the Energize Eastside investment.
- 6 On April 29, 2022, PSE filed a Motion for Leave to Respond to CENSE’s Proposed Budget in Support of Fund Grant (Motion). PSE attaches its proposed Response to CENSE’s Proposed Budget in Support of Fund Grant (Response).
- 7 In its Motion, PSE notes that it is unclear whether it is required to seek leave to respond to CENSE’s Proposed Budget. PSE submits its Motion out of an abundance of caution.
- 8 PSE requests that the Commission allow it the opportunity to respond to CENSE’s Proposed Budget. If CENSE’s Proposed Budget is approved, PSE notes that CENSE would receive approximately 40 percent of the \$200,000 designated for the utility’s Customer Representation Sub-Fund. PSE submits that it will provide context regarding CENSE’s Proposed Budget and that the Company has an interest in ensuring that these funds fulfill the statutory purpose.

DISCUSSION

- 9 We grant PSE’s Motion. Pursuant to WAC 480-07-370, the Commission may allow other pleadings upon written motion. Although the Interim Agreement does not explicitly provide for responses to Proposed Budgets, PSE has established sufficient cause for the Commission to grant leave for PSE’s Response to CENSE’s Proposed Budget.¹ PSE’s Response is accordingly accepted by the Commission.

¹ The Commission has not yet determined whether a Proposed Budget is a “petition” within the meaning of WAC 480-07-370(4), to which any party in the proceeding may file a response. It is not necessary, however, to reach this issue at this juncture.

ORDER

10 **THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

11 (1) Puget Sound Energy's Motion is GRANTED.

12 (2) Puget Sound Energy's Response is ACCEPTED.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective May 2, 2022.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

/s/ Michael S. Howard
MICHAEL HOWARD
Administrative Law Judge

**NOTICE TO PARTIES: This is an Interlocutory Order of the Commission.
Administrative review may be available through a petition for review, filed within
10 days of the service of this Order pursuant to WAC 480-07-810.**