

**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 12

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 CENSE also raises certain concerns with the Interim Agreement. For instance, CENSE raises a concern with the forms attached to the Interim Agreement, which provide for a 20 percent reduction for expert witness fees.
- 7 On May 2, 2022, the Commission issued Order 11, Granting Leave to Respond. The Commission granted PSE leave to respond to CENSE's Proposed Budget and accepted PSE's proposed response.
- 8 On May 2, 2022, AWEC also filed a Motion for Leave to Respond to CENSE's Proposed Budget (Motion). AWEC concurrently filed its proposed Response to CENSE's Proposed Budget (Response).
- 9 In its Motion, AWEC notes that CENSE's Proposed Budget raised certain concerns and questions regarding AWEC's own proposed budget. As AWEC notes, CENSE claimed that AWEC's proposed budget did not address the Energize Eastside investment. CENSE also suggested that AWEC should not receive funding due to the composition, financial positions, or advocacy positions of AWEC's membership.
- 10 AWEC also argues that CENSE's disagreements with the terms of the Interim Agreement are inappropriate and should not be considered at this juncture. AWEC requests an opportunity to respond to CENSE's Proposed Budget in the event that the Commission is inclined to grant specific changes in this case.

### DISCUSSION

- 11 We grant AWEC'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, AWEC has established sufficient cause for

the Commission to grant leave for AWEC's Response to CENSE's Proposed Budget.<sup>1</sup> As AWEC observes, CENSE has made various claims regarding the scope of AWEC's proposed budget, its potential advocacy positions, and its eligibility for funding. It is reasonable to provide AWEC an opportunity to respond to these assertions when this does not result in any delay of the proceeding. AWEC's Response is accordingly accepted by the Commission.

**ORDER**

12 **THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

13 (1) The Alliance of Western Energy Consumer's Motion is GRANTED.

14 (2) The Alliance of Western Energy Consumer's Response is ACCEPTED.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective May 3, 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.**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.