

aware, Maryland, and Florida; distributes electricity in Florida; and transmits natural gas on the Delmarva Peninsula and in Florida. The Unregulated Energy operation wholesales and distributes propane; markets natural gas; and provides other unregulated ener36.3%; Other, d3.7%. Officers and directors own 2.6% of common stock; BlackRock, 15.1% (3/22 Proxy). CEO: Jeffry M. Householder. Inc.: DE. Address: 909 Silver Lake Boulevard, Dover, DE 19904. Tel.: (302) 734-6799. Internet: www.chpk.com.

ANNUAL RATES Past Past Est'd '19-'21 to '25-'27 of change (per sh) 10 Yrs. 5 Yrs. 1.5% 9.0% -1.0% 8.0% 13.0% 9.5% Revenues "Cash Flow" Earnings Dividends 9.5% 7.0% Book Value 9.5% 10.5% 6.0%

60.3 189.2 79.5

329.0

618%

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Fix. Chg. Cov

Other

52.6 239.6

376.4

771%

30.3 160.6

279.7

780%

Cal- endar	QUAR Mar.31		VENUES (Sep.30		Full Year
2019	160.5	94.5	92.6	160.4	479.6
2020	152.7	97.1	101.4		488.2
2021	191.2	111.1	107.3		570.0
2022	222.9	140	132.1		665
2023	240	165	160		750
Cal-	EARNINGS PER SHARE A				Full
endar	Mar.31 Jun.30 Sep.30 Dec.31				Year
2019	1.75	.54	.38	1.04	3.72
2020	1.77	.64	.56	1.24	4.21
2021	1.96	.78	.71	1.28	4.73
2022	2.08	.86	.75	1.31	5.00
2023	2.15	.95	.80	1.35	5.25
Cal- endar	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID B Mar.31 Jun.30 Sep.30 Dec.31				Full Year
2018 2019 2020 2021 2022	.325 .37 .405 .44 .48	.325 .37 .405 .44 .48	.48	.37 .405 .44 .48	1.39 1.55 1.69 1.84

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation had a respectable performance in the opening quarter of 2022. Share net of \$2.08 was 6% higher than the year-ago total of \$1.96. One contributor was the Regulated Energy unit, aided by continued pipeline expansions by the Eastern Shore and Peninsula Pipeline operations, organic growth in the natural gas distribution businesses, plus incremental benefits from the acquisition of Escambia Meter Station in 2021. Moreover, results of the Unregulated Energy division got a boost from last year's purchase of Diversified Energy Company, higher rates for the Aspire Energy segment, and increased propane margins per gallon and service fees. Although inflationary pressures persist, full-year earnings might advance around 6%, to \$5.00 a share, relative to 2021's \$4.73 figure. Regarding 2023, the bottom line ought to rise at a similar percentage rate, to \$5.25 a share, as operating margins expand further.

Corporate finances are sound. When the first quarter ended, cash and equivalents resided at \$5.2 million. Too, there was \$256.3 million available under

revolving credit facility. Meanwhile. Chesapeake's long-term $_{
m debt}$ seemed manageable (43% of total capital), and we believe that short-term commitments of \$160.6 million were not a major stumbling block. Lastly, additional debt and/or equity securities can be issued if necessary. All things considered, the company ought to continue to satisfy its obligations with little trouble.

The quarterly common stock dividend was just increased 11.5%, to \$0.535 a **share.** What's more, our projections out to 2025-2027 indicate that additional steady hikes in the distribution will probably take place. The payout ratio over that span ought to be in the neighborhood of 40%, which is reasonable.

Chesapeake shares, although favorably ranked for Timeliness, have unenticing total return potential during the 2025-2027 period. Capital gains possibilities are nothing to write home about. Also, the current dividend yield of 1.7% is not spectacular when stacked against the average of Value Line's Natural Gas Utility Industry. Frederick L. Harris, III May 27, 2022

(A) Diluted shrs. Excludes nonrecurring items: '08, d7¢; '15, 6¢; '17, 87¢. Excludes discontinued operations: '19, 24¢; '20, 5¢. Quarters for

Next earnings report due early Aug.

(B) Dividends historically paid in early January, April, July, and October. ■ Dividend reinvest-2019 don't equal total because of rounding. ment plan. Direct stock purchase plan avail-

(C) In millions, adjusted for split.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability 90 Price Growth Persistence 90 **Earnings Predictability** 95