BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

AVISTA CORPORATION D/B/A/ AVISTA UTILITIES

Respondent.

DOCKETS UE-220053, UG-220054, and UE-210854 (Consolidated)

SEBASTIAN COPPOLA ON BEHALF OF THE WASHINGTON STATE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL PUBLIC COUNSEL UNIT

EXHIBIT SC-11

Avista's Response to Public Counsel's Data Request No. 249, with Attachment A, on CSR costs and Customer Contacts

July 29, 2022

AVISTA CORP. RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

JURISDICTION: WASHINGTON DATE PREPARED: 05/13/2022 CASE NO.: UE-220053 & UG-220054 WITNESS: Kelly Magalsky REQUESTER: Public Counsel **RESPONDER:** Matt Halloran TYPE: DEPT: **Customer Solutions** Data Request PC - 249REQUEST NO.: TELEPHONE: (509) 495-4170

EMAIL: matt.halloran@avistacorp.com

SUBJECT: Miscellaneous Expenses

REQUEST:

RE: Miscellaneous Expenses, Direct Testimony of Kelly E. Magalsky, Exh. KEM-1T at 20:10–17, Figure No. 4 (Customer Contacts by Channel (Data)).

Please provide the following information in Excel:

- A. Provide the information in Figure No. 4 with actual 2016, 2017 and 2021 data.
- B. Provide a breakdown of the number of web visits by type tracked for 2021.
- C. Provide the number of Customer Service Representatives (CSR) for each year 2009, and 2016–2021 with the related annual cost for the CSR.
- D. Provide the number of CSR and related costs forecasted for each year for 2022 through 2024.
- E. Confirm that the data is system-wide and not only Washington. If not confirming, please explain.
- F. Provide the average number of customers for each year 2009 and 2016–2024 for the system or jurisdiction to which the data in the chart pertains.
- G. Explain why the number of self-service contacts has been increasing each year at a higher rate than the decline in total live contacts. Are customers finding it more difficult to get information from the Company without a live contact and are repeatedly accessing the digital channels searching for information they cannot easily obtain? Please explain and support your answer with documented evidence.

RESPONSE:

- A. Please see PC-DR-249 Attachment A, tab labeled "Figure 4".
- B. Please see PC-DR-249 Attachment A, tab labeled "Figure 4".
- C. Please see PC-DR-249 Attachment A, tab labeled "CSR Costs". Because of the Company's flexible staffing model, such that the number of CSRs working at any given time varies depending on customer call forecasts, we have provided the number of CSR hours staffed for each year along with the associated labor cost. CSR labor data is not available for 2009.
- D. CSR data and related costs is not available for 2023-2024. Call Center staffing analysis is performed on an as needed basis prior to onboarding new staff. CSR costs in future years will vary based on actual observed call volumes and as driven by market and labor trends.
- E. The data provided in Figure 4 is system wide.
- F. Please see PC-DR-249 Attachment A, tab labeled "Figure 4". For purposes of this data, the Company does not have a forecast available for 2023-2024.
- G. Avista does not know every reason and exactly why this trend is occurring as we cannot always fully explain complex customer behavior in simple and quantifiable terms. The following are some of the reasons we believe this trend is occurring:

Avista continues to offer more functionality on myavista.com that our customers find 1) value in. That value drives a change in their behavior to interact with myavista.com and/or the Company's mobile app on a more frequent basis than has been observed historically. Our digital channel tools are often easier to access at the time and location of customer's choosing and, in some cases, provide customers with a tool, information, or service that they did not have previously. We do suspect that providing the new functionality provides benefits such as giving customers more choices or information and may also have the benefit of avoiding a phone call but it is not a 1-for-1 phone to digital channel visit tradeoff. The data seems to show that the easier it is for the customer, the more frequently they will use a specific functionality. For example, related to Avista's recent AMI deployment in Washington state, we've developed and deployed functionality on myavista.com that allows a customer to view their energy usage down to the 5-minute interval, and see their 'bill-todate' and 'projected-bill." These features provide valuable information to our customers about their energy use that they never had previously and as such, they are accessing myavista.com more frequently.

Another example is the 'View and Report Outages' page. Prior to any digital channels to complete these two functions, we know that some customers would call to either report or view the status of their outage. The volumes that we are seeing now, however, through our digital channels is likely far exceeding the number of customers who were accessing that information through a phone call. We believe this can be attributed to the ease of which they can now access the information on either the website or mobile app.

Documented evidence to support these examples is provided in Table No. 1 below. The customer traffic to the "View Your Usage" page on myavista.com has seen growth that is directly correlated with the deployment of smart meter data availability. The page was deployed in 2017 and initially only had a view of 'total monthly usage.' In 2019, Avista added the ability for customers to view their smart meter data and saw a marked increase in page traffic that continues to grow year over year.

The 'View and Report Outage' pages have seen similar trends. As customers become more aware of the ability to check their outage status without calling Avista, that digital functionality has seen drastic increases traffic.

Table No. 1: Number of Page Views By Year

Myavista.com Page Title	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
View Usage	0	39,022	60,549	105,606	124,393
View and Report Outage	19,343	20,352	520,396	1,080,951	1,349,612

2) Additionally, digital channels support more than just interactions that were historically supported by the call center. For example, our percent of customers paying via cash or check in the mail is decreasing and the percent paying using a digital channel is increasing. A portion of the digital traffic increase in visits can be attributed to this trend.

ATTACHMENT A TO AVISTA'S RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COUNSEL'S DATA REQUEST NO. 249

Customer Service Representative (CSR) Related Annual costs

Систем становите (сел.)												
	Hours Staffed	Agent load	ed labor rate		Labor Costs							
2009	121,237	\$	36.69	\$	4,448,185.53							
2016	122,603	\$	39.38	\$	4,828,106.14							
2017	113,272	\$	43.50	\$	4,927,316.62							
2018	111,761	\$	43.50	\$	4,861,603.50							
2019	113,833	\$	43.70	\$	4,974,502.10							
2020	122,026	\$	44.11	\$	5,382,566.86							
2021	112,000	\$	45.23	\$	5,065,760.00							

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Date	Visits to myAvista.co m	Mobile App Sessions	Text Conversations	IVR Handled Calls	Phone Calls	Emails I	Date	Visits to myAvista.com	Mobile App Sessions	Text Conversations	IVR Handled Calls	Phone Calls	Emails	Year	Total Avista Customers - Electric	Total Avista Customers - Gas	Visits to myAvista.com	Mobile App Sessions	Text Conversa tions	IVR Handled Calls	Phone Calls	Emails	Date	Visits to myAvista.com 2021	Visit's to MyAvista.com 2021 Desktop	Visit's to MyAvista.com 2021 Mobile	Visit's to MyAvista.com 2021 Tablet
Jan 2016	278,941		531	64,964	64,905		an 2009				77,868	88,470	2,841	2009	356,536	316,201	1,451,840		2.704	735,938	930,585		Jan 2021	508,468	202,228	294,242	11,998
Feb 2016 Mar 2016	240,960 243.420		283 164	58,904 61,140	61,181 60,102	5,836 Fe 6,406 M					59,366 65,750	81,160 88.433	2,417 2,189	2016 2017	377,159 382,131	340,131 347.160	2,838,599 3.466,919		5 3,704 2 3,566	755,271 875,424	693,860	66,124 48,552	Feb 2021 Mar 2021	354,820 418.206	174,021 191,516	169,998 214.846	10,801 11,844
Apr 2016	225,550		134	61,630	58,033	5,153 A	pr 2009				56,213	80,661	2,133	2018	387,518	354,799	3,770,243	104,786	6 4,691	1,029,601	626,910	23,877	Apr 2021	403,444	170,460	218,605	14,379
May 2016 Jun 2016	230,587 225,283	21 2,748	383 255	61,514 76,467	56,939 58,914	5,712 Ma 5,791 Ju	ay 2009 un 2009				55,384 72,197	76,663 85,294	2,819 6,808	2019 2020	392,828 400,018	361,495 366,836	4,406,233 4,209,265				615,229 491,774		May 2021 Jun 2021	365,083 440,086	160,272 192,389	192,801 235,111	12,010 12,586
Jul 2016	227,790	2,378	467	58,723	51,753	4,940 J	lul 2009				60,792	75,090	2,993	2021	405,622	372,025	4,708,597		27,969				Jul 2021	389,617	176,438	202,154	11,025
Aug 2016 Sep 2016	243,606 223,856	3,738 4,056	727 278	62,905 72,189	58,393 54,903	6,537 Au 6,044 Se	ug 2009				57,416 57,148	71,703 68,248	2,456 2,256										Aug 2021 Sep 2021	369,089 348,809	162,256 151,671	196,399 187,879	10,434 9,259
Oct 2016	238,889	15,496	222	64,347	55,597	5,948 O					58,080	75,509	2,768									F	Oct 2021	389,110	170,246	206,625	12,239
Nov 2016	224,666 235,051	5,530 8,038	102 158	51,375 61,113	50,442 54,804	3,968 No 3,969 De	ov 2009				50,416 65,308	67,358 71.996	3,012 2.863										Nov 2021 Dec 2021	368,747 353,118	169,791 172,305	191,408 174,868	7,548 5,945
Jan 2017	298,247	9,808	239		63,879	2,735	ec 2009	1,451,840			735,938	930,585	35,555									L	Dec 2021	333,110	172,303	174,808	3,543
Feb 2017	263,812	7,373	150		60,427	2,434	_																				
Mar 2017 Apr 2017	278,066 252,819	7,023 8,328	85 311	72,663 67,521	64,618 53,833	2,762	N.	Monthly data not tracked in 2009.																			
May 2017	262,968	8,564	421	68,355	56,247	2,783																					
Jun 2017 Jul 2017	330,138 294,155	8,117 7,733	200 204	68,793 73,352	58,619 55,261	5,394 4,992		Customer Contacts	2009	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021												
Aug 2017	276,604	7,159	234	70,768	57,188	4,233	s	ielf-Service Contacts Handled by (69%	83%	86%	88%	90%	92%	94%												
Sep 2017	260,661 302,623	7,185 10.186	301 519	84,014 65.609	55,291 60,234	3,324 5.910		Web Visits Wobile App Sessions	1,451,840	2,838,599 42,005	3,466,919 107,462	3,770,243 104,786	4,406,233 282,974	4,209,265 859,348	4,708,597 1,368,740												
Nov 2017	322,726	8,500	237	86,697	54,856	6,559	T	Text Conversations		3,704	3,566	4,691	8,665	12,342	27,969												
Dec 2017 Jan 2018	324,100 368,452	17,486 13,837	665 392	90,825 96,684	53,407 61,601	5,156 3.706		VR Handled Calls Total Self-Service contacts	735,938 2,187,778	755,271 3,639,579	875,424 4,453,371	1,029,601 4,909,321	1,144,645 5,842,517	1,141,790 6,222,745	1,404,306 7,509,612			-									
Feb 2018	338,213	9,509	161	80,604	52,096	2,015		ive Customer Contacts Handled b	31%	17%	14%	12%	10%	8%	6%												
Mar 2018	314,351	4,943	103	77,966 77,533	55,413 50,852			Phone Calls (CSR)	930,585	685,966		626,910	615,229	491,774	459,067		-										
Apr 2018 May 2018		7,118 7,157	151 381	77,533 85,917	50,852			Emails (CSR) Fotal Live Contacts	35,555 966,140	66,124 752,090		23,877 650,787	31,581 646,810	37,936 529,710	34,444 493,511												
Jun 2018	287,693	8,642	446	94,741	51,434	1,864																					
Jul 2018 Aug 2018	289,594 301,424	6,796 10,396	217 791	81,212 96,351	48,744 54,064	1,795 1,804																					
Sep 2018	288,375	6,963	378	78,511	49,055	1,721																					
Oct 2018 Nov 2018	354,095 330,982	7,371 10,962	498 838	90,241 90,701	55,377 49,657	2,015 2,010																					
Dec 2018	306,293	11,092	335	79,140	45,243	2,002																					
Jan 2019 Feb 2019	380,922 364,240	9,989 15,052	211 413	85,222 84,783	53,399 47,502	2,505 2,168																					
Mar 2019	365,382	7,461	361	108,667	53,928	3,007																					
Apr 2019 May 2019	336,088 360,383	8,125 11,980	225 611		54,327 53,740	2,670 3,004																					
Jun 2019	319,071	16,580	757	89,297	46,802	2,582																					
Jul 2019 Aug 2019	358,709 336,047	29,894	1,310 705	104,318 92.045	52,214 49,476	2,495																					
Sep 2019	349,075	33,823	970	106,057	50,494	2,761																					
Oct 2019 Nov 2019	487,191 395,884	53,528 24,333	2,210 482	126,659 78,823	58,011 45,610	2,946																					
Dec 2019	353,241	43,430	410	79,625	49,726	2,336																					
Jan 2020 Feb 2020	380,907 344,450	70,748 58,317	1,212 726		57,211 50,072	2,547 2,794																					
Mar 2020	356,966	62,050	726	92,030	44,915	3,412																					
Apr 2020	324,676	57,852	352	76,157	34,662	3,480																					
May 2020 Jun 2020	313,405 309,639	65,769 56.547	439 394	90,598 111,543	34,986 40,170	2,714 2,619																					
Jul 2020	366,473	58,995	401	97,421	37,436	3,100																					
Aug 2020 Sep 2020	357,532 370,234	61,508 98.088	843 2,720	86,639 117,715	35,573 40,557	2,950 3,126																					
Oct 2020	403,229	103,568	3,010	87,399	44,317	4,933																					
Nov 2020 Dec 2020	325,359 356,395	77,255 88,651	686 767	65,058 82,961	34,829 37,046	3,245 3,016																					
Jan 2021	508,468	217,979	14,406	129,936	46,145	3,451																					
Feb 2021 Mar 2021	354,820 418,206	85,177 115,467	826 1,199	86,282 131,082	36,085 44,154	2,752 3,393																					
Apr 2021	403,444	95,958	1,024	127,524	37,452	3,567																					
May 2021	365,083 440,086	88,564 118,593	739 1,957	94,247 176,218	32,615 39,116	2,609 2.636																					
Jul 2021	389,617	97,710	741	113,887	34,975	2,686																					
Aug 2021 Sep 2021	369,089 348,809	101,356 95,042	1,295 1,343	131,074 132,998	37,073 35,715	2,626																					
Oct 2021	389,110	94,335	1,810	94,636	38,950	2,597																					
Nov 2021 Dec 2021	368,747 353,118	132,914 125,645	1,842 787	101,764 84,658	39,257 37,530	2,776																					
Dec 2021	333,118	123,045	787	84,038	37,530	2,031																					