

ORDER NO. 16 500

ENTERED DEC 23 2016

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
OF OREGON**

UM 1722

In the Matter of

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF  
OREGON,

Investigation into Recovery of Safety Costs  
by Natural Gas Utilities.

ORDER

**DISPOSITION: ISSUE FUND GRANT REQUEST APPROVED**

On December 15, 2016, the Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon filed a Request for Payment from the Avista Corporation, dba Avista Utilities; Cascade Natural Gas Company; and Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural Issue Fund Grants. The procedures for payment of Issue Fund Grants are governed by Section 7.3 of the Third Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement (Agreement), adopted by the Commission in Order No. 15-335. CUB is automatically precertified to receive Issue Fund Grants under OAR 860-001-0120(3)(a) and under Section 5.2(a) of the Agreement.

CUB asks for a final payment of \$18,000 to be split between the Avista (\$5,250), Cascade (\$5,250), and NW Natural (\$8,000) Issue Funds and states that the remaining balance of the approved budget (\$5,500) may be released back in equal shares to Cascade's and Avista's Issue Funds. Under the Agreement, the Request for Payment must:

1. Itemize the expenses, payees and hourly rates of amount to be reimbursed;
2. Demonstrate that the expenses are reasonable and are directly attributable to issues and positions pursued on behalf of a particular customer class and consistent with the intervenor's proposed budget;
3. Provide information sufficient to show that the intervenor has complied with any conditions imposed on the Issue Fund Grant; and
4. Specify whether the request for payment is for a progress payment or a final payment and indicate whether any approved budget amount may be released back to the applicable Issue Fund.

Further, under the terms of the Agreement, CUB must establish that it has used in-house resources or outside funding for at least 20 percent of the Eligible Expenses for an Eligible Proceeding. Agreement at 22. CUB provided the required documentation in its request.

The Agreement provides that the Commission determine in each proceeding how the participating utilities are to recover the funding grants from the various customer classes. Under Section 7.7(b), Issue Fund Grants should be allocated to align the costs of the advocacy with the intended potential beneficiaries of the advocacy. Agreement at 24. The Commission considered the intended beneficiaries, and finds that the issue fund expenditures should be allocated to (Utility's) residential customers.

The Commission finds that CUB's request meets the requirements of the Agreement, and its request should be approved. Section 7.8 of the Agreement provides that the utility must pay the Issue Fund Grant to the requesting intervenor within 30 days after receipt of Commission directive. The balance of the approved budget should be made available to the (applicable utility's) Issue Fund.

### ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon's request meets the requirements of the Third Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement, and its request is approved.
2. Avista Corporation, dba Avista Utilities pay \$5,250 from the Avista Issue Fund; Cascade Natural Gas Company pay \$5,250 from the Cascade Issue Fund; and Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural pay \$8,000 from the NW Natural Issue Fund to the Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon within 30 days after receipt of this order, and that the grants be assessed to the applicable utility's residential customers.

DEC 23 2016

Made, entered, and effective \_\_\_\_\_.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Grant", is written over a horizontal line.

**Michael Grant**  
Chief Administrative Law Judge  
Administrative Hearings Division