

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON

UM 1654

In the Matter of

NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS
COMPANY, dba NW NATURAL,Investigation of Interstate Storage and
Optimization Sharing.

ORDER

**DISPOSITION: JOINT MOTION GRANTED; PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR
ISSUE FUND GRANTS APPROVED**

On April 26, 2017, the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board (CUB) and the Northwest Industrial Gas Users (NWIGU) filed a joint motion seeking approval to file intervenor funding requests and proposed budgets to cover extended activities in this docket. These activities are related to the evaluation and cost allocation study of Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural's optimization activities, the assets being utilized for those activities, the allocation between regulated and unregulated services, and the various components of NW Natural's system that drive the costs and revenues associated with interstate storage services.¹ CUB and NWIGU note that the ongoing work is an extension of this docket and ordered by the Commission, but because the work is subsequent to an order, there has not been a prehearing conference at which to set a deadline for intervening funding requests.

Consistent with that request, both CUB and NWIGU filed separate proposed budgets for Issue Fund Grants in this proceeding. CUB's proposed budget shows eligible expenses in the amount of \$37,500; and it seeks an Issue Fund Grant in the amount of \$30,000. NWIGU's proposed budget shows eligible expenses in the amount of \$38,370; and it seeks an Issue Fund Grant in the amount of \$30,696.

The Third Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement (IFA), approved in Order No. 15-335, provides that precertified intervenors must submit a proposed issue fund budget to the Commission that contains, at a minimum, the following information:

¹ Order No. 15-006 (Mar. 5, 2015)

- 1) A statement of the work to be performed;
- 2) A description of the areas to be investigated;
- 3) A description of the particular customer class(es) that will benefit from the intervenor's participation;
- 4) Identification of the specific fund accounts from which the intervenor is seeking monies and an estimate of the amount of available funds in that account;
- 5) A budget showing estimated attorney, consultant and expert witness fees, which may include the cost for appropriate support staff and operations support; and
- 6) A representation that the intervenor will use matching funds in the form of either in-house resources or outside funding to account for or pay at least 20 percent of the eligible expenses for which the intervenor is seeking an Issue Fund Grant.

Once a proposed budget is received, the Commission decides whether Issue Fund Grants are available for use based on factors identified in the IFA. The Commission has the authority to accept, deny or partially deny the request, and may place reasonable conditions on the grant.

CUB was automatically precertified to receive Issue Fund Grants under Section 5.2(a) of the IFA and OAR 860-001-0120(3)(a). NWIGU became precertified on February 3, 2004, in Order No. 04-055. The proposed budgets of CUB and NWIGU include the requisite information and reflect the current status of the work to be done in this docket.

In light of the on-going activities ordered by the Commission in this docket, the joint motion filed by CUB and NWIGU seeking approval to file intervenor funding requests and proposed budgets is granted. Moreover, given the issues being addressed, the complexity of the issues and the significant policy decisions to be made, the proposed budgets of CUB and NWIGU are reasonable and should be approved.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The joint motion seeking approval to file intervenor funding grant requests and proposed budgets is granted.
2. The Oregon Citizens' Utility Board's proposed budget for an Issue Fund Grant is approved; and an Issue Fund Grant is approved up to \$30,000.

3. The Northwest Industrial Gas Users' proposed budget for an Issue Fund Grant is approved; and an Issue Fund Grant is approved up to \$30,696.

Made, entered, and effective MAY 04 2017 .



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

Michael Grant
Chief Administrative Law Judge
Administrative Hearings Division