

ORDER NO. 20-266

ENTERED Aug 14 2020

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

AR 632

In the Matter of

Rulemaking Regarding the 2019 Senate
Bill 98, Renewable Natural Gas Programs.

ORDER

DISPOSITION: ISSUE FUND GRANT REQUEST APPROVED

On August 12, 2020, the Alliance for Western Energy Consumers (AWEC), formerly known as the Northwest Industrial Gas Users (NWIGU), filed a Request for Payment of its Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural Issue Fund Grant. Section 7.3 of the Fourth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement (Agreement), adopted by the Commission in Order No. 18-017, governs the procedures for payment of Issue Fund Grants. AWEC was precertified as NWIGU to receive Issue Fund Grants on February 3, 2004, in Order No. 04-055.

AWEC asks for a final payment of \$14,014 from the NW Natural Issue Fund. 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, AWEC must establish that it has "used in-house resources or outside funding to account for or pay at least 20% of the Eligible Expenses for the work to be performed in the proceeding for which the intervenor is seeking an Issue Fund Grant." Agreement at 15. AWEC provided the required documentation in its request.

The Agreement provides that the Commission will make a determination in each proceeding as to 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 so as to fairly align the costs of the advocacy with the intended potential beneficiaries of the advocacy. Agreement at 23. The Commission has considered the intended beneficiaries, and finds that the issue fund expenditures should be allocated to NW Natural's industrial customers.

The Commission finds that AWEC has met 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 the Commission directive. AWEC requests that remainder of the approved issue fund grant may be released back into the NW Natural Issue Fund account.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The Alliance of Western Energy Consumers has met the requirements of the Fourth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement, and its request is approved.
2. Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural pay \$14,014 from the NW Natural Issue Fund to the Alliance of Western Energy Consumers within 30 days after receipt of this Order, and the grant be assessed to NW Natural's industrial customers.

Made, entered, and effective Aug 14, 2020.



Nolan Moser
Chief Administrative Law Judge
Administrative Hearings Division

