

ORDER NO. 22-449

ENTERED Nov 16 2022

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

UM 2178

In the Matter of

OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY
COMMISSION STAFF,

Natural Gas Fact Finding per Executive
Order 20-04 PUC Year One Work Plan.

ORDER

DISPOSITION: ISSUE FUND GRANT REQUESTS APPROVED

On November 15, 2022, the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board filed a Request for Payment of its 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 Fourth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement (Agreement), adopted by the Commission in Order No. 18-017. 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 \$30,000, with \$8,572 from the 2021 Avista Issue Fund, \$4,286 from the 2021 Cascade Natural Gas Issue Fund, and \$17,142 from the 2021 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, 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 20. 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. The Commission considered the intended beneficiaries and finds that the issue fund expenditures should be allocated to the residential customers of Avista Utilities, Cascade Natural Gas, and NW Natural.

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.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The Oregon Citizens' Utility Board's request meets the requirements of the Fourth Amended and Restated Intervenor Funding Agreement, and its request is approved.
2. Avista Corporation, dba Avista Utilities, pay \$8,572 from the Avista Utilities 2021 Issue Fund to the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board within 30 days after receipt of this order, and the grant be assessed to Avista Utilities' residential customers.
3. Cascade Natural Gas Company pay \$4,286 from the Cascade Natural Gas 2021 Issue Fund to the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board within 30 days after receipt of this order, and the grant be assessed to Cascade Natural Gas's residential customers.

4. Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural, pay \$17,142 from the NW Natural 2021 Issue Fund to the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board within 30 days after receipt of this order, and the grant be assessed to NW Natural's residential customers.

Made, entered, and effective Nov 16, 2022.



Nolan Moser
Chief Administrative Law Judge
Administrative Hearings Division

