

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION OF KNOX COUNTY)	CASE NO.
UTILITY COMMISSION FOR A RATE)	2023-00430
ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO 807 KAR 5:076)	

ORDER

On March 18, 2024,¹ Knox County Utility Commission (Knox County Commission) filed its application with the Commission requesting an adjustment to its water rates pursuant to 807 KAR 5:076. The Commission finds that a procedural schedule² should be established to ensure the orderly review of Knox County Commission's application. The procedural schedule is attached as Appendix A to this Order.

In addition, Knox County Commission shall file on or before the date set forth in the procedural schedule its responses to the Commission Staff's request for information, attached to this Order as Appendix B, and shall respond to any future requests for information propounded by Commission Staff by the date or dates set forth on any such requests.

¹ Knox County Commission tendered its application on February 27, 2024. By letters dated February 28, 2024, and March 13 2024, the Commission rejected the application for filing deficiencies. The deficiencies were subsequently cured, and the application is deemed filed on March 18, 2024.

² No action is necessary to suspend the effective date of Knox County Commission's proposed rates for service. Pursuant to 807 KAR 5:076, Section 7(1), an applicant who applies for a rate adjustment pursuant to the procedures set for in 807 KAR 5:076 may not place its proposed rates into effect until the Commission approves those rates or six months from the date of the filing of its application.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. The procedural schedule set forth in Appendix A to this Order shall be followed.
2. On or before the date set forth in the procedural schedule, Knox County Commission shall file its responses to the Commission Staff's request for information, attached to this Order as Appendix B.
3. Knox County Commission shall respond to any additional requests for information propounded by Commission Staff as provided in those requests.
4. No later than the date set forth in the procedural schedule, Commission Staff shall file with the Commission and serve upon all parties of record a written report (Commission Staff's Report) containing its recommendations regarding Knox County Commission's requested rate adjustment.
5. No later than 14 days after the date of service of the Commission Staff's Report, each party of record shall file with the Commission:
 - a. Its written comments on and any objections to the findings contained in the Commission Staff's Report; and
 - b. Any additional evidence for the Commission to consider.
6. If Commission Staff recommends that Knox County Commission's financial condition supports a higher rate than Knox County Commission proposes or the assessment of an additional rate or charge not proposed in Knox County Commission's application, Knox County Commission in its response to the Commission Staff's Report shall also state its position in writing on whether the Commission should authorize the assessment of the higher rate or the additional rate or charge.

7. If Commission Staff recommends that changes should be made to the manner in which Knox County Commission accounts for the depreciation of Knox County Commission's assets, Knox County Commission in its response to the Commission Staff's Report shall also state its position in writing on whether the Commission should require Knox County Commission to implement the proposed change for accounting purposes.

8. A party's failure to file written objections to a recommendation contained in the Commission Staff's Report within 14 days after the date of the filing of the Commission Staff's Report shall be deemed a waiver of all objections to that finding.

9. If a party requests a hearing or informal conference, then the party shall make the request in its written comments and state the reason a hearing or informal conference is necessary.

10. A party's failure to request a hearing or informal conference in the party's written response shall be deemed a waiver of all rights to a hearing on the application and a request that the case stand submitted for decision.

11. A party's failure to file a written response within 14 days after the date of service of the Commission Staff's Report shall be deemed a waiver of all rights to a hearing on the application.

12. As set forth in 807 KAR 5:001, Section 4(11)(a), a person requesting permissive intervention in a Commission proceeding is required to demonstrate either (1) a special interest in the proceeding that is not adequately represented in the case, or (2) that the person requesting permissive intervention is likely to present issues or develop facts that will assist the Commission in fully considering the matter without unduly

complicating or disrupting the proceedings. Therefore, any person requesting to intervene in a Commission proceeding must state with specificity the person's special interest that is not otherwise adequately represented or the issues and facts the person will present that will assist the Commission in fully considering the matter. A mere recitation of the quantity of the utility consumed by the movant or a general statement regarding a potential impact of possible modification of rates will not be deemed sufficient to establish a special interest.

13. Any motion to intervene filed after the date established in the procedural schedule attached as Appendix A to this Order shall also show good cause for being untimely. If the untimely motion is granted, the movant shall accept and abide by the existing procedural schedule.

14. The Commission directs the parties to the Commission's July 22, 2021 Order in Case No. 2020-00085³ regarding filings with the Commission.

³ Case No. 2020-00085, *Electronic Emergency Docket Related to the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19* (Ky. PSC July 22, 2021), Order (in which the Commission ordered that for case filings made on and after March 16, 2020, filers are NOT required to file the original physical copies of the filings required by 807 KAR 5:001, Section 8).

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

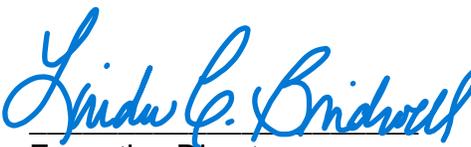

Chairman


Vice Chairman


Commissioner

ENTERED
APR 03 2024
rcs
KENTUCKY PUBLIC
SERVICE COMMISSION

ATTEST:


Executive Director

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX TO AN ORDER OF THE KENTUCKY PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION IN CASE NO. 2023-00430 DATED APR 03 2024

Requests for intervention shall be filed no later than 04/15/2024

All requests for information to Knox County Commission
shall be filed no later than 04/22/2024

Knox County Commission shall file responses to requests
for information no later than 05/06/2024

All supplemental requests for information to
Knox County Commission shall be filed no later than 05/20/2024

Knox County Commission shall file responses to supplemental
requests for information no later than 06/03/2024

Commission Staff's Report shall be filed no later than 07/15/2024

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX TO AN ORDER OF THE KENTUCKY PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION IN CASE NO. 2023-00430 DATED APR 03 2024

COMMISSION STAFF'S FIRST REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO KNOX COUNTY UTILITY COMMISSION

Knox County Utility Commission (Knox County Commission), pursuant to 807 KAR 5:001, shall file with the Commission an electronic version of the following information. The information requested is due on May 6, 2024. The Commission directs Knox County Commission to the Commission's July 22, 2021 Order in Case No. 2020-00085¹ regarding filings with the Commission. Electronic documents shall be in portable document format (PDF), shall be searchable, and shall be appropriately bookmarked.

Each response shall include the question to which the response is made and shall include the name of the witness responsible for responding to the questions related to the information provided. Each response shall be answered under oath or, for representatives of a public or private corporation or a partnership or association or a governmental agency, be accompanied by a signed certification of the preparer or the person supervising the preparation of the response on behalf of the entity that the response is true and accurate to the best of that person's knowledge, information, and belief formed after a reasonable inquiry.

Knox County Commission shall make timely amendment to any prior response if Knox County Commission obtains information that indicates the response was incorrect

¹ Case No. 2020-00085, *Electronic Emergency Docket Related to the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19* (Ky. PSC July 22, 2021), Order (in which the Commission ordered that for case filings made on and after March 16, 2020, filers are NOT required to file the original physical copies of the filings required by 807 KAR 5:001, Section 8).

or incomplete when made or, though correct or complete when made, is now incorrect or incomplete in any material respect.

For any request to which Knox County Commission fails or refuses to furnish all or part of the requested information, Knox County Commission shall provide a written explanation of the specific grounds for its failure to completely and precisely respond.

Careful attention shall be given to copied and scanned material to ensure that it is legible. When the requested information has been previously provided in this proceeding in the requested format, reference may be made to the specific location of that information in responding to this request. When applicable, the requested information shall be separately provided for total company operations and jurisdictional operations. When filing a paper containing personal information, Knox County Commission shall, in accordance with 807 KAR 5:001, Section 4(10), encrypt or redact the paper so that personal information cannot be read.

1. Provide copies of each of the following, and when appropriate, provide in Excel spreadsheet format with all formulas, rows, and columns fully accessible and unprotected. Employee names should be redacted from all documents.
 - a. The general ledger for the years ended December 31, 2022, and 2023.
 - b. A list of all year-end adjusting entries for the years ended December 31, 2022, and 2023.
 - c. The trial balance in Excel spreadsheet format for the years ended December 31, 2022, and 2023, including all year-end adjustments that will appear on the financial statements.

d. Refer to the Application, Schedule of Adjusted Operations (SAO). Provide a cross reference that matches each 2022 general ledger account to a revenue or expense line in the SAO and reconcile each amount that does not match.

2. Refer to the Application, SAO, Adjustment References. Provide all workpapers used to generate the proposed adjustments. Component details of a workpapers should tie to the general ledger accounts that comprise the SAO line items, including any adjustment for unreconciled amounts.

3. Using a table format, provide an Excel spreadsheet with all formulas, rows, and columns fully accessible and unprotected that lists each position (Position 1, Position 2, etc.) job title, hours worked, pay rate, total wages paid, and total Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA) cost for each employee for the years ended December 31, 2022, and 2023. Include the date the employee was hired and, if applicable, the employee's termination date. The table should include a column for total wages by employee (regular wages and overtime) and a row for total wages for all employees. Employee names should be redacted from all documents.

a. Provide calculations by employee that support pro forma wages of \$407,592. This may be provided as a separate table or combined with the table above. If a position is recently vacated but the intent is to fill it, note the vacancy and the amount of time that it has been vacant.

b. Provide a summary of overtime hours worked and costs that were due to vacant positions and thus will be eliminated when the vacant positions are filled.

c. Distribute the increase of \$45,000 in pro forma labor costs in the following format.

Description	Amount	Percent
Gross Test Year Wages	\$362,592	
Charged to Tap Fees/Capitalized ()		
Reported Test Year Wages	362,592	
Wage Rate Inflation		
Merit/Promotional Increases		
Positions Added Since Beginning of Test Year		
Turnover During Test Year		
Pro Forma Wages	407,592	

4. Provide a description of all employee benefits, other than salaries and wages, paid to or on behalf of each employee for the calendar year 2022. Supplemental coverage for which the employee pays 100 percent of the cost should also be included. Employee names should be redacted from all documents.

a. Provide a copy of the most recent invoice for each employee benefit described above.

b. Using the same table that lists each position and wage information, list each employee benefit (medical, dental, life, and others), the employee's contribution, the employer premium contribution, and the adjustment based on Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) contribution rates, if applicable. If health insurance is provided, designate the coverage type (i.e., single, family, couple, or parent plus). If benefits other than medical insurance are provided, include a total column for the cost of all benefits excluding the BLS adjustment.

c. Explain how Knox County Commission handles excess pensions and other post-employment benefits expenses over contribution levels.

5. Provide certificates of insurance and most recent invoices for general liability, workers' compensation, automobile, property, and casualty for 2022, and 2023.

6. Provide the minutes from Knox County Commission's Board of Commissioner (Board) meetings for the calendar years 2022, 2023, and year to date 2024.

7. Provide a document listing the name of each member of the Board for each of the calendar years 2022, 2023, and 2024 and state, individually, the total amount of each benefit paid to, or on the behalf of, each director during each year (i.e., wages, health insurance premiums, life insurance premiums, FICA taxes, etc.), their term (beginning and ending), and current authorized annual compensation.

a. Provide documentation from the Fiscal Court that authorizes each Board member's appointment and compensation.

b. Provide training records for each board member for 2022, 2023, and year to date 2024.

8. Provide the following with respect to new tap installations.

a. Number of installations during the test year.

b. State whether labor costs were capitalized and, if so, provide the total amount and designate the line in the fixed assets listing that reflects the capitalization.

c. State whether material costs were capitalized and, if so, provide the total amount and designate the line in the fixed assets listing that reflects the capitalization.

9. State the last time Knox County Commission performed a cost-of-service study (COSS) to review the appropriateness of its current rates and rate design.

a. Explain whether Knox County Commission considered filing a COSS with the current rate application and the reasoning for not filing one.

b. Explain whether any material changes to Knox County Commission would cause a new COSS to be prepared since the last time it completed one.

c. If there have been no material changes to Knox County Commission, explain when Knox County Commission anticipates completing a new COSS.

d. Provide a copy of the most recent COSS that has been performed for Knox County Commission in Excel spreadsheet format with all formulas, rows, and columns fully accessible and unprotected.

10. Refer to the Application, Current Billing Analysis 2022 Usage and Existing Rates and Proposed Billing Analysis 2022 Usage and Proposed Rates.

a. Provide the billing analysis in Excel Spreadsheet format with all formulas, rows, and columns unprotected and fully accessible.

b. Describe adjustments to the billing analysis and the justification for each one.

c. Provide an analysis of the proposed pro forma adjustment to metered water sales of \$100,098.

11. Provide the number of occurrences and dollar amounts for late fees that were recorded during the calendar years 2022, 2023, and year to date 2024.

12. Provide a schedule listing the number of occurrences for each nonrecurring charge listed in the current tariff that was recorded during the test year and the total amount recorded for each nonrecurring charge. If the revenue for any nonrecurring

charge was zero, include that charge and indicate that no revenue was recorded. Include the general ledger account numbers where each nonrecurring charge is recorded.

a. Provide updated cost justification sheets to support each nonrecurring charge listed in Knox County Commission's tariff.

b. Provide updated cost justification sheets to support each Meter Connection/Tap-on Charge listed in Knox County Commission's tariff.

13. Refer to Knox County Commission's Tariff, PSC Ky. No. 1, Original Sheet No. 11, Billing, Meter Readings and Related Information, Frequency of meter reading.

a. Provide the date that Knox County Commission billing cycle begins (meter read date).

b. State whether the date that the billing cycle begins is the date that would be best stated as the effective date of any order the Commission issues concerning rates in this case.

14. Refer to Application, Attachment 4, Table A, Debt Service Schedule. For each outstanding debt issuance still active, provide the case number in which Knox County Commission was authorized to issue the debt.

15. Provide a breakdown in both gallons and per gallon dollar amount, of water purchased during the test year by vendor, identifying all vendors from whom Knox County Commission purchased water. Provide the current rates charged by each vendor from whom Knox County Commission purchases water.

16. Provide an overview of any actions planned or taken by Knox County Commission to reduce its water loss, including a copy of any water loss reduction plan, if available.

17. Provide the following information related to billing software:
- a. State whether the billing software and general ledger/financial management software are separate or integrated.
 - b. Brand or common name for software.
 - c. State whether the software is locally installed on a utility-owned computer or is a subscription service that is internet based.
 - d. If locally installed, state the installation date.
 - e. State whether the system is still serviced by the manufacturer and whether the utility maintains a service contract.

18. Refer to the Application, Attachment 4, Schedule of Adjusted Operations – Water Utility. Also refer to Knox County Commission’s response to Commission’s February 28, 2024 Notice of Deficiencies, Case_No._2023-00430_NOD_Response.pdf, Revenue Requirement Calculation table. In the Revenue Requirement Table, Pro Forma Operating Expenses is reported as \$1,619,925. In the SAO Pro Forma Operating Expenses is reported as \$1,812,689. Reconcile and explain the difference between the two amounts.

19. Refer to the Application, Attachment 4, Debt Service Schedule. Also refer to Knox County Commission’s Response to Commission’s February 28, 2024 Notice of Deficiencies, Case_No._2023-00430_NOD_Response.pdf, Revenue Requirement Calculation table.

- a. In the Debt Service Schedule Table, The Total Average Annual Debt Principal and Interest payments is reported as \$191,273. In the Revenue Requirement

Calculation table, the Total Average Annual Debt Principal and Interest payments are reported as \$186,087. Reconcile and explain the difference between the two amounts.

b. In the Debt Service Schedule Table, the Total Average Annual Debt Principal and Interest payments is calculated using a five-year average. In the Revenue Requirement Calculation table, the Total Average Annual Debt Principal and Interest payments is calculated using a three-year average. Confirm whether Knox County Commission wants to use a three or a five-year average in its calculations.

20. Refer to Knox County Commission's Response to Commission's February 28, 2024 Notice of Deficiencies, Case_No._2023-00430_NOD_Response.pdf, Revenue Requirement Calculation table. The Debt Coverage Requirement of \$3,000 is approximately 1.612 percent of the Average Annual Debt Principal and Interest Payments. Confirm this is the correct percentage Knox County Commission's lending agency requires. If not, explain the discrepancy.

21. Refer to the Application, Attachment 4, Schedule of Adjusted Operations – Water Utility. Also Refer to the Application, Attachment 7, Tax Asset Detail Schedule. In the SAO, Depreciation expense it reported as \$239,386. In the Tax Asset Detail Schedule Tax Current Depreciation is reported as \$256,533. Reconcile and explain the difference between the two amounts.

22. Refer to 807 KAR 5:076 Section (5)(2)(a)–(c). State whether Knox County Commission provided notice to customers of the rate increase by mailings to customers, published in the newspaper of general circulation in Knox County Commission's service area, or published in a trade publication or newsletter delivered to all customers. If notification was published, provide the tear sheets showing the legal notice advertisement

published by Knox County Commission. If the notice was mailed to customers, provide a copy of the mailing and date of mailing.

23. Refer to 807 KAR 5:076 Section (5)(1)(b)(1) and (2). State whether Knox County Commission, within five business days of the date of the application was submitted to the Commission, posted on its website a copy of the public notice and a hyperlink to the location on the Commission's website where the case documents are available. If yes, please submit any proof of notice on the website with instructions on where to locate said publication. If not, explain why not.

24. Refer to the Application, Attachment 3, Current and Proposed Rates. Also refer to Attachment 5, Current Billing Analysis, and Attachment 6 Proposed Billing Analysis. The Current and Proposed Rates includes rates for a 3" meter; however, the 3" meter is not included in the current or the proposed Billing Analysis. Explain why is the 3" meters not included in the current or proposed Billing Analysis.

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