



For Immediate Release: 08/08/18

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18064/18-G-0133;18-G-0140

**Public Statement Hearings Scheduled for St. Lawrence Gas Proposals
— Comments Sought on Gas Rates and Proposed Acquisition by Liberty Utilities Co.—**

ALBANY — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today announced it was seeking public comment on two proposals submitted by St. Lawrence Gas Company, Inc. (St. Lawrence). One proposal concerns the gas rates charged by St. Lawrence; the other proposal concerns the proposed acquisition of St. Lawrence by Liberty Utilities Co. (Liberty).

On February 26, 2018, St. Lawrence filed a proposal seeking to continue a temporary gas revenue surcharge that is currently set to expire in late 2018. St. Lawrence proposes to continue the temporary revenue surcharge for its Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties Expansion Project for an additional 15 years. St. Lawrence states that, under its proposal, actual Expansion Project costs that are currently over budget would be recovered without an increase in base delivery rates. St. Lawrence claims that, in comparison to current bills, residential, commercial, and industrial customers would see decreases in their monthly gas bills of 10.4 percent, 10.1 percent, and 8.7 percent, respectively. The decrease in monthly charges results, in part, from spreading the cost recovery over a longer period.

On March 1, 2018, St. Lawrence and Liberty filed a joint petition seeking approval of the acquisition of St. Lawrence by Liberty and the issuance of debt related to that acquisition. Liberty and St. Lawrence claim, among other things, that the acquisition and related financing are in the public interest, will not adversely affect St. Lawrence's current customers or employees, and will provide net benefits. They add that the proposed financing will allow St. Lawrence to take advantage of relatively low interest rates and additional financing vehicles to replace current indebtedness at reasonable cost.

Under New York State law, the Commission may adopt or reject the proposals, in whole or in part, or modify them. In doing so, the Commission will consider changes proposed by the participating parties and the public.

Public Statement Hearings and Information Sessions

To provide individuals with information in advance of the public statement hearings, information sessions will be conducted during the hour preceding the public statement hearings. During these sessions, St. Lawrence representatives will provide a brief overview of the Company's proposals. In addition, an Administrative Law Judge will provide a brief overview of the review process. These presentations will be followed by a brief opportunity for questions and answers. Each information

session will conclude before the public statement hearing is scheduled to commence. The public statement hearings will be held as follows:

Wednesday, August 15, 2018
Malone Middle School Auditorium
15 Francis Street
Malone, NY 12953

Information session: 7:00 p.m.
Public statement hearing: 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 16, 2018
Potsdam Civic Center Community Room
38 Main Street
Potsdam, NY 13676

Information session: 2:00 p.m.
Public statement hearing: 3:00 p.m.

At the public statement hearings, those wishing to comment on St. Lawrence's proposals will have an opportunity to make a statement on the record. It is not necessary to make an appointment in advance or to present written material to speak at the hearing. Persons will be called to speak after completing a request card. A verbatim transcript of the hearing will be made for inclusion in the record of this proceeding.

Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations should call the Department of Public Service's Human Resources Management Office at (518) 474-2520 as soon as possible. TDD users may request a sign language interpreter by placing a call through the New York Relay Service at 711. Individuals with difficulty understanding or reading English are encouraged to call the Commission at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.

Other Ways to Comment

For those who cannot attend or prefer not to speak at a public statement hearing, there are several other ways to send comments to the Commission regarding the proposals. Comments should refer to "Case 18-G-0133 – St. Lawrence Rates" or "Case 18-G-0140 – St. Lawrence Acquisition."

Internet or Mail: Comments may be entered directly via the Commission's website at www.dps.ny.gov. Search using the case numbers 18-G-0133 or 18-G-0140, and then click on "Post Comments" at the top of the page; or email comments to the Secretary to the Commission at secretary@dps.ny.gov. Alternatively, comments may be mailed or delivered to Hon. Kathleen H. Burgess, Secretary, Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350.

Toll-Free Opinion Line: You may call the Commission's Opinion Line at 1-800-335-2120. This number is set up to take comments about pending cases from in-State callers, 24 hours a day. Press "2" to leave comments, referring to the "St. Lawrence rate case" or the "St. Lawrence acquisition case." Comments provided through the Opinion Line are not transcribed, but a summary is provided to the Commission for its consideration.

Written comments received by the Department will become part of the record considered by the Commission. Written comments may be viewed online (go to www.dps.ny.gov, click on "Search," search using case either case number ("18-G-0133" or "18-G-0140"), and then click on the "Public Comments" tab)

Comments submitted via these alternate means are requested by **August 30, 2018.**