



Department of Public Service

For Immediate Release: 01/26/21

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21011 / 20-W-0477

Virtual Public Statement Hearing to be Held Regarding Hudson Valley Water Cos.

Call for Hearings Stem from Department of Public Service Investigation

ALBANY — The New York State Department of Public Service (DPS) announced that it will hold a virtual public forum on February 2, 2021, to receive comments concerning a New York State Department of Public Service (Department) Staff Report on an investigation into the water quality, system quality, and business practices of Hudson Valley Water Companies, Inc. following the receipt of a complaint made by at least 25 customers of the utility company. Staff's report was issued for comment on October 2, 2020, pursuant to the New York State Administrative Procedure Act.

On August 9, 2019, the Department launched an investigation into the water quality, system quality, and business practices of Hudson Valley. The concerns included, but were not limited to, water quality, system reliability, rate affordability, and poor customer service.

The Commission is required to ensure that the public receives safe and adequate water service at just and reasonable rates. The Commission also has jurisdiction over the approval of the ownership and operation of water utilities; meter testing and approval; cost allocation; service standards; tariff terms; and utility communications with its customers of approved or proposed rates, charges, and tariff terms. The Department examines utilities' revenues, costs, and sales forecasts; reviews utility acquisitions; reviews short- and long-term system plans; investigates complaints related to customer service, rates and charges, and reliability of the system; and reviews utility tariffs and statements.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that, pursuant to PSL §89-j, a public statement hearing will be held virtually before Administrative Law Judge Dakin Lecakes, as follows:

DATE: Tuesday, February 2, 2021

TIME: 4:00 P.M.

Electronic Access: www.webex.com

Event Number: 179 551 2309

Password: Feb2-4pm

Phone-Only Access: (518) 549-0500

Access Code: 179 551 2309

Those wishing to comment on any aspect of this proceeding will have the opportunity to make a statement on the record at the virtual public statement hearing. **Any person wishing to provide a public statement must register in advance of the hearing.**

To register electronically: Participants who would like to provide a statement and will login to a hearing electronically may register to do so by visiting www.webex.com by **5:00 P.M. on February 1, 2021**. From the Webex homepage, registrants should click “Join” at the top right-hand corner of the screen, enter the appropriate event number listed above, and provide all requested information.

On the appropriate date and time of the hearing, please visit www.webex.com to log in to the hearing, click “Join” at the top right-hand corner of the screen, and input the appropriate event number for the hearing. You may need to “refresh” the webex home page if the “Join” button does not at first appear. Participants will be asked to “select audio system.” It is recommended that participants opt to have the system “call me” or “call using computer.” The “call me” option will require participants to enter their phone numbers.

To register by phone: Any participant who is not able to login to a hearing electronically may participate by phone. Call-in participants wishing to provide a statement may register to do so by calling 1-800-342-3330 by **5:00 P.M. on February 1, 2021**, where they should follow prompts to the appropriate hearing and provide the following information: first and last name, address, and phone number.

On the appropriate date and time of a hearing, all call-in users should dial (518) 549-0500 and enter the relevant access code listed above.

All participants will be muted upon entry into the hearing. The Administrative Law Judge will call on each person who has asked to make a statement. The public statement hearing will be held open until everyone who has registered to speak has been heard or other reasonable arrangements to submit comments into the record have been made. Time limits may be set for each speaker as necessary. It is recommended that lengthy comments be submitted in writing and summarized for oral presentation. A verbatim transcript of the hearing will be made for inclusion in the record of this case.

To listen to the hearing: Pre-registration is not required for any person who would like to listen to the hearing without making a statement. The hearing will be livestreamed on the internet and available for viewing on the Department of Public Service YouTube channel on the date and time listed above. To access that YouTube channel, visit the Department’s website, www.dps.ny.gov, and click on the YouTube icon at the bottom of the homepage. In addition, any person without internet access may listen to the hearings by phone by calling **(518) 549-0500** and entering the applicable access code.

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 Department at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this notice.

Other Ways to Comment

Those who prefer not to present comments at a public statement hearing may provide comments in several other ways.

Internet or Mail: Go to www.dps.ny.gov, then click on “Search” and enter the case number in the “Search by Case Number” field, and then click on “Post Comments” at the top right of the page; or send comments by email to the Secretary to the Commission at secretary@dps.ny.gov.

Alternatively, comments may be mailed to the Hon. Michelle L. Phillips, Secretary, New York State Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. All written comments will become part of the record considered by the Commission and may be accessed on the Department of Public Service website by searching the case number, as described above, and clicking on the “Public Comments” tab.

Toll-Free Opinion Line: You may call the Department of Public Service’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. These comments are not transcribed verbatim, but a summary is provided to the Commission. All submitted comments should refer to “Case 20-W-0477.” **Although comments will be accepted throughout the pendency of this proceeding, they are requested by February 5, 2021.**