



Agenda Date: 1/25/23
Agenda Item: VB

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 1st Floor
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350
www.nj.gov/bpu/

WATER

IN THE MATTER OF PINELANDS WASTEWATER)
COMPANY FOR APPROVAL OF AN INCREASE IN)
ITS RATES FOR WASTEWATER SERVICE AND)
OTHERWASTE WATER SERVICE AND OTHER)
TARIFF CHANGES)
)
) DOCKET NO. WR22090556
) OAL DOCKET NO. PUC 08516-2022S

Parties of Record:

Brian O. Lipman, Esq., Director, New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel
Jay L. Kooper, Esq., General Counsel, Pinelands Waste Water Company, Petitioner

BY THE BOARD:

On September 7, 2022, the Pinelands Wastewater Company (“Company” or “Petitioner”), a public utility within the State of New Jersey, with its principal business office located at 485C Route One South, Suite 400, Iselin, New Jersey 08830, filed a petition with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board”) to increase its rates for wastewater pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2-21 and N.J.A.C. 14:1-5.11 and 14:1-5.12 (“Petition”). Petitioner requested authorization to increase its base tariff rates and charges for wastewater service amounting to approximately \$417,160 or 26.76% above the adjusted annual revenue for the test year ending December 31, 2022 and for this increase in rates to take effect on October 7, 2023.¹ The Company serves customers in portions of Southampton Township (“Township”), Burlington County, including contract service for part of the Township itself.

The Petitioner stated that the proposed rate increase is necessary due to increase in expenses and a decreased wastewater treatment volumes, which have occurred since the rates were last set in 2019. The increase in expenses include the costs of power, chemicals, testing requirements, maintenance, security, taxes, insurance, labor and employee benefits. The Company is also engaged in a capital improvement program to maintain and improve safe, adequate and proper service to its customers. The Company claimed that the capital improvements and needed expense increases have improved the quality of service, but have

¹ By letter dated September 8, 2022, the Petitioner notified the Board that it will not implement the proposed rate increase on an interim basis prior to the effective date of the Board’s initial suspension order for this matter. However, it remains Petitioner’s intention to implement the proposed rates at the conclusion of the suspension period should the Board not issue a final Decision and Order by the end of the period.

impacted earnings. Further, the Petitioner argued that the current rates are inadequate to meet the Company's increased expenses and provide a reasonable return on its investment in the utility plant.²

This matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") for hearings as a contested case and was assigned to Administrative Law Judge Jacob S. Gertsman. On September 28, 2002, Board issued an Order suspending the proposed rates until February 7, 2023.

As the proposed revisions, if approved, will increase existing rates and change existing classifications in Petitioner's tariff, it is **HEREBY ORDERED** that:

- (1) Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2.21(d), the proposed revisions are further suspended until June 7, 2023, unless prior to that date the Board disposes of the Petition or enters an Order further suspending the proposed revisions;
- (2) Petitioner shall, at least 10 days prior to the date set for hearing on the Petition by the OAL, file with the Board, and with the OAL, proof of compliance with the notice provisions set forth in N.J.S.A. 48:2-32.2 and N.J.A.C. 14:1-5.12(b) and (c), including a statement that any relief found by the Board to be just and reasonable may be allocated by the Board to any class or classes of customers on any rate or schedule as the Board may determine; and
- (3) Petitioner shall serve copies of this Order upon the OAL; the Division of Rate Counsel; the clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of the affected county; and, where appropriate, the executive officer of the affected county. Service of the Petition, notice of hearings, and this Order may be made simultaneously. Proof of service of this Order shall be filed with the Board.

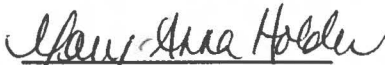
² See In re Pinelands Water Company for Approval of an Increase in its Rates for Water Service and Other Tariff Changes, Docket No. WR19030417, Order dated October 25, 2019.

This Order shall be effective on February 1, 2023.

DATED: January 25, 2023

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
BY:



JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO
PRESIDENT

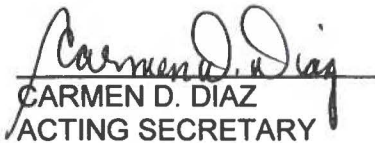
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DR. ZENON CHRISTODOULOU
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



CARMEN D. DIAZ
ACTING SECRETARY

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the within
document is a true copy of the original
in the files of the Board of Public Utilities.

IN THE MATTER OF PINELANDS WATER COMPANY FOR APPROVAL OF AN INCREASE
IN ITS RATES FOR WATER SERVICE AND OTHER TARIFF CHANGES

DOCKET NO.WR22090556

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