

**BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

<b>IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION</b>	)	<b>CASE NO. AVU-E-21-01</b>
<b>OF AVISTA CORPORATION FOR</b>	)	<b>AVU-G-21-01</b>
<b>AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS RATES</b>	)	
<b>AND CHARGES FOR ELECTRIC AND</b>	)	<b>NOTICE OF SCHEDULING</b>
<b>NATURAL GAS SERVICE TO ELECTRIC</b>	)	
<b>AND NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS IN THE</b>	)	<b>NOTICE OF PUBLIC</b>
<b>STATE OF IDAHO</b>	)	<b>WORKSHOP</b>
	)	
	)	<b>NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING</b>
	)	
	)	<b>NOTICE OF TECHNICAL</b>
	)	<b>HEARING</b>
	)	
	)	<b>ORDER NO. 35010</b>

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On January 29, 2021, Avista Corporation dba Avista Utilities (“Avista” or the “Company”) applied to increase its electric and natural gas rates for Idaho customers. *Application* at 1. In the Application, Avista requests approval of a “Two-Year Rate Plan” for the proposed electric and natural gas rate increases. *Id.* In “Rate Year 1,” Avista requests an electric base rate increase of \$24.8 million (10.1 percent) and a natural gas base rate increase of \$0.1 million (0.1 percent), effective September 1, 2021. *Id.* In “Rate Year 2,” Avista requests an electric base rate increase of \$8.7 million (3.2 percent) and a natural gas base rate increase of \$1.0 million (2.2 percent), effective September 1, 2022. *Id.*

Avista represents that these proposed rate increases would be offset by the effect of Tax Customer Credit Tariff Schedules 76 (electric) and 176 (natural gas)<sup>1</sup> and the Deferred Depreciation Credit Tariff Schedule 177 (natural gas). *Id.* Avista states the proposed amortization of \$31.3 million in electric tax benefits from Schedule 76, beginning on September 1, 2021, would completely offset Avista’s requested electric rate relief for Rate Year 1 until about November 30,

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<sup>1</sup> The proposed offset to the requested rate increases in Tariff Schedules 76 and 176 come from Case Nos. AVU-E-20-12 and AVU-G-20-01 wherein the Commission approved Avista’s request to change its accounting method. *See* Order No. 34906. The Commission found that this accounting change could provide immediate benefits to customers, subject to similar approvals in other jurisdictions where Avista provides services. Order No. 34906 at 3.

2022. *Id.* at 1-2. However, Avista represents that its Idaho electric customers would see an \$8.7 million (3.5 percent) bill increase for Rate Year 2, effective September 1, 2022. *Id.* at 2.

Avista also states the proposed 10-year amortization of \$12.1 million in natural gas tax benefits from Schedule 176, beginning September 1, 2021, would result in about \$1.2 million in benefits per year. *Id.* at 2. The Company states these benefits would offset the proposed \$0.1 million natural gas base rate increase in Rate Year 1, decreasing natural gas customers' bills by about 1.8 percent. *Id.*

For Rate Year 2 Avista proposes to amortize its "Natural Gas Deferred Depreciation Expense" balance of about \$0.9 million for one-year, effective September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023, offsetting the proposed \$1.0 million increase through Schedule 177. *Id.* Avista represents that, after application of Schedule 176 and 177 impacts, customers would see an 0.1 percent increase, effective September 1, 2022. *Id.*

On February 23, 2021, the Commission issued a Notice of Application and Notice of Intervention Deadline. *See* Order No. 34930. The Idaho Conservation League, Walmart Inc., Community Action Partnership Association of Idaho, Idaho Forest Group LLC, and Clearwater Paper Corporation intervened as parties. *See* Order Nos. 34940, 34953, 34958 and 34967.

With this Order, we adopt the parties' proposed schedule for this case and schedule a telephonic public workshop, a telephonic customer hearing for Avista's customers to testify about the Company's Application, and a technical hearing for the parties to offer evidence and testimony and to allow for the cross-examination of witnesses.

### **NOTICE OF SCHEDULING**

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that the Commission adopts the following schedule:

Settlement Conference for parties	May 19, 2021
Public Workshop	June 16, 2021
Staff/Intervenor Prefile Testimony	June 23, 2021
Customer Hearing	July 14, 2021
Company Rebuttal Testimony	July 19, 2021
Technical Hearing	August 2-3, 2021

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all testimony and exhibits in this matter must comport with Rules 231 and 267 of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure. IDAPA 31.01.01.231 and .267.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the parties have been directed to serve discovery, testimony, and exhibits among themselves by electronic mail pursuant to Rule 63. IDAPA 31.01.01.063.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that when filing discovery with the Commission, the parties shall provide an original and three copies to the Commission Secretary. IDAPA 31.01.01.061.02.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that persons desiring to state a position on Avista’s Application may file a written comment explaining why the person supports or opposes the Application by the close of business on August 3, 2021. Comments must be filed through the Commission website or by e-mail unless computer access is unavailable. To comment electronically, please access the Commission’s home page at [www.puc.idaho.gov](http://www.puc.idaho.gov). Click the “Case Comment Form” and complete the form using the case number as it appears on the front of this document. To file by e-mail, the customer must e-mail the comments to the e-mail addresses listed below. In addition to submitting the comments to the Commission Secretary, the customer must also e-mail Avista at the e-mail addresses listed below. If computer access is unavailable, then comments may be mailed to the Commission and Company at these addresses:

**For the Idaho Public Utilities Commission:**

Commission Secretary  
Idaho Public Utilities Commission  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0074

[secretary@puc.idaho.gov](mailto:secretary@puc.idaho.gov)

Street Address for Express Mail:

11331 W. Chinden Blvd.,  
Building 8, Suite 201-A  
Boise, ID 83714

**For Avista:**

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Spokane, WA 99220-3727  
[pat.ehrbar@avistacorp.com](mailto:pat.ehrbar@avistacorp.com)

### **NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP**

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that Staff will hold a telephonic, public, informational workshop for Avista customers on **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 2021, AT 6:00 PM (PDT)**. The purpose of the workshop is to provide customers with an overview of the Application and Staff's analysis regarding how Avista's proposed rate increases for electric and natural gas service would impact customers. At the workshop, customers may ask Staff about the Application and how customers may further participate in the proceeding. Avista representatives will also be available. To participate online, please visit **idahogov.webex.com** and enter **133 194 8246**. At the next window, enter your name, e-mail address and the password **June16Meeting**. To participate by telephone, please call **1-415-655-0001** and enter the passcode **133 194 8246** when prompted.

### **NOTICE OF CUSTOMER HEARING**

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission will conduct a telephonic customer hearing in this matter on **WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 2021, AT 6:00 PM (PDT)**. The purpose of the telephonic customer hearing is to take testimony from members of the public and customers of Avista. To participate, please call **1-415-655-0001** and enter the passcode **133 481 5766** when prompted. Those planning on testifying are encouraged to join the hearing at 5:45 PM (PDT).

### **NOTICE OF TECHNICAL HEARING**

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission will conduct a technical hearing on **MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2021, COMMENCING AT 9:30 A.M. (MDT) IN THE COMMISSION HEARING ROOM, 11331 W. CHINDEN BLVD, BUILDING 8, SUITE 201A, BOISE, IDAHO 83714 AND CONTINUING ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2021, IF NECESSARY.**

NOTICE OF SCHEDULING  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
NOTICE OF CUSTOMER HEARING  
NOTICE OF TECHNICAL HEARING  
ORDER NO. 35010

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the public workshop and all hearings in this matter will meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Persons needing the help of a sign language interpreter or other assistance to participate in or to understand testimony and argument at a workshop or hearing must ask the Commission to provide that assistance. The request for assistance must be received by the Commission at least five (5) working days before the pertinent workshop or hearing, and must be made by contacting the Commission Secretary at:

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 83720 BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0074  
(208) 334-0338 (Telephone)  
(208) 334-3762 (FAX)  
Mail: [secretary@puc.idaho.gov](mailto:secretary@puc.idaho.gov)

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the record in this matter is available for public inspection during regular business hours at the Commission offices. The record is available on the Commission's web site at [www.puc.idaho.gov](http://www.puc.idaho.gov). Click on the "Electric" or "Natural Gas" icon, select "Open Cases," and click on the case number (Case No. AVU-E-21-01 for electric or AVU-G-21-01 for natural gas) as shown on this document.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this matter will be conducted pursuant to the Commission's Rules of Procedure, IDAPA 31.01.01.000, *et seq.*

### **ORDER**

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED the procedural schedule proposed by the parties set forth in the above Notice of Scheduling is approved.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that anyone may file written comments with the Commission about the Company's Application through the close of business on August 3, 2021.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Commission Staff hold a telephonic, public, informational, customer workshop on Wednesday, June 16, 2021, at 6:00 PM (PDT).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Commission will hold a telephonic customer hearing at which customers and interested members of the public may testify on Wednesday, July 14, 2021, at 6:00 PM (PDT).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Commission will hold a technical hearing for the parties to offer evidence and examine witnesses on Monday, August 2, 2021, at 9:30 AM (MDT). The technical hearing will continue Tuesday, August 3, 2021, if necessary.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that parties should continue to comply with Order No. 34781, issued September 17, 2020. All pleadings should be filed with the Commission electronically and shall be deemed timely filed when received by the Commission Secretary. See Rule 14.02. Service between parties should also be accomplished electronically. Voluminous discovery-related documents may be filed and served on CD-ROM or a USB flash drive.

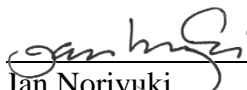
DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April 2021.

  
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PAUL KJELLANDER, PRESIDENT

  
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KRISTINE RAPER, COMMISSIONER

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ERIC ANDERSON, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jan Noriyuki  
Commission Secretary

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