

MEDIA RELEASE

VERMONT PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD OPENS PROCEEDING TO REVIEW UTILITY REGULATION

Montpelier, June 26, 2017 – Today, the Vermont Public Service Board issued an Order opening an investigation into the manner in which electric and natural gas utilities are regulated in Vermont. In opening this proceeding, the Board noted that substantial transformations in technology, state policy, and other areas have altered the regulatory landscape and that it would be appropriate to reexamine Vermont’s regulatory structure to assess how well it reflects these changes.

In recent years, new state policies such as the Renewable Energy Standard and increased energy efficiency goals have changed the role of Vermont’s utilities, focusing them on the procurement of alternatives to fossil-fuel-based energy. At the same time, the advent of new technology, such as cold-climate heat pumps, electric vehicles, and energy storage, are creating new opportunities in the utility sector, but also present technical challenges like how to integrate intermittent resources and new types of consumption into utilities’ distribution systems. Over the past ten years, Vermont’s utilities have generally operated under alternative regulation plans, but these plans have not been comprehensively evaluated for their effectiveness, especially in light of the changing utility landscape. In opening this investigation, the Board wishes to consider how best to align regulatory practices with the policy goals and changing realities of Vermont’s utility sector.

As part of this investigation, the Board invites comments from interested stakeholders and the public. The Board also plans to hold at least one informal workshop discussion. The Board has established a date July 18, 2017, as an initial deadline for comments on potential topics for discussion at the workshop, which will take place on August 8, 2017. Any person or organization interested in participating in the proceeding should contact the Clerk of the Board at psb.clerk@vermont.gov or (802) 828-2358.

The investigation was opened in response to a request from the Vermont Department of Public Service, which recommended that the Board conduct a workshop process to evaluate existing forms of regulation in Vermont.

For more information about this proceeding, please visit <http://psb.vermont.gov/utilityregulationproceeding>

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For immediate release.

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