

State of Florida



## Public Service Commission

CAPITAL CIRCLE OFFICE CENTER • 2540 SHUMARD OAK BOULEVARD  
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0850

-M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M-

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**DATE:** April 6, 2015  
**TO:** Carlotta S. Stauffer, Commission Clerk, Office of Commission Clerk  
**FROM:** Melinda Watts, Engineering Specialist, Division of Engineering *MW*  
**RE:** DN 140158-WS – Application for increase in water/wastewater rates in Highlands County by HC Waterworks, Inc.

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Please file the attached correspondence in the correspondence side of the above mentioned docket file.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONERS:  
ART GRAHAM, CHAIRMAN  
LISA POLAK EDGAR  
RONALD A. BRISÉ  
JULIE I. BROWN  
JIMMY PATRONIS

STATE OF FLORIDA



DIVISION OF ENGINEERING  
TOM BALLINGER  
DIRECTOR  
(850) 413-6910

## Public Service Commission

April 6, 2015

Mr. Manuel Ernhart  
1912 Sentinel Point Road  
Sebring, FL 33875

**Re: Docket No. 140158-WS – Application for increase in water/wastewater rates in Highlands County by HC Waterworks, Inc.**

Dear Mr. Ernhart:

Thank you for expressing your concerns regarding the rate increase petition filed by HC Waterworks, Inc. (HCWW or Utility). To ensure that the Commission staff and the Commissioners have knowledge of your concerns, your letter has been placed on the correspondence side of the docket file for all to review.

The Commission is required to set rates that are just, reasonable, compensatory, and not unfairly discriminatory and we use the rate of return methodology as set forth in Chapter 367, Florida Statutes. The Commission's accountants, engineers, and economists examine the financial and engineering information filed by the Utility as part of its rate increase application. The Commission's auditors also examine this information and publish the results of their findings in an audit report. All costs found to be imprudent or unreasonable are disallowed. Please remember that there are many factors that affect the cost of providing service: including, the size and age of the utility system; the cost of water and wastewater bulk services; the number of customers; and the geographic spread of the service area.

The Commission's staff also makes a recommendation regarding the overall quality of service provided by a utility after evaluating: (1) the quality of the utility's product; (2) the operating conditions of the utility's facilities; and, (3) the utility's attempt to address customers' satisfaction. As part of this evaluation we review sanitary surveys, outstanding citations, violations, and consent orders on file with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the County Health Department over the preceding three-year period, along with input from the DEP and health department officials.

Mr. Manuel Ernhart

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We also review complaints regarding secondary water quality standards<sup>1</sup> for a five- year period and consider customer comments and complaints.

We thank you for taking the time to express your concerns regarding the Utility's proposed rate increase. You may monitor the status of this docket by visiting the FPSC's website at [www.psc.state.fl.us](http://www.psc.state.fl.us). If you have any additional questions, or require further assistance, please call me by phone at (850) 413-6952 or by e-mail at [mwatts@psc.state.fl.us](mailto:mwatts@psc.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,



Melinda Watts  
Engineering Specialist III

MW:tj

cc: Office of Commission Clerk (Docket No. 140158-WS)

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<sup>1</sup> Secondary water quality standards are contaminants, such as odor and color; customers would notice but are not a health risk.