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Public Service Commission

July 27, 2015

RECEIVED - FPSC
15 JUL 27 PM 1:35
COMMISSION
CLERK

Mr. and Mrs. William Behn
7838 County Road 109
Lady Lake, FL 32159-8805

Re: Docket No. 140217-WU - Application for increase in water rates in Sumter County by Cedar Acres, Inc.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Behn:

Thank you for expressing your concerns about the rate increase petition filed by Cedar Acres, Inc. (Cedar Acres 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.

You mention in your comments that you have lived in the development that Cedar Acres serves for twenty-four years. During that time and since its beginning (approximately 1986), Cedar Acres has had no rate adjustment. Unfortunately, due to the amount of time that has lapsed between the original rates being set and this rate proceeding, along with other factors, the possible percentage increase is significant. However, the rates proposed in the staff report are preliminary.

Many factors affect the cost of providing water service. They can include: the size and age of the utility system; the quality of the water at its source; the number of customers; and the geographic spread of the service area. Moreover, for Cedar Acres, an additional component affecting the potential rate increase has to do with the length of time between initial rates being set and this rate proceeding.

During a rate case, the Commission's accountants, engineers, and economists examine the financial and engineering information that is gathered through the audit and data requests, etc. The Commission's auditors examine a utility's books and records and publish the results of their findings in an audit report. The engineers conduct a site visit along with research at other regulatory agencies. All of the information is processed and any costs found to be imprudent or unreasonable are disallowed.

Mr. and Mrs. Behn

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Rates are increased relative to a utility's revenue requirement and are designed in order to allow a utility the opportunity to recover its reasonable and prudent costs for providing service and a reasonable rate of return on its investment in facilities necessary to provide such water service. The rates and revenue requirement do not include any past losses for a utility. Rates are set in a manner that will ensure that those customers who pay their bill timely will not be subsidizing any customers who do not pay their bill timely. On this topic, staff is considering implementing a late payment fee to deter customers from untimely payments of their bill.

Subsequent to the issuance of the staff report, much analytical work is performed, and additional information is obtained prior to staff making a determination that will be included in its recommendation to the Commissioners for their consideration and vote. Staff is gathering additional information to make a final determination regarding the appropriate revenue requirement and rates for the Utility.

We appreciate your letter and understand your concerns regarding the Utility's proposed rate increase. I hope the above information has been helpful. If you have any additional questions, or require further assistance, please call me at (850) 413-6922 or email me at cgallowa@psc.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,



Cecilia Galloway
Public Utility Analyst

cc: Division of Accounting and Finance (Norris, Fletcher, Smith)
Division of Engineering (Mtenga, Rieger, Vickery)
Division of Economics (Thompson, Hudson)
Office of Commission Clerk (Docket No. 140217-WU)