

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition for rate increase by Peoples Gas System, Inc.	DOCKET NO. 20230023-GU
In re: Petition for approval of 2022 depreciation study, by Peoples Gas System, Inc.	DOCKET NO. 20220219-GU
In re: Petition for approval of depreciation rate and subaccount for renewable natural gas facilities leased to others, by Peoples Gas System, Inc.	DOCKET NO. 20220212-GU ORDER NO. PSC-2023-0242-CFO-GU ISSUED: August 16, 2023

ORDER GRANTING MOTIONS FOR TEMPORARY PROTECTIVE ORDER
(DOCUMENT NOS. 03706-2023 AND 03913-2023)

On or about June 7, 2023, the Office of Public Counsel (OPC) requested invoices associated with Account 913. On April 11, 2023, OPC served on Peoples Gas System, Inc. (PGS) its First Request for Production of Documents (Nos. 1-48). On June 13, 2023, OPC served PGS its Tenth Request for Production of Documents (Nos. 98-99). These discovery requests and invoice request are collectively referred to as “OPC’s Requests.”

On June 20, 2023, pursuant to Rule 25-22.006(6)(c), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), PGS filed a Motion for Temporary Protective Order (Motion)¹ to exempt from Section 119.07(1), Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Account 913 invoices and portions of its responses to OPC’s First Request for Production of Documents. On July 5, 2023, PGS filed another Motion for Temporary Protective Order,² requesting to keep confidential its responses to OPC’s Tenth Request for Production of Documents (No. 98-99).

Motion for Temporary Protective Order

In its Motions, PGS contends that its responses to OPC’s Requests contain proprietary information regarding invoices related to Account 913 as well as discussions about equity and debt issuances from 2018-2023. In addition, PGS contends it will provide internal documentation related to the 2023 Transaction to incorporate PGS as a standalone legal entity.

PGS contends that all or portions of its responses to OPC’s Requests constitute “proprietary confidential business information” and are entitled to protection against public disclosure pursuant to 366.093, F.S. PGS contends that the disclosure of this information could adversely affect the economic interests of PGS and its customers.

¹ Document No. 03706-2023, filed in Docket No. 20230023-GU

² Document No. 03913-2023, filed in Docket No. 20230023-GU

Section 366.093(2), F.S., directs that all records produced pursuant to a discovery request for which proprietary confidential status is requested shall be treated by any party subject to the public records law as confidential and exempt from Section 119.07(1), F.S. Rule 25-22.006(6), F.A.C., codifies the Commission's policy regarding the protection of confidential information from public disclosure during the discovery process in a manner that is not overly burdensome to both parties. Rule 25-22.006(6)(a), F.A.C., in pertinent part, states:

In any formal proceeding before the Commission, any utility or other person may request a protective order protecting proprietary confidential business information from discovery. Upon a showing by a utility or other person and a finding by the Commission that the material is entitled to protection, the Commission shall enter a protective order limiting discovery in the manner provided for in Rule 1.280, Florida Rules of Civil Procedure.

In addition, Rule 25-22.006(6)(c), F.A.C., states that if a party allows OPC to inspect or take possession of utility information, then that "utility may request a temporary protective order exempting the information from Section 119.07(1), F.S." The rule further requires the utility to file a specific request for a protective order under paragraph (a) of the rule if the information is to be used in the proceeding before the Commission.

Ruling

Upon consideration of PGS's assertions of the confidential nature of the information contained in PGS's responses to OPC's Requests and Document Nos. 03706-2023 and 03913-2023, PGS's Motions for Temporary Protective Order are hereby granted. As a result, this information shall be protected from disclosure pursuant to Rule 25-22.006(6), F.A.C.

Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by Commissioner Gabriella Passidomo, as Prehearing Officer, that Peoples Gas System, Inc.'s Motions for Temporary Protective Order as set forth in Document Nos. 03706-2023 and 03913-2023 are granted, pursuant to the terms and conditions set forth in this Order.

By ORDER of Commissioner Gabriella Passidomo, as Prehearing Officer, this 16th day
of August, 2023.



Gabriella Passidomo
Commissioner and Prehearing Officer
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Copies furnished: A copy of this document is provided to the parties of record at the time of issuance and, if applicable, interested persons.

AAW/MRT

NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.569(1), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

Mediation may be available on a case-by-case basis. If mediation is conducted, it does not affect a substantially interested person's right to a hearing.

Any party adversely affected by this order, which is preliminary, procedural or intermediate in nature, may request: (1) reconsideration within 10 days pursuant to Rule 25-22.0376, Florida Administrative Code; or (2) judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court, in the case of an electric, gas or telephone utility, or the First District Court of Appeal, in the case of a water or wastewater utility. A motion for reconsideration shall be filed with the Office of Commission Clerk, in the form prescribed by Rule 25-22.0376, Florida Administrative Code. Judicial review of a preliminary, procedural or intermediate ruling or order is available if review of the final action will not provide an adequate remedy. Such review may be requested from the appropriate court, as described above, pursuant to Rule 9.100, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.