



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

NOTICE OF FILING AND PUBLIC HEARING

D.P.U. 24-157

November 26, 2024

Petition of Aquarius Water Company, Inc. d/b/a Ashmere Water Service, pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 94, G.L. c. 165, § 2, and 220 CMR 5.00 for Approval of a General Increase in Rates.

On October 8, 2024, Aquarius Water Company, Inc. d/b/a Ashmere Water Service ("Company") filed a petition with the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") for approval of a general increase in rates. The Department has docketed this matter as D.P.U. 24-157 and has suspended the effective date of the proposed increase until September 1, 2025, to investigate the Company's request. The Company last received a rate increase in Ashmere Water Company, D.P.U. 93-120 (1994).

The Company currently charges annual rates of \$375.00 for permanent residents and \$200.00 for summer residents. The Company states that its current revenues are insufficient to cover its expenses and set aside reserves and proposes a total of four rate increases over four years. The Company first proposes to increase its annual rates to \$500.00 (33 percent) for permanent residents and \$240.00 (20 percent) for summer residents. The Company proposes further increases of \$100.00 every twelve months until the annual rates are \$800.00 for permanent residents and \$540.00 for summer residents (total increases of about 113 percent and 170 percent, respectively).

The Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ("Attorney General") filed a notice to intervene in this matter pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E. On November 7, 2024, the Department designated Marc Tassone, Esq. of the Legal Division and Paul Osborne of the Rates and Revenue Requirements Division as settlement intervention staff to participate as a full party in this proceeding.

The Department will conduct a public hearing to receive comments on the Company's petition. The Department will conduct the public hearing using Zoom videoconferencing on **January 16, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.** Attendees can join by entering the link, <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82267754166>, from a computer, smartphone, or tablet. No prior software download is required. For audio-only access to the hearings, attendees can dial in at 646-558-8656 (not toll free) and then enter the **Meeting ID# 822 6775 4166**. If you

anticipate providing comments via Zoom during the public hearing, please send an email by **January 7, 2025**, to annemarie.belle@mass.gov with your name, email address, and mailing address. If you anticipate commenting by telephone, please leave a voicemail message by **January 7, 2025**, at 617-305-3702 with your name, telephone number, and mailing address.

Any person interested in commenting on this matter may submit written comments no later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **January 17, 2025**. Written comments from the public may be sent by email to dpu.efiling@mass.gov, annemarie.belle@mass.gov and the Company's owner, Gertrude Drosehn at gdrosehn@yahoo.com. Please note that in the interest of transparency any comments will be posted to our website as received and without redacting personal information, such as addresses, telephone numbers, or email addresses. As such, consider the extent of information you wish to share when submitting comments. The Department strongly encourages public comments to be submitted by email. If, however, a member of the public is unable to send written comments by email, a paper copy may be sent to Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts, 02110.

Any person who desires to participate otherwise in the evidentiary phase of this proceeding shall file a petition for leave to intervene no later than 5:00 p.m. on **January 3, 2025**. A petition for leave to intervene must satisfy the timing and substantive requirements of 220 CMR 1.03. Receipt by the Department constitutes filing and determines whether a petition has been timely filed. A petition filed late may be disallowed as untimely, unless good cause is shown for waiver under 220 CMR 1.01(4). To be allowed, a petition under 220 CMR 1.03(1) must satisfy the standing requirements of G.L. c. 30A, § 10. All responses to petitions to intervene must be filed by the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the second business day after the petition to intervene was filed.

All documents should be submitted to the Department in **.pdf format** by e-mail attachment to dpu.efiling@mass.gov and annemarie.belle@mass.gov. The text of the e-mail must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 24-157); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website through our online File Room as soon as practicable (enter "24-157") at: <https://eeaonline.eea.state.ma.us/DPU/Fileroom/dockets/bynumber>. In addition, one copy of all written comments and petitions to intervene should be emailed to the Company's owner at gdrosehn@yahoo.com.

The filing and all subsequent related documents submitted to or issued by the Department will be available on the Department's website as referenced above as soon as is practicable. To the extent a person or entity wishes to submit comments or intervene in accordance with this Notice, electronic submission, as detailed above, is sufficient. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), contact the Department's ADA coordinator at

eeadiversity@mass.gov, 617-626-1282. To request an interpreter at the hearing, please contact the Department's ADA coordinator at eeadiversity@mass.gov, 617-626-1282 by **January 9, 2025**.

For further information regarding the Company's filing, please contact the Company's owner, Gertrude Drosehn at gdrosehn@yahoo.com. For further information regarding this Notice, please contact Annemarie Belle, Hearing Officer, Department of Public Utilities, at annemarie.belle@mass.gov.