



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

MEMORANDUM

TO: Service List in D.P.U. 17-140

FROM: Staci Rubin, Hearing Officer

RE: Joint Petition of Electric Distribution Companies for Approval of Model Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target Tariff pursuant to An Act Relative to Solar Energy, St. 2016, c. 75, § 11(b), 225 CMR 20.00., D.P.U. 17-140, Rescheduling Evidentiary Hearings

DATE: March 12, 2018

CC: Mark Marini, Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

On September 12, 2017, Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil, Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid, and NSTAR Electric Company and Western Massachusetts Electric Company, each d/b/a Eversource Energy (collectively “Electric Distribution Companies”) filed a Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target tariff (“SMART Provision”) to implement An Act Relative to Solar Energy, St. 2016, c. 75, § 11(b), G. L. c. 25A, § 6, and 225 CMR 20.00 (“SMART Program Regulations”). The SMART Program Regulations establish a voluntary statewide solar incentive program (“SMART Program”). 225 CMR 20.00. The SMART Regulations encourage the Electric Distribution Companies to jointly develop and submit a SMART Provision to the Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) for review and approval. 225 CMR 20.02, 20.05(2), 20.07(3)(a)(11). The Department has docketed this petition as D.P.U. 17-140.

Last week, I issued a Hearing Officer Memorandum limiting the scope of evidentiary hearings and confirming the order of witness appearance (Hearing Officer Memorandum

at 2-3 (March 7, 2018)). This Memorandum discusses the need to postpone evidentiary hearings and modify the procedural schedule.

II. POSTPONING EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS

Pursuant to the Procedural Schedule and Ground Rules issued on November 13, 2017, the Department scheduled evidentiary hearings on March 14-16, 2018. On March 7, 2018, I issued a memorandum: (1) limiting the scope of the evidentiary hearings to examination of all matters of the SMART Provision excluding FCM matters; (2) stating that the Department may re-open discovery for the limited purpose of questioning estimated SMART Program costs and schedule one or more additional days of evidentiary hearings, depending on the content of the information filed by the Electric Distribution Companies in response to outstanding information requests (see Exh. DPU 2-5); and (3) establishing an order of witness appearance (Hearing Officer Memorandum at 2-3 (March 7, 2018)). I further noted that the Department may reassess the evidentiary hearing dates based on weather events currently predicted to occur this week (Hearing Officer Memorandum at 2-3, n.2 (March 7, 2018)).

At this time, the Department expects storm activation and potential for widespread power outages. Therefore, the Department is canceling the hearings scheduled for March 14-16, 2018 and is working diligently with the parties to reschedule the evidentiary hearings as soon as practicable. I will send a subsequent Hearing Officer Memorandum confirming the rescheduled hearing dates and order of witness appearance. The rescheduled hearing dates may not occur consecutively. I anticipate that the order of witness appearance will change from the order listed in the March 7, 2018 Hearing Officer Memorandum. Additionally, the Department is postponing the briefing schedule. Consequently, the deadline for intervenors to file initial briefs is not March 30, 2018. I will confirm the revised briefing schedule in writing. The Department intends to retain a staggered briefing schedule where intervenor initial briefs will be due first, followed by the Electric Distribution Companies' initial brief, then the intervenor reply briefs, and concluding with the Electric Distribution Companies' reply brief.

For further information regarding this memorandum, please contact me at (617) 305-3592.