
From: Peg Ryan
Sent: Sunday, November 22, 2009 7:01:25 PM
To: PUC
Subject: Proposed Black Hills Power Rate Increase
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Dear Commissioners:

I understand you will be holding a public meeting in Rapid City on 11/24 regarding the rate increase proposed by Black Hills Power. I cannot attend the meeting, but I have a couple of questions which I think should be considered:

1) What specifically will the increased revenue be used for? Will any of it be directed toward research and/or development of alternative energy generation such as wind or solar? I understand that one of the obstacles facing large scale development of these renewable energy sources is distribution systems. Also in many areas existing distribution systems and other infrastructure needs upgrading and improvement. Will any of the revenue generated by the rate increase be used to research and/or develop or improve distribution systems?

2) How much of the proposed revenue increase will be used to increase the salaries of current employees? Although I certainly understand that workers (and executives) would like to have raises, in these times of economic hardship when many other workers are at best not receiving any salary increases and may even be seeing layoffs or reductions in hours, it hardly seems appropriate to ask the public for more money for salary increases - or shareholder dividends. Also, I recently read that BHP received a grant for digital meters. Doesn't this mean that eventually meter readers will become obsolete? Won't this mean savings for BHP by reducing the need for these workers? Even if (as certainly would be hoped) these workers can be reassigned to different jobs, there would still be savings in travel time and productivity. Have these savings been accounted for in determining the amount of rate increase required?

I hope you will post the notes from this meeting on your web site. I look forward to reading them.

Thank you for this opportunity to ask questions.

Sincerely,

Peg Ryan
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