



SIXTH FLOOR, 900 HOWE STREET, BOX 250
VANCOUVER, BC V6Z 2N3 CANADA
web site: <http://www.bcuc.com>

**BRITISH COLUMBIA
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**ORDER
NUMBER G-181-15**

TELEPHONE: (604) 660-4700
BC TOLL FREE: 1-800-663-1385
FACSIMILE: (604) 660-1102

IN THE MATTER OF
the *Utilities Commission Act*, RSBC 1996, Chapter 473

and

an Application by FortisBC Energy Inc.
for Approval of Biomethane Energy Recovery Charge Rate Methodology

BEFORE: D. M. Morton, Panel Chair/Commissioner
H. G. Harowitz, Commissioner November 19, 2015
K. A. Keilty, Commissioner

O R D E R

WHEREAS:

- A. By Order G-210-13 and its Decision dated December 11, 2013 (2013 Decision), the British Columbia Utilities Commission (Commission) approved the continuance of the FortisBC Energy Inc. (FEI) biomethane program on a permanent basis with certain modifications as directed in the 2013 Decision. The 2013 Decision set out a cost-based rate methodology for determining the Biomethane Energy Recovery Charge (BERC) that recovers all biomethane program costs;
- B. On August 28, 2015, FEI filed an application for Approval of Biomethane Energy Recovery Charge Rate Methodology (Application), pursuant to sections 59–61 of the *Utilities Commission Act*. In the Application FEI is seeking approval of a non cost-based BERC rate methodology, mechanisms for transferring costs and unsold biomethane volumes out of the Biomethane Variance Account for recovery from FEI's non-bypass ratepayers and revised reporting requirements;
- C. On September 18, 2015 the Commission issued Order G-147-15 establishing the initial regulatory timetable which included a round of written information requests followed by a procedural conference to determine the remaining regulatory process;
- D. The following parties registered as interveners in the proceeding:
 - i. British Columbia Old Age Pensioners' Organization *et al*;
 - ii. B.C. Sustainable Energy Association and the Sierra Club B.C., jointly; and
 - iii. Commercial Energy Consumers Association of British Columbia.

- E. The Commission and each of the three registered interveners submitted information requests (Information Request No. 1). FEI filed written responses to Information Request No. 1 on November 6, 2015;
- F. By letter dated November 10, 2015, the Commission requested that at the procedural conference scheduled for November 16, 2015, parties specifically address questions regarding the need for further regulatory process and the nature of such process as well as the extent to which it is necessary to clarify the scope of the proceeding regarding the subject Application;
- G. The procedural conference, held on November 16, 2015 was attended by FEI, the three registered interveners and Commission staff. Each of the parties, including Commission counsel on behalf of Commission staff, made submissions;
- H. FEI pointed out that in the event the Commission directs a streamlined review process (SRP), it may be difficult to be fully prepared for all technically complex questions that may arise. FEI also agreed to present oral final argument at an SRP. Intervenors' requested that their final argument be by written process following the SRP; and
- I. The Commission determined at the procedural conference that additional regulatory process is required and that it should be a Streamlined Review Process (SRP) and that parties may submit questions of a more technical nature to FEI in advance to assist FEI in its preparation for the SRP.
- J. The Commission has established the regulatory timetable for the remaining regulatory process.

NOW THEREFORE the Commission orders as follows:

1. The regulatory timetable for the remaining regulatory process for the FortisBC Energy Inc. (FEI) Application for Approval of Biomethane Energy Recovery Charge Rate Methodology is established as set out in Appendix A to this order.
2. Registered interveners intending to apply for participant assistance in this proceeding must submit a budget estimate by Friday, December 11, 2015, consistent with the Commission's Participant Assistance/Cost Award Guidelines and Order G-72-07. Copies of the Guidelines are available upon request or can be downloaded from the Commission's website at <http://www.bcuc.com>.
3. A streamlined review process (SRP) is scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2016 commencing at 9:00 a.m., in the Commission's Hearing Room on the 12th Floor, 1125 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC. FEI is directed to present its final argument orally at the SRP. Intervenors will file written final argument by Monday, February 15, 2016 and FEI will file written reply by Tuesday February 23, 2016. Details regarding the Commission's SRP can be found on the Commission website at www.bcuc.com.

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4. Parties wishing to submit questions in advance of the SRP to facilitate the efficient review of more technical issues at the SRP are directed to submit these questions in writing to FEI by Thursday January 14, 2016 with copies to the Commission and the other parties. FEI is directed to respond to these questions at the SRP.

DATED at the City of Vancouver, In the Province of British Columbia, this *19th* day of November 2015.

BY ORDER

Original signed by:

D. M. Morton
Commissioner

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REGULATORY TIMETABLE

ACTION	DATE (year)
Filing of Participant Assistance/Cost Award Budgets	Friday, December 11, 2015
Written Technical Questions to FEI	Thursday, January 14, 2016
Streamlined Review Process* including FEI Final Argument	Wednesday, February 3, 2016 Commencing at 9:00 a.m.
Intervener Final Argument	Monday, February 15, 2016
FEI Reply	Tuesday, February 23, 2016

*Location: Commission Hearing Room
12th Floor, 1125 Howe Street
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2K8