

ORDER NO. 87657

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SANDPIPER ENERGY, INC. FOR A GENERAL INCREASE IN ITS NATURAL GAS AND PROPOANE RATES AND FOR APPROVAL OF CERTAIN OTHER CHANGES TO ITS TARIFF	* * * * * * *	BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF MARYLAND _____ CASE NO. 9410
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Issue Date: July 7, 2016

On December 2, 2015, Sandpiper Energy, Inc. (“Sandpiper” or “Company”) filed an application with the Maryland Public Service Commission (“Commission”) for authority to adjust its retail rates and charges for the distribution of propane and natural gas and for approval of certain changes to its tariff. By Order No. 87270, the Commission initiated this proceeding, delegated the proceedings to the Public Utility Law Judge Division, and suspended the proposed rates for an initial period of 150 days from January 1, 2016.

On January 8, 2016, a pre-hearing conference was held in this matter and a procedural schedule was adopted with which all parties¹ were in agreement. Subsequent to the pre-hearing conference and pursuant to further discussions between Sandpiper, the Commission’s Staff Counsel and Office of People’s Counsel (collectively, the “Parties”), have agreed to extend the adopted procedural schedule an additional 30 days and to

¹ The Maryland Office of People’s Counsel and the Commission’s Technical Staff are the other parties in this proceeding.

reschedule certain procedural deadlines.² On February 4, 2016, in order to implement the revised procedural schedule, Sandpiper agreed to withdraw its request for a January 1, 2016 effective date for its proposed rates and charges included with its application and requested that its proposed rates and charges become effective February 1, 2016 for purposes of calculating a new suspension period to provide the Commission an opportunity to determine the justness and reasonableness of the rates and to allow sufficient time to address any appeals of a Proposed Order and issue a final Order in this matter.³ Pursuant to Public Utilities Article §4-204(b)(2), *Annotated Code of Maryland*, on February 11, 2016, the Commission issued Order No. 87397 that suspended the proposed rates filed by Sandpiper on December 2, 2015, for a period of not more than 180 days from February 1, 2016.

On June 30, 2016, Sandpiper filed a request for the Commission to extend the statutory suspension period an additional 60 days to allow sufficient time for the parties to complete settlement discussions and for the Public Utility Law Judge and Commission to review the settlement arrived at between the Parties. The filing indicates that the parties have reached a settlement in principle and require additional time to prepare a settlement agreement. In order to implement the requested 60-day extension, Sandpiper agrees to withdraw its February 1, 2016 proposed effective date for its proposed tariffs and rates and now requests that its proposed tariff rates and charges become effective

² See ML 183053. The Parties submitted the revised procedural schedule to the Public Utility Law Judge for approval. On February 10, 2016, Public Utility Law Judge McGowan approved the revised schedule and issued a Notice of Modified Procedural Schedule in this proceeding.

³ *Id.*

April 1, 2016.

IT IS THEREFORE, this 7th day of July, in the year Two Thousand Sixteen by the Public Service Commission of Maryland,

ORDERED: (1) That the proposed rates filed by Sandpiper Energy, Inc. on December 2, 2015 are hereby suspended for 180 days from April 1, 2016.

By Direction of the Commission,

/s/ David J. Collins

David J. Collins
Executive Secretary