

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

January 10, 2018

IN RE:

**PETITION OF ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION FOR
APPROVAL OF NEGOTIATED FRANCHISE
AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF BLUFF CITY,
TENNESSEE**

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**DOCKET NO.
17-00130**

ORDER GRANTING ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN HEARING

This matter is before the Hearing Officer upon the *Motion for Leave to Appear as Witness by Telephone* (“*Motion*”) filed by Atmos Energy Corporation (“Atmos”) on January 8, 2018. In its *Motion*, Atmos seeks permission for its witness to participate by telephone in the hearing on its *Petition for Approval of Franchise Agreement with Town of Bluff City, Tennessee* (“*Petition*”) to be held during the regularly scheduled Commission Conference beginning at 1:00 p.m. (CST) on January 16, 2018. In its *Motion*, Atmos states that its witness works in Bristol, Tennessee and “... due to the distance involved in travel to Nashville and his duties supervising the gas system during the winter period, Mr. Blaylock requests permission to testify by telephone.”¹ In addition, Atmos confirms that a licensed Notary Public will be present to administer the testimonial oath and remain present during Mr. Blaylock’s testimony.²

Under the Tennessee Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, decisions involving telephone participation in a hearing are within the hearing officer’s discretion:

(c) In the discretion of the administrative judge or hearing officer and agency members and by agreement of the parties, all or part of the hearing may be

¹ *Motion*, p. 1 (January 8, 2018).

² *Id.*

conducted by telephone, television or other electronic means, if each participant in the hearing has an opportunity to participate in, to hear, and, if technically feasible, to see the entire proceedings while taking place.³

In accordance with the above-referenced statute and considering that the request was timely filed and that personal appearance by the witness would be burdensome, the Hearing Officer grants Atmos's request, subject to compliance with the following conditions:

1. Petitioner's attorney shall appear personally at the hearing to present and facilitate questioning of the Petitioner's witness.

2. Petitioner is required and solely responsible for securing a properly licensed Notary Public, in good standing, in the State or jurisdiction where the witness is giving telephonic testimony. During the hearing, the Notary Public shall be in the same physical location and appear with the testifying witness.

3. The Notary Public secured by the Petitioner shall be duly authorized to administer the testimonial oath, and shall do so during the hearing. The Notary Public is required to remain in the presence of the witness at all times during the witness' testimony until such time as the witness is excused from examination by the presiding Commissioner.

4. After the hearing, the Notary Public shall prepare and sign an affidavit, which bears the official seal of the Notary Public, affirming, (1) the proven identity of the witness, (2) the fact that the Notary Public properly administered the testimonial oath to such person, and (3) that the testimony given by the sworn witness was in accordance with the highest ethical standards, as observed by the Notary Public. In addition, the testifying witness shall sign a conforming *Witness Certification*. (As a courtesy, Exhibit A contains sample forms of the *Witness Certification and Notary Public Affidavit*.)

5. The original *Witness Certification* and *Notary Public Affidavit* must be post-

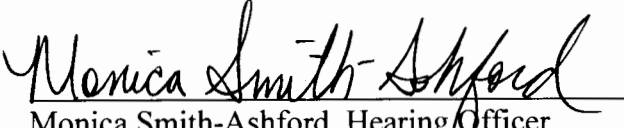
³ Tenn. Code Ann § 4-5-312(c) (2015).

marked within five (5) days of the hearing and received by the Commission's Docket Manager via postage-paid U.S. Mail. Should the required affirming documents not be received by the Docket Manager as required above, the testimony of the witness may be struck from the record and constitute sufficient cause for denial of the *Petition*.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. Subject to the conditions set forth in this Order, Atmos Energy Corporation's witness may appear and participate by telephone in the hearing noticed for January 16, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. (CST).

2. To avoid disruption of other matters scheduled for the consideration of the Commission, persons authorized to participate by telephone shall call 800-689-9374 and enter Guest Passcode: 233602# at least **five (5) minutes before the start time set for the Commission Conference**. The Commission Conference will begin promptly.


Monica Smith-Ashford, Hearing Officer

cc: Interested Parties
Original in Docket File

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

IN RE:

(Case Style)

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Docket No. 00-00000

WITNESS CERTIFICATION

Affiant, duly sworn according to law, states as follows:

I, _____, attest and certify that on the _____ day of _____, 20____, I gave sworn testimony by telephonic means at a hearing in the above-styled docket before the Tennessee Public Utility Commission. I have read the Affidavit of the Notary Public, executed by Mr. /Mrs. _____, who administered the testimonial oath to me and witnessed my testimony, and I further acknowledge and affirm that the testimony I provided during the hearing complied with the highest ethical and legal standards.

FURTHER WITNESS SAITH NOT.

WITNESS my hand, at office, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS

NAME OF WITNESS (Printed)

EXHIBIT A

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

IN RE:

(Case Style)

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Docket No. 00-00000

NOTARY PUBLIC AFFIDAVIT

Affiant, duly sworn according to law, states as follows:

1. I, _____, am a duly licensed Notary Public in good standing in the State of _____, County of _____. This Affidavit is made of my own personal knowledge.
2. My business address and telephone phone where I may be contacted is:

3. To provide sworn testimony by telephone before the Tennessee Public Utility Commission, _____ ("Witness") appeared personally before me and provided _____ (type of identification), which I verified, on the _____ day of _____, 20____.
3. During the hearing, I properly administered the testimonial oath to the Witness before he/she testified by telephone before the Tennessee Public Utility Commission.
4. I remained in the presence of the Witness at all times during his/her testimony until such Witness was excused from examination by the Commission panel or Hearing Officer.

5. To the extent observable, the testimony given by the Witness was in accordance with the highest ethical and legal standards.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAITH NOT.

WITNESS my hand, at office, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

NOTARY PUBLIC

NOTARY PUBLIC (Printed)

My Commission Expires: