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BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

March 8, 2022

IN RE:

NAVITAS TN NG, LLC

ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT (ACA) AUDIT

)

)

) **Docket No. 21-00043**

)

**NOTICE OF FILING BY THE UTILITIES DIVISION OF THE TENNESSEE
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 65-4-104, 65-4-111 and 65-3-108, the Utilities Division of the Tennessee Public Utility Commission gives notice of its filing of the Navitas TN NG, LLC.'s ACA Audit Report in this docket and would respectfully state as follows:

1. The present docket was opened by the Commission to hear matters arising out of the audit of Navitas TN NG, LLC.'s (hereafter the "Company") ACA filing covering the period January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.
2. The Company's ACA filing was received on April 7, 2021, and the Audit Staff (hereafter the "Staff") completed its audit of same on March 3, 2022.
3. On March 3, 2022, the Utilities Division submitted its preliminary ACA audit findings to the Company via e-mail. The Company responded on March 8, 2022 via e-mail and this response has been incorporated into the final report.

4. The Utilities Division hereby files its Report attached as Exhibit A with the Tennessee Public Utility Commission for deposit as a public record and approval of the findings and the recommendations contained therein.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Foust".

Lisa Foust
Utilities Division of the
Tennessee Public Utility Commission

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 8th day of March 2022 a true and exact copy of the foregoing has been either hand-delivered or delivered via U.S. Mail, postage pre-paid, to the following persons:

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Lisa Foust

EXHIBIT A

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT

OF

NAVITAS TN NG, LLC.

ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT

Docket # 21-00043

PREPARED BY

TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

UTILITIES DIVISION

March 2022

COMPLIANCE AUDIT
NAVITAS TNG, LLC.
ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT

Docket # 21-00043

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I. INTRODUCTION

The subject of this audit is Navitas TN NG, LLC.'s ("Navitas" or "Company") compliance with the Actual Cost Adjustment ("ACA") and Refund Adjustment ("RA") of the Purchased Gas Adjustment Rule ("PGA Rule") of the Tennessee Public Utility Commission ("TPUC" or "Commission").¹ The objective of the audit was to determine whether the purchased gas adjustments, which are encompassed by the ACA, and approved by the TPUC for the twelve (12) months ended December 31, 2020, were calculated correctly and were supported by appropriate source documentation.

II. AUDIT OPINION

The Audit Staff's ("Staff") audit resulted in **two (2) monetary findings**.² The net amount of the findings is **\$72.89 in over-recovered gas costs**. Except for the findings mentioned above, Staff concludes that the Purchased Gas Adjustment mechanism as calculated in the Actual Cost Adjustment appears to be working properly and in accordance with the TPUC rules for Navitas TN NG, LLC.

III. SUMMARY OF COMPANY FILING

The Company submitted its ACA filings on April 7, 2021, covering the period January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. There were separate filings for the Jellico Division and the Byrdstown/Fentress Division. The Jellico Division filing reflected an ending balance in its ACA account at December 31, 2020, of **negative \$65,866.19**, which represents an **over-collection** of gas costs from customers. The Byrdstown/Fentress Division filing reflected an ending balance in its ACA account at December 31, 2020, of **positive \$692.68**, which represents an **under- collection** of gas costs from its customers. The tables below provide a summary of each ACA account as submitted by the Company.³

¹ As of April 5, 2017 the name of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority has changed to Tennessee Public Utility Commission and board members of the agency will be known as Commissioners rather than Directors

² Refer to Section VIII for a description of the findings.

³ The negative ending balance of Navitas's Jellico ACA account indicates that the Company has over-collected this amount from its customers as of December 31, 2020. The positive ending balance of Navitas's Byrdstown/Fentress ACA account indicates that the Company has under-collected this amount from its customers as of December 31, 2020. The ACA factors are derived for each division by dividing Staff's corrected amounts by the projected sales volumes for the next twelve (12) months in an attempt to refund these amounts over a twelve month period. See Attachment 1 and Attachment 2. However, there are timing differences between the close of the audit period and the effective date of a new factor. There is always regulatory lag inherent in the true-up process. Larger companies are capable of calculating ACA factors and implementing them immediately, prior to audit. However, the smaller companies are encouraged to await the results of the Staff's audit before implementing an ACA factor.

SUMMARY OF THE ACA ACCOUNTS⁴

Jellico Division

Line No.		Company (as filed)
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/2020	\$(35,001.33)
2	<u>Activity During Current Period:</u>	
3	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	67,440.63
4	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	101,540.10
5	Plus Interest	<u>(2,806.69)</u>
6	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/20	<u><u>(\$65,866.19)</u></u>

Byrdstown/Fentress Division

Line No.		Company (as filed)
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/20	\$7,412.09
2	<u>Activity During Current Period:</u>	
3	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	58,465.95
4	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	65,183.92
5	Plus Interest	<u>(1.44)</u>
6	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/20	<u><u>\$692.68</u></u>

IV. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON COMPANY**

Navitas TN NG, LLC (Local Distribution Company), with its local office located at 613 Sunset Trail, Jellico, Tennessee, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Navitas Assets, LLC (parent company), which has its headquarters at 3186-D Airway Ave., Costa Mesa, California. On December 20, 2010, Navitas was awarded its Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CCN) when the Tennessee Regulatory Authority voted unanimously to approve the transfer of control and authority from Gasco Distribution Systems (“Gasco”) to Navitas.⁵

⁴ A negative number represents an over-recovery (or over-collection) of gas costs; a positive number represents an under-recovery (or under-collection) of gas costs.

⁵ In Re: *Joint Petition of Navitas TN NG LLC and Gasco Distribution Systems, Inc. for Approval of Transfer of Control and Authority of Gasco Distribution Systems, Inc.*, Docket No. 10-00220, TRA Order (December 30, 2010).

Navitas is a natural gas distributor, which provides service to approximately 564 customers⁶ in the City of Jellico (Campbell County), City of Byrdstown (Pickett County) and a few customers in Fentress County, all of which are located in northeast Tennessee. In addition to Tennessee, the parent company also operates in Oklahoma, Kentucky and Ohio. Navitas purchases the natural gas used to serve these areas from Delgasco, Inc, Petrol Energy, LLC, and B&W Pipeline. Navitas uses B&W Pipeline and Spectra Energy, Inc. to transport the gas.

V. JURISDICTION AND POWER OF THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) §65-4-104 gave jurisdiction and control over public utilities to the Tennessee Regulatory Authority, now the Tennessee Public Utility Commission. By virtue of Chapter 305 of the Public Acts of 1995, jurisdiction and control over public utilities was transferred from the Tennessee Public Service Commission to the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the “TRA” or “Authority”) on July 01, 1996. T.C.A. §65- 4-104 states that:

The Authority shall have general supervision and regulation of, jurisdiction, and control over, all public utilities...

T.C.A. states further in §65-4-111 that the public utilities are to maintain a Uniform System of Accounts:

The Authority shall have the power after hearing, upon notice, by order in writing to require every public utility... to keep its books, records, and accounts so as to afford an intelligent understanding of the conduct of its business, and to that end to require every public utility of the same class to adopt a uniform system of accounting. Such system shall conform, where applicable to any system adopted or approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission of the United States. And to furnish annually, or at other times as the Authority may require, a detailed report of finances and operations as shown by said system of accounts.⁷

The TRA responded to T.C.A. §65-4-111 by establishing its own rule 1220-4-1-.11 regarding the uniform system of accounts which public utilities should maintain. The TRA's rule provides:

⁶ Annual Report period ending December 31, 2020.

The following uniform system of accounting will be followed by utilities and other companies making periodic reports to the Authority:

1. For Classes A and B gas companies - Uniform System of Accounts as adopted by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners as revised June 30, 1972, and any amendments or revisions pertaining thereto.

The TRA received its authority to examine the books and records of public utilities from T.C.A. §65-4-105 which states that the TRA would possess all the other powers conferred on the TRA. T.C.A. §65-3-108 gives the TRA:

full power to examine the books and papers of the said companies, and to examine, under oath, the officers, agents, and employees of said companies...to procure the necessary information to intelligently and justly discharge their duties and carry out the provisions of this chapter and chapter 5 of this title.

The Utilities Division of the TPUC is responsible for auditing those companies under the Commission's jurisdiction to ensure that each company is abiding by Tennessee statutes as well as the Rules and Regulations of the Commission. Lisa Foust and Michelle Mairs of the Utilities Division conducted this audit.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT (PGA) RULE

Actual Cost Adjustment Audits:

The PGA Rule can be found in Chapter 1220-4-7 of the Rules of the Tennessee Public Utility Commission. The PGA Rule permits the Company to recover, in a timely fashion, the total cost of gas purchased for delivery to its customers and to assure that the Company does not over-collect or under-collect gas costs from its customers.

The PGA consists of three major components:

- 1) **The Actual Cost Adjustment (ACA)**
- 2) **The Gas Charge Adjustment (GCA)**
- 3) **The Refund Adjustment (RA)**

The ACA is the difference between the revenues billed to customers by means of the GCA and the cost of gas invoiced to the Company by suppliers plus margin loss (if allowed by order of the TPUC in another docket) as reflected in the Deferred Gas Cost account. The ACA then "true-up" the difference between the actual gas costs and the gas costs recovered from the customer through a surcharge or a refund. The RA refunds the "true-up" along with

other supplier refunds. For a more complete definition of the GCA and RA, please see the PGA Formula in Appendix A.

Section 1220-4-7-.03(2) of the PGA Rule requires:

Each year, the Company shall file with the [Authority] an annual report reflecting the transactions in the Deferred Gas Cost Account. Unless the [Authority] provides written notification to the Company within one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of filing the report, the Deferred Gas Cost Adjustment Account shall be deemed in compliance with the provisions of these Rules. This 180-day notification period may be extended by mutual consent of the Company and the [Authority] Staff or by order of the [Authority].

VII. SCOPE OF AUDIT

To accomplish the audit objective, the Staff conducted in-house audit work, during which the Company's calculations of gas costs incurred and gas costs recovered were examined. The Staff also audited a sample of customer bills to determine if the proper PGA rates and ACA rates were being applied in the Company's calculation of the customers' bills. These bills were selected to be representative of the residential, commercial and industrial customers in each of the Company's service areas. The sample was selected from all twelve months of the audit period. Based on the customer bills reviewed, Staff opines that Navitas is correctly billing its customers.

VIII. ACA FINDINGS

Staff's audit findings totaled an over-collection of \$72.89. This is the result of two (2) monetary findings and represents an under-recovered amount, which when added to the Company's calculated balance, results in a net ending balance in the ACA Account of \$(65,246.40)⁸. A summary of the ACA Account as filed by the Company and as adjusted by the Staff is shown below, followed by a description of the findings.

SUMMARY OF THE ACA ACCOUNT**:

Line		Navitas Combined Filing	Staff Audit Results	Difference (Findings)
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/2020	\$(27,589.27)	\$(27,589.24)	\$0.00
2	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	125,906.58	125,835.92	(70.66)
3	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	160,682.72	160,682.72	0.00
4	Plus Interest	<u>(2,808.13)</u>	<u>(2,810.36)</u>	<u>(2.23)</u>
5	Ending Balance at 12/31/2020	<u>\$(65,173.51)</u>	<u>\$(65,246.40)</u>	<u>\$(72.89)</u>

**A number in () is a negative or credit balance which represents an over-collection of gas costs. A negative or credit balance for Gas Costs Recovered is the opposite or an under-collection of gas costs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

FINDING #1	Invoice Gas Cost	\$ (70.66)	Over-Recovery
FINDING #2	Interest	<u>(2.23)</u>	Over-Recovery
	Net Result	<u>\$(72.89)</u>	Over-Recovery

⁸ The ending balance is made up of \$(65,866.19) over-collection for the Jellico Division and \$619.79 under-collection for the Byrdstown/Fentress Division.

FINDING #1:

Exception

The Company used incorrect invoiced gas cost amounts for its Byrdstown/Fentress Division.

Discussion

The Company recorded \$12,988.98 for the July 2020 invoice from Petrol. The correct amount of the invoice was \$12,088.98, for a difference of \$900.00.

The Company received a credit of \$55.87 from B&W in February 2020 but did not record the credit to gas costs in the ACA Account. In addition, the Company incorrectly included interest on late payments of \$33.07 to Enbridge/Spectra for the period of January 2020 to December 2020.

Staff removed \$900.00 to correct the July 2020 Petrol invoice amount, applied the \$55.87 credit that B&W issued on February 2020 and removed the interest on late payments of \$33.07, which cannot be recovered from customers. To the net adjustment, Staff then applied the Tennessee allocation %. The result was a **decrease to purchased gas costs of \$70.66 (over-collection) for the Byrdstown/Fentress Division.**

Company Response

- A) According to the Findings, after applying the Tennessee % the audit found an over-collection in the amount of \$72.89. A portion of that amount was a credit of \$57.87 due to a miscalculation of MCF's delivered to Kentucky in July of 2017. B&W Pipeline made the error and issued Navitas a credit memo dated 1/31/2020 clearly stating it was a credit due Kentucky. B&W Pipeline is a vendor for Navitas in Tennessee and in Kentucky. Navitas paid B&W with one check to cover the invoices. The customers in Tennessee should not be affected by a credit issued to Kentucky. If Tennessee customers are going to take Kentucky credits, they will need to pay the Kentucky bills.
- B) \$33.07 interest on late payments to Enbridge/Spectra, another vendor Navitas uses in Tennessee, was part of the \$72.89 the audit found as an over-collection. During 2020, Tennessee, along with several other States, regulated utilities to suspend service disconnections to help mitigate the impact of the state of emergency associated with Covid-19. This aid to the customers put a rural utility company like Navitas in a possible financial predicament. Given that the Commission ordered the delay and reduction in collections and cashflow, it de facto must be responsible for that action and allow the collection of interest due suppliers as a consequence of that action.

FINDING #2:

Exception

The Company understated the amount of interest due to the Customers.

Discussion

Based on the Staff corrections discussed in Finding #1, Staff recalculated the correct amount of interest on the average monthly balances in the ACA Account. The result was an increase in interest due to the Customer of **\$2.23, which represents an over-collection of gas costs.**

Company Response

IX. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff reviewed the gas costs and recoveries of Navitas TN NG, LLC for the twelve (12) month period ended December 31, 2020. Based on the filing as shown in Section VIII, the **net balances** in the ACA Accounts as of December 31, 2020 should be **(\$65,866.19) (over-collection) for the Jellico Division and \$619.79 (under-collection) for the Byrdstown/Fentress Division**. The net ending balance in the combined Navitas filing, as summarized in Section VIII of the Report is (\$65,246.40) over-collection.

In order to adjust the Jellico and the Byrdstown/Fentress ACA balances, the Staff calculated ACA adjustment factor to be applied to customer bills in the **Jellico Division** is **(\$0.2625) per CCF** (see Attachment 1), and the Staff calculated ACA adjustment factor to be applied to customer bills in the **Byrdstown/Fentress Division** is **\$0.0075 per CCF** (see Attachment 2).

Staff recommends that these factors be implemented beginning with the Company's March 2022 billing and should stay in effect until new factors are calculated and approved in Navitas' next ACA filing covering the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

It is important for Navitas to closely monitor its ACA balance on a monthly basis. As actual data is gathered at the end of each month, the ACA schedule can be updated to the latest balance. This balance, along with gas cost increases and decreases in the market, should be a factor in the Company's decision whether a tariff filing to adjust the PGA adjustment factor is needed. If the Company filed more frequent PGA adjustments customers would see smaller increases or decreases throughout the year, instead of a drastic change in rates at the end of the audit. **Staff, therefore, recommends that the Company monitor its ACA balances more closely and report these balances quarterly to TPUC Staff to determine if a PGA filing is warranted.**⁹

⁹ TPUC Rule 1220-04-07 (PGA Rule) does not require the Company to quarterly file its ACA balance with TPUC Staff nor does it prevent the Commission from ordering it. These reports could ensure that the gas costs are more evenly spread to customers over the year.

Navitas TN NG, LLC
Calculation of the ACA Factor
(for Jellico customers)

Line No	Factor to be applied to residential, commercial and industrial customers:		
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/20	\$ (35,001.33)	
2	Plus Purchased Gas Costs	67,440.63	
3	Minus Gas Costs Recovered	95,498.80	
4	Plus Interest	(2,806.69)	
5	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/20	\$ <u><u>(65,866.19)</u></u>	
6	Sales Volumes **	250,872	CCF
7	ACA Factor - surcharge/(refund) (Line 5 divided by Line 6)	\$ <u><u>(0.2625)</u></u>	Per CCF

** Historical sales volumes for 12 months ending 12/31/20

**Navitas TN NG, LLC
Calculation of the ACA Factor
(for Byrdstown/Fentress customers)**

Line No	Factor to be applied to residential, commercial and industrial customers:	
1	Beginning Balance at 1/1/20	\$ 7,412.09
2	Purchased Gas Costs	58,395.29
3	Gas Costs Recovered	65,183.92
4	Plus Interest	(3.67)
5	Ending Balance Including Interest at 12/31/20	<u>619.79</u>
6	Sales Volumes **	82,759 CCF
7	ACA Factor - surcharge/(refund) (Line 5 divided by Line 6)	\$ <u>0.0075</u> Per CCF

** Historical sales volumes for 12 months ending 12/31/20

APPENDIX A

PGA FORMULA

The computation of the GCA can be broken down into the following formulas:

$$\text{Firm GCA} = \frac{D + \text{DACA}}{\text{SF}} - \text{DB} + \frac{P + T + \text{SR} + \text{CACA}}{\text{ST}} - \text{CB}$$

$$\text{Non-Firm GCA} = \frac{P + T + \text{SR} + \text{CACA}}{\text{ST}} - \text{CB}$$

where

GCA = The Gas Charge Adjustment in dollars per Ccf/Therm, rounded to no more than five decimal places.

D = The sum of all fixed Gas Costs.

DACA = The demand portion of the ACA.

P = The sum of all commodity/gas charges.

T = The sum of all transportation charges.

SR = The sum of all FERC approved surcharges.

CACA = The commodity portion of the ACA.

DB = The per unit rate of demand costs or other fixed charges included in base rates in the most recently completed general rate case (which may be zero if the Company so elects and the Commission so approves).

CB = The per unit rate of variable gas costs included in base rates in the most recently completed general rate case (which may be zero if the Company so elects and the Commission so approves).

SF = Firm Sales.

ST = Total Sales.

The computation of the RA can be computed using the following formulas:

$$\text{Firm RA} = \frac{\text{DR1} - \text{DR2}}{\text{SFR}} + \frac{\text{CR1} - \text{CR2} + \text{CR3} + i}{\text{STR}}$$

$$\text{Non-Firm RA} = \frac{\text{CR1} - \text{CR2} + \text{CR3} + i}{\text{STR}}$$

where

RA =	The Refund Adjustment in dollars per Ccf/Therm, rounded to no more than five decimal places.
DR1 =	Demand refund not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment, and received from suppliers by check, wire transfer, or credit memo.
DR2 =	A demand surcharge from a supplier not includable in the GCA, and not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment.
CR1 =	Commodity refund not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment, and received from suppliers by check, wire transfer, or credit memo.
CR2 =	A commodity surcharge from a supplier not includable in the GCA, and not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment.
CR3 =	The residual balance of an expired Refund Adjustment.
i =	Interest on the "Refund Due Customers" account, using the average monthly balances based on the beginning and ending monthly balances. The interest rates for each calendar quarter used to compute such interest shall be the arithmetic mean (to the nearest one-hundredth of one percent) of the prime rate value published in the "Federal Reserve Bulletin" or in the Federal Reserve's "Selected Interest Rates" for the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd months preceding the 1st month of the calendar quarter.

SFR = Firm sales as defined in the GCA computation, less sales under a transportation or negotiated rate schedule.

STR = Total sales as defined in the GCA computation, less sales under a transportation or negotiated rate schedule.