

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

October 29, 2021

IN RE:

PETITION OF CHATTANOOGA GAS COMPANY FOR
APPROVAL OF NEGOTIATED FRANCHISE
AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF CHATTANOOGA,
TENNESSEE PURSUANT TO TENNESSEE CODE
ANNOTATED § 65-4-107

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DOCKET NO.
21-00093

ORDER GRANTING ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN HEARING

This matter is before the Hearing Officer upon the *Motion to Appear and Participate at Hearing Telephonically* (“*Motion*”) filed by Chattanooga Gas Company (“CGC” or “Petitioner”) on October 28, 2021. In its *Motion*, CGC seeks permission for its witness, Archie Hickerson, to participate by telephone in the hearing in the above-captioned matter to be held during the regularly scheduled Commission Conference beginning at 9:00 a.m. (CDT) on November 1, 2021. CGC requests that its witness be allowed to testify by phone because personal appearance would be burdensome due to the hospitalization out of state of a member of the witness’s family.

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 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.¹

¹ Tenn. Code Ann § 4-5-312(c).

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 CGC's *Motion*, subject to compliance with the following conditions²:

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

2. Petitioner is solely responsible for and shall be required to secure a properly licensed Notary Public, in good standing, in the State or jurisdiction where the witness is giving testimony. During the hearing, the Notary Public shall be in the same physical location and remain 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's testimony until 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*.³

5. The original *Witness Certification* and *Notary Public Affidavit* must be post-marked within five (5) days of the hearing and received by the Commission's Docket Manager via postage-

² In its *Motion*, CGC states it will comply with these conditions if its *Motion* is granted.

³ The *Witness Certification* and *Notary Public Affidavit* forms attached to CGC's *Motion* as Exhibit A are satisfactory to use to comply with this requirement.

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, Chattanooga Gas Company's witness may appear and participate by telephone in the hearing to be held on November 1, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. (CDT).

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monica Smith-Ashford". The script is cursive and fluid.

Monica Smith-Ashford, Hearing Officer

cc: Interested Parties
Original in Docket File