

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

May 5, 2022

IN RE:

PETITION OF ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION FOR  
APPROVAL OF ITS 2022 ANNUAL RATE REVIEW  
FILING PURSUANT TO TENN. CODE ANN. § 65-5-  
103(d)(6)

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DOCKET NO.  
22-00010

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ORDER GRANTING ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN HEARING

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This matter is before the Hearing Officer upon the *Motion to Appear and Participate at Hearing Telephonically* (“*Motion*”) filed by the Consumer Advocate Unit in the Financial Division of the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General (“Consumer Advocate”) on May 2, 2022. In its *Motion*, the Consumer Advocate seeks permission for its witness, David Dittmore, 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 May 9, 2022. The Consumer Advocate requests that its witness be allowed to testify by phone because Mr. Dittmore may still be in quarantine with a Covid positive family member on the hearing date or may be addressing a serious family matter on the date of the hearing and personal appearance would be burdensome.

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.<sup>1</sup>

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 the Consumer Advocate's *Motion*, subject to compliance with the following conditions<sup>2</sup>:

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*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tenn. Code Ann § 4-5-312(c).

<sup>2</sup> In its *Motion*, the Consumer Advocate states it agrees that the telephonic participation will be subject to these conditions if its *Motion* is granted.

<sup>3</sup> The *Witness Certification* and *Notary Public Affidavit* forms attached to the Consumer Advocate's *Motion* as Collective Exhibit A are satisfactory to use to comply with this requirement.

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-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, the witness of the Consumer Advocate Unit in the Financial Division of the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General may appear and participate by telephone in the hearing to be held on May 9, 2022, 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 signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Monica Smith-Ashford, Hearing Officer

cc: Interested Parties  
Original in Docket File