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MAC

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



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CHAIRMAN
Martin P. Honigberg

COMMISSIONERS
Robert R. Scott
Kathryn M. Bailey

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Debra A. Howland

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, N.H. 03301-2429

November 4, 2015

Her Excellency, Governor Margaret Wood Hassan
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, NH 03301

Your Excellency and Honorable Councilors:

REQUESTED ACTION

The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission requests **RETROACTIVE** authority to continue its membership and participation in the New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners, Inc. (NECPUC), Vendor #162916, for the period of October 1, 2015, or the date of Governor and Council approval, through September 30, 2016, for an amount of \$24,000.00.

Funding is 100% Other Funds (Utilities Assessment) and is available in account 'Organizational Dues', as follows:

<u>Account</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>
02-81-81-810010-28120000	Office of the Commissioner	
010-081-28120000-026-500251	Membership Fees	\$24,000.00

EXPLANATION

The New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners is a non-profit organization comprising the utility regulatory bodies of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Established in 1947, NECPUC was incorporated in 1976. Every New England utility commissioner is a member of NECPUC for the duration of his or her tenure. NECPUC provides regional regulatory assistance on matters of common concern to the six New England states, addressing issues challenging the electricity, gas, telecommunications and water industries. NECPUC has no independent regulatory authority.

Membership in NECPUC has proved especially valuable in responding to increased regional activity and

numerous Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) initiatives. Through NECPUC, we have also been able to leverage staff resources from all the New England states and, as a result, the work product in both quantity and quality has been at a level that we would not have been able to achieve alone. In addition to funding the position of NECPUC Executive Director and the administrative costs of the organization, NECPUC dues from each member state help defray expenses incurred as a result of the multitude of ongoing FERC proceedings, as well as regional activities and policy issues involving ISO-NE and the distribution, generation, and transmission companies that participate in New England regional energy markets. NECPUC also sponsors training programs for member states. Full day trainings in FY 2015 included a session on cyber security, resilience and storm restoration, electromagnetic events, and the regulation of advanced energy technologies.

A copy of the invoice is attached.

Listed below are answers to standard questions required for Governor and Council organization dues and membership approval submissions:

1. **How long has this organization been in existence and how long has this agency been a member of this organization?** NECPUC has been in existence since 1947. The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission has been a member since its inception.
2. **Is there any other organization which provides the same or similar benefits which your agency belongs to?** No. NECPUC is the only entity that provides regional education and coordination on issues of common concern such as electric, gas, water, and telecommunications.
3. **How many other states belong to this organization and is your agency the sole New Hampshire state agency that is a member?** The six New England states, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont, are members of NECPUC. The Commission is the only New Hampshire agency within the organization.
4. **How is the dues structure established? (Standard fee for all states, based on population, based on other criteria, etc)** There is a standard fee for all six states.
5. **What benefit does the state receive from participating in this membership?** NECPUC coordinates positions on regional issues and has had great success in changing policies that would have been very costly to New Hampshire ratepayers. Increasingly, the policies are determined on a national and regional level; waiting for issues to make their way to the Commission would be too late to have meaningful input.
6. **Are training or educational/ research materials included in the membership? If so, is the cost included? Explain in detail.** Yes. NECPUC sponsors training sessions on emerging issues and to educate new Commissioners and Commission Staff members. NECPUC also coordinates conference call briefings on federal and regional developments that affect New Hampshire.
7. **Is the membership required to receive any federal grants or required in order to receive or participate in licensing or certification exams? Explain.** No, membership in NECPUC is not required in order to receive federal grants or participate in licensing or certification exams.
8. **Is there any travel included with this membership fee? Explain in detail any travel to include the number of employees involved, the number of trips, destination if known and purposes of membership supported trips.** There is no travel specifically tied to the payment of NECPUC's membership dues.
9. **Which state agency employees are directly involved with this organization? (Indicate if they are members, voting members, committee members, and/or officers of the organization.** The Commission is one of six voting members. Chairman Honigberg is NECPUC's Vice President and participates in NECPUC discussions along with Commissioners Robert Scott and Kathryn Bailey. Commission Staff are active on NECPUC Committees, including those concerning consumer affairs, electric markets, regional energy issues, and utility cyber security.

10. Explain in detail any negative impact to the State if the Agency did not belong to this organization. New Hampshire benefits from the coordinated positions developed through NECPUC. It would be less efficient and less effective for New Hampshire to “go it alone” on these regional issues. Ultimately, it would be New Hampshire ratepayers that would suffer, as NECPUC positions have resulted in wholesale rate savings that are passed through to customers’ retail bills.

This request is **RETROACTIVE** because the invoice was received after the submission deadline for the October 7, 2015 G&C meeting and therefore could not be approved before October 1, 2015. A copy of the October 2015 invoice is attached for your review.

Your consideration of our request is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Martin P. Honigberg
Chairman

Attachment - Invoice

RECEIVED

NOV 02 2015

NH PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION



New England Conference of Public Utilities Commissioners
necpuc

Angie O'Connor, President
Rachel Goldwasser, Executive Director

INVOICE #2015-1
NECPUC Dues for Fiscal Year 2015-16
New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission

Date: October 30, 2015

Bill To: Eunice Landry
NH PUC
21 South Fruit Street – Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429

Terms: Due on receipt
Check Payable to **NECPUC**
Tax ID # 05-0376760

Description: Organizational dues for regional activities and coordination

Amount due: \$24,000

Please mail your check, payable to **NECPUC** at:
Rachel Goldwasser
NECPUC
72 N. Main Street
Concord, NH 03229

Direct electronic transfer to a NECPUC bank account is also an acceptable payment method. Please contact Rachel Goldwasser at 603-856-8690 with any questions.

NECPUC, 72 N. Main Street, Concord NH 03301
603-856-8690, rgoldwasser@necpuc.org