

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

Docket No. 2015-04

**Application of Public Service Company of New Hampshire
d/b/a Eversource Energy for Certificate of Site and Facility**

April 6, 2018

ORDER SUSPENDING STATUTORY TIMEFRAME

On March 14, 2018, on its own Motion, the Subcommittee determined that it was in the public interest to further suspend the statutory timeframe to render a final decision on the Application for a Certificate of Site and Facility. This Order memorializes that decision.

I. BACKGROUND

On April 12, 2016, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy applied to the Site Evaluation Committee (Committee) to construct a new 115kV electric transmission line approximately 12.9 miles in length between existing substations in Madbury and Portsmouth (Project).

On April 26, 2017, the Subcommittee conducted a public hearing and voted to extend deadlines for state agencies to provide final reports to August 1, 2017, and suspend the deadline for the final written decision to December 29, 2017. An Order memorializing this decision was issued on My 22, 2017.

On June 20, 2017, a Revised Procedural Schedule was issued establishing a schedule for the final adjudicative hearings and deliberations to begin in mid-October and end in early November, 2017. On August 10, 2017, the Applicant filed a Motion to Postpone Final Adjudicative Hearings and requested that the final adjudicative hearing date be re-established once the Applicant had addressed the concerns expressed by the Department of Environmental

Services of the potential impacts of the Project on the water quality in Little Bay. On August 21, 2017, an Order was issued granting the Motion and required the parties to submit an agreed-upon revised procedural schedule upon receipt of the final report from DES.

The Subcommittee held a hearing on pending motions on March 14, 2018. At the time of the hearing, a revised procedural schedule had not yet been submitted to the Subcommittee. During the hearing, the Subcommittee voted to further extend the December 29, 2017, timeframe to reach a final decision. This Order memorializes that decision.

II. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

RSA 162-H:7, VI-d, requires the Subcommittee to issue or deny a certificate for an energy facility within 365 days of the acceptance of an application. “If the [Subcommittee], at any time while an application for a certificate is before it, deems it to be in the public interest, it may temporarily suspend its deliberations and timeframe established under RSA 162-H:7.” RSA 162-H:14.

The deadline for a written final decision was initially postponed until December 29, 2017. Given the complexity of the environmental issues DES did not finish its review of the Project and recommend final conditions until February 28, 2018, making it impossible to issue a written decision by December 29, 2017. The Project implicates important environmental concerns that will require additional time for investigation and discovery. The procedural schedule in this docket has been extended many times due to no fault of the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee finds it is reasonable and in the public interest to further extend the timeframe for issuing the final written decision until April 1, 2019.

SO ORDERED this sixth day of April, 2018.



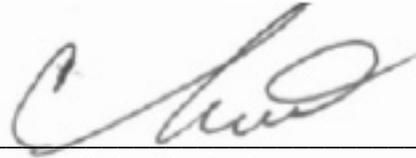
Evan Mulholland, Designee, Presiding Officer
Administrator
Department of Environmental Services



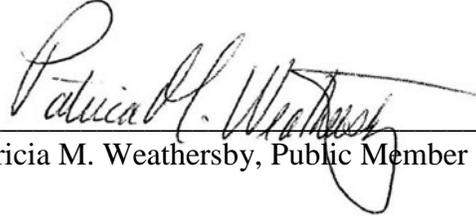
David Shulock, Designee
Director of Legal Division
Public Utilities Commission



Elizabeth Muzzey
Director
Division of Historical Resources
Department of Natural and Cultural Resources



Charles Schmidt, Designee
Administrator
Bureau of Right of Way
Department of Transportation



Patricia M. Weathersby, Public Member