

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

Docket No. 2015-06

**Joint Application of Northern Pass Transmission LLC
and Public Service Company of New Hampshire
d/b/a Eversource Energy for a Certificate of Site and Facility**

September 18, 2017

ORDER SUSPENDING STATUTORY TIMEFRAME

On August 31, 2017, on its own motion, the Subcommittee determined that it was in the public interest to further suspend the statutory time frame to render a final decision on the Application for a Certificate of Site and Facility (Application). This Order memorializes that decision.

I. Background

On October 19, 2015, Northern Pass Transmission LLC and Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (collectively Applicant) applied to the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (Committee) to construct a 192-mile transmission line. The transmission line, sometimes referred to herein as the Project, is proposed to have a capacity rating of up to 1,090 MW and to run through New Hampshire from the Canadian border in Pittsburg to Deerfield.

On May 19, 2016, the Subcommittee conducted a public hearing and voted to suspend the statutory timeframe for a final decision under RSA 162-H:14. The Subcommittee voted to extend the time frame to reach a final decision until September 30, 2017. A written order memorializing the decision was issued on June 15, 2016. *See* Order on Motions to Suspend dated May 19, 2016 (Original Suspension Order).

Following a period of written discovery and technical sessions, the Subcommittee convened adjudicative hearings beginning in April of 2017 pursuant to RSA 162-H:10, II. As of August 31, 2017, the Subcommittee had conducted thirty days of adjudicative hearings. Despite the best efforts of all parties, the Applicant had not yet completed the presentation of its case in chief.

A third prehearing conference was held on August 9, 2017. It was determined that a substantial number of additional hearing days would have to be scheduled to complete the adjudicative hearings.

At a public meeting on August 31, 2017, a motion was duly made and seconded to extend the September 30, 2017, timeframe to reach a final decision. The Applicant, Counsel for the Public, and the Intervenors' were all provided an opportunity to make statements and weigh-in on the pending motion. Counsel for the Public and the Intervenors all supported extending the deadline. The Applicant agreed that, given the work that the Subcommittee still had to complete, that the deadline probably needed to be extended, keeping in mind the interest of the Applicant in ensuring a timely decision on the pending Application. The Subcommittee voted to extend the statutory timeframe to reach a final decision on the Application until March 31, 2018. This Order memorializes that decision.

II. Authority to Suspend Timeframe


The Subcommittee has the authority to suspend the proceedings and the statutory timeframe if it finds it is in the public interest to do so. *See* RSA 162-H:14. The Original Suspension Order addresses that statutory authority and need not be repeated here.

III. Suspension is in the Public Interest

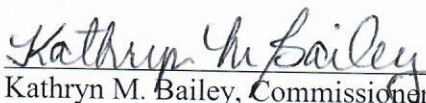
The Subcommittee finds that it is in the public interest to extend the statutory timeframe so that a complete and thorough adjudicative process can occur. The Subcommittee finds it to be in the public interest to continue the presentation of the Applicant's case through its remaining witnesses and allowing those witnesses to be cross-examined. It is also in the public interest for Counsel for the Public and the intervenors to present their witnesses and be subjected to cross-examination. In addition, the record in this proceeding is voluminous. The Subcommittee finds that it is in the public interest to take sufficient time to consider and deliberate about the multitude of issues that arise in this complicated and important docket. In short, the public interest requires that the Application is fully considered and such full consideration cannot be accomplished before September 30, 2017.

The Subcommittee voted to extend the timeframe for a final decision to March 31, 2018. It is anticipated that the witnesses will all be heard and the record closed by December 31, 2017. Briefing will occur following closure of the record and it is anticipated that: briefing will be completed by the end of January 2018; public deliberations will take place by the end of February 2018; and a final written decision will be issued by March 31, 2018.

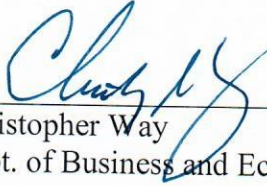
So Ordered this eighteenth day of September, 2017, by the Subcommittee:



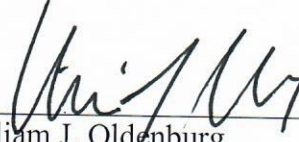
Martin P. Honigberg, Presiding Officer
Site Evaluation Committee
Commissioner and Chair
Public Utilities Commission



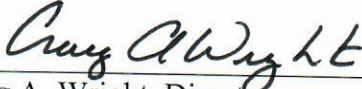
Kathryn M. Bailey, Commissioner
Public Utilities Commission



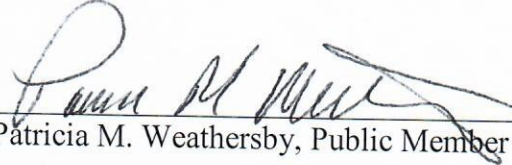
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Craig A. Wright, Director
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Patricia M. Weathersby, Public Member