

STATE OF NEW JERSEY Board of Public Utilities 44 South Clinton Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Post Office Box 350 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350 www.nj.gov/bpu/

## WATER

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF NEW JERSEY-AMERICAN WATER COMPANY, INC. FOR APPROVAL OF INCREASED TARIFF RATES AND CHARGES FOR WATER AND SEWER SERVICE, CHANGE IN DEPRECIATION RATES AND OTHER TARIFF MODIFICATIONS ORDER SUSPENDING INCREASES, CHANGES OR ALTERATIONS IN RATES FOR SERVICE

DOCKET NO. WR15010035

Parties of Record:

Ira G. Megdal, Esq. on behalf of New Jersey-American Water Company, Inc., Petitioner Stefanie A. Brand, Esq., Director, on behalf of the Division of Rate Counsel

BY THE BOARD<sup>1</sup>:

On January 9, 2015, New Jersey-American Water Company ("Company" or "Petitioner"), a public utility of the State of New Jersey subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Public Utilities ("Board"), filed a Petition pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2-18, N.J.S.A. 48:2-21, N.J.S.A. 48:2-21.1<sup>2</sup>, N.J.A.C. 14:1-5.7 and N.J.A.C. 14:1-5.12 seeking to increase rates for water and wastewater service. The combined proposed rates would increase the Company's annual revenues by \$66.2 million or approximately 9.96% over pro-forma present rate revenues. Petitioner serves approximately 612,791 water and fire service customers, and approximately 35,987 sewer service customers, in all or part of 189 municipalities in 18 of the State's 21 counties. The increase in rates would become effective on February 8, 2015<sup>3</sup>. Petitioner does not seek interim rate relief pending final determination on the Petition.

According to the Petition, the rate increase is necessary: (a) for the Company: to finance essential and continuing plant investment; (b) earn a fair and adequate rate of return on its net investment in used and useful property; (c) establish rates which are sufficient, under efficient and economical operation, to maintain and support its financial integrity, and to raise such funds as may be necessary for the proper discharge of its public duties; (d) provide earnings sufficient

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Commissioners Richard S. Mroz and Upendra J. Chivukula recused themselves due to a potential conflict of interest and as such took no part in the discussion or deliberation of this matter.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Board notes that although the petition cites <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 48:2-21.1, the petition does not include a request for an adjustment of rates during the pendency of the hearing.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> On January 14, 2015, the Company filed a letter with the Board stating that it will not implement rates on an interim basis prior to March 18, 2015.

to attract investors and fund the Company's operations; and (e) enable the Company to continue to provide safe, adequate and proper service to its customers.

It appearing that the proposed revisions will increase existing rates and change or alter existing classifications in Petitioner's tariff, it is <u>HEREBY</u> <u>ORDERED</u> that:

- Pursuant to <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 48:2-21, the proposed revisions be, and are, suspended until June 8, 2015, unless the Board, prior to that date, makes a determination disposing of the petition, or enters an Order further suspending the proposed revisions;
- (2) Petitioner shall, at least ten (10) days prior to the date set for hearing on the petition by the Office of Administrative Law, file with the Board and with the Office of Administrative Law (33 Washington Street, Newark N.J. 07102), proof of compliance with the Notice provisions of <u>N.J.S.A</u> 48:2-32.2 and <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 14:1-5.12 (b) and (c), which Notice shall include a statement that any relief found by the Board to be just and reasonable may be allocated by the Board to any class or classes of customers on any rate or schedule as the Board may determine; and
- (3) Petitioner shall serve copies of this Order upon the Office of Administrative Law, Division of Rate Counsel (140 East Front Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Post Office Box 003, Trenton, NJ 08625-0003), the clerk of each affected municipality, the clerk of the Boards of Chosen Freeholders of each affected county and, where appropriate, the executive officer of each affected county within its service area. Service of the petition, notice of hearings and this Order may be made simultaneously. Proof of service of this Order shall be filed with the Board within fifteen (15) days of the date of this Order.

This Order shall be effective on February 23, 2015.

2111/15 DATED:

JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES BY:

a Holder

MARY-ANNA HOLE COMMISSIONER

DIANNE SOLOMON

COMMISSIONER

ATTEST SECRETARY

In the Matter of the Petition of New Jersey-American Water Company, Inc. for Approval of Increased Tariff Rates and Charges for Water and Sewer Service, Change in Depreciation Rates and Other Tariff Modifications - BPU Docket No. WR15010035

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