



For Immediate Release: 09/06/2023

Rory M. Christian, Chair

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23087/23-W-0235

Virtual Public Statement Hearings Set Regarding Liberty Utilities

ALBANY — The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) will hold two virtual public statement hearings on **Wednesday, September 13, 2023**, concerning proposed changes in the water delivery rates of Liberty Utilities (New York Water) Corp.

More specifically, the company proposes to increase revenues by \$39,745,567 (or 34.24 percent) on a consolidated basis across its two service areas (Service Area 1 [SA1]) and Service Area 2 [SA2]) for the twelve months ending March 31, 2025. This includes the consolidation of the rates of the company's Sea Cliff and Whitlock service areas with the rates for SA1 with a corresponding elimination of the incremental property tax surcharge that Sea Cliff service area customers currently pay. As a result of the proposed consolidation, the rates under consideration would impact customers in the different service territories by varying amounts. The proposed rates will increase the average residential monthly water bill by about \$18.32 for current SA1 customers, \$15.74 for Merrick customers, and \$7.37 for Sea Cliff customers. The total monthly bill impact from the Liberty NYW revenue request is 39 percent in SA1, 42 percent in Merrick and 13 percent in Sea Cliff.

The company maintains that these changes are due to necessary capital investments that have been made since base rates were last set as well as recent increases in various costs outside of its control. The company maintains that these changes are required to ensure that it can continue to deliver safe, adequate, and reliable water service. The actual bill impacts of the proposed changes on any particular customer class will vary based on revenue allocation and rate design. Liberty's pre-filed testimony and exhibits may be reviewed online at the Department of Public Service website, www.dps.ny.gov, by clicking on "File Search" (located under the heading "Commission Files") and entering the case number (23-W-0235) in the box labelled "Search by Case Number."

Under New York State law, the Commission must consider a utility's rate proposal and may adopt or reject it, in whole or in part, or modify it. In doing so, the Commission will consider changes proposed by the participating parties and general public. Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) are presiding over the gathering of public comments and all evidence relating to the proposal. Public statement hearings will be held to obtain comments from the public concerning Liberty's proposal.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that virtual public statement hearings will be held before ALJs Tara A. Kersey and Dakin D. Lecakes, as follows:

DATE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

Electronic Access: www.webex.com

Meeting Number: 2336 682 4403

Webinar Password: Sept13-1pm

Phone Access: 518-549-0500

Access Code: 2336 682 4403

Password: 73781301

DATE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

Electronic Access: www.webex.com

Meeting Number: 2331 805 3100

Webinar Password: Sept13-5pm

Phone Access: 518-549-0500

Access Code: 2331 805 3100

Password: 73781305

Those wishing to comment on any aspect of this proceeding will have the opportunity to make a statement on the record at the virtual public statement hearings. **Any person wishing to provide a public statement must register in advance of the hearing.**

To register electronically: Participants who would like to provide a statement and will login to a hearing electronically, must register to do so by clicking on <https://signin.webex.com/join> by **4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 12, 2023**. Registrants should enter the appropriate meeting number for the hearing, click "Register" underneath the enter the webinar password box, click "Register" in the box to the right, and provide all requested information.

When logging in to a hearing on the appropriate date and time of the hearing, participants should click on <https://signin.webex.com/join>, enter the appropriate meeting number for the hearing, and input the appropriate webinar password listed above. Participants will be asked to "select audio system." It is recommended that participants opt to have the system "call me" or "call using computer." The "call me" option will require participants to enter their phone numbers.

To register by phone: Any participant who is not able to log in to a hearing electronically may participate by phone. Call-in participants wishing to make a statement at a hearing must register to do so by **4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 12, 2023**, by calling **1-800-342-3330**, where they should follow prompts to the appropriate hearing and provide the following information: first name and last name, address, and phone number.

On the appropriate day and time of the hearing, all call-in users should dial **1-518-549-0500** and enter the relevant access code and phone-in password listed above to join the hearing.

All participants will be muted upon entry into the hearing. The ALJs will call on each person who has registered to speak. The ALJs will continue the hearing until everyone wishing to speak has been heard or other reasonable arrangements have been made to include their comments in the record.

Time limits may be set for each speaker as necessary to afford all attendees an opportunity to be heard. It is recommended that lengthy comments be submitted in writing and summarized for oral presentation. A verbatim transcript of the hearings will be made for inclusion in the record of these cases.

To listen to the hearings: Any person who would like to listen to the hearings but would not like to make a statement may access the hearings without registering. The hearings will be livestreamed on the internet and available for viewing on the Department of Public Service's YouTube channel on the date and times listed above. To access the YouTube channel, visit the Department's website, www.dps.ny.gov, and click on the YouTube icon at the bottom of the homepage. In addition, any person without internet access may listen to the hearings by phone by calling **1-518-549-0500** and entering the applicable access code.

Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations should call the Department of Public Service's Human Resources Management Office at (518) 474-2520 as soon as possible. TDD users may request a sign language interpreter by placing a call through the New York Relay Service at 711. Individuals with difficulty understanding or reading English are encouraged to call the Department at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this press release.

Other Ways to Comment

For those who cannot attend or prefer not to speak at a public statement hearing, there are several other ways to provide your comments to the Commission. Comments should refer to "Case 23-W-0235 – Liberty NYW Rates." Although comments will be accepted throughout the pendency of this proceeding, they are requested by October 18, 2023.

By Internet or Mail: Go to www.dps.ny.gov, click on "File Search" (located under the heading "Commission Files"), enter 23-W-0235 in the "Search by Case Number" field, and then click on "Post Comments" box located at the top of the page. Those unable to file electronically may mail their comments to the Hon. Michelle L. Phillips, Secretary, New York State Public Service Commission, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. All written comments will become part of the record considered by the Commission and may be accessed on the Department of Public Service website by searching the case number, as described above, and clicking on the "Public Comments" tab.

Toll-Free Opinion Line: Individuals may choose to submit comments by calling the Commission's Opinion Line at 1- 800-335-2120. This number is set up to receive in-state calls 24-hours a day. These calls are not transcribed verbatim, but a summary is provided to the Commission.