



Control Number: 50664



Item Number: 169

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OPEN MEETING COVER SHEET

COMMISSIONER MEMORANDUMS

MEETING DATE: April 17, 2020

DATE DELIVERED: April 16, 2020

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 32

CAPTION: Project No. 50664 - Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019

DESCRIPTION: Chairman Walker's Memo and Commissioner Botkin's Memo

Distribution List:
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Journey, Stephen
Urban, John Paul
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Chairman

Arthur C. D'Andrea
Commissioner

Shelly Botkin
Commissioner

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Public Utility Commission of Texas

TO: Chairman DeAnn T. Walker
Commissioner Arthur C. D'Andrea
Commissioner Shelly Botkin

All Parties of Record (*via electronic transmission*)

FROM: Shelah J. Cisneros
Commission Advising

RE: *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019*, Project
No. 50664, Commissioner Memos, April 17, 2020 Open Meeting, Item No. 32.

DATE: April 16, 2020

Please find enclosed memoranda by Chairman Walker and Commissioner Botkin regarding the above-referenced project. No other commissioner will file a memorandum in this project.

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Public Utility Commission of Texas

Commissioner Memorandum

TO: Chairman DeAnn T. Walker
Commissioner Arthur C. D'Andrea

FROM: Commissioner Shelly Botkin

DATE: April 16, 2020

RE: April 17, 2020 Open Meeting – Item No. 32
Project No. 50664 – *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019*

I truly appreciate the continuing efforts of many, including the Chairman, Commissioner D'Andrea, market participants, utilities, customer advocates, and Commission Staff, to implement the Commission's decisions in this project. Under the Chairman's leadership, a great deal has been accomplished quickly, and I believe the swiftness is a testament to the desire of all to serve our fellow Texans well.

I welcome the opportunity at the open meeting to discuss the COVID-19 Electricity Relief Program and potentially make some clarifications. I believe we are asking residential customers who cannot fully pay their electric bill due to unemployment or low-income from the effects of the COVID-19 disaster to pay what they are able. Funds from the ERP will offset a part of those bills and is coupled with the prohibition against disconnection for overdue bills.

The ERP is intended to provide a support structure that will assist ERP customers with paying their bills as well as to provide some safeguards for the financial soundness of the competitive electric market. With respect to that first objective, I believe we can help customers and REPs better understand the structure of the program. Therefore, I look forward to discussing with you some of the questions that have been raised as the program is being implemented. As far as the second objective, I would like to discuss the application of late fees for customers not in the ERP. This modification would result in a more focused waiver of the Commission's rules and would be in keeping with the policy goal that those who can pay their bills should continue to do so on a timely basis.

I look forward to discussing these matters with you at the open meeting.

Public Utility Commission of Texas

Commissioner Memorandum

TO: Commissioner Arthur C. D'Andrea
Commissioner Shelly Botkin

FROM: Chairman DeAnn T. Walker 

DATE: April 16, 2020

RE: Open Meeting of April 17, 2020 - Agenda Item No. 32
Project No. 50664 - *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019*

Since the open meeting on March 26, 2020, I have continued to consider the various input that I have received concerning the previous orders issued by the Commission in this matter. Based upon that input, I propose making several modifications to two of the previous orders.

I propose modifying the order in which the Commission granted exceptions to certain rules. In particular, I recommend that the Commission end the exceptions to the electric, water, and sewer rules on May 15, 2020. I believe that the Commission should set an end date for the exceptions to the rules to provide certainty. If the Commission needs to extend that date, then it can do so at the open meeting on May 14, 2020. I further recommend that the Commission limit the applicability of the exceptions to the stated rules to residential customers. A proposed second order is attached as Attachment A.

In addition, I recommend that the Commission modify the COVID-19 Electricity Relief Program and the previous order establishing the program. As I stated at the last open meeting and in the documents filed relating to the program, details of the program had to be worked out and the program would likely have to be updated to address additional issues. The Commission Staff, in particular Connie Corona and Rebecca Zerwas, have done a fabulous job working with the various market participants to respond to questions and develop additional details of the program. Based on the work that the Commission Staff has done and the input that I have received, I recommend that the Commission adopt the attached proposed second order with the modified program in Attachment B.

I look forward to discussing this with you at the open meeting.