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Filing Date - 2024-02-27 12:21:37 PM

Control Number - 52370

Item Number - 123

**SOAH DOCKET NO. 473-22-07686
PUC DOCKET NO. 52370**

APPLICATION OF EAST HOUSTON UTILITIES, INC. FOR AUTHORITY TO CHANGE RATES	§ § § § §	BEFORE THE STATE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
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NOTICE OF APPEARANCE AND MOTION TO ABATE

East Houston Utilities, Inc. (EHU), Applicant, hereby files this Notice of Appearance. The following attorneys enter their appearances in this matter on behalf of Applicant. Applicant respectfully requests this Court to allow Geoffrey P. Kirshbaum and the law firm of TERRILL & WALDROP to appear as counsel for Applicant in this matter and requests that all notices given, or required to be given, in this matter and all papers served, or required to be served, in this matter be given to and served upon the undersigned address, telephone number, and email address.

Geoffrey P. Kirshbaum
TERRILL & WALDROP
810 West 10th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 474-9100
(512) 474-9888 (Facsimile)
gkirshbaum@terrillwaldrop.com

On January 29, 2024, in SOAH Order No. 9 Adopting Procedural Schedule and Setting Hearing on the Merits was filed, the presiding Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) set the date for the hearing on the merits in this case for March 6, 2024. The undersigned attorney was engaged late last week as counsel for EHU and is diligently working to get up to speed on the matter. However, the undersigned counsel will not be ready to properly represent EHU at a hearing on the merits on March 6, 2024. Additionally, EHU would like to revisit the possibility settlement of this case with the Parties and has commenced those discussions.

On February 23, 26, and 27, 2024, Counsel for EHU conferred with the Parties regarding abatement of the proceeding and possible settlement discussions. Counsel for Commission Staff indicated their agreement with the request. Barry and Stacy Evans, Wesley Francis, and Lauren Hood are opposed to the request, but provided no explanation for their opposition in their respective responsive communications. No response was received from either J.D. Keller or Gary Lechner.

EHU's request is reasonable. Moreover, a similar request was granted by the presiding ALJ for Commission Staff earlier in this docket.¹ EHU respectfully requests that the presiding SOAH ALJ abate this proceeding until April 5, 2024 to allow counsel for EHU sufficient time to familiarize himself with the case and allow additional time for possible settlement of this proceeding. EHU, with Commission Staff's agreement, propose the Parties either file a status report or a proposed procedural schedule by April 5, 2024.

For the foregoing reasons, East Houston Utilities, Inc. respectfully requests that this proceeding be abated until April 5, 2024. Additionally, East Houston Utilities, Inc. requests that a deadline of April 5, 2024 be set for Parties to either file a status report or proposed procedural schedule. East Houston Utilities, Inc. also seeks all and further relief to which it may be justly entitled at law or in equity.

¹ Commission Staff's Request for a Continuance of Hearing on the Merits (May 30, 2023); SOAH Order No. 6 Scheduling Hearing on the Merits (Jun. 9, 2023).

Respectfully submitted,



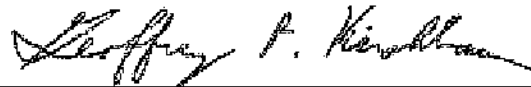
By: _____

Geoffrey P. Kirshbaum
State Bar No. 24029665
TERRILL & WALDROP
810 West 10th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
Tel: (512) 474-9100
Fax: (512) 474-9888
gkirshbaum@terryillwaldrop.com

**ATTORNEYS FOR EAST HOUSTON
UTILITIES, INC.**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer, notice of this document was provided to all parties of record via electronic mail on February 27, 2024 in accordance with the Second Order Suspending Rules, issued in Project No. 50664.



Geoffrey P. Kirshbaum