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Ontario

DECISION ON COST ELIGIBILITY

EB-2019-0003

Post-2020 Natural Gas Demand Side Management Framework

By Delegation, Before: Theodore Antonopoulos

June 11, 2019

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

On May 21, 2019 the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) issued a letter initiating a policy consultation to develop a Demand Side Management (DSM) framework for natural gas distributors beginning in 2021. The OEB indicated that as part of Phase 1 of the consultation, it will be holding a stakeholder meeting to seek input from interested parties on three specific issues related to the principles, goals and objectives of the framework and scope of the OEB's review. The OEB provided for up to two (2) hours for preparation before the stakeholder meeting, actual time for attending the stakeholder meeting on June 13, 2019 and up to four (4) hours for written comments on the questions outlined in the May 21, 2019 letter.

The OEB indicated that cost awards will be recovered from rate-regulated natural gas distributors based on their respective customer numbers. The OEB also stated that it will use the process set out in section 12 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* and act as a clearing house to implement the payment of cost awards.

The OEB received 27 requests to participate in this consultation. The following 18 parties requested cost eligibility in relation to their participation in the consultation:

1. Association of Power Producers of Ontario
2. Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater Toronto
3. Consumers Council of Canada
4. Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters
5. Efficiency Canada
6. Energy Probe Research Foundation
7. Environmental Defence
8. Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario
9. Green Energy Coalition
10. Housing Services Corporation
11. Industrial Gas Users Association
12. London Property Management Association
13. Low Income Energy Network
14. Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers
15. Ontario Sustainable Energy Association
16. Pollution Probe
17. School Energy Coalition
18. Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition

Natural gas distributors were given an opportunity to file any objections they might have in relation to the eligibility of the above-noted participants. The OEB did not receive any objections.

This Decision and Order is being issued by delegated authority under section 6 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*.

FINDINGS

The OEB has reviewed the requests for cost eligibility from participants to ensure they were compliant with section 3 of the OEB's *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*.

All requests for cost eligibility are granted. The OEB notes that Efficiency Canada and the Housing Services Corporation (HSC) have not typically participated in prior OEB consultations. Efficiency Canada's mission is to promote an energy efficient Canadian economy, which includes tracking energy efficiency plans across the country and participating where possible to ensure all energy efficiency potential is exploited. HSC's mandate is to deliver a natural gas bulk procurement program to all municipal public housing organizations in Ontario. HSC has participated as a member of the Independent Electricity System Operator's Conservation First Framework Mid-term Review Advisory Group, representing low-income and social housing electricity consumers. The OEB notes that this consultation is intended to seek advice from a broad range of interested parties, and that both stakeholders appear to be in a position to contribute.

That said, the OEB notes that there are a number of interested stakeholders with a significant degree of overlapping interests. The OEB is encouraged to see that in its letter requesting participation, Efficiency Canada indicated that it intends to liaise with other organizations to coordinate its comments to minimize overlap. The OEB expects that participants with similar viewpoints will coordinate their activities to the extent possible in order to increase efficiency and minimize costs. The OEB also reminds parties to be mindful of section 6 of the *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* with respect to cost eligible claims and specifically, section 6.05 regarding cost eligible representatives.

A decision and order on cost awards will be issued at a later date. The OEB reminds parties that the maximum hours allocated for each activity are per party. The OEB may announce other activities related to this consultation that are eligible for cost awards. This cost eligibility Decision will apply to any further eligible activities in this consultation process.

DATED at Toronto June 11, 2019

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Original signed by

Theodore Antonopoulos
Vice President
Applications Division