



PUBLIC INTEREST ADVOCACY CENTRE
LE CENTRE POUR LA DÉFENSE DE L'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC

November 30, 2022

VIA OEB RESS

Ms. Nancy Marconi
Registrar
Ontario Energy Board
Toronto, ON
M4P 1E4

Dear Ms. Marconi:

**Re: EB-2022-0016 Bluewater Power Distribution Corporation (Bluewater)
May 1, 2023 Cost of Service Rates
Request for Intervention and eligibility for cost awards**

Please find attached the Notice of Intervention of VECC in the above-noted proceeding. We have also directed a copy of the same to the Applicant as well as their counsel via email.

Yours truly,

John Lawford

Counsel for VECC

Email copy:
Leslie Dugas, Director, Regulatory & Customer Service
ldugas@bluewaterpower.com

Michael Buonaguro, Counsel to the Applicant
mrb@mrb-law.com

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

**BLUEWATER POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION (BLUEWATER)
MAY 1, 2022 RATE APPLICATION
NOTICE OF INTERVENTION
OF THE
VULNERABLE ENERGY CONSUMERS COALITION**

To: Ms. Nancy Marconi, Registrar
And to: Ms. Leslie Dugas, Director, Regulatory & Customer Service Bluewater Power Distribution

IDENTITY OF THE INTERVENOR AND ITS MEMBERSHIP

1. The Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC) hereby expresses its intention to intervene and participate in the above-mentioned proceeding. VECC consists of the following organizations:
 - (a) The Federation of Metro Tenants Association (FMTA)
 - (b) The Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations (OCSCO)

2. The Federation of the Metro Tenants Association (the "FMTA") is a non-profit corporation composed of over ninety-two affiliated tenants associations, individual tenants, housing organizations, and members of non-profit housing co-ops. In addition to encouraging the organization of tenants and the promotion of decent and affordable housing, the Federation provides general information, advice, and assistance to tenants. The address is:

500-27 Carlton Street
Toronto, ON
M5B 1L2

3. The Ontario Coalition of Senior Citizens' Organizations ("OCSCO") is a coalition of over 160 senior groups as well as individual members across Ontario. OCSCO represents the concerns of over 500,000 senior citizens through its group and individual members. OCSCO's mission is to improve the quality of life for Ontario's seniors. OCSCO's address is:

333 Wilson Avenue, Suite 406
Toronto, ON
M3H 1T2

4. The coalition of the FMTA and OCSCO under the name VECC has the specific mandate of intervening in proceedings to advocate on behalf of the interests of Ontario's vulnerable consumers with respect to energy issues, primarily through intervention in regulatory proceedings at the Ontario Energy Board.

5. Although the organization is not itself a member of VECC, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) in Ottawa assists in the representation of the interests of vulnerable consumers by ensuring the availability of competent representation and consultant support to the VECC participation.
6. VECC is a frequent intervenor in Board proceedings. Our annual information filing can be found on the Board's website at: <https://www.oeb.ca/stakeholder-engagement/intervenor-information/annual-filings-frequent-intervenors>

INDIVIDUALS AUTHORIZED TO REPRESENT VECC IN THIS PROCEEDING

7. The name and address of the agent authorized to receive documents on behalf of VECC is:

John Lawford
Counsel, Regulatory and Public Policy
2-285 McLeod Street,
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 1A1
613-562-4002 Ext. 125
wford@piac.ca
PIAC Office: 613-562-4002 (Donna Brady) Ext. 121

8. VECC requests that all correspondence and documentation also be electronically copied to VECC's consultants:

Mark Garner (project manager)
647 Broadway Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M4G 2S8
647-408-4501 (office)
markgarner@rogers.com
and

Bill Harper
107 Baker Ave
Richmond Hill, Ontario
L4C 1X5
bharper.consultant@bell.net

9. To mitigate costs VECC requests only electronic copies of the materials. VECC may ask for paper copies of some or all of the materials if this becomes necessary. VECC requests electronic copies of the application and any additional supporting materials are sent to its representatives at their respective e-mail addresses.

GROUNDS FOR THE INTERVENTION

10. Bluewater Power Distribution Corporation (Bluewater) is seeking to incorporate into rates operating, maintenance and administration (OM&A) expenses that are over 27% higher than that last approved by the Board. In this regard we also note a significant increase in OM&A expenses of nearly 10% in the bridge (2022) and test years (2023).
11. The Applicant also proposes significant increases in its capital spending/distribution system plan as compared to past spendings. The Utility proposes an exceptionally large capital program in 2022 and for the entire new rate period plan as compared to the previous six years of spending.
12. We also observe that Bluewater has exceeded the Board approved embedded cost of equity in every year since its 2013 rate year approval – including those years it sought to delay rebasing.

INTERESTS OF THE INTERVENOR

13. VECC approved as an intervenor in this Utility’s prior cost of service application EB-2012-0107. The Board approved a settlement agreement which included an undertaking to file a study of the cost to service its customers in the Large Use rate class. This study was undertaken the application includes resulting changes to the cost allocation methodology. Bluewater also proposes to increase the revenue to cost ratio for the residential class of customers.
14. In addition to these specific interests VECC is intervening in order to ensure that the interests of electricity consumer, particularly low-income consumers, are fully represented in the delivery of electricity and the determination of just and reasonable rates for that service. VECC intends to scrutinize all aspects of the Applicant’s proposal in the interest of ensuring low-income ratepayers only pay in rates for the reasonable and prudent costs incurred by the Applicant.

INTENTION TO SEEK COST AWARDS

15. VECC will be requesting an award of costs for its participation in this proceeding and believes that, as a coalition representing the direct interests of consumers, it meets the eligibility criteria set out in the Ontario Energy Board’s Rules of Practice and Procedure (Section 39) and its’ Practice Direction on Cost Awards (Section 3.03).
16. VECC’s members do not have access to the direct funding required to retain appropriate legal and consulting support for its intervention in OEB proceedings. Accordingly, VECC relies on PIAC to provide legal support and retain qualified consultants on the basis that PIAC can recover the related fees and disbursements from the Board based on the Board’s Practice Direction on Cost Awards at the prevailing Cost Award Tariff.

DATED AT TORONTO, NOVEMBER 30, 2022