From: Office of the Registrar
To: Zulma DeBonis
Subject: CM: FW: Intervention Form: EB-2024-0023 - Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition
Date: Thursday, June 6, 2024 3:04:44 PM

Intervention Form

Case Number:

EB-2024-0023

Intervenor Name:

Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition

Mandate and Objectives:

The Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC) is an unincorporated coalition of two major Ontario organizations.

VECC was formed in 1999 with the intent of representing the interests of residential consumers in matters of energy regulation and policy where those consumers, by reason of age, income, tenure or place of residence, language, literacy, or other infirmity may experience greater hardship than other residential consumers as a result of increased rates or policies that place demands on customers. These same consumers may have difficulty, or lack the resources to ensure that their voice is heard by regulators and policy makers deciding upon energy issues.

VECC has intervened in hundreds of OEB hearings since the date of its formation in 1999, and shares in the credit for the efficacy of the intervenor participation process in affecting decisions that have advanced the public interest and resulted in reductions in utility demands and just and reasonable rates.

Membership of the Intervenor and Constituency Represented:

The Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC) is an unincorporated coalition of two major Ontario organizations, the Ontario Society of Senior Citizens' Organizations and the Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations, facilitated by the assistance of a national non-profit corporation and registered charity, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre.

The Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations (FMTA) is a Toronto non-profit corporation composed of over ninety-two affiliated tenants associations, plus thousands of 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, referrals and assistance to tenants.

The Ontario Society of Senior Citizens' Organizations (OSSCO) is a provincial organization and a registered charity. Founded in 1986, its mission is to improve the quality of life for Ontario's seniors by encouraging seniors' involvement in all aspects of society, by keeping them informed on current issues, and by focusing on programs to benefit an aging population. OSSCO offers education programs, policy and research, information, referral, counseling, research materials, 2 outreach and support, self-help and volunteer programs. OSSCO's membership includes over 140 organizations and individuals representing 500,000 senior citizens from across Ontario. OSSCO is community-based and not-for-profit and includes organizations representing seniors, ethnocultural, health, native, recreational, retiree, disability and women's organizations. OSSCO members are kept informed of the activities of VECC through the organization web site.

Programs or Activities Carried Out by the Intervenor:

PIAC is not a member organization of the VECC coalition, but facilitates the work of VECC, largely by ensuring that representation and research support is available to VECC, and by assuming administrative responsibilities associated with filings and other Board requirements. Because PIAC is not a law firm, it cannot provide legal services. Legal services to VECC are provided by counsel who are not employees/agents for PIAC but recommended by PIAC for VECC retainer as a result of their regulatory experience with energy issues and regulation.

Governance Structure:

VECC representation is mainly provided by counsel and consultants retained by VECC through the facilitation of PIAC. PIAC is only the facilitator and administrator in the arrangement. As well, in any VECC intervention, counsel instructions are the province of VECC, not PIAC.

VECC engages legal counsel and consultants to assist in its representation before the Board.

Representatives:

Mark Garner
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Bill Harper
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Other Contacts:

Frequent Intervenor Form:

OEB Proceedings:

EB-2021-0004 EB-2021-0009 EB-2021-0011 EB-2021-0027 EB-2021-0039 EB-2021-0041 EB-2021-0052 EB-2021-0110 EB-2021-0147 EB-2021-0148 EB-2021-0149 EB-2021-0181 EB-2021-0212 EB-2021-0243 EB-2022-0013 EB-2022-0016 EB-2022-0018 EB-2022-0019 EB-2022-0022 EB-2022-0024 EB-2022-0028 EB-2022-0043 EB-2022-0044 EB-2022-0049 EB-2022-0053 EB-2022-0056 EB-2022-0067 EB-2022-0072 EB-2022-0096 EB-2022-0133 EB-2022-0184 EB-2022-0200 EB-2023-0106 EB-2023-0109

Issues:

VECC's members are customers of the Applicant and will be materially affected. The Utility's last cost of service application, EB-2014-0073 was for a 2014 test year. VECC was granted party status in that proceeding. Festival Hydro is now proposing a residential distribution rate increase of over 23% from currently approved rates. The Applicant is seeking a significant increase in its test year capital budget as compared to the its last cost of service proceeding. Similarly, there is a proposed 18% increase in operating costs as compared to the last actual results from the 2023 year. VECC has an interest in all the issues included in the standard issues list for cost-based applications.

Policy Interests:

N/A

Hearings:

Until interrogatories and other discovery is complete, we believe it is premature to decide upon either a written or oral hearing. We do recommend the inclusion of a process to allow the parties to attempt to settle the issues and present any settlement to the Board.

Evidence:

VECC does not intend to file evidence in this proceeding.

Coordination with Other Intervenors:

VECC will coordinate with other intervenors with similar interests, where appropriate, to promote responsible participation in the proceeding.

Cost Awards:

VECC applies for recovery of its costs reasonably incurred in the course of its intervention in this matter. VECC's members are customers of the Applicant and eligible for an award of costs pursuant to section 3.03(a) of the Practice Direction. VECC has participated in many proceedings before the Board and has been found to be eligible for recovery of its reasonably incurred costs.

Language Preference:

English