

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

PROCEEDING NO. 24M-0062G

IN THE MATTER OF THE GAS INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN OF BLACK HILLS COLORADO GAS, INC. FILED PURSUANT TO 4 CODE OF COLORADO REGULATIONS 723-4-4552 OF THE COMMISSION'S RULES REGULATING GAS UTILITIES.

**INTERIM DECISION OF
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
AVIV SEEGV
SCHEDULING REMOTE PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING**

Mailed Date: June 3, 2024

I. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

1. On March 1, 2024, Black Hills Natural Gas, Inc. (Black Hills or the Company) filed its Initial Gas Infrastructure Plan, consistent with provisions in the Commission's Rules Regulating Gas Utilities, 4 *Code of Colorado Regulations* ("CCR") 723-4-4550 to 4555.

2. By Decision No. C24-0260, the Commission, among other things, opened this Proceeding, required that initial public comments be filed no later than September 3, 2024, and responsive comments be filed no later than October 1, 2024, and referred the scheduling and convening of a public comment hearing to an Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ").

I. PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING

A. Observing or Participating in the Virtual Public Comment Hearing

3. Given the geographic breadth of Black Hills's service territory, the ALJ is scheduling two same-day remote public comment hearing sessions, including during the lunch hour, and past ordinary business hours, to best accommodate interested persons' ability to appear. The method and timing of the public comment hearings are intended to provide

flexibility for interested persons to appear and provide a public comment. Therefore, a remote public comment hearing is scheduled for September 3, 2024, with the first session scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and the second session from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Each public comment hearing session will continue until either the conclusion of the public comments of any commenter then in attendance, or 12:30 p.m. for the session scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m., and 5:15 p.m. for the session scheduled to begin at 4:00 p.m. (whichever is later). In no event shall each session end later than the designated end-time (1:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.).

4. The September 3, 2024, public comment hearing will be held using the web-hosted video-conferencing service, Zoom. The Zoom information to join the public comment hearing will be posted on the Public Utilities Commission's (PUC or Commission) calendar of events, on the Commission's website at: <https://puc.colorado.gov/puccalendar>.

5. Members of the public who wish to submit a live comment must pre-register by clicking on the registration link included in the scheduled hearing on the calendar of events page of the Public Utilities Commission's website (<https://puc.colorado.gov/puccalendar>). Members of the public who do not pre-register will not be able to submit a live comment during the remote public hearing session.

6. To ensure a clear record and orderly hearing progression, interested persons are strongly encouraged to participate by videoconference. Nevertheless, interested persons have the option to participate by telephone.

7. During the public comment hearing, the ALJ will take action as necessary to facilitate a clear and understandable record, and to ensure the orderly progress of the hearing. For the same reasons, all participants are required to: (a) mute their microphone during the hearing until called upon by the ALJ; (b) ensure they are participating from a location with minimal or

no background noise; (c) not connect to the hearing using multiple devices located in the same room (which causes audio feedback); and (d) input their full name into Zoom when prompted to do so. Participants are encouraged to use a headset to listen to the hearing, as this may also help avoid background noise and feedback when they speak. Participants are encouraged to use a computer, smart phone, or tablet that is connected to the internet and has an operational microphone, speaker, and camera.

8. Attachment A to this Decision provides step-by-step technical instructions and requirements to participate by videoconference using a computer. This is intended to ensure that the remote hearing proceeds efficiently. Hence, it is important that videoconference participants carefully review and follow all requirements in this Decision and Attachment A.

9. The Commission strives to accommodate all members of the public at its hearings by providing services for foreign language users and persons with disabilities upon receipt of a reasonable accommodation request. Interested persons requesting an accommodation for the public comment hearing should complete the Language Access Form under the “How to Make Comments” tab at <https://puc.colorado.gov/how-to-participate> at least one week prior to the hearing. Requests for accommodation can also be made directly by contacting Holly Bise at 303-894-2024, or holly.bise@state.co.us.

10. Consistent with Commission practice, the public comment hearing will be webcast on the Commission’s website. Persons wishing to observe, but not participate in the hearing may do so by observing the webcast of the rulemaking hearing and need not join the hearing by telephone or videoconference. To observe the hearing by webcast, you may enter the following link in the web browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/@COPublicUtilitiesCommission/featured> This link connects to the

Commission's YouTube webpage, where interested persons may observe live and recorded hearings.

B. Requesting Accommodations for Public Comment Hearings

11. The Commission strives to accommodate all members of the public at its hearings by providing services for foreign language users and persons with disabilities upon receipt of a reasonable accommodation request. Requests for such accommodations should be made at least one week prior to the event by completing the Language Access Form. Requests can also be made directly by contacting Holly Bise at 303-894-2024 or by emailing holly.bise@state.co.us.

12. Consistent with Commission practice, the public comment hearing will be webcast on the Commission's website. Persons wishing to observe, but not participate in the hearing may do so by observing the webcast of the rulemaking hearing and need not join the hearing by telephone or video-conference. To observe the hearing by webcast, enter this link in the web browser <https://puc.colorado.gov/webcasts> and select the audio or video option for the assigned hearing room. The assigned hearing room will be identified on the Commission's public calendar for the date and time of the hearing, at the following link: <https://puc.colorado.gov/pucalendar>.

13. The ALJ encourages interested persons who do not wish to provide comments during the hearing to observe the hearing through the webcast because this will help minimize background noise during the hearing and may assist in the orderly progression of the hearing.

C. Other Methods to Submit Public Comment

14. Interested persons may provide written or oral comments. Although the Commission prefers written comments over oral comments, they are given the same weight.

15. Interested persons are encouraged to submit written comments through either:

- Using the Commission’s Electronic Filing System at <https://www.dora.state.co.us/pls/efi/EFI.homepage>;
- Submitting a comment via online form on the Commission’s website at <https://puc.colorado.gov/> by clicking on the “FILE A COMMENT OR COMPLAINT” link;
- Mailing comments to the Commission’s offices at: Colorado Public Utilities Commission, 1560 Broadway, Suite 250, Denver, CO 80202; or
- Leaving a voicemail at (303) 869-3490 (English and Spanish options).

Please reference this Proceeding (No. 24M-0062G) when submitting a comment.

II. ORDER

A. It Is Ordered That:

1. A fully remote public comment hearing on the above-captioned Application is scheduled as follows:

DATE: September 3, 2024

TIMES: 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (or until concluded), and
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (or until concluded).

PLACE: By video conference or telephone using the Zoom web conferencing platform at a link in the Commission’s calendar of events available at <https://puc.colorado.gov/pucalendar>.

2. All participants in the public comment hearing must follow the requirements in Attachment A hereto, which is incorporated as if fully set forth herein.

3. Those wishing to observe but not participate in the above public comment hearing may do so by observing the Commission’s webcast for the assigned hearing room at: <https://www.youtube.com/@COPublicUtilitiesCommission/featured>.

4. Members of the public who wish to provide written or oral comments outside of the public comment hearing may do so by following the instructions in this Decision.

5. This Decision is effective immediately.

(S E A L)



THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

Aviv Segev

Administrative Law Judge

ATTEST: A TRUE COPY

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Rebecca E. White'.

Rebecca E. White,
Director