

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

**Pennsylvania Public Utility
Commission**

v.

**Public Meeting held February 25, 2021
3019369-OSA
Docket No. R-2020-3019369**

**Pennsylvania American
Water Company**

STATEMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN DAVID W. SWEET

Before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission for consideration and disposition is the Recommended Decision of Administrative Law Judge Conrad A. Johnson, issued on December 23, 2020, relative to the above-captioned consolidated general rate increase proceedings initiated by Pennsylvania-American Water Company (PAWC or Company). Also, before the Commission is the Joint Petition for Non-Unanimous Settlement of Rate Investigation of PAWC, the Commission's Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement, the Pennsylvania-American Large Users Group and AK Steel Corporation, filed on October 30, 2020.¹

I will vote for the recommended result, which is a base rate increase at approximately 50% of the initial request of \$138.6 million. However, I continue to be concerned about the timing of this case. The substantial rate increase was requested in April of 2020, after the ravages of the pandemic were fully apparent.

While I wish PAWC had not asked for such a large increase in the midst of the pandemic, I cannot justify, on this record, a vote to completely deny any rate increase. But sadly, the proposal submitted by PAWC was not accompanied by what I would consider to be sufficiently robust or specific initiatives to mitigate the impact of the increase upon low-income customers and particularly those adversely affected by the pandemic.

At least PAWC (and as well the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority in its rate case) has indicated support for a Commission proceeding to determine whether water utilities should be included in the Commission's CAP Policy statement.² Please be assured that there will be a follow up with these utilities to determine when and how its suggestions can be implemented.

February 25, 2021

DATE



DAVID W. SWEET
VICE CHAIRMAN

¹ Exceptions to the Recommended Decision were filed on January 5, 2021, by the following Parties: the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA); the Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA); and, the Coalition for Affordable Utility Services and Energy Efficiency in Pennsylvania (CAUSE-PA). On January 11, 2021, PAWC, the Commission on Energy Opportunities (CEO) and the Commission's Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement (I&E) filed Replies to Exceptions.

² 52 Pa.Code §§ 69.261- 69.267