

PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

PA Public Utility Commission, et al.
vs.
Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority

Public Meeting of January 18, 2024
3039919-ALJ
Docket Nos. R-2023-3039919 (stormwater)
R-2023-3039920 (water)
R-2023-3039921 (wastewater)

STATEMENT OF VICE CHAIR KIMBERLY BARROW

Before us for consideration is the Recommended Decision (R.D.) of Administrative Law Judge Gail M. Chiodo that recommends approval of the “Joint Petition for Settlement of All Issues With All Parties” (Settlement) filed on October 30, 2023, to settle Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority’s (PWSA) rate proceeding.¹ The Settlement, *inter alia*, highlights PWSA’s agreement to participate in collaborative meetings related to stormwater, and enhancements to its low-income assistance programs, customer service, and quality of service.

As part of the Settlement, PWSA agrees that within 30 days of the entry of an order in this matter, its Cares Team will contact the City and the Allegheny Department of Human Services (Allegheny DHS) to identify potential mechanisms for cross-enrollment of low-income customers through other municipal offices serving the City, or through coordination with programs or services administered by the Allegheny DHS. (R.D. at 32, 74-75).

I commend these organizations for agreeing to work together to provide PWSA’s low-income customers with the assistance they need to pay their utility bills. In order to ensure that all of PWSA’s customers are properly educated on these programs, I encourage a focus on a robust and enhanced customer education program for PWSA’s water and wastewater utilities as well.² In addition, I encourage PWSA to track any potentially negative issues related to cross-enrollment of its low-income customers so that they may be addressed in a timely and efficient manner.

January 18, 2024
Date



Kimberly Barrow, Vice Chair

¹ The signatories to the Settlement include, PWSA, the Commission’s Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement, the Office of Consumer Advocate, the Office of Small Business Advocate, Pittsburgh United’s Our Water Table, the City of Pittsburgh (City), the School District of Pittsburgh. The River Development Cooperation, although not a signatory, did not oppose the Settlement. (R.D. at 8.)

² In the Settlement, PWSA agrees to develop an enhanced outreach and education plan related to available assistance and mitigation measures connected to its stormwater fee. The enhanced plan includes, among other things: (i) prompt stormwater customers about whether they have adopted or have an interest in adopting green stormwater; (ii) discuss the benefits of practicing green stormwater mitigation, including the \$40 credit for rain barrels; and (iii) discuss whether the customers are enrolled in, and eligible for, the Bill Discount Program to take advantage of available stormwater discounts. (R.D. at 28).