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File #: 203275

March 12, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Rosemary Chiavetta
Secretary
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 2nd Floor North
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265

Re: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, et al. v. National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation
Docket Nos. R-2024-3045177, et al.

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Attached for filing in the above-referenced proceeding is the Motion for Protective Order of National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation.

Copies will be provided as indicated on the Certificate of Service.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicholas A. Stobbe

NAS/dmc
Attachments

cc: The Honorable Charece Z. Collins (*via email; w/attachments*)
Certificate of Service

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been served upon the following persons, in the manner indicated, in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant).

VIA E-MAIL

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Date: March 12, 2024



Nicholas A. Stobbe

**BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, *et al.* :
:
:
v. : Docket Nos. R-2024-3045177, *et al.*
:
National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation :

MOTION FOR PROTECTIVE ORDER

TO ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE CHARECE Z. COLLINS:

National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation (“Distribution” or the “Company”) hereby requests that Administrative Law Judge Charece Z. Collins (the “ALJ”) enter a Protective Order in this proceeding pursuant to the provisions of 52 Pa. Code § 5.365(a), and in support thereof represents as follows:

1. On December 29, 2023, Distribution filed data and exhibits supporting recovery of purchased gas costs in compliance with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission’s (“Commission”) regulations at 52 Pa. Code §§ 53.64 - 53.65.

2. On January 16, 2024, the Office of Small Business Advocate (“OSBA”) filed a Notice of Appearance, Complaint, Public Statement, and Verification.

3. On January 18, 2024, the Commission’s Bureau of Investigation & Enforcement (“I&E”) filed a Notice of Appearance.

4. On January 31, 2024, Distribution filed additional supporting data and exhibits as well as the prepared, written testimony of the eight witnesses listed below in support of Supplement No. 269 to Tariff Gas — Pa. P.U.C. No. 9, to be effective for service rendered on

and after August 1, 2024. Distribution also submitted a Tariff Addendum. The Tariff Supplement and the Addendum set forth the specific rates proposed by Distribution for recovery of purchased gas costs effective on August 1, 2024.

5. On February 1, 2024, the Office of Consumer Advocate (“OCA”) filed a Notice of Appearance, Complaint, and Public Statement.

6. Also on February 1, 2024, a Prehearing Conference Order was issued, which, among other things, scheduled a telephonic prehearing conference for February 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., among other things.

7. On February 13, 2024, Distribution, OCA, OSBA, and I&E submitted Prehearing Conference Memoranda.

8. On February 16, 2024, the Prehearing Conference took place as scheduled.

9. Late on February 16, 2024, the ALJ issued a Prehearing Order.

10. On February 20, 2024, the Commission issued a Hearing Notice.

11. Proprietary Information within the definition of 52 Pa. Code § 5.365 has been requested during the course of this proceeding, which justifies the issuance of a Protective Order. For example, parties have sought information that is customarily treated as sensitive, proprietary, or highly confidential, including but not limited to specific pricing information, information regarding discounts provided to certain customers, and other information. Treatment of such information as set forth in the attached proposed Protective Order is justified because unrestricted disclosure of such information would not be in the public interest. These considerations constitute cause for the restrictions specified in 52 Pa. Code § 5.365 and in Administrative Law Judge or Commission Orders granting relief pursuant to said regulation.

12. Under 52 Pa. Code §§ 5.362(a)(7) and 5.365, the Office of Administrative Law Judge or the Commission may issue a Protective Order to limit or prohibit disclosure of confidential commercial information where the potential harm to a participant would be substantial and outweighs the public's interest in having access to the confidential information. In applying this standard, relevant factors to be considered include: (1) the extent to which disclosure would cause unfair economic or competitive damage; (2) the extent to which the information is known by others and used in similar activities; and (3) the worth or value of the information to the party and to the party's competitors. 52 Pa. Code § 5.365(a)(1)-(3).

13. The attached proposed Protective Order defines two categories of protected information. The first is "Confidential," which is defined in Paragraph 3 of the attached proposed Protective Order as "those materials which customarily are treated by that party as sensitive or proprietary, which are not available to the public, or which, if disclosed freely, would subject that party or others to risk of competitive disadvantage or other business injury." The second is "Highly Confidential," which is defined in Paragraph 4 of the attached proposed Protective Order as "those materials that are of such a commercially sensitive or of such a private, personal nature that the producing party is able to justify a heightened level of confidential protection with respect to those materials."

14. Paragraph 25 of the attached proposed Protective Order protects against overly broad designations of protected information by giving all parties the right to question or challenge the confidential or proprietary nature of the "Confidential" or "Highly Confidential" information.

15. Limitation on the disclosure of "Confidential" or "Highly Confidential" information will not prejudice the rights of the participants, nor will such limitation frustrate the

prompt and fair resolution of this proceeding. The proposed Protective Order balances the interests of the parties, the public, and the Commission.

16. The attached suggested Protective Order sought by Distribution will protect the proprietary nature of competitively valuable information while allowing the parties to use such information for purposes of the instant litigation. The proposed Protective Order applies the least restrictive means of limitation that will provide the necessary protections from disclosure.

17. Distribution has consulted with all other parties to this proceeding, and none of them have an objection to the granting of this Motion.

WHEREFORE, for all the reasons set forth above, National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation with the concurrence of all other parties in this proceeding, respectfully requests that Your Honor issue the attached Protective Order.

Respectfully submitted,



Anthony D. Kanagy (ID # 85522)
Nicholas A. Stobbe (ID # 329583)
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Date: March 12, 2024

Counsel for National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation

**BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, *et al.* :
:
:
v. : Docket Nos. R-2024-3045177, *et al.*
:
National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation :

PROTECTIVE ORDER

Upon consideration of the Motion for a Protective Order that was filed by National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation on March 12, 2024,

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The Motion is hereby granted with respect to all materials and information identified in Paragraphs 3 and 4 below.

2. That the materials subject to this Protective Order are all correspondence, documents, data, information, studies, methodologies, and other materials, furnished in this proceeding, which are believed by the producing party to be of a proprietary or confidential nature and which are so designated by being stamped “Confidential” or “Highly Confidential.” Such materials will be referred to below as “Proprietary Information.”

3. That the parties may designate as “Confidential” those materials which customarily are treated by that party as sensitive or proprietary, which are not available to the public, or which, if disclosed freely, would subject that party or others to risk of competitive disadvantage or other business injury.

4. That the parties may designate as “Highly Confidential” those materials that are of such a commercially sensitive or of such a private, personal nature that the producing party is

able to justify a heightened level of confidential protection with respect to those materials. For example, but without limitation, “Highly Confidential” information may include Proprietary Information that constitutes or describes: (i) customer names or customer prospects’ names, addresses, annual volumes of gas usage, or other customer-identifying information; (ii) marketing plans; (iii) competitive strategies or service alternatives; (iv) market share projections; (v) competitive pricing or discounting information; and (vi) marketing materials that have not yet been used.

5. That Proprietary Information shall be made available to counsel for the non-producing party, subject to the terms of this Protective Order. Such counsel shall use or disclose the Proprietary Information only for purposes of preparing or presenting evidence, cross examination, or argument or for settlement discussions in this proceeding. To the extent required for participation in this proceeding, counsel for a non-producing party may afford access to Proprietary Information subject to the conditions set forth herein.

6. Proprietary Information produced in this proceeding shall be made available to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) and its Staff. For purposes of filing, to the extent that Proprietary Information is placed in the Commission’s report folders, such information shall be handled in accordance with routine Commission procedures inasmuch as the report folders are not subject to public disclosure. To the extent that Proprietary Information is placed in the Commission’s testimony or document folders, such information shall be separately bound, conspicuously marked, and accompanied by a copy of this Protective Order. Public inspection of Protected Information shall be permitted only in accordance with this Protective Order.

7. That “Confidential” information may be made available to a “Reviewing Representative” who is a person who has signed a Non-Disclosure Certificate in the form attached as **Appendix A** hereto and who is: (i) an attorney for one of the parties who has entered an appearance in this proceeding; (ii) an attorney, paralegal, or other employee associated for purposes of this proceeding with an attorney described in subparagraph (i); (iii) an expert or an employee of an expert retained by a party for the purpose of advising, preparing for or testifying in this proceeding; (iv) an employee or other representative of a party with significant responsibility in this proceeding; or (v) a person mutually agreed to by the producing and non-producing parties.

8. Provided, however, that no Reviewing Representative may be a “Restricted Person.” For the purpose of this Protective Order, “Restricted Person” shall mean: (i) an officer, director, stockholder, partner, or owner of any competitor of a party or an employee of such an entity if the employee’s duties involve marketing or pricing of the competitor’s products or services; (ii) an officer, director, stockholder, partner, or owner of any affiliate of a competitor of a party (including any association of competitors of a party) or an employee of such an entity if the employee’s duties involve marketing or pricing of the competitor’s products or services; (iii) an officer, director, stockholder, owner or employee of a competitor of a customer of a party if the Proprietary Information concerns any specific, identifiable customer of a party; and (iv) an officer, director, stockholder, owner or employee of an affiliate of a competitor of a customer of a party if the Proprietary Information concerns a specific, identifiable customer of the party; provided, however, that no expert shall be disqualified on account of being a stockholder, partner, or owner unless that expert’s interest in the business would provide a significant motive for violation of the limitations of permissible use of the Proprietary Information. For purposes of

this Protective Order, stocks, partnership, or other direct ownership interests (excluding ownership in mutual funds) valued at more than \$10,000 or constituting more than a one percent interest in a business establishes a significant motive for violation. The Office of Small Business Advocate's ("OSBA") consultant, Mr. Mark Ewen, will not be considered "Restricted Person," provided that Mr. Ewen does not share, distribute, or discuss the Proprietary Information with any person except authorized OSBA representatives.

9. If an expert for a party to this Protective Order, another member of the expert's firm or the expert's firm also serves as an expert for, or as a consultant or advisor to, a Restricted Person, said expert must: (i) identify for the other party to this Protective Order each Restricted Person and each expert or consultant; (ii) make reasonable attempts to segregate those personnel assisting in the expert's participation in this proceeding from those personnel working on behalf of a Restricted Person; and (iii) if segregation of such personnel is impractical, the expert shall give to the producing party written assurances that the lack of segregation will in no way jeopardize the interests of the party or its customers. The parties retain the right to challenge the adequacy of the written assurances that the parties' or their customers' interests will not be jeopardized.

10. That "Highly Confidential" information may be made available to a "Reviewing Representative" who has signed a Non-Disclosure Certificate in the form attached as **Appendix A** hereto and who is: (i) an attorney for one of the parties who has entered an appearance in this proceeding; (ii) an attorney, paralegal, or other employee associated for purposes of this proceeding with an attorney described in subparagraph (i); (iii) an expert or an employee of an expert retained by a party for the purpose of advising, preparing for or testifying in this proceeding; or (iv) a person mutually agreed to by the producing and non-producing parties.

11. Provided, however, that a Reviewing Representative of Highly Confidential information shall not be a “Restricted Person” as defined in Paragraph 8 or include any employee or agent of a customer of a party subject to this Protective Order, a competitor of a party subject to this Protective Order, or a competitor of a customer of a party subject to this Protective Order whose duties include: (i) the marketing, sale, or purchase of natural gas or natural gas transportation services; (ii) management regarding or supervision of any employee whose duties include the marketing, sale, or purchase of natural gas or natural gas transportation services for a competitor of a party subject to this Protective Order or a customer of the party; (iii) consulting services for a competitor of a party subject to this Protective Order or a customer of the party regarding the marketing, sale or purchase of natural gas or natural gas transportation services; or (iv) responsibility regarding other strategic business activities in which use of market sensitive information could be reasonably expected to cause competitive harm to a party or to a customer of a party subject to this Protective Order.

12. If any person who has had access to Proprietary Information subsequently is assigned to perform any duties which would make that person ineligible to be a Reviewing Representative of “Confidential” or “Highly Confidential” information, that person shall immediately inform the producing party of his or her new duties, shall dispose of any Proprietary Information and any information derived therefrom in his or her possession and shall continue to comply with the requirements of this Protective Order with regard to the Proprietary Information to which that person previously had access.

13. That no other persons may have access to the Proprietary Information except as authorized by order of the Commission or the Presiding Administrative Law Judge.

14. That qualified “Reviewing Representatives of Highly Confidential” information may review and discuss “Highly Confidential” information with their client or with the entity with which they are employed or associated, to the extent that the client or entity is not a “Restricted Person,” but may not share with or permit the client or entity to review the “Highly Confidential” information. Such discussions must be general in nature and not disclose specific “Highly Confidential” information; provided, however, that counsel for the Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement (“I&E”), Office of Consumer Advocate (“OCA”) and Office of Small Business Advocate (“OSBA”) may share Proprietary Information with the I&E Deputy Chief Prosecutor, I&E Director, Consumer Advocate, Deputy Consumer Advocate, and Small Business Advocate, respectively, without obtaining a Non-Disclosure Certificate from these individuals, provided that these individuals otherwise abide by the terms of the Protective Order.

15. That Proprietary Information shall be treated by non-producing parties subject to this Protective Order and by all Reviewing Representatives in accordance with the certificate attached as **Appendix A** and executed pursuant to Paragraph 17. Information deemed Proprietary Information shall not be used except as necessary for the conduct of this proceeding, nor shall it be disclosed in any manner to any person except a Reviewing Representative who is engaged in the conduct of this proceeding and who needs to know the information in order to carry out that person’s responsibilities in this proceeding.

16. That Reviewing Representatives may not use information contained in any Proprietary Information obtained through this proceeding to give any commercial advantage. If a party wishes to designate as a Reviewing Representative a person not described in Paragraphs 7 and 10 above, the party shall seek agreement from the party providing the Proprietary Information. If an agreement is reached, that person shall be a Reviewing Representative with

respect to those materials. If no agreement is reached, the party shall submit the disputed designation to the presiding Administrative Law Judge for resolution.

17. That a Reviewing Representative shall not be permitted to inspect, participate in discussions regarding, or otherwise be permitted access to Proprietary Information pursuant to this Protective Order unless that Reviewing Representative has first executed a Non-Disclosure Certificate, provided that if an attorney qualified as a Reviewing Representative has executed such a certificate, the paralegals, secretarial and clerical personnel under the attorney's instruction, supervision or control need not do so. A copy of each Non-Disclosure Certificate shall be provided to counsel for the party asserting confidentiality prior to disclosure of any Proprietary Information to that Reviewing Representative.

18. That attorneys and outside experts qualified as Reviewing Representatives are responsible for ensuring that persons under their supervision or control comply with this Protective Order.

19. That none of the parties waive their right to pursue any other legal or equitable remedies that may be available in the event of actual or anticipated disclosure of Proprietary Information.

20. That the producing party shall designate data or documents as constituting or containing Proprietary Information by stamping the documents "Confidential" or "Highly Confidential." Where only part of data compilations or multi-page documents constitutes or contains Proprietary Information, the parties, insofar as reasonably practicable within discovery and other time constraints imposed in this proceeding, shall designate only the specific data or pages of documents which constitute or contain Proprietary Information. The Proprietary

Information shall be served in an envelope separate from the nonproprietary materials, and the envelope shall be conspicuously marked “Confidential” or “Highly Confidential.”

21. That the non-producing party will consider and treat the Proprietary Information as within the exemptions from disclosure provided in Section 335(d) of the Public Utility Code, 66 Pa. C.S. § 335(d), as applicable, and is within the definition of “confidential proprietary information” in the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law, Act of February 14, 2008, P.L. 6, 65 P.S. §§ 67.101-67.3104, until such time as the information is found to be non-proprietary. In the event that any person or entity seeks to compel the disclosure of Proprietary Information, the non-producing party shall promptly notify the producing party in order to provide the producing party an opportunity to oppose or limit such disclosure.

22. That any public reference to Proprietary Information by a party shall be to the title or exhibit reference in sufficient detail to permit persons with access to the Proprietary Information to understand fully the reference and not more. The Proprietary Information shall remain a part of the record, to the extent admitted, for all purposes of administrative or judicial review.

23. That, when a statement or exhibit is identified for the record, the portions thereof that constitute Proprietary Information shall be designated as such for the record.

24. That any part of the record of this proceeding containing Proprietary Information, including but not limited to all exhibits, writings, testimony, cross examination and argument, and including reference thereto as mentioned in Paragraph 22 above, shall be sealed for all purposes, including administrative and judicial review, unless such Proprietary Information is released from the restrictions of this Protective Order, either through the agreement of the parties subject to this Protective Order or pursuant to an order of the Commission.

25. That the parties shall retain the right to question or challenge the confidential or proprietary nature of Proprietary Information and to question or challenge the admissibility of Proprietary Information. If a party challenges the designation of a document or information as proprietary, the party providing the information retains the burden of demonstrating that the designation is appropriate.

26. That the parties shall retain the right to object to the production of Proprietary Information on any proper ground; to refuse to produce Proprietary Information pending the adjudication of the objection; and to seek additional measures of protection of Proprietary Information beyond those provided in this Protective Order.

27. That within 30 days after a Commission final order is entered in the above-captioned proceeding, or in the event of appeals, within 30 days after appeals are finally decided, the non-producing party, upon request, shall either destroy or return to the producing party all copies of all documents and other materials not entered into the record, including notes, which contain any Proprietary Information. In the event that the non-producing party elects to destroy all copies of documents and other materials containing Proprietary Information instead of returning the copies of documents and other materials containing Proprietary Information to the producing party, the non-producing party shall certify in writing to the other party that the Proprietary Information has been destroyed.

Dated: _____

Honorable Charece Z. Collins

APPENDIX A
BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, *et al.* :
: :
: :
v. : Docket Nos. R-2024-3045177, *et al.*
: :
National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation :

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The undersigned is a Reviewing Representative of the _____, a party to this proceeding (“Party”), and is not or has no knowledge or basis for believing that he/she is a “Restricted Person” based upon reasonable knowledge and efforts as that term is defined in Paragraph 8 of the Protective Order, or prohibited from being a “Reviewing Representative of Highly Confidential information” pursuant to Paragraph 11 of the Protective Order. The undersigned has read and understands the Protective Order in the above-referenced proceeding, which Protective Order deals with the treatment of Proprietary Information. The undersigned agrees to be bound by, and comply with, the terms and conditions of said Protective Order.

Name

Address

Signature

Employer