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OPEN MEETING

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MEMORANDUM

Arizona Corporation Commission

AZ CORP COMMISSION
DOCKET CONTROL COMMISSION

DOCKETED

SEP 19 2013

FROM: Utilities Division

DATE: September 19, 2013

DOCKETED BY
nr

RE: SULPHUR SPRINGS VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. - APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF ITS 2014 RENEWABLE ENERGY STANDARD TARIFF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN. (DOCKET NO. E-01575A-13-0209)

Introduction

On June 27, 2013, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. ("SSVEC") filed an application with the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") seeking approval of its 2014 Renewable Energy Standard and Tariff ("REST") Implementation Plan ("Plan").

The SSVEC 2014 REST Plan targets a renewable energy goal of 2.25 percent of retail sales. Based on 2014 retail sales of 894,364 MWh, this equates to 20,123 MWh of renewable energy.

The implementation portion of the Plan consists of several programs, collectively called "Sun Watts". Details of the programs are discussed below.

The Sun Watts Green Contribution Program

This program allows customers to elect to contribute additional dollars on their bills to be used to fund various renewable energy programs. SSVEC does not propose changes to this program in the 2014 Plan.

Proposed Incentives

A summary of SSVEC's proposed and current, Commission-approved Up-front Incentives ("UFI") is presented in Table I.

Table I
Proposed and Current Up-Front Incentives

| Program | Proposed 2014 Up-Front Incentives | Current 2013 Up-Front Incentives |
|---|---|--|
| Sun Watts Residential PV Incentive | \$0.25 per Watt, up to \$2,500 | \$0.50 per Watt, up to 35 % of installed cost |
| Residential Wind Incentive | \$0.10 per Watt, up to \$1,250 | N/A |
| Sun Watts Commercial PV Incentive | \$0.25 per Watt, up to \$5,000 of system cost for grid-connected and off-grid systems. | \$0.50 per Watt, up to 35% of system cost for grid-connected systems less than 50 kW; \$1.00 per Watt. Up to 35% of system cost for off-grid systems. |
| Commercial Wind Incentive | \$0.10 per Watt, up to \$2,500 | N/A |
| Solar Water Heater Program | \$0.50 per kWh of estimated energy saved during 1st year of system operation, up to 25% of system cost. | \$0.65 per kWh of estimated energy saved during 1st year of system operation, up to 25% of system cost. |

Performance-based incentives (“PBIs”) were originally used as a method to extend or spread out the “cash flow” and allowed SSVEC to pay on more systems in any given year. At the \$0.25 per watt UFI level for photovoltaic (“PV”) systems and with the maximum incentive set, PBIs are no longer needed to manage cash flow. Per SSVEC, PBIs have created more administrative work than was anticipated and are not worth the effort. Eliminating PBIs also removes the long term (7-18 years) liability for incentive payments. Because wind is not as effective or predictable as PV in SSVEC’s service area, SSVEC feels that the lower UFI and cap is appropriate for wind, and the PBIs for wind should also be eliminated. SSVEC believes that continuing PBIs for wind systems at the current incentive levels would be spending administrative “dollars” to measure out “pennies”, which SSVEC does not feel is a good way to spend customer REST funds.

**Table II
 Proposed (2014) and Current (2013) Performance Based Incentives for PV**

| Performance Based Incentive | 10-Year REC & Payment Agreement (\$/kWh) | | 15-Year REC & Payment Agreement (\$/kWh) | | 20-Year REC & Payment Agreement (\$/kWh) | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------|--|-------|--|------|
| | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 |
| Grid-Connected | 0.00 | 0.084 | 0.00 | 0.082 | 0.00 | 0.08 |
| Off-Grid | 0.00 | 0.06 | 0.00 | 0.05 | 0.00 | 0.04 |

The Sun Watts Residential Incentive Program

The SunWatts Residential incentive program will pay a UFI for the installation of qualifying PV, wind, or solar water heating (“SWH”) systems. To qualify for an incentive, the PV or wind system must be eligible to participate in Net Metering. Therefore, the system must be no more than 125% of the customer’s total connected load.

Photovoltaic System Incentives

Currently, this program pays a UFI of \$0.50 per installed watt, up to 35 percent of the total cost of a PV system. SSVEC now proposes to pay \$0.25 per installed watt of a PV system, up to \$2,500 (see Table 1).

Wind System Incentives

The proposed incentive rate for wind is \$0.10 per watt with a maximum incentive of \$1,250. To qualify for an incentive, the wind system must have a final output voltage of at least 120 VAC and be grid-tied. Wind turbines that produce only DC voltages (for battery charging) do not qualify for incentives.

Sun Watts Commercial One-Time Incentives

The SunWatts Commercial & Industrial (non-residential) incentive program will pay a UFI for the installation of qualifying PV, wind, or SWH systems. To qualify for an incentive, the PV or wind system must be eligible to participate in Net Metering. Therefore, the system must be no more than 125% of the customer’s total connected load.

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Currently, this program pays a UFI of \$0.50 per installed watt, up to 35 percent of the total cost of a PV system. SSVEC now proposes to pay \$0.25 per installed watt of a photovoltaic system, up to \$5,000 (see Table 1).

Wind System Incentives

The proposed incentive rate for wind is \$0.10 per watt with a maximum incentive of \$2,500. To qualify for an incentive the wind system must have a final output voltage of at least 120 VAC and be grid-tied. Wind turbines that produce only DC voltages (for battery charging) do not qualify for incentives.

Debt Service for the 2008 Schools Project

As part of the 2008 REST program the Commission approved a Clean Renewable Energy Bonds ("CREBs") loan for the Solar for Schools project. The Maintenance and Debt Service budget is set to \$800,000 per year, up from \$750,000. Beginning with the 2014 REST Program, SSVEC has to include some maintenance costs due to the bankruptcy and subsequent closure of the Inverter Manufacturer which nullified the extended warranty SSVEC had obtained in 2008, thus the \$50,000 increase.

The Sun Watts Large-Scale Generating Program

SSVEC installed two cooperative-owned, utility-scale solar photovoltaic systems in 2012, with a total capacity of 1.5 MW. These solar power plants were funded through Commission-approved CREB funds. SSVEC's proposed 2014 REST Plan budget includes a line item for debt service of these CREB bonds. SSVEC reimburses the REST fund for all kWh produced by these solar power plants at the Avoided Cost Rate as set in SSVEC's Net Metering Tariff which is updated annually.

The Sun Watts Loan Program

SSVEC will eliminate its revolving loan program for residential, small business and large systems. With system prices dropping and solar installers offering more creative financing programs, the loan system was hardly being used by SSVEC customers. In 2012, only 5 loans were made for the whole year (only 26% of annual loan budget).

Solar Water Heater Program

SSVEC proposes to pay a rebate equal to \$0.50 per kWh of estimated energy saved during the system's first year of operation. This proposed rate is \$0.15 per kWh less than the current, approved rate. Only OG-300 certified solar systems are eligible for the Sun Watts Incentive. SSVEC highly recommends that systems be installed by licensed contractors but if the member chooses to do a "self-install", the local building inspector must approve the installation to qualify for the SunWatts Incentive. Customers will provide copies of their invoice for tracking system costs for posting on the AZ Goes Solar website.

UCPP Approved Technologies

SSVEC states that it will use the incentive, specifications, and criteria developed by the Uniform Credit Purchase Program (“UCPP”) Working Group as the basis for Performance Based Incentives. SSVEC is proposing to continue incentives for solar day lighting, geothermal, biogas/biomass, and solar space cooling. The current and 2014 proposed incentive levels are as follows in Table III:

**Table III
 Proposed and Approved Incentives for UCPP Approved Technologies**

| Technology | Current/Proposed 2014 UFI | Current/Proposed 2014 PBI |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Solar Day Lighting | \$0.12 per kWh for first year savings | |
| Geothermal | | |
| Electric | | \$0.02 per kWh over 10 years |
| Thermal | | \$0.035 per kWh over 10 years |
| Biogas/Biomass | | |
| Electric | | \$0.034 per kWh over 10 years |
| Thermal | | \$0.010 per kWh over 10 years |
| Cooling | | \$0.025 per kWh over 10 years |
| CHP-Electric | | \$0.025 per kWh over 10 years |
| CHP-Thermal | | \$0.013 per kWh over 10 years |
| Solar Space Cooling | | \$0.077 per kWh over 10 years |

Additional Programs and Incentives

SSVEC proposes to continue the Habitat for Humanity (“Habitat”) Program. SSVEC contributes up to \$15,000 to the Habitat organization for the purchase of photovoltaic and other renewable energy equipment to be installed on Habitat homes. If Habitat does not have a suitable project, these funds will be used to pay residential and commercial incentives. SSVEC

notes that it will also assist in finding local renewable energy equipment dealers who are willing to donate products and services to the Habitat cause.

SSVEC will provide New Home Subdivision Model Home advertising allowance of \$250 per builder per year, subject to available funds.

SSVEC proposes to continue to fund a grant program for teachers in its service territory for the development of renewable energy curricula for the classroom. SSVEC’s 2014 budget allows up to ten grants of \$500 each.

REST Plan Funding and Expenditures

SSVEC is not proposing any changes to its REST kWh surcharge or the REST surcharge caps. The SSVEC REST Surcharge is \$0.00988 per kWh and the collection caps are shown in the following Table IV:

**Table IV
 REST Plan Collections**

| Rate Class | Monthly Collection Caps | Monthly Average per Bill | Percentage Reaching Cap | Collection by Rate Class per Month |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Residential | \$3.49 | \$ 3.11 | 74.4% | \$121,205 |
| General Service | \$85.00 | \$ 10.86 | 1.8% | \$80,144 |
| Irrigation | \$50.00 | \$ 36.50 | 61.8% | \$19,802 |
| Large Commercial/Industrial | \$200.00 | \$ 139.15 | 45.0% | \$53,397 |
| Contract | \$300.00 | \$ 300.00 | 100.0% | \$900 |

SSVEC has provided the 2014 REST Plan budget as shown in the following Table V:

**Table V
 Proposed 2014 REST Plan Budget**

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Collections | |
| Estimated 2014 REST Surcharge | \$3,500,000 |
| SSVEC-owned Solar Power Plant production | \$112,839 |
| Estimated 2013 carryover | \$15,000 |
| Total | \$3,627,839 |
| Expenditures | |
| Program Costs (Administration, Advertising, etc.) | \$200,000 |
| Habitat Program | \$15,000 |
| CREB Bonds for Schools Debt Service | \$800,000 |
| CREB Bonds for Solar Power Plant Debt Service | \$375,000 |
| SunWatts Residential Incentives | \$1,286,839 |
| SunWatts Commercial Incentives | \$750,000 |
| PBI Residential | \$100,000 |
| PBI Commercial | \$100,000 |
| Total | \$3,627,839 |

Staff Recommendations

Staff recommends approval of SSVEC's 2014 REST Implementation Plan, as filed. In addition, Staff recommends that the words One-Time Incentive ("OTI") be replaced with Up-Front Incentive ("UFI") in all future filings (either new applications or compliance filings) by SSVEC.

Staff further recommends that SSVEC be ordered to file a Renewable Energy Surcharge tariff in compliance with the Decision in this case within 15 days of the effective date of that Decision.



Steven M. Olea
Director
Utilities Division

SMO:PML:sms\CHH

ORIGINATOR: Patrick Lowe

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BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

BOB STUMP
Chairman
GARY PIERCE
Commissioner
BRENDA BURNS
Commissioner
BOB BURNS
Commissioner
SUSAN BITTER SMITH
Commissioner

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION
OF SULPHUR SPRINGS VALLEY
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. FOR
APPROVAL OF ITS 2014 RENEWABLE
ENERGY STANDARD TARIFF
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

DOCKET NO. E-01575A-13-0209
DECISION NO. _____
ORDER

Open Meeting
October 16th and 17th, 2013
Phoenix, Arizona

BY THE COMMISSION:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. ("SSVEC" or "Company") is certificated to provide electric service as a public service corporation in the state of Arizona.

Introduction

2. On June 27, 2013, SSVEC filed an application with the Arizona Corporation Commission ("Commission") seeking approval of its 2014 Renewable Energy Standard and Tariff ("REST") Implementation Plan ("Plan").

3. The SSVEC 2014 REST Plan targets a renewable energy goal of 2.25 percent of retail sales. Based on 2014 retail sales of 894,364 MWh, this equates to 20,123 MWh of renewable energy.

4. The implementation portion of the Plan consists of several programs, collectively called "Sun Watts". Details of the programs are discussed below.

1 The Sun Watts Green Contribution Program

2 5. This program allows customers to elect to contribute additional dollars on their bills to
3 be used to fund various renewable energy programs. SSVEC does not propose changes to this
4 program in the 2014 Plan.

5 Proposed Incentives

6 6. A summary of SSVEC's proposed and current, Commission-approved Up-Front
7 Incentives ("UFI") are presented in Table I.

8 **Table I**
9 **Proposed and Current Up-Front Incentives**

| Program | Proposed 2014 Up-Front Incentives | Approved 2013 Up-Front Incentives |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Sun Watts Residential PV Incentive | \$0.25 per Watt, up to \$2,500 | \$0.50 per Watt, up to 35 % of installed cost |
| Residential Wind Incentive | \$0.10 per Watt, up to \$1,250 | N/A |
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| Commercial Wind Incentive | \$0.10 per Watt, up to \$2,500 | N/A |
| Solar Water Heater Program | \$0.50 per kWh of estimated energy saved during 1st year of system operation, up to 25% of system cost. | \$0.65 per kWh of estimated energy saved during 1st year of system operation, up to 25% of system cost. |

23 7. Performance-based incentives ("PBIs") were originally used as a method to extend or
24 spread out the "cash flow" and allowed SSVEC to pay on more systems in any given year. At the
25 \$0.25 per watt UFI level for photovoltaic ("PV") systems and with the maximum incentive set,
26 PBIs are no longer needed to manage cash flow. Per SSVEC, PBIs have created more
27 administrative work than was anticipated and are not worth the effort. Eliminating PBIs also
28 removes the long term (7- 18 years) liability for incentive payments. Because wind is not as

1 effective or predictable as PV in SSVEC's service area, SSVEC feels that the lower UFI and cap is
 2 appropriate for wind, and the PBIs for wind should also be eliminated. SSVEC believes that
 3 continuing PBIs for wind systems at the current incentive levels would be spending administrative
 4 "dollars" to measure out "pennies", which SSVEC does not feel is a good way to spend customer
 5 REST funds.

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| Performance Based Incentive | 10-Year REC & Payment Agreement (\$/kWh) | | 15-Year REC & Payment Agreement (\$/kWh) | | 20-Year REC & Payment Agreement (\$/kWh) | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------|--|-------|--|------|
| | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 | 2014 | 2013 |
| Grid-Connected | 0.00 | 0.084 | 0.00 | 0.082 | 0.00 | 0.08 |
| Off-Grid | 0.00 | 0.06 | 0.00 | 0.05 | 0.00 | 0.04 |

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17 8. The SunWatts Residential incentive program will pay a UFI for the installation of
 18 qualifying PV, wind, or solar water heating ("SWH") systems. To qualify for an incentive, the PV
 19 or wind system must be eligible to participate in Net Metering. Therefore, the system must be no
 20 more than 125% of the customer's total connected load.

21 **Photovoltaic System Incentives**

22 9. Currently, this program pays a UFI of \$0.50 per installed watt, up to 35 percent of
 23 the total cost of a PV system. SSVEC now proposes to pay \$0.25 per installed watt of a PV
 24 system, up to \$2,500 (see Table 1).

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26 10. The proposed incentive rate for wind is \$0.10 per watt with a maximum incentive of
 27 \$1,250. To qualify for an incentive, the wind system must have a final output voltage of at least
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1 120 VAC and be grid-tied. Wind turbines that produce only DC voltages (for battery charging) do
2 not qualify for incentives.

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16 not qualify for incentives.

17 **Debt Service for the 2008 Schools Project**

18 14. As part of the 2008 REST program the Commission approved a Clean Renewable
19 Energy Bonds ("CREB") loan for the Solar for Schools project. The Maintenance and Debt
20 Service budget is set to \$800,000 per year. Beginning with the 2014 REST Program SSVEC has to
21 include some maintenance costs due to the bankruptcy and subsequent closure of the Inverter
22 Manufacturer which nullified the extended warranty SSVEC had obtained in 2008.

23 **The Sun Watts Large-Scale Generating Program**

24 15. SSVEC installed two cooperative-owned, utility-scale solar photovoltaic systems in
25 2012, with a total capacity of 1.5 MW. These solar power plants were funded through
26 Commission-approved CREB funds. SSVEC's proposed 2014 REST Plan budget includes a line
27 item for debt service of these CREB bonds. SSVEC proposes to reimburse the REST fund for all

28 ...

1 kWh produced by these solar power plants at the Avoided Cost Rate as set in SSVEC’s Net
 2 Metering Tariff which is updated annually.

3 **The Sun Watts Loan Program**

4 16. SSVEC will eliminate its revolving loan program for residential, small business and
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 7 were made for the whole year (only 26% of annual loan budget).

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22 **Table III**

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| Geothermal | | |

| | | |
|----|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Electric | \$0.02 per kWh over 10 years |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | Thermal | \$0.035 per kWh over 10 years |
| 4 | Biogas/Biomass | |
| 5 | Electric | \$0.034 per kWh over 10 years |
| 6 | Thermal | \$0.010 per kWh over 10 years |
| 7 | Cooling | \$0.025 per kWh over 10 years |
| 8 | | |
| 9 | CHP-Electric | \$0.025 per kWh over 10 years |
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Additional Programs and Incentives

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20. SSVEC will provide New Home Subdivision Model Home advertising allowance of \$250 per builder per year, subject to available funds.

21. SSVEC proposes to continue to fund a grant program for teachers in its service territory for the development of renewable energy curricula for the classroom. SSVEC’s 2014 budget allows up to ten grants of \$500 each.

REST Plan Funding and Expenditures

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| Contract | \$300.00 | \$ 300.00 | 100.0% | \$900 |

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| Advertising | \$1,000 |
| CREB Bonds for Schools Debt Service | \$800,000 |
| CREB Bonds for Solar Power Plant Debt Service | \$375,000 |
| SunWatts Residential Incentives | \$1,286,839 |
| SunWatts Commercial Incentives | \$750,000 |
| PBI Residential | \$100,000 |
| PBI Commercial | \$100,000 |
| Total | \$3,627,839 |

Recommendations

24. Staff has recommended approval of SSVEC's 2014 REST Implementation Plan, as discussed herein.

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ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.'s 2014 REST Implementation Plan be approved as discussed herein.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the words One-Time Incentive ("OTI") be replaced with Up-Front Incentive ("UFI") in all future filings (either new applications or compliance filings) by Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc. shall file a Renewable Energy Surcharge tariff in compliance with the Decision in this case within 15 days of the effective date of that Decision.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Decision shall become effective immediately.

BY THE ORDER OF THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

CHAIRMAN

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, JODI JERICH, Executive Director of the Arizona Corporation Commission, have hereunto, set my hand and caused the official seal of this Commission to be affixed at the Capitol, in the City of Phoenix, this _____ day of _____, 2013.

JODI JERICH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DISSENT: _____

DISSENT: _____

SMO:PML:sms\CHH

1 SERVICE LIST FOR: Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.
2 DOCKET NO. E-01575A-13-0209

3 David Bane
4 Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc.
5 311 East Wilcox
6 Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

7 Mr. Steven M. Olea
8 Director, Utilities Division
9 Arizona Corporation Commission
10 1200 West Washington Street
11 Phoenix, Arizona 85007

12 Ms. Janice M. Alward
13 Chief Counsel, Legal Division
14 Arizona Corporation Commission
15 1200 West Washington Street
16 Phoenix, Arizona 85007

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