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June 17, 2022

Via Electronic Mail and First Class Mail

Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, Rhode Island 02888

Re: Docket 5254 – In Re: Newport Water’s Petition to Recover Electronic Payment Fees

Dear Ms. Massaro:

On behalf of Portsmouth Water and Fire District, enclosed for filing in the above-referenced matters are an original and nine copies of the Portsmouth Water and Fire District’s Position in Response to City of Newport, Utilities Division, Water Department’s Response to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission’s Hearing Record Request PUC RR-2.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adam M. Ramos'.

Adam M. Ramos

AMR:cw
Enclosures

cc: Docket No. 5254/4933 Service Lists (electronically only)

62810194

**Docket No. 5254 - City of Newport Water Division – Petition to Recover Electronic
Payment Transaction Fees
Service List updated 5/5/22**

| Parties/Address | E-mail Distribution | Phone |
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| Robert Schultz, Director of Public Works Newport Water Department 70 Halsey St. Newport, RI 02840 | rschultz@CityofNewport.com ; lsitrin@CityofNewport.com ; dbarrett@CityofNewport.com ; | 401-845-5600 |
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| File an original and six (6) copies w/: Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk Public Utilities Commission 89 Jefferson Blvd. Warwick, RI 02888 | Luly.massaro@puc.ri.gov ; John.harrington@puc.ri.gov ; Alan.nault@puc.ri.gov ; | 401-780-2107 |

**Docket No. 4933 - City of Newport Water Division – Multi-year Rate Filing
Service List updated 5/3/22**

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| File an original and nine (9) copies w/: Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk John Harrington, Commission Counsel Public Utilities Commission 89 Jefferson Blvd. Warwick, RI 02888 | Luly.massaro@puc.ri.gov ; | 401-780-2107 |
| | John.harrington@puc.ri.gov ; | |
| | Alan.nault@puc.ri.gov ; | |

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

IN RE: NEWPORT WATER'S PETITION TO : Docket No. 5254
RECOVER ELECTRONIC PAYMENT FEES :

**PORTSMOUTH WATER AND FIRE DISTRICT'S POSITION IN RESPONSE TO
CITY OF NEWPORT, UTILITIES DIVISION, WATER DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE
TO THE RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION'S
HEARING RECORD REQUEST PUC RR-2**

Portsmouth Water and Fire District ("Portsmouth") has reviewed the City of Newport, Utilities Division, Water Department's ("Newport Water") Response to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission's (the "Commission") Hearing Record Request PUC RR-2 ("RR-2"), and Portsmouth respectfully submits this position in response.

In RR-2, the Commission asked Newport Water to state whether the Water Pollution Control Department of the City of Newport, Utilities Division ("WPC") should pay for any of the electronic payment fees for which Newport Water is proposing that it pay via a withdrawal from its restricted Revenue Reserve Account. Newport Water responded that it does not believe that WPC should pay for those amounts because the timing of the Commission's Order in Docket 5022 directing Newport Water to absorb the electronic payment fees "did not provide the WPC with the ability to appropriately budget for this expense" and would "create an administrative burden and place pressure on an existing budget already stressed by current economic conditions, instability, and supply issues."

Portsmouth disagrees with the rationale set forth by Newport Water for not requiring WPC to pay some of this amount. It is undisputed that some of the electronic payment fees result from payments made on the WPC portions of Newport Water customer bills. Accordingly, it is appropriate for WPC to share responsibility for these costs consistent with how Newport

Water allocates other shared customer service costs to WPC. The timing and budgeting issues asserted by Newport Water in its response to RR-2 do not justify burdening other customers with additional expense that otherwise should be borne by WPC.

That disagreement, however, does not necessarily mean that Portsmouth's position is that Newport Water should bill WPC for a portion of the amounts that otherwise would be withdrawn from the restricted Revenue Reserve Account under Newport Water's proposal. At the June 14, 2022, hearing in this matter, Newport Water's witnesses testified that they believe that revenue Newport Water receives from WPC as miscellaneous revenue contributes to the balance accrued in the restricted Revenue Reserve Account. If WPC does, in fact, provide revenue to the restricted Revenue Reserve Account, then money withdrawn from that account to pay for electronic payment fees would include a contribution from WPC.

Accordingly, Portsmouth's position is: (1) WPC should contribute to the payment of the electronic payment fees incurred and proposed to be paid for via a withdrawal from Newport Water's restricted Revenue Reserve Account; (2) if Newport Water can confirm that miscellaneous revenues received from WPC contribute to the balance in the restricted Revenue Reserve Account, then there is no need to bill WPC separately for those amounts; but (3) if revenue from WPC does not contribute to the restricted Revenue Reserve Account, then Newport Water should bill WPC for its commensurate allocated share of the electronic payment fees incurred in the same manner that it bills WPC for other customer service expenses.

Respectfully submitted,

PORTSMOUTH WATER AND FIRE
DISTRICT

By its Attorney,

/s/ Adam M. Ramos

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Dated: June 17, 2022

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I e-mailed a copy of the within document to all parties set forth on the Dkt. 5254/4933 Service Lists on the 17th day of June, 2022.

/s/ Adam M. Ramos

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